AN

OLD TESTAMENT COMMENTARY

FOR

ENGLISH READERS.
AN OLD TESTAMENT COMMENTARY
FOR ENGLISH READERS.

BY VARIOUS WRITERS.

EDITED BY CHARLES JOHN ELICOTT, D.D.
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"WHATSOEVER THINGS WERE WRITTEN AFORETIME WERE WRITTEN FOR OUR LEARNING, THAT THROUGH PATIENCE AND THROUGH COMFORT OF THE SCRIPTURES WE MIGHT HAVE HOPE."

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THE FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS.
INTRODUCTION

TO

THE BOOKS OF THE KINGS.*

I. Unity of the Book, and Relation to the Earlier Books.—The history of the kings (Siphèr Melackhan) is really but one book. The division into two books, which has no existence in the old Hebrew canon, and has been borrowed by us from the LXX. and Vulgate, is a purely arbitrary division, not even corresponding to any marked epoch in the history. It may have been made merely for convenience of use and reference. It may have been simply artificial; for there is a curious note in St. Jerome's account of the arrangement of the Hebrew Canon in twenty-two books, according to the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, in which he remarks that to the five double letters correspond five double books, of which the Book of Kings is one. In any case it is to be disregarded, and the two books treated as having a perfect unity of idea and authorship.

In the LXX., followed in this by the Vulgate, the Books of Samuel are called the "First and Second Books of the Kings," and our Books of Kings are made the Third and Fourth. It has been supposed that this ancient alteration of the Hebrew titles is intended to point to a common authorship. Some have gone so far as to make the whole history from Judges to Kings one unbroken compilation, in which the present divisions are but accidental; and in confirmation of this view it has been noticed that all the successive books open with the simple conjunction "And" (in our version, "Now"), that the various books contain common phrases and terms of expression, and that even in the Book of Judges (chaps. xvii. 6, xviii. 1, xix. 1) we find allusions to the future monarchy of Israel. Now these indications certainly show that the successive books were regarded as forming part of one history, and that the compilers had probably much the same ancient sources of information before them. Possibly they may also imply the agency of what we should call an editor, at the time of the inclusion of the books in the Canon. But they cannot argue anything as to contemporaneous compilation. The connection in particular of the Books of Samuel and Kings is accounted for without any such supposition, by the consideration that, in actual fact, these books do include the whole history of the Israelitish monarchy. Against the notion of common authorship we must set the marked difference of language and character, which can hardly escape the most careless reader. Even in respect of the language of the books, there seems little doubt that the Hebrew of the Books of Samuel belongs to an earlier and purer age. But looking to the whole style and narrative, we observe that the Books of Kings have far more of an official and annalistic character; they mark dates and epochs, and quote authorities; they include the story of some 430 years in the same space which in the earlier books is devoted to about a century. Except in the sections which deal with the lives of Elijah and Elisha, and include descriptions of the characters of Ahab and Jezebel, they have far less freedom of style, less graphic vividness and beauty, and less of moral and spiritual force than the earlier books. There is (for example) no character in them which stands out with the living personality of David or even of Saul; unless perhaps the characters of the two great prophets may be excepted. The successive kings are viewed as kings, rather than as men. Many of them are to us little more than names marking epochs. Even where they are drawn in some detail, as in the case of Solomon, Jehoshaphat, Jehu, Hezekiah, Josiah, the kingly character mostly predominates over the human individuality. It is impossible not to see that each of the two works has a marked internal unity of peculiar style and character, in which it differs from the other. By whomsoever they were compiled, they must be referred to different hands, and to different periods.

II. Sources from which it was Drawn.—While, however, the Books of Kings have been brought by one hand into their present form, they are manifestly a compilation from more ancient sources. This is, indeed, avowed in their constant appeal to extant documents. But it would be obvious, even without such appeal, from internal evidence—from the alternate accordance and discordance with them of the independent record contained in the Books of Chronicles; from the occurrence of expressions (as "unto this day," in 1 Kings viii. 8 and elsewhere) which could not belong to the time of compilation; and from the marked variety of style and treatment in the various parts of the history itself. The only sources to which they actually refer are "the book of the Acts of Solomon" (1 Kings xi. 41), and the "books of the Chronicles of the kings of Israel and of Judah." The former is expressly ascribed, in 2 Chron. ix. 29, to the authorship of Nathan the prophet, Ahijah the Shilonite, and Iddo the seer. The latter may have been most frequently drawn up by "the recorder" or chronicler, whom we find mentioned as a court official in the successive reigns (see 2 Sam. viii. 16; 1 Kings iv. 3; 2 Kings xviii. 18). But in many cases the office of annalist was undoubtedly discharged by the prophets; as, for example, by Shemaiah and Iddo for Rehoboam (2 Chron. xii. 15), by Iddo for Abijah (2 Chron. xiii. 22), by Jehu son of Hanani, for Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. xx. 34), by Isaiah for Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 22). In the record of the reign of Hezekiah, the compiler of the Books of Kings has embodied, almost verbatim, the historical chapters appended to the earlier part of the Book of Isaiah (Isa. xxxvi.—xxxix.). It is, indeed, thought that the later

* While I alone am answerable for this Introduction, I have to acknowledge with gratitude some valuable criticisms and suggestions from my colleague in the work, the Rev. C. J. Ball, A.B.
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name for Seer (Chōzeh), which is altogether distinct from the earlier title (Bīlek) applied to Samuel (1 Sam. ix. 9, 11, &c.), was an official title, indicating a position of authority and service in the court. Among the duties of his office the work of the historian may have been sometimes included. Probably it is not by mere technical arrangement that the historical books were included among "the Prophets" in the Jewish division of the Old Testament.

But although these sources alone are distinctly indicated, we can hardly doubt that others were actually available. There were Temple archives, from which so much of the record of the Book of Chronicles appears to be drawn; and it is difficult not to suppose that from these much is taken of the almost technical account of the building and furniture of the Temple, and of the full and detailed history of its consecration. The records, again, of the careers of the prophets, especially of the great prophets Elijah and Elisha, bear the impress of a character wholly different from that of the more official parts of the history. The beauty and vivacity of the style, and the spiritual force of the narrative, appear to indicate that they are taken from some personal biographies, probably produced in the Schools of the Prophets, and possibly handed down by oral tradition, before they were committed to writing. The story of Elijah at Carmel and at Horeb, and on the great day of his translation, the picture of Elisha in his intercourse with Naaman, in the house of the Shunammite, amidst the angel guards at Dothan, or in the prophetic foresight of his dying hour, could have come from no official records. In the Books of the Chronicles (see Introduction to Chronicles) we find repeated references to prophetic annals. It is hardly likely that a prophetical School of History would have omitted to dwell on the glorious history of the prophetic order. The supposition entertained by some critics, and enunciated with an almost intolerant positiveness, that the story of the great prophets is a half-imaginative composition of later growth, is contradicted by the very characteristics of the story itself—the unity and vividness of the characters depicted, the graphic touches of detail, and the solid realism of the whole narrative. Probably it would never have been entertained, except on the ground of a priori objection to all record of miracle.

III. Date of its Compilation.—While, however, these older materials of various kinds were employed, it is clear, from the general coherency of the narrative, the recurrence of fixed phrases and methods of treatment, and the characteristics of the style and language, that the books, as we at present have them, were put into form by one author. They may previously have passed through many hands, each compiler leaving his work to be dealt with by his successor. There may be a germ of truth in the confident assertions of the Biblical critics who describe the "old prophetic Book of Kings" as "confidently as if they had collated it, and distinguishing the contributions of the "Deuteronomist editor" as if they had seen him at work. But, as the book now stands, it is acknowledged by all that the style, the language, and some of the expressions used, refer it very plainly to the era of the Captivity. The curious notice, in the closing verses of the Second Book, of the release of Jehoiachin from prison by Evil-Merodach, the king of Babylon, in the thirty-seventh year of his captivity (unless, indeed, it be supposed, somewhat arbitrarily, to be an addition), may be taken, like the abrupt conclusion of the Acts of the Apostles, to indicate the actual date of the final composition of the books themselves.

Tradition of Authorship.—The Old Jewish tradition, embodied in the Talmud, ascribing the book to the prophet Jeremiah, at least points unmistakably to its composition in this era. On the accuracy of this ascription itself the most careful criticism is still divided. The traditions of the Talmud vary very greatly in antiquity and value; and the strange character of some of the ascriptions of authorship of Scriptural books obliges us to receive all with reservation. Still they must have some prima facie force of testimony, unless they be plainly contradicted by internal evidence. In this case, moreover, it cannot be doubted that the tradition has in its favour considerable probability, when we remember the great honour in which Jeremiah was held by the Chaldean conquerors (see Jer. xxxix. 11—14, xl. 2—6), and the consequent facilities which he might have enjoyed for saving some of the records of the Temple before its destruction (illustrated by the curious legend of his preservation of the Ark and the Tabernacle in 2 Macc. ii. 1—6); when we consider how naturally he, the last of the prophets of the era of Israel's independence, would be led to regard his work as the fruit of his long probation; and when we trace his actual devotion to the work of the historian, as shown in the many historical chapters interwoven with his prophecy. To these considerations many critics add some notable similarities which they believe that they trace between these books and the Book of Jeremiah, not only in detailed points of the history, but in style and diction. * * they note also the coincidence, with variations of detail, of Jer. liii. with the last chapter of the Second Book of Kings (which, however, would in itself only show that the compiler of the latter book had knowledge of the Book of Jeremiah); and dwell on the remarkable omission of all notices in the Book of Kings of the prophet Jeremiah, who played so important a part in the history, and who is expressly noticed more than once in the far briefer account in the Chronicles. (See 2 Chron. xxxiv. 25, xxxvi. 12.)† These evidences are not conclusive; but, when we take them in conjunction with the old Jewish tradition, and the probabilities of the case, we cannot but conclude that there is at least some considerable ground for the theory of the authorship of Jeremiah, or perhaps of Baruch the scribe, to whom the written form of some part at least of the Book of Jeremiah (see Jer. xxxvi. 4, 32, xliv.) must be traced.

IV. Its General Character and Purpose.—The compiler, whoever he was, was evidently much more than a mere copyist. The very character of his work shows that he had in view throughout the great didactic purpose which pervades the whole prophetic utterances—to bring out the Divine government over the covenant-bound people; to trace their sins and their repentance, God's punishments and His forgiveness; to draw forth, for the learning of the servants of God in all ages, the spiritual lessons taught by the voice of "God in history." To suppose that the carrying out of this didactic purpose is in the slightest degree incompatible with faithful accuracy in narration of facts, is to misunderstand the main principles of true historical composition, which alone make history something higher than the "old almanacs" of the shallow epigrammatist. To study the

* See Canon Rawlinson's Introduction in the Speaker's Commentary, § 4.

† For example, Keil's Introduction, the article "Kreos" (by Bishop Lector-Hervey), Dr. Bittel, and Canon Rawlinson's Introduction in the Speaker's Commentary.
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books themselves without discovering in them, again and again, evidences of historical and geographical accuracy, even in points of detail—traces of the incorporation of official documents and of the narratives of eye-witnesses—curious signs of independence, and yet of coincidence, in respect of the glimpses into Tyrian, Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, and even Moabite history, which recent discoveries have given us—marks of a lofty and austere candour, not only disregarding the prejudices of patriotic vainglory, but even bringing out the better features of character in those whom it condemns—examples of a simple profoundness of insight into the causes underlying external history—might well seem to be impossible; unless we bring to the study some foregone conclusions as to the impossibility of the miraculous, in fact or in foresight, which are destructive of the historical character of the whole of Scripture. Still that the historian is a true prophet, teaching by examples, is obvious in every line of his history.

The evidence of this purpose is not to be found only or chiefly in the passages of grave reflection scattered through the books. Such are, for example, the constant allusions to the prophets and the ‘high places,’ showing that in these he, by the light of subsequent events, saw a danger which escaped even the most earnest reformers of earlier times. (See 1 Kings iii. 3, xv. 14, xxii. 43, &c.) Such, again, is the significant notice (in 1 Kings xii. 15) of the judicial blindness of Rehoboam, as carrying out the appointed vengeance of the Lord on the apostasy of Solomon; the reflections on the sentences pronounced on the houses of Jeroboam and Baasha, and on the special sin of Ahab, which drew down similar destruction on the house of Omri (1 Kings xii. 30, xiii. 33, 34, xvi. 7, xxi. 25, 26); the emphatic reference to the mercy of God, giving to the kingdom of Israel a last deliverance and probation in the revival of power under Josiah and Jeroboam II. (2 Kings xiii. 5, 6); above all, the solemn chapter of sad confession of God’s righteous judgment, in the fall of that kingdom after many warnings and many acts of forgiveness (2 Kings xvii. 7—29), and the corresponding reference in the case of Judah to the unrepented sin and ineradicable corruptions introduced by Manasseh, which even Josiah’s reformation could not take away (2 Kings xxi. 10—15, xxii. 26, 27, xxiv. 3, 4, 20).

In all these there is a deep prophetic insight into the ways of God, not tinged by the sadness so characteristic of all the books of Kings (especially of the prophetic annals, the prophets of woe to Israel and to Judah), but yet convinced that the Judge of the whole earth must do right, and even resting with satisfaction on His righteous judgment.

But the whole tenor and construction of the history tells this story, with even greater emphasis. On reflective study it will be seen to be not so much a continuous narrative, as a series of records of great epochs of historical significance, strung on a thin thread of mere annalistic sequence. Thus, (a) the First Book opens with a section of comparatively detailed narrative, full of lessons of practical instruction, descriptive of the great reign of Solomon, and the revolution which avenged its apostasy and destroyed its glory (chs. i.—xiv.). After this, (b) a period of at least forty years is dismissed in two chapters (chs. xv., xvi.) with the briefest possible notice, only just sufficient to give connection to the general narrative. To this succeeds (c) the most magnificent portion of the whole book (1 Kings xvii.—2 Kings xi.), unsurpassed in power in the historical books of the Old Testament, which, in the lives of the great prophets Elijah and Elisha, represents to us the great crisis of the Baal apostasy, the victorious struggle against it by the prophetic inspiration, supported by a special outburst of miraculous power, and the final vengeance which extirpated it, alike in Israel and in Judah. After this comes (d) an epoch of important historical events—first, of a marvellous revival of prosperity and power to Israel under Josiah and Jeroboam II., to Judah under Josiah, Amaziah, Uzziah; next, of a period of revolution, anarchy, and bloodshed, which ushered in the final destruction of the northern kingdom. But it was (as the prophetic writings of Amos and Hosea show us) an epoch in which no spiritual vitality showed itself through national prosperity or national disaster; and therefore it is compressed within six chapters (2 Kings xii.—xvii.) in which, moreover, whole reigns, like the long and prosperous reign of Jeroboam II., are all but a blank. (e) Similarly in the last epoch, when the kingdom of Judah alone survived, the two reigns of religious reformation—those of Hezekiah and Josiah—are given in graphic and detailed narrative, occupying five chapters (chs. xviii.—xx., xxii., xxiii.), while the long period of the iniquity of the house of Amon, filled up hopelessly the measure of national iniquity, is dismissed in a few verses (chap. xxi. 1—18), and the whole history of the last agony of Judah, after the death of Josiah, occupies little more than two chapters (chs. xxiv., xxv.). It is clear from the very method of the historical narrative that the purpose of the book is mainly didactic. The writer dwells rather on the lessons of history than the mere record of facts; on typical characters of good and evil, which appeal to the humanity of all times, rather than on the social and political conditions of the nation which belonged only to his own age; on the solemn march of the righteous providence of God, rather than on the confused and multitudinous struggles of human wills. In other words, he discharges what is virtually the prophetic office—only that he declares the works, instead of the direct word, of God. In this lies the spiritual value of the book for us. In this characteristic view of all events, far more than of the miraculous element of the record, we find the distinctive characteristic of what we call “Sacred history.”

V. Illustrations from other Books.—The study of the books, moreover, from this point of view is greatly helped by comparison with other books of Holy Scripture, belonging to the same period of Jewish history.

The Chronicles.—It is, of course, obvious to compare them with the parallel record given in the Second Book of Chronicles. That record is of far later date. We cannot doubt that the Chronicler had the Books of Kings before him; for there are places in which he seems deliberately to pass over, or merely to glance at, what had been fully recorded there. But it is also clear that his work is, on the whole, independent; he evidently had and used the same ancient materials, and, besides these, other materials, especially the Temple records, and the prophetic annals, which he frequently cites; in passages of general coincidence there are constantly touches of variation, sometimes of apparent discrepancy; and in the history of the kingdom of Judah, to which he confines himself, there are many epochs in which he fills up generally what in our book is but a bare outline, or supplies special incidents which are there omitted. (See Introduction to Chronicles.) Considering the
date and character of the two works, it is probably well to take the Book of Kings as the standard account, and to fasten to the significance of the title of Παραληπομένων ("things omitted"), given in the LXX. to the Chronicles, as to make them a commentary, an illustration, and a supplement of the older work. But each has its independent character and value. The Book of Kings has been called the prophetic record, the Book of Chronicles the priestly record, of the time. This would be a misleading antithesis, if it was taken to convey the notion of antagonism or even marked diversity of idea between the books, which any attentive study of both must dissipate. But it is so far true as this—that the Book of Kings, dealing so largely with the kingdom of Israel, naturally gives special prominence to the office and work of the older prophets, who ministered chiefly to that kingdom; while the Book of Chronicles, being almost exclusively the history of Judah, brings out the power of the priesthood and the royalty of David, which played so great a part—sometimes in union, sometimes in antagonism—in the spiritual history of the southern kingdom.

But besides this direct comparison of the two historical records, there is illustration no less valuable, as painting to us the inner life of Israel during the period of our history; for to this period a one continuous order of development.

The Psalms.—The illustration to be derived from the Psalms would be far more instructive, if we were not driven to rely mainly on internal evidence as to their date and occasion, and were not accordingly, in most cases, unable to fix these points with any certainty. But even with this drawback, the illustration is invaluable, as painting to us the inner life of Israel during the period of our history; for to this period a large portion of the Psalter must certainly be referred.

There seems much probability that the first division of the Psalter (Ps. i.—xli.) took shape in the time of Solomon, for use in the Temple worship. In the later divisions many psalms are, with more or less authority, ascribed to Asaph, to Heman (and the sons of Korah), and to Ethan, the three chief musicians of David, and probably of Solomon also. Of these subsequent divisions it is at least not unlikely that some mark and illustrate the religious revivals of Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah. Nor is more particular reference altogether wanting. Two psalms (lxxii., lxxvii.) are ascribed to Solomon—the one, a picture of the glory and majesty of his kingdom; the other (one of the Songs of Degrees), ascribing to the Lord alone the blessings of earthly prosperity and happiness. Other psalms, especially among those ascribed to the sons of Korah, are of a national character—crying to God in national disaster (Ps. lxi.v.), thanking Him in the hour of triumph and deliverance (Ps. xlv.—xlvi.), singing hymns at the marriage of the king (Ps. lxxxv.), or proclaiming the loveliness and gladness of the dwellings of the Lord of Hosts (Ps. lxxxiv.). One group (Ps. xci.—cv.) has been thought by some to belong to the golden age of Hezekiah's glory and Isaiah's prophecy.

The "great Hallel" (Ps. cxii.—cxvii.), though found in the divisions of the Psalter belonging to the era after the Captivity, yet illustrates the festal worship of the people in the Temple of God: such psalms as Ps. cxxxiv., mark the character of the Captivity by "the waters of Babylon." In all cases, the Psalms are the lyric expression of the inner life of the chosen people, and of the individual servants of God, underlying the simple narrative which our books supply. We must study them if we would catch the spirit which animates the letter of the historic record itself.

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The Sapiential Books.—But plainer illustration is gained from books which can be more certainly referred to distinct periods in the history. Thus the Book of Proverbs is illustrated by a consideration of the various books which may be called "Sapiential." The great Book of Proverbs, both in its poetical and gnomic portions, tracing itself to him as the chief master of wisdom—perhaps much as the Psalter bears the name of David—is in its representation of wisdom the key to the true nature of the culture and glory of his age, and to the tendencies which, gaining the mastery, brought on its fall. The Song of Solomon—now by all the best authorities referred unhistorically to his age, probably to his hand—is full of the passion for beauty, the delight in nature, the sensibility to pure love, the knowledge of humanity and the marking both the character of the great king, and the culture of his time; yet is not without the tendency to rest on the visible and the sensual, in which was the germ of his voluptuous polygamy. The Book of Jonah—which, whatever be the date of its original materials, is commonly referred to his time—certainly opens the great questions of Natural Religion, concerning man as man, which belong to an age searching after wisdom and having contact with the thought and inquiry of races outside the covenant. The wonderful Book of Ecclesiastes, to whatever period it is to be referred, in its depiction of a soul’s tragedy shows no little insight into the character of him in whose person it speaks, as wearied out with the search after happiness in wisdom and in pleasure, in contemplation and in action, and coming back at last in despair to the simple command, “Fear God, and keep His commandments,” which was the first teaching of childhood. Only when studied in connection with the history can these books be rightly understood; so studied they give, on the other hand, an infinite life and colour to the bare massive outline drawn in the historical books.

The Prophetic Books.—Again, the later history of the Second Book borrows even greater illustration from the prophetic writings—much as the earlier part of the record derives its chief interest from the action of the older prophets of unwritten prophecy from Ahijah to Elisha. Thus, the period of national revival in Israel under Jeroboam II., and the unhappy period of decline and fall which succeeded it—so briefly and coldly narrated in our books—live in the pages of Amos, the prophet of the day of hollow and licentious prosperity; and Hosea, the prophet of the well-merited doom of judgment. There we discover the evils which lurked under a material prosperity and an outward semblance of religion; there we see how they burst out, rending the very bonds of society, so soon as that prosperity began to wane. So again, the character of the reckless and cruel greatness of the Assyrian Empire, shown so terribly in the destruction of Israel and in the imminent danger of Judah, is marvellously illustrated by Nahum, in his grand patriotic hymn of triumph over the foreseen fall of Nineveh. To the days of prosperity of Uzziah, who "loved husbandry," belong (it seems) the utterances of Joel, picturing with poetic grandeur the physical disasters as God’s judgment, calling to repentance, promising temporal and spiritual blessing, and beginning the series of Apocalyptic visions of the vain
struggle of the enemies against the people of God. Once more, the great epoch of Hezekiah’s religious revival is marked by the writings of the prophet Micah, who, indeed, gave the signal for it (see Jer. xxxvi. 22). From the time of the first Messianic prophecy become both clearer and definite. The two grand crises of that reign—the danger under Ahaz from Syria and Israel, and the invasion of Sennacherib—form two chief themes of the supreme prophecy of Isaiah, out of which the Messianic hope rises almost to actual vision. To the interval between Hezekiah and Josiah, when the Chaldean power begins to come into prominence, we may perhaps refer the magnificent brevity of the prophecy of Habakkuk. Certainly the pathetic interest of the reign of Josiah is illustrated by the foreboding utterances of Zephaniah. The bitterness of the captivity of Judah—probably the great Captivity—is brought out in the denunciation of Edomite triumph and cruelty in the hour of Judah’s disaster by Obadiah. Nor is it too much to say that the whole history of the last agony of the kingdom of Judah can be read adequately in the historical and prophetical chapters of the great Book of Jeremiah. The Books of Kings supply the thread of connection, which binds the prophetic book together, enabling us rightly to understand the substance of each, and the method of prophetic development running through them all. The prophecies, on the other hand, supply constantly the key to the true sense of the history, drawing out explicitly the lesson which it teaches by implication, and giving us a living picture of the ages which it sketches only in outline.

VI. Illustrations from Profane History. To these all-important illustrations must be added, as subsidiary, the light thrown upon the narrative by the study of the various heathen records, whether found in the works of ancient historians, or read in the monumental history of nations which came in contact with Israel, discovered and deciphered in modern times. This kind of illustration, hardly known in the case of the earlier books, begins substantially in the Book of Kings.

The account of Josephus, with all its acknowledged defects, is of very great value, both as a gloss on the Scriptural account, and an occasional supplement to it. The variations found in the LXX. version, in the way of transposition, addition, and omission, are not, indeed, of great importance; for the only substantial addition in the history of Jeroboam (see Note at the end of Kings xi.) is obviously legendary. But they are of considerable interest, and occasionally indicate the existence of independent traditions. The authors quoted by Josephus or early Christian historians (such as Berosus, Manetho, Ptolemy), the monuments of Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon, even the Moabitite stone, all throw light again and again on the Book of Kings; and, though not without occasional difficulties and discrepancies of detail, have unquestionably furnished the strongest confirmation of its historic truth, and have cleared up some obscurities in its brief record. The history, it will be observed, comes in contact with the history of Tyre in the reigns of Hiram and Ethbaal, the history of Judah in the reign of the Pharaoh father-in-law of Solomon, of Shishak, of “Zerah the Ethiopian,” of Sabacu (the So or Seveh of 2 Kings xvii. 3), of Tirhakah, and of Pharaoh-necho; with the history of Assyria under the “Pul” of 2 Kings xv. 19, Tiglath-pileser, Shalmaneser, Sarqon, Sennacherib, Esarhaddon; with the history of Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar; even with our one glimpse of the history of Moab under Mesha in the reign of Jehoram of Israel. Most of our knowledge of these histories is comparatively new. When it is read through the extraordinary monumental records of Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon, the discovery and deciphering of which form one of the most wonderful chapters in historical study—it not only brings out facts, determines dates, confirms or corrects our interpretations, but it gives us a vivid picture of the very life and character of the great Empires, which often explains the different views taken of them in Scripture, and always gives force and colour to our conceptions of the Scripture history itself. The treasure-house is far from being exhausted. Future generations may rival or excel the advance made in this generation and the last, and every advance will be of no inconsiderable value to the student of Scripture history.

The effect of all this study and illustration of the book is to bring out more and more both its historical authenticity and its didactic value. The substance of the history, and even the text, have but few obscurities, and these are generally elucidated by comparison with the ancient versions.

VII. The Numbers given in the Book. The one difficulty in the interpretation of the book lies in the numbers, chronological and other, which occur in it. These are now always written in full; but there is every reason to believe that in the original manuscripts they were, as usual, indicated by Hebrew letters—a method of indication which, as is well known, gives the greatest facility to accidental or intentional corruption. Thus, in our book, and still more in the Chronicles, it is difficult not to suppose that the large numbers given in the history (as, for example, 1 Kings xx. 29, 30; 2 Chron. xvi. 7, 8) are without authority, due to careless transcription, or to corruption of the original document by the exaggeration of Jewish scribes.

The Chronology. It is possible that this facility of corruption in numbers may bear upon what is the other critical difficulty of the book, the determination of its chronology. In this book, unlike the earlier historical books, the calculations of dates are given in the text with great exactness, whether by the hand of the historian or by that of some later chronologer. The first remarkable date is that mentioned in 1 Kings vi. 1, fixing the commencement of the Temple in the 480th year after the Exod. With regard to this date, which has presented much difficulty to chronologers, see Note on the passage. By whomsoever given, it deserves very careful consideration in the calculation of Biblical chronology.

Next we have the reign of Solomon given at forty years (1 Kings xi. 43); against which the statement of Josephus that he reigned eighty years (Ant. viii. 7, 8) can hardly be held to be of serious moment.

From the time of the disruption, we have, marked with great precision, first, the duration of the successive reigns of the kings of Israel; next, the duration of the reigns of the kings of Judah; lastly, statements of the synchronisms of the events in each line with certain years in the reigns of the kings of the other line. Now, in the prescnt condition of the text, these three lines of calculation present occasional discrepancies; and this is especially the case with the synchronistic notices, which are, indeed, believed by many to have been added by a later hand, both because of their rather formal artificiality, and of the evident
confusion which they introduce. Setting these last aside, the discrepancies are slight. In any case they are not great and may be easily exhibited.

The whole history (after the reign of Solomon) can be divided into three periods—(a) from the contemporaneous accession of Jeroboam and Rehoboam to the contemporaneous deaths of Jehoram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah by the hand of Jehu; (b) from the contemporaneous accession of Jehu and Athaliah to the fall of Samaria in the sixth year of Hezekiah; (c) from the sixth year of Hezekiah to the capture of Jerusalem. Now, (a) in the first period there is no difficulty. The united reigns in Israel amount to 98 years,* in Judah to 95† and, remembering that the dates are always given in round numbers, reckoning, after the Hebrew manner, any part of a year as a year, there is here no real discrepancy, even in the synchronistic notices. We may accept the lower calculation, or perhaps something even less than this, as the true one.

In (c), period (b), discrepancy begins. The united reigns in Israel amount to 143 years, in Judah to 165; and the synchronistic notices in the later part of the period are not only disturbed by this discrepancy, but are occasionally self-contradictory.† Of this discrepancy there must be some account to be given; for it is too patent to have escaped the notice of the historian himself, or even of a later chronologer. It is, of course, possible to refer it to corruption of the text; but of such corruption we have no indication in any variations of the ancient versions. If this be set aside, there are but two ways of accounting for it. There may have been (as Archbishop Ussher supposed) periods of interregnum in Israel—one of eleven years after the death of Jeroboam II, and before the accession of Zachariah, the other of about the same period between Pekah and Hoshea. But of these the former is most unlikely, for the period of anarchy had not yet set in; the latter, more probable in itself, is apparently inconsistent with the actual words of the historian (2 Kings xv. 30): of neither is there any trace in the history. The only other possible supposition is, that in Judah some kings may, after common Oriental custom, have acceded to power during their fathers' reigns, as coadjutors or substitutes. It happens that this is specially likely during this period in two cases. If, as has been thought by some critics, Amaziah after his defeat by Joash was kept in captivity till his conqueror's death, it would be natural that his son should be placed on the throne; and, when Uzziah had been smitten with leprosy, we actually know that Jotham acted as king before his father's death (2 Kings xv. 5). This supposition is, on the whole, most probable. It will not correct the confusion of the synchronistic notices, but it will account for the discrepancy in the collective duration of the reigns in the two lines. In this case it is perhaps, therefore, best again to take the lower calculation. In the third period (c), period (a), discrepancy begins. The total duration of the united reigns in Judah between the fall of the kingdom of the tenth year of Josiah and the third year of Jehoiada is 233 years; Judah exists alone, and no difficulty can arise.

The general result, therefore, is that, taking the shorter calculation, we have, from the division of the kingdom to the fall of Samaria, a period of 238 years, and from the same point to the fall of Jerusalem a period of 371 years. If the longer calculation be taken, twenty-two years must be added to each of these periods.

Now, we are able to test these calculations by independent chronological data, found in ancient historians and chronologers, and in the Egyptian and Assyrian monuments. By such comparison their general accuracy is very remarkably illustrated, although some discrepancies in detail occur.

(a) Thus the capture of Samaria is fixed by Ptolemy's Canon in B.C. 721; the capture of Jerusalem is determined by undoubtedly authorities in B.C. 586. The interval between these dates corresponds almost exactly with the time assigned in our text to the sole existence of the kingdom of Judah.

(b) Starting from either of these dates, the calculation in the text, taking the shorter reckoning, would place the accession of Rehoboam at 987 or 985 B.C. Now, the Egyptian records fix the accession of Shishak at about 985 B.C. His invasion took place in his twentieth year, B.C. 963, and as this coincided with the fifth year of Rehoboam, this would fix the accession of Rehoboam at B.C. 988—about half-way between the dates determined by the longer and shorter calculations of the chronology of our text.

(c) The invasion of Pharaoh-necho is placed in our history about twenty-three years before the final capture of Jerusalem, i.e., about B.C. 669. But the Egyptian chronology fixes his reign from 610 to 594, and makes his expedition against Assyria take place early in his reign.

(d) The accession of Sabaco II. (the So or Sereah of 2 Kings xvii. 4) is fixed by the Egyptian records in B.C. 723; the Hebrew text notes the intercourse between him and Hoshapha about three years before the capture of Samaria, i.e., 720 or 724. In all these cases there is a very close coincidence between the two chronologies.

(e) The Assyrian chronology agrees less closely. Thus our text makes Manahem's reign end about thirty years before the fall of Samaria, i.e., B.C. 751. The Assyrian records make Tiglath-pileser receive tribute for him in 741. In our text the expedition of Sennacherib is fixed to about eight years after the fall of Samaria, i.e., B.C. 713. The Assyrian monuments place it about B.C. 701; and this later date seems to be confirmed by the Canon of Ptolemy. These discrepancies cannot be removed, except by alteration of our text, unless there be some error in the date of our Assyrian calculations. It will be observed that they are simply in detail.

(f) The chronological notices in Josephus, which, by their minute accuracy suggest some independent sources of information, do not enable us to pronounce decisively between the two reckonings of the text. Thus (a) he has placed Josiah's fulfilment of the prophecy against the altar at Bethel 361 years after its utterance, immediately after the division of the kingdom (Ant. x. 1. 4). Now the eighteenth year of Josiah would be according to the shorter reckoning about 336 years, according to the longer reckoning about 352 years, after the division of the kingdom; and the incident recorded took place not earlier, though it may have been later, than the 18th year. (g) In the chronological notices in Josephus, which, by their minute accuracy suggest some independent sources of information, do not enable us to pronounce decisively between the two reckonings of the text. Thus (a) he has placed Josiah's fulfilment of the prophecy against the altar at Bethel 361 years after its utterance, immediately after the division of the kingdom (Ant. x. 1. 4). Now the eighteenth year of Josiah would be according to the shorter reckoning about 336 years, according to the longer reckoning about 352 years, after the division of the kingdom; and the incident recorded took place not earlier, though it may have been later, than the 18th year.
which is in excess even of the longer reckoning. (3) In Ant. ix. 14. 1, he gives the period from the disruption to the fall of Samaria as "240 years, 7 months, and 7 days," which agrees almost exactly with the 238 years of the shorter reckoning.

Hence the effect of this comparison, assuming the general correctness of the non-Scriptural records, is to bring out more clearly—what the condition of the chronology itself would suggest—the existence of some confusions in detail, but an undoubted general correctness even in this, which is acknowledged to be the point of the greatest difficulty. The books thus stand out as true history in the highest sense of the word, uniting clear historical accuracy, even of detail, with vivid depiction of character, and high prophetic insight into the laws of the Providence of God.

[In respect both of the Introduction and the Notes on the First Book of Kings, the author has to express his obligation to the Commentaries of Keil and Thenius; to Ewald's History of Israel, and (in less degree) to Stanley's Lectures on the Jewish Church; to Canon Rawlinson's valuable Introduction and Notes in the Speaker's Commentary, and his Bampton Lectures; to many articles in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, and Winer's Realwörterbuch, and to Prof. Robertson Smith's article ("Kings") in the Encyclopaedia Britannica. For the study of the text, the Variorum Bible of Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode is invaluable. The comparison of the text with the ancient versions, and the study of Josephus' history, which is, in the main, virtually a paraphrase, are matters of course.]
CHAPTER I.—(1) Now king David was old and stricken in years; and they covered him with clothes, but he gat no heat. (2) Wherefore his servants said unto him, Let there be sought for my lord the king a young virgin: and let her stand before the king, and let her cherish him, and let her lie in thy bosom, that my lord the king may get heat. (3) So they sought for a fair damsel throughout all the coast of Israel, and found Abishag a Shunammite, and brought her to the king. (4) And the damsel was very fair, and cherished the king, and ministered to him: but the king knew her not. (5) Then Adonijah the son of Haggit exalted himself, saying, I will be king; all the historical books (Ezra, Nehemiah, 1, 2 Chronicles, Judges, Ruth, 1, 2 Samuel, &c.). It marks the general conception of the unity of the whole history, but implies nothing of special connection of time or authorship with the books of Samuel. In fact, although these books are in some sense the continuation of the former, yet the narrative is hardly continuous. The history passes at once to the closing scene of David’s life, leaving a comparative blank in the period succeeding the restoration after the defeat of Absalom—a blank which is partly filled up in the later books (1 Chron. xxii.—xxix.). Stricken in years—about seventy years old. Since “clothes” mean “bed-clothes,” the meaning is that the King was now too feeble to rise from his bed. His life began its responsibilities early; it had been hard and trying; and, as the history shows, not wholly free from self-indulgence. Hence, at no excessive age, its complete decease. (3) A Shunammite.—Shunem is in the territory of Issachar (Josh. xix. 18), and in the plain of Jezreel (1 Sam. xxviii. 4), near Mount Gilboa. As Eusebius, describing its position carefully, calls it “Sulem,” and ingeniously and not improbably, this variation of name is confirmed by its ready identification with the modern village of Solam, it has been conjectured (see Smith’s Dictionary of the Bible, SHULAMITE), ingeniously and not improbably, that Abishag is the “fair Shulamite” of the Song of Solomon (chap. vi. 13). The conjecture certainly throws some light on the occurrences of chap. ii. 10—25. Probably the whole notice of Abishag is only introduced on account of her subsequent connection with the fate of Adonijah. (4) Adonijah (my Lord is Jehovah), David’s fourth son, born in Hebron (2 Sam. iii. 4), at least thirty-three years before. From the words of Solomon in chap. ii. 22, we may gather that he claimed the throne as being now the eldest son. Hence it is probable that Chileab (or Daniel, see 2 Sam. iii. 3; 1 Chron. iii. 1), the second son, was dead, as well as Amnon and Absalom. The similarity between Adonijah and Absalom, in respect of personal beauty, favour with a too-indulgent father, ambition and trust in popularity, is evidently suggested by the narrative, which places them in close connection, although born of different

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General Summary of the Book.—The narrative of this book falls naturally into three sections: First, (a) in chaps. i.—xiv. we have a comparatively detailed record of the accession and reign of Solomon, and of the revolution which produced the disruption both of the kingdom and of the worship of Israel. This record itself varies greatly, both in style and in fulness. In some parts it is graphic and full of spiritual interest; in some it is clearly marked by official, and almost technical, detail; while in others it is brief and summary in style, more like a series of historical notes than a regular narrative. But although it covers only about forty years, it occupies more than half of the entire book. Secondly, (b) in chaps. xv. and xvi we find only short annalistic accounts of the succession in the two kingdoms, and the chief events of each reign, from Jeroboam to Ahab, and from Rehoboam to Jehoshaphat. Thirdly, (c) in chaps. xvii.—xxii., with the appearance of Elijah the whole style of the narrative changes to increased fulness, great vividness of description, and expressive spiritual significance, and so continues to the end of the book, and through that portion of the second Book which contains the close of the history of Elijah and the history of Elisha.

In this variety of character we see clear evidence of compilation from older sources—the annals of the kings, the official records of the Temple, and the biographies of the prophets. In it we find, moreover, distinct evidence of the historical accuracy of a record, which is full, where it can draw from detailed records, and contents itself with brief summary, where such materials are wanting. (On the chronology, see Introduction.)

The opening narrative of the beginning of Solomon’s reign, in chaps. i.—iii., and especially of the accession to the throne, in chap. i., is given with remarkable vividness and unusual fulness of detail. When we read in 2 Chron. ix. 29, that the acts of Solomon were written partly “in the book of Nathan the prophet,” it is impossible not to conjecture that the record of these early days is drawn from this book of one who had been a prominent actor in the whole.

(1) Now king David.—“Now” is the simple illative conjunction “and,” found at the beginning of
and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him. (6) And his father had not displeased him 1 at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so? and he also was a very goodly man; and his mother bare him after Absalom. (7) And 2 he was joined with Joab the son of Zeruiah, and with Abiathar the priest; and they following Adonijah helped him. (8) But Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet, and Shimei, and Rei, and the mighty men which belonged to David, were not with Adonijah. (9) And Adonijah slew sheep and oxen and fat cattle by the stone of Zoeleth, which is by ⁴ En-rogel, and called all his brethren the king’s sons, and all the men of Judah the king’s servants: (10) but Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah, and the mighty men, and Solomon his brother, he called not.

1. Wherefore Nathan spake unto Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon, say-

mothers. The means, moreover, which Adonijah employed, the body-guard of fifty men, and the maintenance of chariots and horsemen, are exactly imitated from the example of Absalom (2 Sam. xx. 1); and we note that the feast sacrifice, with the support of two important leaders in peace and war, recalls the same model. But Adonijah hardly shows the craft and ruthless determination of the elder rebel. His attempt on the crown seems crude and ill-planned in conception, and wanting in promptitude of action.

(7) Joab.—The books of Samuel have brought out clearly the career and character of Joab, as being in some degree like Abner) a professed soldier, raised to a formidable and half-independent power by the incessant wars of Saul and David. He stands out in consistent portraiture throughout, as a bold, hard, and unscrupulous man; in his relations to the king often imperious and disobedient; but nevertheless an absolutely loyal servant, to whom, in great degree, the establishment of David’s throne was due, and who, moreover (as is shown by his remonstrance against the numbering of the people, recorded in 2 Sam. xv. 3—1 Chron. ii. 1, 3, 6), was not without some right instincts of policy and of duty to God.

Abiathar the priest.—Of Abiathar we also know that he had been the companion of all David’s adversity, and of his reign at Hebron (1 Sam. xxii. 20, xxiii. 5, 6), and xxvii. 5, 6); that he was installed (with Abiathar) as high priest at Jerusalem, and recovered his position in the king’s favour since the death of Absalom; and it is possible that the evident growth of despotic power and state in David’s latter years may have alienated him from the trusty friends of earlier and simpler days. But the true explanation would seem to be, that the attempt of Adonijah was not viewed as an actual rebellion. Solomon was young; David’s designation of him for the succession might be represented as the favouritism of dotage; and the assumption of the crown by the eldest son, a man in the prime of life and of popular qualities, might seem not only justifiable, but even right and expedient.

(8) Zadok the priest (son of Ahitub) was the representative of the family of Eleazar, elder son of Aaron, as Abiathar of the family of Ithamar, the younger son (1 Chron. xxiv. 3). As a “young man of valour,” under “Jehoiada, leader of the Aaronites,” he joined David at Hebron with 3,700 men (1 Chron. xii. 28), and had been left in charge of the Tabernacle at Gibeon (1 Chron. xvi. 39) after the removal of the Ark to Jerusalem. On his relation to Abiathar, see chap. ii. 35.

Shimei, and Rei,—Ewald conjectures that these were two brothers of David, called Shimma and Raddai in 1 Chron. ii. 13, 14. These, however, being older than David, would now be in extreme old age. Of Rei, we have no mention elsewhere; but there is a Shimei (in 1 Kings iv. 18), a high officer of Solomon; a “Shammah,” one of the “mighty men” of 1 Chron. xii. 5, and a “Shammah,” one of the “mighty men” (in 2 Sam. xxiii. 11).

The mighty men.—See 2 Sam. xxiii. 8—39. The name Gibborim is a technical name, and is thought to designate a picked body of troops, the standing nucleus of the armies of Israel. It is commonly inferred that they were the successors of the six hundred men of David’s band during his life of wandering and exile, and that “the three” and “the thirty” (2 Sam. xxiii.) were their officers. They are mentioned as attached to the person of David in 2 Sam. x. 7; xvi. 6; xx. 9.

The stone of Zoeleth.—The meaning is uncertain. The derivation seems to be from a root, meaning to “crawl,” or “steal on.” Some interpreters render the “stone of the serpents;” the Targums make it “the rolling stone;” other authorities the “stone of the conduit,” which would suit well its position as here described.

(9) En-rogel.—The spring of the fuller.” (See Joshua xv. 7, xvii. 16; 2 Sam. xvii. 17.) Its proximity would be useful for the purposes of sacrifice; for it appears to be the only natural spring near Jerusalem, situated not far from Siloam.

(11) Wherefore Nathan.—The initiative taken by Nathan is especially natural, since he had been the
ing. Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign, and David our lord knoweth it not? (12) Now therefore come, let me, I pray thee, give thee counsel, that thou mayest save thine own life, and the life of thy son Solomon. (13) Go and get thee in unto king David, and say unto him, Didst not thou, my lord, O king, swear unto thine handmaid, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? why then doth Adonijah reign? (14) Behold, while thou yet talkest there with the king, I also will come in after thee, and confirm thy words.

15 And Bath-sheba went in unto the king into the chamber: and the king was very old; and Abishag the Shunammite ministered unto the king. (16) And Bath-sheba bowed, and did obeisance unto the king. And the king said, What wouldest thou? (17) And she said unto him, My lord, thouarest by the Lord thy God unto thine handmaid, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne. (18) And now, behold, Adonijah reigneth; and now, my lord the king, thou knowest it not: (19) and he hath slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the sons of the king, and Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the host: but Solomon thy servant hath he not called. (20) And thou, my lord, O king, the eyes of all Israel are upon thee, that thou shouldest tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him. (21) Otherwise it shall come to pass, when my lord the king shall sleep with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon shall be counted 3 offenders.

(22) And, lo, while she yet talked with the king, Nathan the prophet also came in. (23) And they told the king, saying, Behold Nathan the prophet. And when he was come in before the king, he bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground. (24) And Nathan said, My lord, O king, hast thou said, Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? (25) For he is gone down this day, and hath slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the king's medium both of the prophecy to David of the son who should build the Lord's house (2 Sam. vii. 12-15), and also of the blessing on Solomon, embodied in the name Jedidiah ("beloved of Jehovah," 2 Sam. xii. 25). Perhaps for this very reason the conspirators had altogether held aloof from him.

(12) The life of... Solomon.—The usurpation of Adonijah would, as a matter of course, be sealed by the blood of his rival Solomon. (Comp. 2 Chron. xxi. 4.) Bath-sheba herself, if need had been, could have been sacrificed; but her position of favour with David would excite jealousy, and Solomon, being still young, might well be thought only an instrument in her hands.

(13) Didst thou... swear.—Of this oath we have no mention elsewhere. It may have belonged to the time of Solomon's birth (2 Sam. xii. 24, 25). In 1 Chron. xxii. 6-13, we find a designation of Solomon for succession, apparently earlier than this time—it being clearly understood (see verse 20), according to Oriental custom, that such designation, without strict regard to priority of birth, lay in the prerogative of the reigning king.

(14) While thou yet talkest.—The whole history seems to indicate a growth of royal state and Oriental reverence for the king's person since the defeat of Absalom, contrasted with the comparative simplicity of intercourse with him in earlier days, and preparatory to the still greater development of majesty and despotism under Solomon. Bath-sheba's entrance into the bedchamber seems to be looked upon as an intrusion, to be ventured upon only in the humble attitude of a suppliant. Nathan does not presume to approach the king with remonstrance, till the maternal anxiety of Bath-sheba has paved the way. (Comp. in Esther iv. 10-16, the picture of the still more unapproachable royalty of Persia.)

(21) Shall sleep with his fathers.—Here this phrase, so constantly used in the record of the death of the kings, occurs in these books for the first time. (It is also found in the message of promise by Nathan, 2 Sam. vii. 12, relating to the succession of the son who should build the Temple.) We find corresponding expressions in Gen. xv. 15; Deut. xxxi. 16. Without connecting with the use of this phrase anything like the fulness of meaning which in the New Testament attaches to "the sleep" of the departed servants of God (as known to be a "sleep in Jesus"), it seems not unreasonable to recognise in it, at least, a rudimentary belief in death as rest and not extinction. The addition, "with his fathers," has probably a reference to "the tombs of the kings;" especially as we find that it is not adopted in the cases of Jehoram (2 Chron. xxi. 20) and Joash (2 Chron. xxiv. 25), who were not buried therein.

(22) Hast thou said.—The question here and in verse 27, of course, merely intended to draw out denial; but it is singularly true to nature that it does so by the assumption (natural in court language) that nothing of such a kind could be even conceived as done without the king's will. There is something striking in the contrast of the deference of Nathan as a counsellor on state business with the bold superiority of his tone in the discharge of his true prophetic office (as in 2 Sam. vii. 2-17, xii. 1-14).

(25) God save king Adonijah.—Literally (as in 1 Sam. x. 24; 2 Sam. xvi. 16, &c.), "May the king live;" like the "Let the king live for ever" of verse 31, and of Neh. ii. 3; Dan. ii. 4, iii. 9, &c.
sons, and the captains of the host, and Abiathar the priest; and, behold, they eat and drink before him, and say, 1God save king Adonijah. (20) But me, even me thy servant, and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and thy servant Solomon, hath he not called. (27) Is this thing done by my lord the king, and thou hast not shewed it unto thy servant, who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him? (28) Then king David answered and said, Call me Bath-sheba. And she came 2 into the king's presence, and stood before the king. (29) And the king sware, and said, As the Lord liveth, that hath redeemed my soul out of all distress, (30) even as I sware unto thee by the Lord God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; even so will I confirm it unto him. (31) Then Bath-sheba bowed with her face to the earth, and did reverence to the king, and said, Let my lord King David live for ever. (32) And king David said, Call me Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. And they came before the king. (33) The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon: (34) and let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel: and blow ye with the trumpet, and say, God save king Solomon. (35) Then ye shall come up after him, that he may come and sit upon my throne; for he shall be king in my stead: and I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah. (36) And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king, and said, Amen: the Lord God of my lord the king say so too. (37) As the Lord hath been with my lord the king, even so be he with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord king David. (38) So Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of...
Solomon is Anointed.

I. KINGS, I.

Adonijah flees.

Verse 40. The public enthronement in the palace (ordered by David in verse 35) follows the anointing and acceptance by the acclamations of the people, as an integral part of the inauguration of royalty.

The king bowed himself that is, in worship (comp. Gen. xxviii. 31), at once joining in the prayer of his servants, and thanking God for the fulfilment of His promise.

(49) And all the guests.—Nothing is more striking than the sudden and humiliating collapse of the attempt of Adonijah, strongly supported as it was by Joab and Abiathar, in contrast with the formidable character of the rebellion of Absalom. This is another indication that the royal power had been greatly consolidated during the last peaceful years of David's reign. Perhaps, moreover, the usurpation of Adonijah, not being viewed as a rebellion against David, but only a presumption on his favour, was accordingly crushed at once by the expression of his will. It is strange that of all the conspirators Adonijah alone seems to have feared punishment at this time; his accomplices, the other conspirators, are apparently allowed to disperse in safety, and their rebellion is ignored.

(50) The horns of the altar.—The horns were projections from the altar, to which (see Ps. cxviii. 27) the victims were fastened, and on which the blood was sprinkled (Exod. xxi. 14). To take hold of them was, of course, to claim the right of sanctuary—a right, however, which the Law, ruled as usual by moral considerations, formally denied to wilful murder (Exod. xxii. 14), and which accordingly (see chap. ii. 39, 41) was refused hereafter to Joab. Adonijah, by the acknowledgment of "King Solomon," seems to represent his usurpation as one of those acts of haste and inadvertency, to which alone sanctuary was conceded.
saymg, Let king Solomon swear unto me to day that he will not slay his servant with the sword. (25) And Solomon said, If he will shew himself a worthy man, there shall not an hair of him fall to the earth: but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die. (26) So king Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and bowed himself to king Solomon: and Solomon said unto him, Go to thine house.

CHAPTER II.—(1) Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying, (2) I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man; (3) and keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself: (4) that the Lord may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, (52) there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel. (5) Moreover thou knowest also what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, and what he did to the two captains of the hosts of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and unto Amasa the son of Jethro, whom he slew, and shed the blood of war upon his girdle that was about his loins, and in his shoes that were on his feet. (6) Do therefore according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in

(52) There shall not a hair of him fall.—Solomon’s pardon, though according to Oriental ideas, an act of extraordinary grace, was yet characteristically cautious and conditional, to be withdrawn accordingly on the first symptom of any renewal of Adonijah’s pretensions.

II.
The narrative in this chapter still continues much in the same graphic style and detail as in the previous chapter. During the interval between the two chapters we have in 1 Chron. xxviii., xxix. the record of a great assembly of the “princes of Israel” and the whole realm—a solemn farewell of David to the people, with charge to aid in building the Temple, followed by offerings for it, and the making of “Solomon king the second time” (chap. xxix. 22). This possibly represented an actual accession to the royal throne over Judah, but over the rest of Israel, with formal acceptance by the representatives of all the tribes. (Comp. xii. 1, in respect of the accession of Rehoboam.) In this detailed record it is specially noticed (1 Chron. xxviii. 2) that the old king “stood up on his feet,” as though the excitement of the great occasion had renewed for a time his strength, and enabled him to rise from his bed. It is also recorded that “all the sons of David,” who had apparently favoured Adonijah, submitted themselves to Solomon the king (chap. xxi. 24).

(2) I go the way of all the earth.—Comp. Josh. xxiii. 14.

(3) Keep the charge.—The main charge to Solomon is noble enough. He is to “show himself a man,” in spite of his youth; he is to take heed in all things to follow the Law of the Lord; he is to trust both in the general promise of God to obedience, and in the special promise made to the house of David (2 Sam. vii. 12-16). It is remarkably in harmony with the beautiful Psalm, “the last words of David,” preserved in 2 Sam. xxii. 3–5, telling how “he that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God,” and, in spite of consciousness of shortcomings from this high ideal, trusting in the “everlasting covenant of God” with him, “ordered in all things, and sure.” Nor does it accord less with the equally beautiful prayer of 1 Chron. xxix. 18, 19, for Solomon and for the people. In all this David speaks in the spirit of a true servant and saint of God. But in the special charges that follow we see the worldly prudence of the old statesman, and in one case some trace of long-remembered grudge, singularly true to imperfect human nature, although utterly unworthy of an ideal picture of a hero-king.

(5) What Joab . . . did.—The charge as to Joab has a certain righteousness in it. David could not—probably since Joab’s knowledge of his great crime, he dared not—punish him as he deserved. There is a graphic vividness in the description of the blood of his victims, shed as “the blood of war in peace,” spirting over the girdle and sandals of the murderer, which shows how the horror of the crimes had dwelt on David’s imagination. The murder of Abner, treacherous as it was, probably had some show of justification in the rough justice wrought out by the duty laid in ancient law on the “avenger of blood.” David disclaims it (2 Sam. iii. 26, 29, 37—39), without actually condemning it as inexcusable. The more recent and shameful murder of Amasa was simply one of revenge and ambition, because Amasa had been put in Joab’s place; yet David, broken in spirit, does not dare to blame it, and quietly acquiesces in the resumption by Joab of the dignity conferred on the murdered man. That these crimes should be punished by a king whose hands were clean, and who owed Joab nothing, was perhaps just, certainly within the letter of the law; though clemency might have spared the old and now fallen warrior, who had at least served David ably with long and faithful service. It is singularly true to nature, that the old King makes no mention of the act for which nevertheless, in all probability, he most bore grudge against Joab—the reckless slaughter of Absalom against his own express commands and entreaties—and does not deign to allude to his recent treason, which probably had already embittered Solomon against him.
Solomon succeeds David.

I. KINGS, II.

Bath-sheba uses Solomon.

But shew kindness unto the sons of  
*Barzillai* the Gileadite, and let them be of those that eat at thy table: for so they came to me when I fled because of Absalom thy brother. (7) And, behold, thou hast with thee *Shimei* the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim: but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I sware to him by the Lorp, saying, 'I will not put thee to death with the sword. (9) Now therefore hold him not guiltless: for thou art a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood. (10) So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David. (11) And the days that David 'reigned over Israel were forty years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem. (12) Then sat Solomon upon the throne of David his father; and his kingdom was established greatly. (13) And Adonijah the son of Haggrith came to Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon. And she said, Comest thou peaceably? And he said, Peaceably. (14) He said moreover, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And she said, Say on. (15) And he said, Thou knowest that the kingdom was mine, and that all Israel set their faces on me, that I should reign: howbeit the kingdom is turned about, and is become my brother's: for it was his from the Lord. (16) And now I ask one petition of thee, 2 deny me not. And she said unto him, Say on. (17) And he said, Speak, I pray thee, unto Solomon the king, (for he will not say thee nay,) that he give me Abishag the Shunammite to wife. (18) And Bath-sheba said, Well; I will speak for thee unto the king. (19) Bath-sheba therefore went unto king Solomon, to speak unto him for Adonijah. And the king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother; and she sat on his right hand. (20) Then she said, I desire one small petition of thee; I pray thee, say me not nay. And the king said unto her, Ask on, my mother: for I will not say thee nay. (21) And she said, Let Abishag the Shu-
Adonijah is Slain.

I. KINGS, II.

Joab goes to the Altar.

(22) And whv dost thou ask? — In Solomon's answer there is a certain bitterness, venting itself in irony, which seems to argue the mingling with kingly dignity and policy of some passionate feeling, not unlike the bursts of passion in his father, as in the case of Nabal (1 Sam. xxv. 21, 22). It certainly gives some probability to the conjecture (see Note on i. 3) that Abishag was the "fair Shulamite" of the Song of Solomon, already loved by the youthful king. In his wrath he infers, rightly or wrongly, that the hand of the conspirators is seen in this petition, and executes vengeance accordingly, summarily and without giving them any trial or opportunity of excusing themselves. God do so to me, and more also. — See Ruth i. 17; 1 Sam. iii. 17, xiv. 44, xx. 13, xxv. 22, 2 Sam. xi. 14, &c. This well-known formula of imprecation—which the LXX. renders, "May God do these things to me and add these things also"—was probably accompanied with some gesture signifying utter destruction. As the Lord liveth, which hath ... — There is something characteristic in this adoration, as compared with that of David in chap. i. 29. In David we always see the living man, whose soul longs after God with a vivid personal devotion. Solomon is emphatically the king, sitting on the throne of David, with his house established for ever. In the majesty of his royalty his individual character is to us almost entirely merged. Sent by the hand of Benaiah. — The chief of the body-guard is the chief of "the executioners" (see chap. i. 38), apparently, in the case of great criminals, carrying out the sentence of condemnation with his own hand. (Comp. Judges viii. 20, 21.)

(23) Then tidings came to Joab: for Joab had turned after Adonijah, though he turned not after Absalom. And Joab fled unto the tabernacle of the Lord, and caught hold on the horns of the altar. — And it was told king Solomon that Joab was fled unto the tabernacle of the Lord; and, behold, he is by the altar. Then Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he fell upon him that he died. (24) And why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? ask for him the kingdom also; for he is mine elder brother; even for him, and for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah. — It is notable that it is not Abiathar's priestly character which prompts him, but his long friendship to David in adversity, and probably of that special promise which David made to him, perhaps not without remorse, when he found that his deceit to Ahimelech had drawn down Saul's bloody vengeance upon him and his family (1 Sam. xxxii. 20—22). That he might fulfill. — In these words is described, not the purpose, but the effect of Solomon's action. The prophecy referred to is, of course, that of 1 Sam. ii. 30—35, iii. 11—14, fulfilled by the degradation, in Abiathar's person, of the house of Ithamar, and the exaltation, or restoration, in Zadok, of the house of Eleazar, to whom, as the elder son of Aaron, the primacy would have seemed naturally to belong. It seems clear from verse 35 that Abiathar had hitherto had some superiority, although in the various notices of the two, Zadok's name stands first; but whether of actual authority, or only of priority of dignity, cannot be determined. While the Tabernacle remained at Gibeon under Zadok's charge, and the Ark was in Mount Zion under Abiathar, there might, indeed, be something like co-ordination between the two. This, in any case, must have disappeared at the building of the Temple; and the disgrace of Abiathar determined that the undivided dignity should pass to Zadok. Joab had turned. — It is strange that Joab should have been in no danger or anxiety immediately after the actual failure of the conspiracy; and it is also notable that, although the real motive for putting him to death was to punish his support of Adoni-jah, now renewed, yet Solomon's words in pronouncing sentence on him refrain from mention of any thing except the old crimes dwelt upon in the dying charge of David. Possibly this was done to bring Joab's case within the emphatic declaration of the Law, that no sanctuary should protect the wilful and treacherous murderer, and that innocent blood, so shed and left unavenged, would pollute the land (Exod. xxi. 14; Num. xxxvi. 31). It is significant, moreover, of the increased power of the monarchy, even in hands young and yet untried, that the old captain of the host, who had been "the remembrance of the Lord, and David's great sin, should now fall, as it would seem, without a single act of resistance or word of remon-
Joab and

I. KINGS, II.

Shimei are Slain.

Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, Go, fall upon him. (30) And Benaiah came to the tabernacle of the Lord, and said unto him, Thus saith the king, Come forth. And he said, Nay; but I will die here. And Benaiah brought the king word again, saying, Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me. (31) And the king said unto him, Do as he hath said, and fall upon him, and bury him; that thou mayest take away the innocent blood, which Joab shed, from me, and from the house of my father. (32) And the Lord shall return his blood upon his own head, who fell upon two men more righteous and better than he, and slew them with the sword, my father David not knowing thereof, to wit, "Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, captain of the host of Judah. (33) Their blood shall therefore return upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his seed for ever: but upon David, and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever from the Lord. (34) So Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up, and fell upon him, and slew him: and he was buried in his own house in the wilderness. (35) And the king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his room over the host: and Zadok the priest did the king put in the room of the house of his father. (36) And the king sent and called for Shimei, and said unto him, Why then hast thou not kept the oath of the Lord, and the commandment that I have charged thee with? (37) For it shall be, that on the day thou goest out, and passest over the brook Kidron, thou shalt know for certain that a snare; and this view is confirmed by Solomon's words in verse 44, which refer back to the old offence of Shimei against David. The narrative gives no hint that Shimei's expedition to Gath was not made in good faith, simply to regain his slaves; and a command, which had its justification in the danger likely to result from its residence in Bahurim, among his own people, could hardly be disobeyed in spirit by a temporary journey to a foreign country. Legally the execution was justifiable, and it may have been politic; but it cannot stand examination on the ground of equity or generosity. It is here probably related by anticipation. (38) Achish son of Maachah.—In 1 Sam. xxvii. 2 we read of Achish son of Maoch, king of Gath; but chronology makes it most unlikely that the same person should here be referred to. The name may have been hereditary.
CHAPTER III.—(1) And Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh’s daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of the Lord, and the wall of Jerusalem round about.

(2) Only the people sacrificed in high places, because there was no house built unto the name of the Lord, until those days. (3) And Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father: only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places.

(4) And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that was the great high place: a thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar. (5) In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee. (6) And Captivity some places of non-sacrificial worship, in some degree like the synagogues of the period after the exile, although not as yet developed into a fully organised system. Unless we refer Ps. lxix. 8 to the Maccabean times, it must be supposed to describe the Chaldean invasion, as destroying not only the Temple, but also “all the houses of God”—properly “assemblies,” and in our Bible version actually translated “synagogues” “in the land.” But these places of prayer and praise and instruction would be different in their whole idea from the “high places” rivalling the Tabernacle was used without scruple, though certainly alien from the spirit of the Mosaic Law as to the supreme sacredness of the “place which God should choose to place his name there.” (See, for example, 1 Sam. vii. 10, xiii. 9, xiv. 35, xvi. 5; 1 Chron. xxi. 26.) After the solemn consecration of the Temple, the circumstances and the character of such worship were altogether changed.

(7) Gibeon.—The name itself, signifying “belonging to a hill,” indicates its position on the central plateau of Israel, in the land of Benjamin, whence rise several round hills, on one of which the town stood. There was now reared the Tabernacle, with the brazen altar of sacrifice, to which the descendants of the old Gibeonites were attached as “hewers of wood and drawers of water” (Joshua ix. 23). It was therefore naturally “the great high place.”

(8) The Lord appeared.—This direct communication to Solomon as a dream—standing in contrast with the indirect knowledge of the Lord’s will by David through the prophets Nathan and Gad (2 Sam. vii. 1—17, xii. 1—14, xxiv. 11—14), and by “inquiring of the Lord” through the priest (1 Sam. xiii. 9—13, xxx. 7; 2 Sam. ii. 1)—is perhaps the first indication of some temporary abeyance of the prophetic office, and (as appears still more clearly from the history of the consecration of the Temple), of a loss of leadership in the priesthood. At the same time it is to be noted that the vision of the Lord through dreams, being of a lower type than the waking vision, is mostly recorded as given to those outside the Covenant, as Abimelech (Gen. xx. 3—7), Laban (Gen. xxxi. 24), Pharaoh and his servants (Gen. xi. 5, xli. 1—8), the Midianite (Judges vii. 13), and Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. ii. 1, iv. 10—18); as belonging to the early stages of revelation, to Abraham (Gen. xv. 12), Jacob (Gen. xxviii. 12—15), and Joseph (Gen. xxxvii. 5—10); and as marking the time of cessation of the regular influence of the prophets during the Captivity (Dan. ii. 19, vii. 1).

(9) And Solomon said.—On Solomon’s “wisdom,” see Note on chap. iv. 29. Here it is clear that the wisdom which he asks is that of the ruler, involving
Solomon asks for Wisdom,

I. KINGS, III.

and has Riches also.

Solomon said, Thou hast shewed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day.

(7) And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father; and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in.

(8) And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude.

(9) Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad; for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?

(10) And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing.

(11) And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself riches, nor hast asked for the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; (12) Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.

(13) And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.

(14) And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days.

(15) Then came there two women, that were harlots, unto the king, and stood before him. (27) And the one woman said, O my lord, I and this woman dwell in one house; and I was delivered of a child with her in the house. (18) And it came to pass the third day after that I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also; and we were together; there was no stranger with us in the house, save we two in the house. (19) And this woman's child died in the night; because she overlaid it. (20) And she arose at midnight, and took my son from beside

The connection of these lower gifts is simply an instance of intuitive sagacity, cutting the Gordian knot of hopeless difficulty by the appeal to maternal instinct—an appeal which might, of course, fail, but which was, under the exceptional circumstances, the only appeal possible. It is in the knowledge how to risk failure rather than be reduced to impotence, and how to go straight to the heart of a difficulty.
me, while thine handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom. (23) And when I rose in the morning to give my child suck, behold, it was dead: but when I had considered it in the morning, behold, it was not my son, which I did bear. (24) And the other woman said, Nay; but the living is my son, and the dead is thy son. And this said, No; but the dead is thy son, and the living is my son. Thus they spake before the king.

(23) Then said the king, The one saith, This is my son that liveth, and thy son is the dead: and the other saith, Nay; but thy son is the dead, and my son is the living. (24) And the king said, Bring me a sword. And they brought a sword before the king. (25) And the king said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other. (26) Then spake the woman whose the living child was unto the king, for her bowels yearned upon her son, and she said, O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it. (27) Then the king answered and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she is the mother thereof.

(28) And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king: for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgment.

CHAPTER IV.—(1) So king Solomon was king over all Israel.

(2) And these were the princes which he had; Azariah the son of Zadok the priest, Elieoreph and Abiah, the sons of Shisha, scribes; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, the recorder. (3) And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the host: and Zadok and Abiathar were the priests: (4) And Azariah the son of Nathan was over the officers: and Zabud the son of

when the slow, regular approaches of science are impossible, that we recognise what men call "a touch of genius," and what Scripture here calls the "wisdom of God."

IV.

The style of this and the succeeding chapter changes from the vividness and fulness of the preceding chapters to a drier and barer record, evidently drawn from the national archives.

(1) King over all Israel.—The emphasis laid upon "all" is characteristic of the writer, who compiled the book after the disruption of the kingdom.

(2) And these were.—The officers described are of two classes—those attached to Solomon's Court, and those invested with local authority.

The princes are evidently Solomon's high counsellors and officers, "eating at the king's table." The word is derived from a root which means to "set in order." It is significant that whereas in the lists of David's officers in 2 Sam. viii. 16—18, xx. 23—26, the captain of the host stands first, and is followed in one list by the captain of the body-guard, both are here preceded by the peaceful offices of the priests, scribes, and the recorder.

Azariah the son of Zadok the priest.—In 1 Chron. vi. 9, 10, we find Azariah described as the son of Ahimeaz, and so grandson of Zadok; and the note in verse 10 (which is apparently out of its right place) seems to show that he was high priest at the time when the Temple was built. The title the "priest" in this place must be given by anticipation, for it is expressly said below that "Zadok and Abiathar were now the priests." The use of the original word, Cohen (probably signifying "one who ministers"), appears sometimes to retain traces of the old times, when the priesthood and headship of the family were united, and to be applied accordingly to princes, to whom perhaps still attached something of the ancient privilege. Thus it is given to the sons of David in 2 Sam. viii. 18, where the parallel passage in 1 Chron. xviii. 17 has a paraphrase, "chief about the king," evidently intended to explain the sense in which it is used in the older record. We may remember that David himself on occasions wore the priestly ephod (see 2 Sam. vi. 14). Possibly in this sense it is applied in verse 5 to Zabud, the "king's friend" (where the Authorised Version renders it by "principal officer"). In this verse there is every reason for taking it in the usual sense. Azariah was already a "prince" before he succeeded to the high priesthood. The mingling of priestly and princely functions is characteristic of the time.

(3) Sons of Shisha.—In 1 Chron. xviii. 16 "Shavsha," and in 2 Sam. xx. 25 "Sheva," is mentioned as the scribe of David. Probably these are variations of the same name, and the office may have become virtually hereditary. The "scribe," or (see Margin) "secretary," is constantly referred to as a high officer, issuing the king's edicts and letters, and acting in his name, like our "Secretaries of State."

Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud is named in 2 Sam. viii. 16, xx. 24, and 1 Chron. xvii. 15 as having been under David also the "recorder" or "remembrancer"—probably the annalist who drew up and preserved the archives of the kingdom.

(4) Zadok and Abiathar . . . the priests.—Abiathar, though disgraced and practically deposed, was still regarded theoretically as priest (much as Annas is called "high priest" in the Gospels), for the priesthood was properly for life.

(5) Son of Nathan.—Probably Nathan, son of David, and own brother of Solomon (1 Chron. iii. 5), is here intended: for the title Cohen, here given to Zabud, is expressly ascribed in 2 Sam. viii. 18 to the "sons of David;" and Nathan the prophet always has his title, "the prophet," appended to his name wherever first mentioned in this book. (See chap. i. 8, 10, 22, 32, &c.)
Ananiah is the "chief of the officers"—that is, chief of the twelve officers mentioned below (verses 7–19)—living, however, at Court.

Zabud, besides the title of Cohen, has that of "the king's friend," previously given to Hushai (2 Sam. xv. 37), an appellation indicating special intimacy and wisdom as a "priest-counselor." (8) Over the household—like the "High Steward" of a modern Court. In 2 Kings xviii. 18 we have the same three officers mentioned ("Eliahim, who was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joash the son of Asaph the recorder.

Adoniram "was over the tribute" (or "levy"),—evidently the head of Solomon's great public works. (See chap. v. 14.) The name is elsewhere given as Adoram. It is to be noticed that in the enumeration of David's officers in the early part of the reign (2 Sam. vii. 16–18), no such officer is found; but that in the latter part of his reign the list contains the name of Adoram (2 Sam. xx. 24). It has been thought that the numbering of the people recorded in 2 Sam. xxiv. and 1 Chron. xxii. was in preparation for such forced work, and hence was odious to Joash and others. In 1 Kings xii. 18 we read how the holder of this office, being naturally most unpopular with those who had felt the burden of Solomon's splendour, was stoned to death in the insurrection against Rehoboam.

To this list the Greek Version adds: "Eliah the son of Shaphat was over the body-guard." As the office of captain of the body-guard is found in the other lists, and is too important to be omitted, it is possible that this citation contains some defect in the Hebrew text. Yet it is also possible that no successor to Beniah was appointed, as experienced had shown, in the crushing of the rebellion of Adonijah, how easily the captnancy of the body-guard might become a quasi-independent power.

Provided victuals for the king and his household.—This denotes the collection of revenue—mostly, no doubt, in kind—for the maintenance of the Court and household and guards of the king; and perhaps may have included also the management of the royal domain lands, such as is described under David's reign in 1 Chron. xxv. 25–31. It is curious that in five cases only the patronymic of the officer is given, probably from some defect in the archives from which this chapter is evidently drawn. The office must have been of high importance and dignity, for in two cases (verses 11, 15) the holders of it were married into the royal house. The provinces over which they had authority—nine on the west and three on the east of Jordan—coincide only in a few cases with the lands assigned to the several tribes. It is not unlikely that by this time much of the tribal division of territory had become obsolete, although we see from 1 Chron. xxvii. 16–22, that for chiefship of men, and for levy in war, it still remained in force.

And these are their names.—The first division, "mount Ephraim," included all the higher part of the territory of Ephraim, one of the most fertile and beautiful regions in Palestine, surrounding the city of Shechem, which lies in a rich plain between Mount Ebal and Gerizim, and including the strong site of the future Samaria. See the description of the country in the blessing of Moses (Deut. xxxiii. 13–17).

The second division included the territory in the maritime plain to the north-west of Judah; assigned to Dan, but in all the earlier history held, with perhaps a few exceptions, by the Philistines. The cities Shalhim, Elon, and Beth-eshem, or Ir-eshem, are noted in Josh. xix. 41–43. Makaz is not mentioned elsewhere. There is here the addition to the name Elon of bethes-hanan ("the house of Hanan"). In 1 Chron. vii. 22 there is a Hanan among the chief men of Benjamin; and 1 Chron. i. 43 a Hanan among David's mighty men. The only one of these cities known in history is Beth-shemesh, the first resting-place of the Ark (1 Sam. vi. 12–21) when restored by the Philistines.

The third division was also in the land of the Philistines, being part of the territory assigned to Judah. Sochoh is mentioned in Josh. xvi. 35, and is noticed in 1 Sam. xvii. 1–3 as close to the field of battle on which David slew Goliath. Hephah is an old Amorite city which was conquered by Joshua (Josh. xiv. 17), still, by a curious survival, giving its name to the whole district, to which the name Aruboth (otherwise unknown) is here also given.

The fourth division, "all the region of Dor," still lies along the coast, but to the north of the preceding districts, close under Mount Carmel, in the territory assigned to Manasseh. Dor is named in Josh. xi. 2, as forming a part of the confederacy of the north under Jabin, and as subsequently conquered (chap. xii. 23), and given to Manasseh (chap. xvii. 11).

The fifth division must have been large and important, including much of the great plain of Esdraelon or Jezreel, the garden and battle-field of Northern Palestine, and extending to the Jordan valley. Taanach, Megiddo, and Beth-shan are all named as Canaanitish cities not taken by Manasseh, but made tributary (Josh. xvii. 11; Judges i. 27). Taanach and Megiddo are referred to in the song of Deborah (Judges v. 19). Megiddo is the place of the death of Absalom (2 Kings ix. 27) and the fall of Josiah (2 Kings xx. 37). Beth-shan is the city in which the body of Saul was exposed in triumph (1 Sam. xxxi. 12). Abel-meholah, the birth-place of Elisha (1 Kings xix. 16), lies south of Beth-shan, and is mentioned in the record of the rout of the Midianites by Gideon (Judges vii. 22). Jokneam
Solomon's Officers.

I. KINGS, IV. The Peace and Size of his Kingdom.

beneath Jezreel, from Beth-shean to Abel-meholah, even unto the place that is beyond Jokneam: (13) the son of Geber, in Ramoth-gilead; to him pertained the towns of Jair the son of Manasseh, which are in Gilead; to him also pertained the region of Argob, which is in Bashan, three-score great cities with walls and brazen bars: (14) Ahinadab the son of Iddo had * Mahanaim: (15) Ahimaz was in Naphtali; he also took Basmath the daughter of Solomon to wife: (16) Baanah the son of Hushai was in Asher and in Aloth: (17) Jehoshaphat the son of Paruah, in Issachar: (18) Shimei the son of Elah, in Benjamin: (19) Geber the son of Uri was in the country of Gilead, in the country of Sihon king of the Amorites, and of Og king of Bashan; and he was the only officer which was in the land.

(20) Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry. (21) And 'Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and Jericho, Bethel, Gibeaon, Ramah, extending from Judah to Ephraim, and commanding the centre of the high land of what was afterwards the kingdom of Judah.

(29) The twelfth division was on the east of Jordan, south of the seventh, including the pastoral country of Reuben and part of Gad on the borders of Moab, probably occupied by the royal flocks and herds.

In place of the reading of the text, " and he was the only officer in the land"—which yields very little meaning, for in each of the divisions there was but one governor—the LXX. here reads, " and Naseph (or an officer), one only in the land of Judah." The reading seems probable; for it will be noticed that in the enumeration the territory of Judah is otherwise altogether omitted. It supplies accordingly here the mention of a special governor, over and above the twelve, for the royal tribe. It has been thought that as Judah was the home province, it was under no other government than that of the king's officers at Jerusalem; but for purposes of revenue it seems hardly likely that it should have been excepted from the general system. Possibly Azariah, who was over the officers residing at the Court, may have been its territorial governor.

In some MSS. of the Greek Version, verses 27, 28 immediately follow verse 19, and (as verses 20, 21 are omitted) they form a link between verses 7-19 and verses 22, 23, in a very natural order.

We were many. The description of the condition of the people here and in verse 25, as multiplied in numbers, and living in festivity and peace, is evidently designed to specify not only their general prosperity and wealth, but also the fact noticed in chap. ix. 20—22, that at this time they were a dominant race, relieved from all burden of labour, and ruling over the subject races, now reduced to complete subjection and servility. (That it was otherwise hereafter is clear from the complaints to Rehoboam in chap. xii. 4.) Now, for the first time, did Israel enter on full possession of the territory promised in the days of the Conquest (Josh. i. 4), and so into the complete fulfilment of the promise to Abraham, alluded to in the words, "many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude" (Gen. xxii. 17).

And Solomon reigned. His dominion is described as extending on the south to the land of the Philistines and the border of Egypt, including what we call Arabia (see Ps. lxxii. 10, and comp. chap. x. 15); on the east to "the river" Euphrates, as far north as Tiphah (the Greek Thapsacus); on the west it would, of course, be bounded by the sea; and on the north it extended far beyond Damascus, probably
served Solomon all the days of his life. (22) And Solomon’s provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal, (23) ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and roebucks, and fallowdeere, and fatted fowl. (24) For he had dominion over all the region on this side the river, from Tiphsah even to Azzah, over all the kings on this side the river: and he had peace on all sides round about him. (25) And Judah and Israel dwelt safely every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, all the days of Solomon. (26) And Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen. (27) And those officers provided victual for king Solomon, and for all that came unto king Solomon’s table, every man in his month: they lacked nothing. (28) Barley also and straw for the horses and 4 dromedaries brought they unto the place where the officers were, every man according to his charge. (29) And 4 God gave Solomon wisdom

up to the borders of the Assyrian Empire. It seems also clear that the Syrian Kingdoms (like the kingdom of Tyre), were allies on a footing of some dependence, though not exactly tributaries. This extension of dominion was the fruit of the warlike energy of the two preceding reigns. As in all ancient Oriental empires, it represented, not an organised monarchy, but the supremacy of a dominant kingdom over tributaries gathered round — “the kings on this side the river” who “brought presents”—apparently at that time numerous, and ruling over small territories. Such an empire would rise rapidly, and as rapidly fall to pieces; and in Solomon’s case it was sustained less by military power than by the peaceful forces of wealth and policy, and was largely dependent on his own personal ascendancy.

(22) Measures. — The “measure” (cor) is variously estimated (from 80 to 42 gallons). In any case the quantity is very large, and, like the other notices of provisions supplied, indicates a vast number, probably several thousands, belonging to the royal household, court, and body-guard. The “harts, roebucks, &c.” whatever the exact meaning of each word may be, evidently denote the wild game, as distinct from the herds and flocks; the “fatted fowl” apparently signifies “dainty food” generally, as distinct from the staple of ordinary meat.

(24) On this side the river. — This translation, although it expresses the true reference, viz., to the country west of the Euphrates, is literally incorrect. The words mean, “on the further side of the river,” considered from the point of view of Babylon (see the use in the later books, or in Ezra iv. 6, vi. 6, &c.) and accordingly indicate composition at the time of the Exile, or, at any rate, at a period when the Babylonish empire was so established in supreme sovereignty as to determine the geographical nomenclature of the East.

(24) Azzah is the well-known Philistine city, Gaza.

(26) Forty thousand. — By comparison with the parallel passage in 2 Chron. ix. 25, and with the notice in chap. x. 26 (one thousand four hundred), it seems clear that for “forty thousand” “four thousand” should be read. They were kept in various “chariot cities,” as well as at Jerusalem. This multiplication of horses and horsemen— forbidden to the future king in Deut. xvii. 16, but foretold by Samuel at the inauguration of the kingdom (1 Sam. viii. 11, 12)—is significant of military conquest and an extended empire. The Israelite armies, in frequent contradiction from their enemies, had been hitherto mainly

of infantry; and in Josh. xi. 9 the chariots and horses captured were not used, but destroyed, “as the Lord bade Joshua.” Such armies were powerful for defence, not for invasion. Now, as it would seem for the first time, this provision of the ancient law, like many others, was set aside, and Solomon’s empire assumed the character of other great Oriental monarchies.

(28) Dromedaries—properly (see Margin), swift beasts; probably the horses of the royal messengers, as distinguished from the war horses.

(29) Wisdom and understanding ... and largeness of heart. — In this passage, “understanding,” which is high intellectual power, and “largeness of heart,” which is clearly capacity of knowledge, boundless as “the sand on the sea-shore,” are both distinguished from the higher gift of wisdom, to which they are but means—the one being the capacity of wisdom within, the other the education of that capacity from without. (a) Wisdom, in the true sense in which it is used in Scripture (especially in the Books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes), is properly the attribute of God, and then, by His gifts of revelation and inspiration, reflected in man. The “wisdom of God” (see, for example, Prov. viii.) is, in relation to man, His Divine purpose in the creation and government of the world, which all things work out. The “wisdom of man” is the knowledge of the true end and object of his own being—which if he fulfilled not, it were better for him not to have been—whether that object be called happiness or perfection. For such knowledge the Book of Ecclesiastes describes a vain search. Such knowledge, as found already, is embodied in the Proverbs; sometimes in the lowest sense of knowledge of what will conduce to our own happiness; sometimes in the higher knowledge of what will best serve man; most often in the supreme knowledge, how we may best do God’s will and show forth His glory. (b) But, since the purpose of our own being cannot be discovered, if our life be regarded as isolated from the history of the world and from its great design, this wisdom in man is regarded as possible, only when he has some glimpse of the wisdom of God, as manifested to man in His visible Providence, in His declared law, and His special revelation to the soul. Hence, “the fear of the Lord” is its “beginning;” and faith in God is the supplement of its necessary imperfection. (c) It will be obvious that, even so considered, this desire for wisdom is more self-contained and self-conscious than “the thirst for God, even the living God,” in which the soul of the Psalmist expresses absolute dependence on God. If the sense of the need of God’s
Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore. And Solomon's wisdom exceeded the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore.

In the case of Solomon some special caution would be natural, and much of his poetry may have been purely secular. The "Psalter of Solomon" (including eighteen psalms) is a Greek apocalypse book, of the time of the Maccabees or later. He spake of trees.—Of this verse there have been many interpretations. Josephus (Ant. viii. c. 2, § 5) supposes Solomon's utterances on these natural products to have been allegorical and symbolic, although he declares that he described them and their properties "like a philosopher." Rabbinical and Oriental legends, eagerly accepted in medieval times, ascribed to him mystic knowledge and magical use of their occult properties. Modern writers have seen in this utterance the first dawn of a scientific natural history and didactic poetry. In all these suppositions there is some truth, though each in its literal meaning evidently interprets the work of Solomon by the ideas of its own time. An examination of the Song of Songs and some sections of the Book of Proverbs—to say nothing of Ecclesiastes and several of the Psalms, and of the Book of Job, which has been thought to belong to the age of Solomon—shows in them repeated exemplifications of a deep sense of the wonder and the beauty of Nature, and also a keen observation of Natural history in detail.

and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore. (30) And Solomon's wisdom exceeded the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. (31) For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore. However this may be, it can hardly be wrong, in spite of the repetition of the group of names, to refer this passage to Heman and this Ethan, and hold Chalcol and Darda to be, like them, contemporaries with Solomon. (32) Proverbs.—The word "proverb" (mashal), from a root signifying "comparison," has the various meanings of (a) parable or allegory, (b) proverb in the modern sense, (c) riddle or enigmatical poem, (d) figurative and antithetical poetry, like the "parable" of Balaam. The Book of Proverbs belongs mainly, but not exclusively, to the second class. Its main part consists of two series of "Proverbs of Solomon" (Prov. x.—xxiv., xxv.—xxx.), composed or collected by him; failing, however, far short of the number given in this verse. The earlier portion (see especially chapters i. 20—33, viii.) partakes more of the character of the first and fourth classes; and in Eccl. xii. 3—6, and perhaps Prov. xxx. 15, 16, 24—31, we have specimens of the third. If the "three thousand" of the text be intended to be taken literally, it is obvious that only a small part of Solomon's proverbs has been preserved. His declension into idolatry might induce care in selection, by such prophetic compilers as "the men of Hezekiah." (Prov. xxv.) Solomon's songs.—We have still ascribed to Solomon the "Song of Songs" and two Psalms (lxxii. and lxxiii.); but nothing else is, even by tradition, preserved to us. This passage is singularly interesting, as showing that the Old Testament Canon is not a collection of chance fragments of a scanty literature, but that out of a literature, which at this time, at any rate, was large and copious, deliberate selections by prophetic authority were made. (The "men of Hezekiah," named in Prov. xxv. 1, are by Jewish tradition Isaiah and his companions.) In the case of Solomon some special caution would be natural, and much of his poetry may have been purely secular. The "Psalter of Solomon" (including eighteen psalms) is a Greek apocalypse book, of the time of the Maccabees or later. The wisdom of all the children of the east.—The phrase "children of the east" is apparently used (see Gen. xxxix. 1; Judg. vi. 3, 33, vii. 12, viii. 10) for the tribes of the country lying between the country of Israel and Mesopotamia. Of these "men of the east," Job is expressly said to be one, and among the chief (Job i. 3). What their wisdom was, the utterances of Job and his friends may testify, showing as declension into idolatry might induce care in selection, resting, though with an awe greater than was felt His songs.—We have still ascribed to Solomon the "Song of Songs" and two Psalms (lxxii. and lxxiii.); but nothing else is, even by tradition, preserved to us. This passage is singularly interesting, as showing that the Old Testament Canon is not a collection of chance fragments of a scanty literature, but that out of a literature, which at this time, at any rate, was large and copious, deliberate selections by prophetic authority were made. (The "men of Hezekiah," named in Prov. xxv. 1, are by Jewish tradition Isaiah and his companions.) In the case of Solomon some special caution would be natural, and much of his poetry may have been purely secular. The "Psalter of Solomon" (including eighteen psalms) is a Greek apocalypse book, of the time of the Maccabees or later. The wisdom of all the children of the east.—The phrase "children of the east" is apparently used (see Gen. xxxix. 1; Judg. vi. 3, 33, vii. 12, viii. 10) for the tribes of the country lying between the country of Israel and Mesopotamia. Of these "men of the east," Job is expressly said to be one, and among the chief ( Job i. 3). What their wisdom was, the utterances of Job and his friends may testify, showing the importance which has been thought

[30—34] The whole passage implies a general growth of wisdom, a largeness of knowledge, and an outburst of literature, of which, as usual with great men, Solomon is at once the child and the leader.

He was wiser.—The wisdom of "Heman, Ethan, Chalcol, and Darda," then rivals of Solomon's fame, is not only known to us from this passage. In the genealogy of 1 Chron. ii. 6, "Ethan, Heman, Chalcol, and Darda" (or "Darda") are found as sons of Zerah, the son of Judah; and the coincidence is remarkable enough to suggest identification. But this identification can scarcely hold. This passage evidently implies that these rivals of Solomon were contemporary with him, not belonging, therefore, to a family many generations earlier. Now it happens that we know of a Heman and an Ethan (see 1 Chron. vi. 33, 44) set by David over the service of song in the Tabernacle, and called "Ezrahites" in the titles of Ps. lxxxiij., lxxxix. ascribed to them. Heman is, moreover, designated as "the king's seer in the words of the Lord" (1 Chron. xxv. 5); and his Psalm (Ps. lxxviii.) is singularly full of thought, moral speculation, and sense of mystery in life and death. Chalcol and Darda are described as sons of Machol. The word Machol may be a proper name. But it is curious that it signifies "dance," or "music"; and it is at least possible that they also, like Heman and Ethan, may have been thus designated, as connected with the music of the Temple. However
things, and of fishes. (34) And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.

CHAPTER V.—And Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants unto Solomon; for he had heard that they had anointed him king in the room of his father; for Hiram was ever a lover of David. (2) And Solomon sent to Hiram, saying, (9) Thou knowest how that David my father could not build an house unto the name of the Lord his God for the wars which were about him on every side, until the Lord put them under the soles of his feet. (4) But now the Lord my God hath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither adversary nor evil occurrence. (5) And, behold, I purpose to build an house unto the name of the Lord my God, as the Lord spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy house, he shall build an house unto my name.

But it also shows, as might have been expected, a constant contemplation of God in and over Nature (much as in Ps. ciii.), a desire to know the secret of His dispensation therein, a conception of a unity in His law over all being, and as a necessary consequence of this, a tendency to mystic interpretation and parable. If in the works here referred to, and now lost to us, there were (as Ewald supposes) “the rudiments of a complete natural history,” it would be an anachronism to doubt that they were marked by these leading characteristics.

V.

In contrast with the brief notes of the previous chapter, the fifth chapter begins another section of the fuller history (chaps. v.—ix. 9), describing in great detail the building and consecration of the Temple, and evidently drawn from contemporary documents.

(1) Hiram is first mentioned in 2 Sam. v. 11 (and the parallel. 1 Chron. xiv. 1) as having sent workmen and materials to David for the building of his house. He is described as a “lover of David.” Ancient tradition makes him a tributary or dependent monarch; and his attitude, as described in Scripture, towards both David and Solomon agrees with this. Josephus (c. Apion, i. 17, § 18) cites from Dios, a Phoenician historian, and Menander of Ephesus, a description of Hiram’s parentage, of his prosperous reign and skill in building; and quotes, as from the Tyrian archives (Ant. viii. 11, §§ 6, 7), letters passing between him and Solomon. The embassy here noticed from Hiram is clearly one of congratulation, perhaps of renewal of fealty. (In 2 Chron. ii. 14, 15 occur the phrases, “my lord, my lord David thy father.”)

(2) Thou knowest. In the description (1 Chron. xxii. 4) of David’s collection of materials for the Temple, it is noted that “the Zidonians and they of Tyre brought much cedar wood to David.” Hence Hiram knew well his desire of building the Temple, and the care with which, when disappointed of it, he prepared for the happier experience of his successor.

(6) Cedar trees out of Lebanon.—The central range of Lebanon is bare; but in the lower ranges there is still—probably in old times there was to a far greater extent—a rich abundance of timber, specially precious to the comparatively treeless country of Palestine. The forest of Lebanon was proverbial for its beauty and fragrance (Cant. iv. 11; Hosea xiv. 6, 12), watered by the streams from the snowy heights (Jer. xvii. 14), when all Palestine was parched up. The cedars which now remain—a mere group, at a height of about six thousand feet—are but a remnant of the once magnificent forest which “the Lord had planted” (Ps. civ. 16). Solomon’s request—couched almost in the language of command—is simply for cedar wood, or rather, for skilled labour in felling and working it, for which the Tyrians were proverbially famed in all ancient records. For this labour he offers to pay; while he seems to take for granted a right for his own servants to come and bring away the timber itself. Hiram’s answer (verse 8) mentions “cedar of fir” also, which agrees exactly with the fuller account of Solomon’s request given in 2 Chron. ii. 8. The pine still grows abundantly in the sandy regions of Lebanon; but it is almost certain that “the fir” here named is the cypress.

(7) Blessed be the Lord.—Hiram’s answer is one of deference, still more clearly marked in 2 Chron. ii. 12—16. His acknowledgment of Jehovah the God of Israel is a token rather of such deference to Israel, than of any acceptance of Him as the one true God.

(8) Shall bring them. — The timber was to be carried down, or, perhaps, let down on slides along the face of the mountain towards the sea, and brought round by rafts to Joppa (2 Chron. ii. 16), to save the
shall accomplish my desire, in giving food for my household. 
(10) So Hiram gave Solomon cedar trees and fir trees according to all his desire. 
(11) And Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand measures of wheat for food to his household, and twenty measures of pure oil: thus gave Solomon to Hiram by year year. 
(12) And the Lord gave Solomon wisdom, “as he promised him: and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon; and they two made a league together. 
(13) And king Solomon raised a levy out of all Israel; and the levy was thirty thousand men. 
(14) And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month by courses: a month they were in Lebanon, and two months at home: and 6 Adoni-

CHAPTER VI.—(1) And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were

enormous cost and difficulty of land carriage. The grant of “food for his household” in return (instead of “hire”) brings out that which is recorded so many ages afterwards in Acts xii. 20—that the country of the Tyrians was “nourished” by Palestine. The commerce and wealth of the Tyrians collected a large population; the narrow slip of land along the coast, backed by Lebanon, must have been, in any case, insufficient to maintain them; and, moreover, all their energies were turned, not to agriculture, but to seamanship. In the grand description in Ezek. xxvii. of the imports of Tyre from all parts of the world, Judah and Israel are named as supplying “wheat, and honey, and oil, and balm.”

(11) Twenty thousand measures of wheat.—This agrees well enough with the calculation in chap. iv. 22 of ninety measures a day—something over 32,000 a year—for Solomon’s Court, presumably greater than that of Hiram. But the “twenty measures of oil”—even of the pure refined oil—is so insignificant in comparison, that it seems best to adopt the Greek reading here (agreeing with 2 Chron. ii. 10, and with Josephus) of 20,000 baths, or 2,000 cors, of oil.

(12) Levy out of all Israel.—This, though far from being onerous, appears to have been at this time exceptional. For in chap. ix. 22 we read that “of the children of Israel did Solomon make no bondmen: but they were men of war, and his servants, and his princes, and his captains.” Thus exceptionally introduced at first for the special service of God, it may have been the beginning of what was hereafter an oppressive despotism over the Israelites themselves. Probably even now the Israelite labourers were (under the chief officers) put in authority over the great mass of 150,000 bondmen, evidently drawn from the native races. (See 2 Chron. ii. 17.) But the whole description suggests to us—what the history of Exodus, the monuments of Egypt, and the description by Herodotus of the building of the Pyramids confirm—the vast sacrifice of human labour and life, at which (in the absence of machinery to spare labour) the great monuments of ancient splendour were reared.

(13) The chief of Solomon’s officers we should certainly have supposed to have been taken from the Israelites (as clearly were the 550 named in chap. ix. 23). But the passage in Chronicles (2 Chron. ii. 18)—reckoning them at 3,600—seems to imply that they were, like the overseers of Israel in the Egyptian bondage (Exod. v. 14, 15), taken from the subject races.

(14) Great stones.—The stones, so emphatically described as “great stones, costly stones, and hewed stones,” were necessary, not so much for “the foundation” of the Temple itself, which was small, but for the substructure of the area, formed into a square on the irregular summit of Mount Moriah. In this substructure vast stones are still to be seen, and are referred by many authorities to the age of Solomon. The labour of transport must have been enormous, especially as all were worked beforehand. (See chap. vi. 7.)

(15) The stone-squarers.—This rendering is a curious gloss on the proper name, “Giblites” (see margin)—the inhabitants of Gebal (mentioned in Ezek. xxvii. 9 in connection with Tyre, and probably in Ps. lxxxiii. 7), a city on the coast of Phoenicia—simply because the context shows that they were clever in stone-squaring. As they are distinguished from Hiram’s builders, it is possible that they were serfs under them, like the Canaanites under Solomon’s builders.

VI.

Chapters vi. and vii. form a section almost technically descriptive of the Temple and other building works of Solomon. (a) The general account of the building of the Temple occupies chap. vi.; (b) to this succeeds a brief description of the other works of Solomon (chap. vii. 1—12); (c) lastly, we have a full and detailed description of the work of Hiram for the ornaments and furniture of the Temple (chap. vii. 13—51). The whole may be compared with 2 Chron. iii., iv., with the account in Josephus (Antt., viii. 3), and with the descriptions (in Ezek. xxv.—xxvii., xxviii.—xxxviii.) of the Tabernacle, which determined the construction of the Temple in many points. With some variations, depending on the nature of the prophetic vision, it may also be illustrated from Ezek. xi.—xiv. On the details of these chapters there has been much learned discussion; but most light has been thrown on it by the articles in the Dictionary of the Bible (TEMPLE, PALACE, JERUSALEM), written by Mr. Fergusson, who
The Temple commenced, I. KINGS, VI. and the Size thereof.

come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord.

And the house which king Solomon built for the Lord, the length thereof was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits. (3) And the porch before the temple of the house, twenty cubits was the length thereof, according to the breadth of the house; and ten cubits was the breadth thereof before the house. (4) And for the house he made windows of narrow lights. (5) And against the wall of the house he built chambers round about, against the walls

unites with antiquarian learning extensive acquaintance with the history and the details of architecture.

(1) In the fourth year.—This date, given with marked precision, forms a most important epoch in the history of Israel, on which, the whole of the received chronology is based. In the LXX., 440 is read for 480, possibly by an interchange of two similar Hebrew letters, or, perhaps, by reckoning from the completion of Exodus at the death of Moses instead of its beginning. The Vulgate agrees with the Hebrew text. Josephus, on the other hand, without any hint of any other reckoning in the Scriptural record, gives 592 years.

The period itself, involving some apparent chronological difficulties, has been supposed to be an interpolation; but without any sufficient ground, except Josephus’s assuming ignorance of its existence, and some early quotations of the passage by Origen and others without it; and in neglect of the important fact that, disagreeing prima fácie with earlier chronological indications in Scripture, it is infinitely unlikely to have been thus interpolated by any mere scribe.

These indications are, however, vague. The period includes the conquest and rule of Joshua, the era of the Judges down to Samuel, the reigns of Saul and David, and the three years of Solomon’s reign already elapsed. Now, of these divisions, only the last three can be ascertained with any definiteness, at about 83 years. The time occupied by the conquest and rule of Joshua, and as has been gathered with any certainty from Scripture. The same is the case with the duration of some of the subsequent Judgeships. Even the numerous chronological notices given in the Book of Judges are inconclusive. We cannot tell whether they are literally accurate, or, as the recurrence of round numbers may seem to suggest, indefinite expressions for long periods; nor can we determine how far the various Judgeships were contemporaneous or successive. The tradition followed by St. Paul (Acts xiii. 19—21), assigning to the whole a period of 450 years, agrees generally with the latter idea. The genealogies given (as, for example, of David, in Ruth iv. 18—22; 1 Chron. ii. 3—15, and elsewhere) agree with the former; but the vague chronological statistics cannot constitute a sufficient setting for setting aside a date so formally and unhesitatingly given at an important epoch of the history, corresponding to the equally formal determination of the date of the Exodus in Exod. xii. 40, 41. The omission of the date in quotations, again, proves little. The different date given by Josephus, without any notice of that which we now have, presents the only real difficulty. But it is possible that he may have been inclined tacitly to harmonise his chronology with some other reckoning known in his time among the heathen; and in any case it is doubtful whether his authority can outweigh that of our present text and the ancient versions. On the whole, there-
of the house round about, both of the
temple and of the oracle: and he made
chambers round about: (9) the nether-
most chamber was five cubits broad, and
the middle was six cubits broad: for with­
out in the wall of the house he made
narrowed rests round about, that the
beams should not be fastened in the walls
of the house. (7) And the house, when it
was in building, was built of stone made
ready before it was brought thither: so
was in building, was built of stone made
The Building
of the house.
beams
nor
any tool of iron heard in the house,
while it was in building. (9) The door
for the middle chamber was in the right
side of the house: and they went up
with winding stairs into the middle
chamber, and out of the middle into the
third. (8) So he built the house, and
finished it; and covered the house
with beams and boards of cedar.
(10) And then he built chambers against
all the house, five cubits high: and they
rested on the house with timber of cedar.

however, outwards and not into the Temple, having
three storeys of low chambers (each only five cubits
high), so arranged that the beams of their roofs were
supported on rests on the outside of the wall (each rest
being a cubit wide), leaving the wall itself intact. Thus
the chambers of the lowest storey were narrowest—five
cubits broad; the second storey six cubits, and the
highest storey seven cubits broad. The higher storeys
(see verse 8), in which the chambers no doubt opened
into one another, were approached by a staircase, having
an external entrance on the right side of the building;
the chambers of the lowest storey probably had exter­
nal doors of their own. Above the highest storey were
still five cubits of wall, which would give room for the
windows (like clerestory windows) previously mentioned.
Nothing is said of the use of these chambers; but they
would be, no doubt, for residence of the priests, stores
for the Temple, and furniture.
The word rendered "chambers" in the former part of
verse 5 is a singular noun, signifying the whole of
this aisle or side building; the "chambers" in the latter
part of the verse—properly, "side pieces," or "ribs"—
denote the separate apartments, or perhaps each of the
storeys of the building.
(7) Neither hammer nor ax... heard.—This
striking provision, involving much labour, and requiring
no little skill, was one of reverence. It may have been
suggested by the prohibition (see Exod. xx. 25; Deut.
xxvii. 5) of the use of tools on the altar of the Lord. But
the idea implied in this prohibition was rather different
—viz., the use for the altar of stones in their simple,
natural condition, without "pollution" by the art of man.
It has been chronicated in Heber's well-known lines:—
"No workmen's steel, no ponderous ax... rung;
Like some tall palm the noiseless fabric spring."
(9) And covered—that is, roofed the house with a
roof of cedar beams and boarding thereon. Some have
supposed that he "covered" the outside walls with
cedar, so that the whole should still look like a wooden
tabernacle; but this is not necessarily implied, and is
in itself unlikely.

(11) And the word of the Lord came to
Solomon, saying, (12) Concerning this house
which thou art in building, if thou wilt
walk in my statutes, and execute my
judgments, and keep all my command­
ments to walk in them; then will I per­
form my word with thee, "which I spake
unto David thy father: (13) and I will
dwell among the children of Israel, and
will not forsake my people Israel.
(14) So Solomon built the house, and
finished it. (15) And he built the walls
of the house within with boards of
cedar, (16) both the floor of the house, and
the walls of the cieling: and he covered
them on the inside with wood, and
covered the floor of the house with planks
of fir. (17) And he built twenty cubits on
the sides of the house, both the floor
and the walls with boards of cedar: he
even built them for it within, even for
the oracle, even for the most holy place.
(17) And the house, that is, the temple
before it, was forty cubits long. (18) And
the cedar of the house within was carved

27
with 1 knops and 2 open flowers: all was cedar; there was no stone seen. (19) And the oracle he prepared in the house within, to set there the ark of the covenant of the LORD. (20) And the oracle in the forepart was twenty cubits in length, and twenty cubits in breadth, and twenty cubits in the height thereof: and he overlaid it with 3 pure gold; and so covered the altar which was of cedar. (21) So Solomon overlaid the house within with pure gold: and he made a partition by the chains of gold before the oracle; and he overlaid it with gold. (22) And the whole house he overlaid with gold, until he had finished all the house: also the whole altar that was by the oracle he overlaid with gold.

cedar panelling was carved throughout with (see margin) "gourds and open flowers," probably festooned, as usual in ancient architecture. In all this the influence of the Tyrian architects was probably felt.

(20) In the forepart.—Although this is a literal translation of the original, the sense is clearly (as the Vulgate renders the phrase) "in the inner part." Gesenius supposes the meaning to be properly, "the wall facing the entrance;" thence the opposite, or "inner," wall or region.

Covered the altar . . . —Our translators have been misled by the context to anticipate what is said below (verse 22). The meaning is "he covered the altar" (presumably of stone) "with cedar."

(20–22) These verses describe the overlaying with pure gold of the panelling of the house and of the Oracle, the partition dividing them, and the altar of incense. Even the floor was similarly covered. (See verse 30.)

(21) He made a partition by (the) chains of gold before the oracle.—This phrase is difficult. The LXX. and Vulg. have wholly different readings; but our translation appears to be substantially correct, as the usual in ancient architecture. In all this the influence of the Tyrian architects was probably felt.

The LXX. and Vulg. have wholly different readings; but our translation appears to be substantially correct, as the usual in ancient architecture. In all this the influence of the Tyrian architects was probably felt.

(22) The whole altar that was by (or belonged to) the oracle.—This is the altar of incense, which, although it stood (see Exod. xxx. 6, xl. 26) before the veil, and therefore in the Holy place, was considered to belong in idea rather to the Holy of Holies; since the offering of incense on it signified the approach by the priests of their face to face intimacy with God, and by implication with the ark of the covenant. This is the so-called altar of the Lord or the altar of burnt offering. (See Exod. xxv. 24, xxvi. 19.)

(23) Cherubim.—These were copied from the Tabernacle, but apparently with some differences, over and above the necessary increase of size, and the change of material from solid gold to olive-wood overlaid with gold. In Exod. xxv. 8–20, xxxvii. 7–9, they are described as having their faces towards the mercy-seat, and covering the mercy-seat with their wings. Here, from the careful description of the outstretched wings, of ten cubits in width for each cherub, meeting in the midst of the floor and touching the walls, it would seem that they must have been turned so as to face the entrance. The cherubim over the ark are described only in three places in the Old Testament—in the passages in Exodus, here, and in the parallel 2 Chron. iii. 10–13, and in those great visions of the priestly prophet Ezekiel (Ezek. i. 4–25, x. 1–22) which have determined the imagery of the Apocalypse. In no case is their form distinctly mentioned, unless, by comparison of Ezek. x. 14, 15 with Ezek. i. 10, it may be inferred to have been the form of a winged bull; whence would be naturally derived the golden calves of the idolatry introduced into Israel in the time of Jeroboam. Josephus, indeed, in his description of the Temple (Antt. viii. c. 3, § 3), expressly says that "no one can tell, or even conjecture, of what shape the cherubim were. The tradition, therefore, must have been lost in the Second Temple, where there was no ark; and this is the more strange, because in Exodus xxvi. 1 the cherubim are said to have been represented in the embroidery of the curtains, and here (in verses 32, 35) to have been similarly carved on the walls. But, whatever the cherubim were, it is certain that they were in no sense representations or emblems of Deity, like the winged figures of Assyria or Egypt, with which they have been often compared. They appear to symbolise the great physical forces of the universe, as guided by superhuman angelic intelligence to serve the supreme will of God. Thus, when first mentioned in Scripture (Gen. iv. 24), the cherubim are associated with "the flaming sword, turning every way, to guard the tree of life"; in Ps. xviii. 10, the Lord is said "to ride upon the cherubim," and "come flying upon the wings of the wind"; in Ezek. i. 10, the four living creatures, or cherubim, sustain the throne of God, and bear it away upon their wings; in Rev. iv. 6–8, v. 8, 9, the same living creatures unite with the elders,
I. KINGS, VI.

one another in the midst of the house. (20) And he overlaid the cherubims with gold.

(21) And he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubims and palm trees and 4 open flowers, within and without. (20) And the floor of the house he overlaid with gold, within and without.

(23) And for the entering of the oracle he made doors of olive tree: the lintel and side posts were 5a fifth part of the wall. (24) The two doors also were of olive tree; and he carved upon them carvings of cherubims and palm trees and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold, and spread gold upon the cherubims, and upon the palm trees. (25) So also made he for the door of the temple posts of olive tree, 5a fourth part of the wall. (26) And the two doors were of fir tree: the two leaves of the one door were folding, and the two leaves of the other door were folding.

(27) And he carved thereon cherubims and palm trees and open flowers: and covered them with gold fitted upon the carved work. (28) And he built the inner court with three rows of hewed stone, and a row of cedar beams.

(29) In the fourth year was the foundation of the house of the Lord laid, in the month Zif: (30) and in the eleventh year, in the month Bul, which is the Tlie

representing the Church of redeemed humanity, in worship of the Lord upon His throne. The representation, therefore, of the cherubim in the Temple simply expresses the claim for Jehovah, the God of Israel, of such lordship over all creation as is hymned in the seraphic song of Isa. vi. 3. Possibly the change of attitude of the cherubim in the Temple denoted a change of idea, characteristic of Solomon and his age. The old attitude is clearly that of worship of God: the new rather of manifestation of His glory to man. (20) And(290,716),(706,724)

Itself, Solomon’s Court was 100 cubits (or 150 feet) by 200 cubits (or 300 feet), covering a little more than an acre. The verse has been interpreted in two ways: either that the floor of the court was raised by three courses of stone, covered with a planking of cedar, or (as Josephus understands it) enclosed by a wall of three courses of stone, with a coping of cedar wood. The latter seems more probable. For in this court stood the altar of burnt offering and the laver, and all sacrifices went on, and this could hardly have been done on a wooden pavement; and besides this we observe that the whole arrangement is (chap. vii. 12) compared with that of the great outer court of the palace where the wooden pavement would be still more unsuitable. It was what was called afterwards the “Court of the Priests,” and in it (see Ezek. xl. 45) appear to have been chambers for the priests.

The mention of the “inner court” suggests that there was an outer court also. We have in 2 Kings xxii. 5, xxiii. 12, a reference to the “two courts” of the Temple, and in Ezek. xl. 17, xlii. 1, 8, a mention of the “outward” or “utter court.” Josephus (Antt. viii. 3, § 3) declares that Solomon built beyond the inner court a great quadrangle, erected for it great and broad cloisters, and closed it with golden doors, into which all could enter, “being pure and observant of the laws.” Even beyond this he indicates, though in rather vague and rhetorical language, an extension of the Temple area, as made by Solomon’s great substructures, forming a court less perfectly enclosed, like the Court of the Gentiles in the later Temple. Of these outer courts and cloisters the tradition remained in the assignment of the title of “Solomon’s Porch” to the eastern cloister of the later Temple. It has been thought that in this outer court were planted trees (in spite of the prohibition of Deut. xvi. 21); and this may have been the case, till the association of idol worship with them made these seem to be unfit for the House of the Lord. But the passages usually quoted to support this view are from the Psalms (Ps. lii. 8, xcvii. 13), of which the former certainly refers to the Tabernacle, and the latter may do so. (37) Zif (the “brightness of flowers”) corresponds to about May. (38) Bul (the month of “rain”) to about November. The whole time occupied was, therefore, seven years and a half.

29
The Building

I. KINGS, VII. of Solomon’s House.

CHAPTER VII.—(1) But Solomon was building his own house thirteen years, and he finished all his house.

(2) He built also the house of the forest of Lebanon; the length thereof was an hundred cubits, and the breadth thereof fifty cubits, upon four rows of cedar pillars, with cedar beams upon the pillars. (3) And it was covered with cedar above upon the beams, that lay on forty five pillars, fifteen in a row. (4) And there were windows in three rows, and light was against light in three ranks. (5) And all the doors and posts were square, with the windows: and light was against light in three ranks. (6) And he made a porch of pillars; the length thereof was fifty cubits, and the breadth thereof thirty cubits; and the porch was before them: and the other pillars and the thick beam were before them. (7) Then he made a porch for the throne where he might judge, even the porch of judgment: and it was covered with cedar from one side of the floor to the other. (8) And his house where he dwelt had another court within the porch, which was of the like work.

Solomon made also an house for Pharaoh’s daughter, whom he had taken to wife, like unto this porch.

(9) All these were of costly stones, according to the measures of hewed stones, sawed with saws, within and without, even from the foundation unto the coping, and so on the outside toward the great court. (10) And the foundation was of costly stones, even great stones, stones of ten cubits, and stones of eight cubits. (11) And above were costly stones, after
the measures of hewed stones, and cedars. (12) And the great court round about was with three rows of hewed stones, and a row of cedar beams, both for the inner court of the house of the Lord, and for the porch of the house.

(13) And king Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre. (14) He was a widow's son of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in brass: and he was filled with wisdom, and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass. And he came to king Solomon, and wrought all his work. (15) For he cast two pillars of brass, of eighteen cubits high apiece; and a line of twelve cubits did compass either of them about. (16) And he made two chapiters of molten brass, to set upon the tops of the pillars: the height of the one chapiter was five cubits, and the height of the other chapiter was five cubits: (17) and nets of
checker work, and wreaths of chain work, for the chapiters which were upon the top of the pillars; seven for the one chapiter, and seven for the other chapiter. (18) And he made the pillars, and two rows round about upon the one network, to cover the chapiters that were upon the top, with pomegranates: and so did he for the other chapiter. (19) And the chapiters that were upon the top of the pillars were of lily work in the porch, four cubits. (20) And the chapiters upon the two pillars had pomegranates also above, over against the belly which was by the network: and the pomegranates were two hundred in rows round about upon the other chapiter. (21) And he set up the pillars in the porch of the temple: and he set up the right pillar, and called the name thereof Jachin: and he set up the left pillar, and called the name thereof Boaz. (22) And upon the top of the pillars was lily work: so was the work of the pillars finished.

(23) And he made a molten sea—a gigantic laver for the ablution of the priests—corresponding to the laver of brass in the Tabernacle (Exod. xxx. 18-21, xxxviii. 8). It had a diameter of 15 feet, and a height of 7½ feet; but as it held 2,000 baths, that is, 17,000 gallons (or, as in 2 Chron. iv. 3, 3,000 baths, that is, 25,500 gallons), it is clear that it could not have been a hemisphere, but must have bulged out in section. There must, however, have been first a bulging inwards, immediately under the rim: for the right translation of verse 26 declares that the rim was in the form of a lily flower, that is, curving outwards. Under the rim ran a double row of gourd ornaments, like those carved in the cedar-panelling of the Temple. The sea stood on two great oxen, corresponding perhaps to the twelve tribes of Israel—the ox being possibly the same emblem which was used in the form of the cherubim—till it was taken down and placed on the pavement by Ahaz (2 Kings xvi. 17), and, like the great pillars, was broken up at last by the Chaldeans for the sake of the brass (2 Kings xxv. 18).

(20) Over against (or rather, close to) the belly which was by the network. The "belly" here (like the "bowls" or "globes" of the chapiters in verses 41, 42) seems to signify the rounded form of the capital, where it comes down to join the shaft. At this juncture the bands of pomegranate ornament ran round the shaft. In this verse it is obvious that there is an omission in the text. It should be, "were two hundred in rows round about the one chapiter, and two hundred in rows round about the other chapiter."

(27-29) The smaller lavers of brass for washing the sacrifices, and the movable bases on which they rested, are described still more elaborately. Some of the details of the description are obscure, and it is clear that our translators were very much at fault about them. Generally, however, it appears that each base was a kind of hollow chest, 6 feet square on plan, and 4½ feet high, having at the angles pilasters or fillets ("ledges" in verse 28), with panels on each side ("borders" in verse 28), ornamented with "lions, oxen, and cherubims," below which hung festoons of thin metal-work—"certain additions made of thin work," in verse 29). Each base was set on four brazen wheels with brazen axles ("plates" in verse 30) only 27 inches high, and with naves, felloes, and spokes, all cast in brass. On each base was a convex circular stand (verse 35), with a "mouth," or circular opening (apparently the chapiter of verse 31), upon which, or over which, the laver stood. This was nine inches high, ornamented with carvings of "cherubims, lions, and palm-trees." From the four corners of the upper surface of the base sprang "undersetters," apparently brackets helping to support the laver, which rested above the "mouth" of the convex stand, and to keep it fast in its place (verses 30, 34). The laver was 6 feet in diameter, and held 40 baths, or about 360 gallons. The whole stood high, no doubt to bring it nearly on a level with the brazen altar, which was 15 feet high. In form, perhaps, each laver was a smaller copy of the molten sea. Of the whole a conjectural description and sketch are given in the Dictionary of the Bible, art. LAYERS.
every addition. (31) And the mouth of it within the chapter and above was a cubit: but the mouth thereof was round after the work of the base, a cubit and an half: and also upon the mouth of it were gravings with their borders, foursquare, not round. (32) And under the borders were four wheels; and the axletrees of the wheels were joined to the base: and the height of a wheel was a cubit and half a cubit. (33) And the work of the wheels was like the work of a chariot wheel: their axletrees, and their naves, and their felloes, and their spokes, were all molten. (34) And there were four undersetters to the four corners of one base: and the undersetters were of the very base itself. (35) And in the top of the base was there a round compass of half a cubit high: and on the top of the base the ledges thereof and the borders thereof were of the same. (36) For on the plates of the ledges thereof, and on the borders thereof, he graved cherubims, lions, and palm trees, according to the proportion of every one, and additions round about. (37) After this manner he made the ten bases: all of them had one casting, one measure, and one size. (38) Then made he ten lavers of brass: one laver contained forty baths: and every laver was four cubits: and upon every one of the ten bases one laver.

xxiv. 25) was retained. But in 2 Chron. iv. 1, and in Josephus's account, it is expressly said that a brasen altar was made by Hiram, 30 feet square and 15 feet high. Probably, therefore, the absence of all mention of it here is simply an omission in the record.

(46) In the plain of Jordan did the king cast them, in the clay ground between Succoth and Zarthan. (47) And Solomon left all the vessels unweighed, because they were exceeding many: neither was the weight of the brass found out.

(48) And Solomon made all the vessels that pertained unto the house of the Lord.
Lord: the altar of gold, and the table of gold, whereupon the shewbread was, (40) and the candlesticks of pure gold, five on the right side, and five on the left, before the oracle, with the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs of gold, (50) and the bowls, and the snuffers, and the basons, and the spoons, and the censers of pure gold; and the hinges of gold, both for the doors of the inner house, the most holy place, and for the doors of the house, to wit, of the temple. (51) So was ended all the work that evening. The horns of the altar were to be touched with the blood of the sin offering (Lev. iv. 7, 18) offered for the priests or the people; and it was to be solemnly purified by the blood of the sacrifice on the great Day of Atonement (Lev. xvi. 18, 19). The offering of incense, therefore, pre-supposed sacrifice already offered, and atonement made for sin. To the Israelites it clearly symbolised the offering of an acceptable worship by man, as restored to the love and communion of God. (See Ps. cxli. 2.) The priest, as a mediator between God and man, alone entered the Holy Place and offered the incense; the people “stood praying without” (Luke i. 10). To us it symbolises the intercession of the One Mediator, offered for us in the Most Holy Place of heaven, by whom alone our worship ascends to God. (See Heb. xi. 12, 14, x. 19-22; Rev. viii. 3.)

For the table of shewbread, see Exod. xxv. 23-28, xxxvii. 10-15; for the shewbread itself, see Lev. xxiv. 5-9. The “shewbread”—properly “bread of the face” (or presence) of God, translated in the LXX. Version as “bread of offering” or “of presentation”—was clearly of the nature of an Eucharistic offering to God of His own gift of bread—a kind of first-fruits, acknowledging that the whole sustenance of life comes from Him, and possibly also implying the truth more closely symbolised by the pot of manna, that “man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word proceeding out of the mouth of God.”

(49) The candlesticks of pure gold.—Whether these ten candlesticks were to supersede the one seven­lighted candlestick made for the Tabernacle (Exod. xxv. 31-40, xxxvii. 17-20), or were to be used in addition to it, we are not told. The latter supposition is, however, far more probable, both because it seems most unlikely that the old sacred candlestick should have been disused, and because in the second Temple only the one seven­lighted candlestick was provided, and (as the sculpture on the Arch of Titus shows) was carried in the Roman triumph after the destruction of the city. (In 2 Chron. iv. 8, 19, there is a mention of ten tables for shewbread, similarly ranged on each side of the Holy Place, probably in the same way, additional to the one proper table.) Josephus, in his rhetorical exaggeration, declares that Solomon made ten thousand candlesticks and ten thousand tables; but he distinguishes the one proper candlestick and table from the rest. The candlestick is elaborately described in the history of the construction of the Tabernacle, as of great costliness of material and workmanship. Placed in the Holy Place, opposite to the table of shewbread, and fed carefully with the sacred oil, it appears to have symbolised the gift of light to the world, as the shewbread the gift of life and sustenance, flowing from the presence of God.

The flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs are the parts of the candlestick (mentioned in Exod. xxv. 31, 37, 38); the “flowers” being the ornaments of the stem and branches, the “lamps” being the seven lights, and the “tongs” being used for trimming.

(50) The various articles here mentioned are also enumerated in the description of the furniture of the Tabernacle, Exod. xxv. 29-38.

The snuffers.—The word is derived from a root signifying “to prune,” and is used for “pruning knives” in Isa. ii. 4 and Micah iv. 3. Some accordingly render it here by “knives,” but the common rendering “snuffers” suits the derivation well enough.

The spoons.—The name signifies simply “something hollow;” and in Num. vii. 86 “the spoons” are said to have been “full of incense,” and to have “weighed ten shekels apiece.” The right meaning is probably “incense pans.”

The censers.—This rendering is clearly erroneous. It should be “snuff-dishes,” or “ash-pans,” as in Exod. xxv. 38.

(51) The things which David his father had dedicated.—For the account of the dedication of various treasures, by David and by the princes of Israel, for the House of the Lord, see 1 Chron. xviii. 8, 10, 11, xxii. 3-5, 14-16, xxviii. 14-18, xxix. 2-5. The accumulation was enormous. It had evidently been the work of years to gather it out of the spoils of many victories, offered in that spirit of thankful devotion which is expressed in David’s own words: “Both riches and honour come of thee . . . and of thine own have we given unto thee” (1 Chron. xxix. 12, 14). The words used in the text seem to indicate that besides the vessels of gold, silver, and brass, gold and silver, in money or in ingots, were brought into the sacred treasury.

VIII.

The exceedingly minute and graphic character of the narrative of the consecration of the Temple, the almost exact verbal coincidence with it of the account given in the Second Book of Chronicles, and the occurrence in verse 8 of the phrase “There they are unto this day,” which could not have belonged to the time of the composition of the book—all show that the compiler must have drawn from some contemporary record, probably some official document preserved in the Temple archives. The beauty and spiritual significance of this chapter—which from time immemorial has been made to yield teaching
covenant of the Lord out of the city of David, which is Zion.

And all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto king Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month. And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark. And they brought up the ark of the Lord, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle, even those did the priests and the Levites bring up.

And king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel, that were assembled unto him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor numbered for multitude. And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the Lord unto his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims.
For the cherubim spread forth their two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubim covered the ark and the staves thereof above. And they drew out the staves, that the 1 ends of the staves were seen out in the 2 holy place before the oracle, and they were not seen without; and there they are unto this day. There was nothing in the ark 3 save the two tables of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, 4 when the Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud 5 filled the house of the Lord, 6 so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord.

Then spake Solomon, The Lord

still partly attached to the ark) were seen—probably by projections visible through the veil—in the Holy Place; although, as the narrative remarks with characteristic minuteness of accuracy, “not without” from the porch. The reason why this detail is dwelt upon is obvious. Up to this time it had been forbidden to withdraw the staves (Exod. xxvi. 19–15), so that the ark might not be ready for transport; now the withdrawal marked the entrance on a new period, during which it was to rest unmoved.

There they are unto this day.—This phrase—not unfrequently repeated in the narrative (see ix. 21, x. 12, xii. 18, &c.)—is an interesting indication of quotation from older documents; for at the time of the compilation of the book the Temple and all that it contained had been destroyed or removed. It is remarkable that in the record of the successive spoilings of the Temple by the Chaldeans (2 Kings xxiv. 13, xxv. 13–17), while the various vessels, the brazen pillars, and the sea are mentioned in detail, nothing is said of their carrying away the ark, which would have been the choicest, as most sacred, of all the spoils. (See Notes on these passages.) About the Jewish tradition, referred to above (see Note on verse 4), setting aside the supposed miracle, there is no intrinsic improbability, considering the respect paid to Jeremiah by the Chaldeans. (See Jer. xxxi. 11–14.)

There was nothing.—The emphasis of this (repeated in 2 Chron. v. 10) is remarkable, and seems intended to make it clear that the various things laid up “before the testimony”—the pot of manna (Exod. xvi. 33, 34); the rod of Aaron (Num. xvii. 10); the copy of the Law (Deut. xxxi. 24–26)—were not in the ark, but (as in the last case is actually stated), at “the side of the ark.” Unless any change afterwards took place—which is highly improbable—this clear statement must determine the interpretation of the well-known passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews (chap. ix. 4), in which no stress need be laid on the literal accuracy of the word “wherein;” for its purpose is simply a general description of the Temple, its chief parts, and its most sacred furniture. The command to deposit the tables in the ark is recorded in Exod. xxv. 16, and the actual deposit of them there in Exod. xl. 20, immediately after the erection of the Tabernacle.

There is something singularly impressive in the especial hallowing of the granite tables of the Law of Righteousness, as the most sacred of all the revelations of the Nature of God; thus indissolubly binding together religion and morality, and showing that God is best known to man, not in His omnipotence, or even in His infinite wisdom, which man can only in slight degree imitate, but in His moral nature, as the very Truth and Righteousness, of which all that man is called true and righteous is but the reflection. The one main object of all prophetic teaching was to bring out the truth here implied, thus writing the law on the heart and on the mind (Jer. xxxi. 33), and rebuking moral evil at least as strongly as religious error and apostasy. The very name of the Messiah for whom they prepared is “Jehovah our righteousness” (Jer. xxiii. 6). The cloud.—The bright Shechinah of the Divine Presence and glory (Exod. xix. 18, 23; Deut. iv. 11–15), the rod of Aaron (Num. xvi. 10), the copy of the Law (Deut. xxxi. 24–26), the pot of manna (Exod. xvi. 33, 34); the rod of Aaron (Num. xvi. 10), the copy of the Law (Deut. xxxi. 24–26), the cloud and as even the Apostles trembled, when they entered on the Mount of Transfiguration, and “knew not what they said” (Luke ix. 33, 34). But it was not so much from terror of the Lord, who is “a consuming fire,” as simply from awe and reverence of His un speakable glory.

The Lord said...—The words of Solomon, though—as is natural in a moment of mingled awe and thankfulness—somewhat broken and abrupt, are clear enough in their general meaning and connection. He refers to the frequent declarations made in old time that the cloud is the symbol of God’s indwelling presence (such as Exod. xix. 9, and Lev. xvi. 2);
he recognises in the appearance of the cloud the sign that the Divine presence is granted to the Temple; and accordingly he exults in the proof that his foreordained work is accomplished by the building of a house, a "settled habitation" for the Lord. The description of the cloud as "thick darkness," in no way contradicts the idea of the glory shining through it; for human eyes are easily darkened by excess of light." This mingled light and darkness symbolises—perhaps more strikingly than even the literal darkness of the Most Holy Place—the mystery which veils the presence of God, known to be, and to be infinitely glorious, but in its nature incomprehensible.

Themius, from a single Chaldee version, suggests for "thick darkness" the correction "Jerusalem," dwelling on the closer harmony of the reading with verse 16, quoting the promise of Psalm cxxxii. 13, 14 (closely connected there with the great promise of David), and urging the likelihood of the citation of this promise by Solomon, and the greater simplicity thus given to his whole utterance. The suggestion is ingenious; but it lacks authority, both external and internal. The LXX., in the Alexandrine MS. (for the Vatican MS. omits the whole), and the Vulg. agree with the Hebrew text; and Josephus, though he gives a verbose paraphrase of the prayer, evidently had our reading before him, for he contrasts the mystery and ubiquity of the Divine presence with the material shrine. Nor is it easy to conceive how from a passage so simple and prosaic, this would be with the reading "Jerusalem," the more difficult, but far more striking, reading of the present text could have arisen.

And the king turned his face about, and blessed all the congregation of Israel: (and all the congregation of Israel stood;) and he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which spake with his mouth unto David my father, and hath with his hand fulfilled it, saying, (16) Since the day that I brought forth my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build an house, that my name might be therein; but I chose 3 David to be over my people Israel. (17) And it was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the Lord God of Israel. (18) And the Lord said unto David my father, Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart. (19) Nevertheless thou shalt not build the house; but thy son that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house unto my name. (20) And the Lord hath performed his word that he spake, and I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the Lord promised, and have built an house for the name of the Lord God of Israel. (21) And I have set there a place for the ark, wherein is the covenant of the Lord, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt.

(22) And Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all Israel.
solomon's prayer.

the congregation of israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven: (23) and he said, "lord god of israel, there is no god like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepeth covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart: (24) who hast kept with thy servant david my father that thou promisedst him: thou spakest also with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine hand, as it is this day. (25) therefore now, lord god of israel, keep with thy servant david my father that thou promisedst him, saying, 'there shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of israel; so that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before me as thou hast walked before me. (26) and now, o lord god of israel, let thy word, i pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant david my father. (27) but will god indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that i have builded? (28) yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, o lord my god, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer, which thy servant

should believe and accept his call, and set in obedience to that belief. thus the decalogue opens with the words, "i am the lord thy god, who brought thee out of the land of egypt, out of the house of bondage," describing the gift of salvation from the mercy of god, which constituted israel afarsh as his peculiar people. (see exod. iii. 7-15.) on the ground of this salvation, rather than of his omnipotence as creator and sustainer of the world, he calls for their obedience to the commandments, which are thus "the words of the covenant." similarly st. paul, when (rom. xii. 1) he calls christians to absolute self-devotion, appeals to them by "the mercies of god," on which he had so fully dwelt—the larger and more spiritual covenant in christ.

(23-29) the prayer of solomon, uttered (see verse 54) on his knees with hands uplifted to heaven, long and detailed as it is, is yet of extreme simplicity of idea. it begins (a), in verses 23-25, with a thankfull acknowledgment of the fulfilment of one part of the great promise to david, and a prayer for the like fulfilment of the other, next (b), in verses 26-30, acknowledging that god's presence can be limited to no temple, it yet asks that his peculiar blessing may rest on prayer uttered toward the place which he has hallowed; and then (c), in verses 31-53, applies that petition to the various contingencies, of oath taken in his name, of rain withheld, of disaster in battle, of famine and pestilence, of captivity in a foreign land, and extends it not only to israel, but to the stranger who shall acknowledge and invite the lord jehovah. its constantly recurring burden is, "hear thou from heaven thy dwelling-place, and when thou hearest, lord, forgive." it is plain that before solomon's mind there are continually present in some form the blessing and the curse pronounced in the law (see lev. xxvi.; deut. xxix.); and it is most true to human nature, and especially characteristic of the thoughtfulness of his philosophic temper, that over the bright hour of exultation there seems to hover a constant foreboding of evils and trials to come.

(23) there is no god like thee.—these words, often used in the psalms (ps. lxi. 19, lxxvi. 8, lxxxix. 6), and especially found in the thanksgiving of david after the great promise (2 sam. vii. 22), are evidently suggested by more ancient utterances of devotion; as for example, in the first recorded psalm at the red sea (exod. xv. 11). in them we trace the spiritual process by which the israelites were trained from the polytheism of their forefathers to the knowledge of the one only god. he is known to them, first, in the close personal relation of "the god of abraham, and isaac, and jacob," to whom "none is like" of all gods whom others worshipped; but next, in his universal relation to the universe as the "god almighty, and the judge of the whole earth" (gen. xvii. 2, xviii. 25); lastly, as jehovah, "god," indeed, "of israel," but, by the very meaning of the name, the one self-existent being, source of all other life. thus, in the thanksgiving of david to the words, "none is like thee," is added at once the higher belief, "there is no god beside thee." in this prayer of solomon there follows at once the striking confession that the "heaven of heavens cannot contain" his infinity.

who keepeth covenant and mercy.—this phrase, again, familiar in prayer (see deut. vii. 9; neb. i. 5; dan. ix. 4), is clearly traceable to the conclusion of the second commandment (exod. xx. 6), and the special revelation of god to moses in the mount (exod. xxxiv. 6, 7). it is notable, not merely because it describes god as manifesting himself "most chiefly by showing mercy and pity," but also because it declares this manifestation of mercy to be pledged to man as a chief part of his covenant. so in the new testament it is said that, to those who own his covenant in christ, "he is faithful and just to forgive sins." (28) therefore now.—the larger and grander part of the promise to david extends beyond solomon's quotation of it. for (see 2 sam. vii. 12-16; ps. lxxxvi. 28-37) it expressly declares that, even if the seed of david fall away, they shall indeed be chasised, but they shall not be cast off. the prophet jeremiah (jer. xxxi. 36; xxxii. 20-26) as well as the psalmist (ps. lxxxix. 36, 37) enforce the declaration by comparing the certainty of its fulfilment with the fixity of "the ordinances of the sun and moon." like the ordinary dispensations of his providence, it is in itself fixed and immutable, although the actual enjoyment of its blessing by each individual, or each age, is conditional on right reception of it.

(27, 28) will god indeed dwell.—the thought expressed here exemplifies a constant antithesis which run through the old testament. on the one hand, there is the most profound and unvarying conception of the infinity, eternal, invisible, incomprehensible, of the lord, as "the high and holy one who inhabitheth eternity," whom "i, the heavens of heavens and the earth, that is, in all its vastest extent—"cannot contain;" and the spirituality of this conception is guarded by the
prayeth before thee to day: (29) that thine eyes may be opened toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which thou hast said, "My name shall be there: that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make toward this place. (30) And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place: and when thou hearest, forgive. (31) If any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house: (32) then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness. (33) When thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto thee in this house: (34) then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest unto their fathers. (35) When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou affliest them: (36) then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk, and give rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance. (37) If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their

sternest prohibition of that idolatry which limited and degraded the idea of God, and by rebuke of the superstition which trusted in an intrinsic sacredness of the Ark or the Temple. On the other hand, there is an equally vivid conviction that the Infinite Jehovah is yet pleased to enter into a special covenant with Israel, beyond all other nations, to reveal Himself by the cloud in the midst of His people, to bless, with a peculiar blessing, "the place which He chooses to place His Name there." The two conceptions co-exist, as in the text, in complete harmony, both preparing for the perfect manifestation of a "God with us" in that kingdom of the Messiah, which was at once to place the perfect covenant with Israel, and to include all peoples, nations, and languages for ever and ever. The words of Solomon in spirit anticipate the utterance of the prophet (Isa. lxvi. 1), quoted by St. Stephen against idolatry of the Ark (Acts vii. 45), and even the greater declaration of our Lord (John iv. 21—24) as to the universal presence of God to all spiritual worship. Yet he feels the reality of the consecration of the House raised by the command of God; and prays that all who recognise it by prayer "toward this house," may enter into the special unity with God which it symbolises, and be heard by Him from heaven. By an instructive contrast, the Temple is described as the place where God's "Name"—that is, His self-revelation—is made to dwell; but heaven, and it alone, as the true dwelling-place of God Himself. (33, 36) If any man trespass. These verses deal with the simplest exemplification of the sacredness of the Temple in the case of the oath of expurgation of one accused of crime (see Exod. xxi. 7). Of these oaths, and the sophistical distinctions between the various forms of them, we have Our Lord's notice in Matt. xxiii. 16—22. Such an oath has a twofold force—a force purely spiritual, inasmuch as it solemnly recognises the Presence of God, and by such recognition shames all falsehood as a kind of sacrilege; and a force which is "of

have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto thee in this house: (34) then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest unto their fathers. (35) When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou affliest them: (36) then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk, and give rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance. (37) If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their
sickness there be; (39) what prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house: (40) then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men;) (40) that they may fear thee all the days that they live in the land which thou gavest unto our fathers.

Moreover concerning a stranger, that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake; (42) (for they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched out arm;) when he shall come and pray toward this house; (43) hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for; that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by thy name.

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Thou only, knowest the hearts... of men. The emphasis laid on this knowledge of the heart (as in Ps. xi. 4, cxxxix. 2—4; Jer. xvii. 9, 10) as the special attribute of Deity, though, of course, belonging to all vital religion, probably especially the leading thought of the Psalms and the Proverbs, which always realise the presence of God, not so much in the outer spheres of Nature and history, as in the soul of man itself. It carries with it, as here, the conviction that, under the general dealings of God's righteousness with man, there lies an individuality of judgment, making them to each exactly what his spiritual condition needs. The plague, for example, which cuts off one man unrepentant in his sins, may be to another a merciful deliverance out of the miseries of this sinful world.

Moreover, concerning a stranger.—These verses in a striking digression (perhaps suggested by the general acknowledgment in the previous verse of God's knowledge of every human heart), interpose in the series of references to Israel a prayer for the acceptance of the prayer of the stranger, who should come from afar to confess the Lord Jehovah, and to pray toward this house.
saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness; and so return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name: then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling place, and maintain their 1 cause, and forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them: for they be thy people, and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst of the furnace of iron: that thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them in all that they call for unto thee. For thou didst separate them from among all the people of the earth, to be thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord God.

And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the Lord, he arose from before the altar of the Lord, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven. And he stood, and blessed all the congrega-

second petition, for mercy and deliverance in the event of defeat and captivity. The spirit, and in the confession of verse 47 the very words, of this prayer of Solomon are strikingly reproduced in the solemn supplication of Daniel, when the close of the Babylonish captivity drew near (Dan. ix. 4—15). There we find a confession of sin, perverseness, and wickedness, literally the same; we find also a similar pleading with God, as "keeping covenant and mercy," a similar reference to the deliverance from Egypt, and a similar emphasis on the consecration of the city and its people by God's "great name." There is a striking pathos of circumstance in the fact, that over "the sanctuary that was desolate" (Dan. ix. 17), with "his windows open towards Jerusalem," Daniel utters the same prayer, which had marked the day of its consecration in all magnificence and prosperity.

Forgive..., and give them compassion. This prayer was singularly fulfilled at the captivity of Judah in Babylon, though we hear of no such thing in relation to the captivity of the "lost tribes" of Israel in Assyria. We see this in the exceptional favour of Nebuchadnezzar and of the Ahasuerus of the Book of Esther to the Jews in Babylon; we see it still more in the greater boon of restoration granted them by Cyrus and Darius, and the Artaxerxes of the Book of Nehemiah. Like the whole course of the fortunes of the Jews in their subsequent dispersion, these things, however they may be accounted for—are certainly unique in history.

For they be thy people. This pleading with God by His deliverance of the people from Egypt, and by His promise to Moses to make them His inheritance (see Exod. xix. 5; Deut. ix. 26, 29, xiv. 2), although especially suggested by the last petition for deliverance from captivity, may be held to apply to the whole of Solomon's prayer. It implies the belief not only that the declared purpose of God cannot fail, but that, even for the manifestation of His glory to man, it must needs be visibly fulfilled before the eyes of the world. This same conviction breathes in many of the utterances of Moses for Israel (see Exod. xxxii. 12, 13; Num. xiv. 13, 14); it is expressed in the "Help us, O Lord, and deliver us for Thy name's sake," of Ps.

lxix. 9, 10, or the "Defer not for Thine own sake, O my God" of Dan. ix. 19: it is declared on the part of the Lord again and again in Ezek. xx. 9, 14, 22, "I wrought for my name's sake." It may, indeed, seem to jar upon our fuller conception of the infinite majesty of God, incapable of being augmented or lessened, and of the infinite love which does all for the sake of His creatures. Yet it is not wholly unlike our Lord's prayer (John xii. 28), "Father, glorify thy name," or the Apostolic declarations of the great purpose of redemption, as designed for "the praise of God's glory" (Ephes. i. 6, 12, 14), and of all Christian life as commanded to "do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. x. 31). In some respects it is like the pleading with our Lord, in the Litany of the Church in all ages, by all the various acts of His redemption, and the prayer of the old Latin hymn—

"Redemisti cruentum passum: Tantus labor ne sit cassum,"

But, indeed, all that might seem strange or unworthy in such prayers vanishes at once, when we consider that the knowledge of God in His self-manifestation is the highest happiness of man; on which, indeed, depend all depth and harmony of human knowledge, and all dignity and purity of human life. Hence, in the Lord's Prayer, the three petitions "for God's glory," preceding all special petitions for our own needs, are really prayers for the highest blessing of all mankind. God's care for His glory is not for His own sake, but for ours.

And it was so. At this point occurs in 2 Chron. vii. 1—3 a striking passage, describing the kindling of the sacrifice by fire from heaven, and, apparently, a second manifestation of the cloud of glory. (See Note on the passage.)

Blessed all the children of Israel. To bless the congregation was the special duty and privilege of the priests (see Num. vi. 23—37); but throughout the whole of this narrative the king, and the king alone, is conspicuous. It is, however, to be noted that Solomon's words here are not strictly of blessing, but rather of praise and prayer to God, and exhortation to the people.
tion of Israel with a loud voice, saying,

60) Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant. (57) The Lord our God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor for-sake us: (58) that he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, which he commanded our fathers. (59) And let these my words, wherewith I have made supplication before the Lord, be nigh unto the Lord our God day and night, that he maintain the cause of his serv-ant, and the cause of his people Israel, at all times, as the matter shall require;

60) that all the people of the earth may know that the Lord is God, and that there is none else. (61) Let your heart therefore be perfect with the Lord our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day.

62) And the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the Lord. (63) And Solomon offered a sacrifice of peace offerings, which he offered unto the Lord, two and twenty thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the Lord. (64) The same day did the king hallow the middle of the court that was before the house of the Lord: for there he offered burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings: because the brasen altar that was before the Lord was too little to receive the burnt offerings, and meat offerings, which the Lord had promised by Moses the servant of the Lord.

(56) That hath given rest.—Now for the first time the frequent promise of rest (Exod. xxxii. 14; Deut. xii. 10, &c.)—partially fulfilled after the conquest of the days of Joshua (Josh. xxi. 44, 45, xxiii. 1, 14), and after the establishment of the kingdom of David (2 Sam. vii. 1)—was perfectly accomplished under Solomon the Peaceful, and the whole charter of gift of the promised land (Josh. i. 3, 4) for the first time thoroughly entered upon. Of the “rest” of Israel, the transfer of the Ark of the Lord from the shifting Tabernacle to the fixed Temple was at once a sign and a pledge. Yet Solomon’s subsequent words imply that “entering into that rest” was conditional on fulfilment of Israel’s part in the covenant, by “walking in the ways of the Lord.” That condition, which he knew so well, he himself broke, and all Israel with him. Hence the fulfilment of the foreboding which emerges so constantly in his prayer. The glory of rest and happiness of his age was but a gleam of prosperity, given, enormous as it is, can hardly be supposed due to the conviction again and again expresses itself that have involved something of the idea, so frequent in the history.

(58) That he may incline ...—Comparing this verse with the exhortation of verse 61, we find exemplified the faith which pervades all Holy Scripture and underlies the whole idea of covenant with God. It is a faith in the true, though mysterious, co-operation of the “preventing grace” of God, which must be recognised in all adequate conceptions of Him, as the Source of all life and action, physical and spiritual, and of that free responsibility of man which is the ultimate truth of the inner human consciousness. God “inclines the heart” and yet the heart must yield itself. The conviction of this truth naturally grows deeper and plainer, in proportion as man realises better the inner life of the soul as contrasted with the outer life of event and action, and realises accordingly the dominion of God over the soul by His grace, over and above His rule over the visible world by His providence. Hence it comes out especially in the Psalms, the Proverbs, and the Prophetic books. It is instructive, for example, to observe how through the great “realm of the Law” (Ps. cxix.) the conviction again and again expresses itself that only by His gift can the heart be enabled to obey it. (See verses 26, 27, 32, 33, 36, &c.) In the New Testament, the “covenant of the Spirit,” the truth is brought out in all its fulness; perhaps most vividly in the celebrated paradox of Phil. ii. 12, 13, “Work out your own salvation . . . For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.”

(59) And Solomon offered.—The idea that the king on this occasion, and on others, performed the priest’s ministerial office is manifestly improbable. At all times he who brought the sacrifice was said to “offer” it. (See, for example, Lev. ii. 1, iii. 2, 7, &c.) The priest accepted it in the name of the Lord, and poured the blood at the foot of the altar of sacrifice, or sprinkled it on the altar of incense. But still the absence of all mention of the priests, even as to the “hallowing” of the court for sacrifice, is characteristic of the tone of the whole narrative, in which the king alone is prominent.

(60) And Solomon offered.—The number here given, enormous as it is, can hardly be supposed due to any error in the text; for it is exactly reproduced in the Chronicles and by Josephus. Much explanation of it has been wasted through misunderstanding of the real difficulty involved. It is comparatively easy to conceive how such a mass of victims could be brought as offerings or consumed, when we consider the vastness of the assembled multitude from the whole of the great dominions of Solomon, dwelling in or encamped about the city. Even at the Passovers of the last days of Jerusalem the multitude of worshippers seems to have been numbered by hundreds of thousands. The real difficulty is to conceive how, even through the fourteen days of the festival, and over the whole of the hallowed portion of the court, the victims could have been offered. But it is not unlikely that on such an occasion it might be deemed sufficient actually to sacrifice only certain representative victims of each hecatomb, and simply to dedicate the rest to the Lord, leaving them to be killed and eaten elsewhere.

This profusion of sacrifices, good as expressing the natural desire of all to offer at such a time, may perhaps have involved something of the idea, so frequent in heathen sacrifice, and so emphatically condemned by the prophets, that the Lord would be “pleased with

1 Chron. 7. 4.
2 Chron. 7. 1.
2 Chron. 7. 7.
Feast of the Dedication.

I. KINGS, IX.

The Lord appears to Solomon.

offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings.

65 And at that time Solomon held a feast, and all Israel with him, a great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt, before the LORD our God, seven days and seven days, even fourteen days. (66) On the eighth day he sent the people away; and they blessed the king, and went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the LORD had done for David his servant, and for Israel his people.

CHAPTER IX.—(1) And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished the building of the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire which he was pleased to do, (2) that the Lord appeared to Solomon the second time, ‘as he had appeared unto him at Gibeon.

(3) And the Lord said unto him, I should have to conclude, either that the dedication was postponed for thirteen years, till all the buildings were finished—which is in itself infinitely improbable, and contradicts the express declaration of Solomon—or that a similar period intervened between Solomon's prayer and the Divine answer to it, which is even more preposterous. The variation in 2 Chron. vii. 11 probably suggests the true key to the difficulty: viz., that the notice in this verse is merely a summary of the history of chaps. vi. —vii., which records the whole of the building works of Solomon, and is not intended to fix the date of the vision of verses 2—9.

(3—9) And the Lord said unto him.—This vision of the Lord presents a remarkable contrast with that recorded in chap. vi. 11—13, while the Temple was in building. Then all was promise and encouragement; now, not only is warning mingled with promise, but, as in Solomon's own prayer, the sadder alternative seems to fix the date of the vision of verses 2—9.

IX.

Of this chapter, the first portion (verses 1—9) forms the conclusion of the detailed narrative of the preceding chapter; the latter portion is wholly different in style and subject.

(1) And it came to pass.—The obvious primâ facie meaning of this verse would land us in much difficulty. By chaps. vi. 33, vii. 1, we find that, while the Temple was built in seven years, the erection of the palace and the other buildings occupied thirteen years; and from chap. v. 10 and 2 Chron. vii. 1 it appears that these works were successive, and therefore that the completion of the palace could not have taken place till thirteen years after the completion of the Temple. Hence we...
have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually. (4) And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments: (5) then will I establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel. (6) But if ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them: (7) then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and shall be for an example. Various corrections have in alienating; although, indeed, the often-quoted enactment of the Law (Lev. xxv. 23, 24), would not have been likely to be strictly observed under his self-reliant despotism.

Mine eyes and mine heart.—See viii. 29. (9) If thou wilt walk.—The fall of the house of Solomon from dominion over all Israel is an emphatic comment on the conditional nature of this promise. Yet the essence of the covenant with David was kept in that preservation of the diminished kingdom to an unbroken succession of his descendants—singularly contrasted with the changes of dynasty in the greater rival kingdom—which is expressly declared to have been granted “for David’s sake” (chap. xi. 12, 19).

(7) Then will I cut off.—These warnings were repeated with terrible force by Jeremiah on the eve of their fulfilment. (See Jer. vii. 12—14, xxiv. 9, xxv. 9.) The destruction of the Temple is by him compared with that which fell on Shiloh—no doubt, after the great defeat by the Philistines in the time of Eli (1 Sam. iv., v.), although the history gives no record of it. The continued existence of the people, as a people, to be “a proverb and a byword,” through the Babylonish captivity, and through their present dispersion, is a fact to which the history of the world undoubtedly furnishes no parallel.

(8) At this house, which is high.—The word “which” is not in the original Hebrew here (although found in the present Hebrew text of 2 Chron. vii. 21). The true meaning is certainly “This house shall be high;” which is the reading of the LXX., while the Vulg. has a good explanatory gloss, “This house shall be for an example.” Various corrections have been proposed, but there seems no necessity for them. There is evidently an allusion to the lofty position of the Temple. Generally the exaltation of “the moun-
and they pleased him not. (13) And he said, What cities are these which thou hast given me, my brother? And he called them the land of Cabul unto this day. (14) And Hiram sent to the king sixscore talents of gold. (15) And this is the reason of the levy which king Solomon raised; for to build

(12) The cities are said to have been in "the land of Gilead." The name Galilee, signifying properly a "circle," or "ring," of territory, is used twice in the Book of Joshua for a region round Kedesh-Naphthali (Josh. xx. 7, xxi. 32), lying to the north-west of the Lake of Gennesareth, and extending to the Waters of Merom. (See also 2 Kings xv. 29.) The western portion of this territory would lie nearly on the frontiers of Tyre, and so would suit well the purpose both of Hiram and of Solomon. The discontent of Hiram probably referred to the condition of the cities (which afterwards had to be rebuilt), not to their geographical position.

(13) Cabul.—The derivation of this word is uncertain. Josephus evidently did not know it as a Hebrew word; for he expressly says that in the Phœnician language it signifies "what is unploising." (Ant. viii. c. 5, sect. 3.) A city Cabul is mentioned in Josh. xix. 27, in the territory of Asher, evidently on the Tyrian frontier, and in the neighbourhood in question. Hiram, it is thought, takes up this name, and applies it to the whole territory, and by a play of words on it signifies his discontent with Solomon's gift. Ewald supposes a Hebrew derivation for the word ("as nought"); others take it to be "like that which vanishes." Either would suit the sense indicated in the text well; but unless these derivations represent something cognate in the Tyrian language, they hardly accord with the requirements of this passage, which (as Josephus says) implies a Phœnician origin for the word.

(14) Hiram sent to the king sixscore talents of gold.—The payment, on any calculation, was a large one, though little more than a sixth of Solomon's yearly revenue. (See chap. x. 14.) How it is connected with the previous verses is matter of conjecture. It may possibly be a note referring back to verse 11, and explaining the amount of gold which Hiram had sent. If this is not so, it would then seem to be a payment in acknowledgment of the cession of the cities, as being of greater value than the debt which it was meant to discharge. Hiram's depreciation of the cities need not imply that he did not care to keep them. "It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer: but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth." (Prov. xx. 14.) Josephus (Ant. vii. 5, 3), has a quaint story in connection with this intercourse between Hiram and Solomon (quoted from Dios), declaring that a contest in riddles took place between these kings, and that, when Hiram could not solve the riddles of Solomon, he "paid a large sum of money for his fine," but adds that he afterwards retaliated on Solomon, by aid of Abdonem of Tyre. It appears by 2 Chron. vii. 2, that the cities were afterwards restored to Israel—how, and why, we know not.

(15—28) The rest of the chapter consists of brief historical notes, partly referring back to the previous records. Thus, verse 15 refers back to chap. v. 13; verses 20—22 to chap. v. 15; verse 24 to chap. vii. 8; verse 26 to a note connected with the history of the Temple. The style is markedly different from the graphic and picturesque style of the passages preceding and following it.

(19) The levy.—This (see chap. v. 13, 15) was both of Israelites and of the subject races, first originated for the building of the Temple, afterwards extended to the other great building works.

The building works enumerated are, first in Jerusalem, then in various parts of the country of critical importance, either for war or for commerce.

Millo, or (as it always has the definite article), "the Millo." The Hebrew word seems to signify "piling up," or "heaping up," and its most simple meaning would be a "fortified mound." From the mention, however, in Judges ix. 6, 20, of the "house of Millo," in connection with the men of Shechem, it has been supposed to be a Canaanitish word; and it is possible that "the Millo" of Jerusalem may have been the name of a quarter of an old Jebusite city, especially as it is first used in connection with the narrative of its capture (2 Sam. v. 9; 1 Chron. xi. 8). That it was a part of the fortification of "the city of David" is clear by this passage, by verse 24 and chap. xii. 27, and by 2 Chron. xxxiii. 5; and the LXX. invariably renders it "Acara," or "the citadel," a name always applied in the later history to the fortification on Mount Zion. Josephus, in describing the works of Solomon, merely says that he made the walls of David higher and stronger, and built towers on them. From the derivation of the word it is possible that the work was the raising a high fortification of earth crowned with a wall, where the hill of Zion slopes down unto the valley known subsequently as the Tyropoeon.

Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer.—These cities were all of important geographical positions, and all had belonged to the subject races.

Hazor was in the north, on high ground near the watershed of Merom. It had been the city of Jabin, head of the northern confederacy (Josh. xi. 1). After the great victory over this confederacy, Joshua burnt Hazor (Josh. xi. 13), and the territory was assigned to Naphtali (chap. xix. 36). But it must have been regained by its old possessors, and rebuilt, for it appears again under another Jabin in Judges iv. It was evidently important, as commanding the great line of invasion through Hamath from the north. Hence it was fortified by Solomon, and probably the native inhabitants were dispossessed.

Megiddo lay in the great plain of Jezreel or Edraelon, the battle-field of Northern Palestine, commanding some of the passes from it into the hill country of Manasseh, to which tribe it was assigned after the conquest (Josh. xvii. 11). But it was not subdued by them (Josh. xii. 13; Judges i. 27, 29), and, with Taanach, appears as a hostile city in the Song of Deborah (Judges v. 19). Now it was fortified, and is named subsequently as an Israelite city (2 Kings ix. 27, xxii. 29). In later times the Romans seem to have occupied it, and their name for it, Legio (now el-Lejjīr), superseded the old title.

Gezer or Gazer, was near Bethlehem, close to the maritime plain. Its king was conquered by Joshua (Josh. xiii. 30, xiv. 12), and the city was allotted to the Levites in the territory of Ephraim (Josh. xx. 17), but it remained unsubdued (Judges i. 29). From the notice in the next verse, it must have been in rebellion.
the house of the Lord, and his own house, and Millo, and the wall of Jerusalem and Hazor, and Megiddo, and Gezer. (16) For Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up and taken Gezer, and burnt it with fire, and slain the Canaanites that dwelt in the city, and given it for a present unto his daughter, Solomon's wife. (17) And Solomon built Gezer, and Beth-horon the nether, and Baalath, and Tadmor in the wilderness, in the land, (18) and all the cities of store that Solomon had, and cities for his chariots, and cities for his horsemen, and that which Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion. (20) And all the people that were left of the Amorites, Hitites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, which were not of the children of Israel, (21) their children that were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel also were not able utterly to destroy, upon those did Solomon levy a tribute of bondservice unto this day. (22) But of the children of Israel did Solomon make no bondmen: but they were men of war, and his servants, and his princes, against Israel, perhaps in the early and more troubled days of Solomon; and was accordingly taken by the Egyptian army (which could easily march up the plain, and attack it therefrom). The passes here were of critical importance, as appears in the Philistine wars (1 Chron. xx. 4; 2 Sam. v. 25), in relation to any advances from the plain. (16) A present—that is, of course, a dowry, on her marriage with Solomon. (17) Beth-horon the nether.—The name “Beth-horon” (“the house of caves,”) was given to two small towns or villages (still called Beth-ør), near Gezer, commanding the steep and rugged pass from the maritime plain, celebrated for three great victories of Israel—the great victory of Joshua (Josh. x.), the victory of Judas Maccabeus (1 Macc. iii. 13–24), and the last victory of the Jews over the Roman army of Cestius Gallus, before the fall of Jerusalem (Josephus, Wars of the Jews, ii. 19). The lower Beth-horon stands on a low eminence on the edge of the plain. (18) Baalath is said by Josephus to have been in the same neighbourhood; and this agrees with the mention of it in Josh. xix. 44, as lying in the region assigned to Dan, on the edge of the Philistine country. The three, Gezer, Beth-horon, and Baalath, evidently form a group of fortified places commanding the passes from the sea-coast.

Tadmor in the wilderness, in the land.—The Hebrew text here has Tamar (with, however, Tadmor as a marginal reading). From this fact, and from the peculiar expression “in the land,” which certainly seems to designate the land of Israel, and from the juxtaposition of the name in this passage with the names of places situated in the southern part of Palestine, it has been thought that the place meant is the Tamar of Ezek. xlvi. 19, xlvii. 28), or, perhaps, Hasason-Tamar, the old name of En-gedi; and that the marginal reading, and the reading of the old versions, have arisen from a mistaken identification of this place with the Tadmor of 2 Chron. ix. 4. But, on the whole, these considerations are not sufficient to counterbalance the invariable reference of this passage, by all the ancient versions and by the narrative of Josephus, to the celebrated Tadmor, the name of which is a local variety of the Hebrew name Tamar (or “the palm-tree”) preserved in the later name of Palmyra. If this be meant, it is indeed difficult to suppose that there is not some omission after the words “in the land.”

Tadmor, or Palmyra, is described by Josephus as “in the desert above Syria, a day's journey from the Euphrates, and six long days' journey from Babylon the Great.” Its foundation is described in 2 Chron. ix. 4, as connected with a subjugation of Hamath-zobah, and it may have had a military purpose. But situated on a well-watered oasis, in the midst of the desert, south-west of Tlbsah or Thapsacus on the Euphrates, also occupied by Solomon (see chap. iv. 24), and about 120 miles from Damascus, it would be eminently fitted for trade both with Damascus and with Babylon and the north. Its importance is indicated by its long existence as a great city, and by its splendour (still traceable in its ruins), in Greek and Roman times, down to, at least, the age of Diocletian. (19) That which Solomon desired to build.—See, in Eec. ii. 4—10, the description of the vineyards, and gardens, and orchards, in Jerusalem, with trees of all manner of fruits and pools of water, “ whatsoever mine eyes desired;” and in Cant. ii. 10—13, iv. 8, vii. 11—13, the vivid pictures of the pleasure-gardens of Lebanon. The text seems evidently to refer to these, in contradistinction from the cities of commercial and military importance previously mentioned. (20) A tribute of bond service.—This was probably not originated, but simply enforced and organised, by Solomon. It dated, in theory at least, from the time of David's conquest of the Ammonites that dwelt in the city, and given it to his daughter, Solomon's wife. (21) And all the people that were left of the Amorites, Hitites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, which were not of the children of Israel, (22) their children that were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel also were not able utterly to destroy, upon those did Solomon levy a tribute of bond service unto this day. (23) But of the children of Israel did Solomon make no bondmen: but they were men of war, and his servants, and his princes, against Israel, perhaps in the early and more troubled days of Solomon; and was accordingly taken by the Egyptian army (which could easily march up the plain, and attack it therefrom). The passes here were of critical importance, as appears in the Philistine wars (1 Chron. xx. 4; 2 Sam. v. 25), in relation to any advances from the plain. (16) A present—that is, of course, a dowry, on her marriage with Solomon. (17) Beth-horon the nether.—The name “Beth-horon” (“the house of caves,”) was given to two small towns or villages (still called Beth-ør), near Gezer, commanding the steep and rugged pass from the maritime plain, celebrated for three great victories of Israel—the great victory of Joshua (Josh. x.), the victory of Judas Maccabeus (1 Macc. iii. 13–24), and the last victory of the Jews over the Roman army of Cestius Gallus, before the fall of Jerusalem (Josephus, Wars of the Jews, ii. 19). The lower Beth-horon stands on a low eminence on the edge of the plain. (18) Baalath is said by Josephus to have been in the same neighbourhood; and this agrees with the mention of it in Josh. xix. 44, as lying in the region assigned to Dan, on the edge of the Philistine country. The three, Gezer, Beth-horon, and Baalath, evidently form a group of fortified places commanding the passes from the sea-coast.

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and his captains, and rulers of his chariots, and his horsemen. (22) These were the chief of the officers that were over Solomon’s work, five hundred and fifty, which bare rule over the people that wrought in the work.

(24) But Pharaoh’s daughter came up out of the city of David unto her house which Solomon had built for her: then did he build Millo.

(25) And three times in a year did Solomon offer burnt offerings and peace offerings upon the altar which he built unto the Lord, and he burnt incense upon the altar that was before the Lord. So he finished the house.

(26) And king Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion-geber, which is beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red sea, in the land of Edom. (27) And Hiram sent in the navy his servants, shipmen that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon. (28) And they came to Ophir, and fetched thence gold, and brought it to Solomon.

The Tyrians were known far and wide as the great sailors both of the Mediterranean and the seas beyond it, till they were rivalled and superseded by their own colonists in Carthage and by the Greeks. How greatly their seaship was, their commerce, and their civilization impressed the imagination of Israel, is shown in the magnificent chapters of Ezekiel on the fate of Tyre (Ezk. xxvi.—xxviii.). The Tyrians, on the contrary, had but little care for the sea, and little knowledge of seaship. The coast line of Palestine is but scantily furnished with harbours; and even at the height of their power they were content to use the maritime skill of the Tyrians, without encroaching upon their commerce or attempting to seize their famous ports. This was natural; for their power in commerce was based on the fact that the Tyrians were the sole people who were absolutely incompatible with maritime enterprise and commerce. Even in this attempt at maritime expedition under Tyrian guidance, Solomon’s action was, as in other points, exceptional, departing from Israelite tradition; and we hear of no similar enterprise, except in the age of Ahab and Jehoshaphat, when the intermarriage of the royal houses of Israel and Phoenicia renewed the close connection with Tyre (1 Kings xxii. 48; 2 Chron. xx. 35). We observe, accordingly, that the sea is mostly regarded in the Old Testament in its terrible power of wave and storm, restrained from destroying only by the Almighty hand of God; and even the one psalm (Ps. cvii. 23—31), which describes the seafarer’s experience, dwells with awe on “God’s wonders in the deep.” In the description of the glory of “the new heaven and earth” of the hereafter, it is declared with emphasis that “there was no more sea” (Rev. xxi. 1).

28 Ophir.—All that can be certainly gathered from the mention of Ophir in the Old Testament is, first, that it was situated to the east of Palestine and approached by the Red Sea (as is clear from this passage, from chap. xxxii. 48, and from 2 Chron. viii. 18, ix. 10), and next, that so famous was the gold imported from it, that the “gold of Ophir” became proverbial (Job xxi. 24, xxviii. 16; Ps. xlv. 10; Isa. xlix. 12; 1 Chron. xix. 4). All else is matter of speculation and tradition. Setting aside merely fanciful conjectures, substantial reasons have been given for fixing it geographically in Africa, Arabia, and India; and of these three positions, evidence strongly preponderates for the second or third. Tradition is in favour of India; the LXX. renders the name as Soufr, or Safir, which is the Coptic word for “India”; the Arabic versions actually render it “India;” and Josephus (Ant. viii. 6, 4) states unhesitatingly that Ophir was in his day called “The Golden Chersonesus,” which is the Malay peninsula. On the other hand, it is urged that “Ophir” in the ethnological list of Gen. x. 26, is placed among the sons of Joktan, clearly indicating an Arabian position; and that the mention of Ophir (here and in chap. x. 11), stands in close connection with the visit of the Queen of Sheba and the gold brought from Arabia. But neither of these considerations is conclusive. Looking to the products described as brought from Ophir, the
The Queen of Sheba

I. KINGS, X. visits Solomon.

four hundred and twenty talents, and brought it to king Solomon.

CHAPTER X. — (1) And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to prove him with hard questions. (2) And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she commended with him of all that was in her heart. (3) And Solomon told her all her questions; there was not any thing hid from the king, which he told her not. (4) And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon’s wisdom, and the house that he had built, (5) and the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the 2 attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his 3 cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord;

“gold and precious stones” would suit either, but India better than Arabia (although, indeed, so far as gold is concerned, Western Africa would have better claim than either); while the “almug,” or “algum” wood is certainly the “sandal wood” found almost exclusively on the Malabar coast, and the very word “algum” appears to be a corruption of its Sanscrit name valguka. If the other imports mentioned in chap. x. 22 were also from Ophir, this latter argument would be greatly strengthened. (See Note there.) But putting this aside as doubtful, the preponderance of evidence still appears to be in favour of India. The Tyrians, it may be added, are known to have had trading settlements on the Persian Gulf, and to have railed in the trade of the East the Egyptians, to whom it would more naturally have belonged. Various places have been named conjecturally as identical with Ophir: as in Arabia, Zaphar or Saphar, Dofir, and Zafari; in Africa, Sofala; and in India, Ahkira, at the mouth of the Indus, and a Soupara mentioned by ancient Greek geographers, not far from Goa.

X.

In verses 1—18, the visit of the queen of Sheba is described graphically and with some detail; the remainder of the chapter returns to a series of brief notes on the government and wealth of Solomon.

(1) The queen of Sheba.—The name “Sheba” must be distinguished from Seba, or Saba (which begins with a different Hebrew letter). (a) The name Seba denotes a Cushite race (Gen. x. 7), connected, in Isa. xliii. 3, xlv. 14, with Egypt and Cush, and named with Sheba (“the kings of Sheba and Saba”) in the Psalm of Solomon (Ps. lxxxii. 10). Seba is, indeed, with great probability identified (see Jos. Ant. ii. 10, 2) with the Ethiopian city and island of Meroë. It is probably from confusion between Sheba and Saba that Josephus (Ant. viii. 6, 5) represents the queen of Sheba as a “queen of Egypt and Ethiopia.” (b) The name “Sheba” is found in the ethnological lists of Gen. x. 7, among the descendants of Cush of the Hamite race, in Gen. x. 25, among the Semitic Joktanites, and in Gen. xxv. 3, among the Abrahamic children of Keturah. The kingdom of Sheba referred to in this passage must certainly be placed in Arabia Felix, the habitation of the Joktanite race (in which the Keturahites appear to have been merged), for the Cushite Sheba is probably to be found elsewhere on the Persian Gulf. The queen of Sheba would therefore be of Semitic race, not wholly an alien from the stock of Abraham.

The fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord.—If the reading of the text be correct, the phrase “concerning the name of the Lord” (to which there is nothing to correspond in 2 Chron. ix. 1) must refer to the constant connection of the name of Solomon—especially in relation to his wisdom, which is here mainly referred to—with the name of Jehovah, as the God to whom, in the erection of the Temple, he devoted both his treasure and himself.

Hard questions—or, riddles. The Arabian legends preserved in the Koran enumerate a list of questions and puzzles, propounded by the queen and answered by Solomon, too puerile to be worth mention. The “hard questions” (in which Solomon is said by Josephus to have had a contest with Hiram also) must surely have been rather those enigmatic and metaphorical sayings, so familiar to Eastern philosophy, in which the results of speculation, metaphysical or religious, are tersely embodied. The writings representing the age of Solomon—Job, Proverbs, and (whatever be its actual date) Ecclesiastes—are all concerned with these great problems, moral and speculative, which belong to humanity as such, especially in its relation to God. In solving these problems, rather than the merely fantastic ingenuity of what we call riddles, the wisdom of Solomon would be worthily employed.

Spices.—The “spices” of Arabia were famous in all ages. Sheba is mentioned in Ezek. xxvii. 22 as trafficking with Tyre “in chief of all spices, and precious stones, and gold.” The spices of “the incense-bearing sands” of Arabia are constantly dwelt upon both in Greek and Roman literature. Frankincense especially was imported from Arabia into Palestine (see Isa. lx. 6; Jer. vi. 20), although now it comes chiefly from India. Myrrh also was in ancient times drawn chiefly from Arabia. Cassia is a product of Arabia and India. Of all spices, the frankincense for sacrifice and the myrrh for embalming the dead would be most in request.

Gold, and precious stones.—These may have been native products of Sheba, or have been brought from the farther East. Gold is not now known to exist in Arabia, nor any precious stones except the onyx and the emerald. But in ancient times it was commonly believed to produce both gold and precious stones largely.

(4, 5) And when the queen of Sheba had seen.—There is something curiously inartificial and true to nature in the accumulation of different impressions as made upon the imagination of the queen. First of all comes the primary impression of Solomon’s wisdom, known by his answering all her questions, and “seen” in the various ordinances of his court and his government. Then the magnificence of the palace and all the arrangements of its service are referred to in detail, as especially likely to tell on one whose own splendour was probably of a simpler and more barbaric
there was no more spirit in her. (6) And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. (7) Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: 3 thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. (8) Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom. (9) Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice. (10) And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: especially appropriate. These represent the stringed instruments chiefly in use in the service of the Temple. The harp (kinnor) is the more ancient, traced (see Gen. iv. 21) even to antediluvian times. The psaltery (nebel) is first mentioned (generally with the harp) in the Psalms. Both seem to have been played either with the hand, or with a plectron or quill. (11, 12) All her desire.—The terms here employed indicate a position of inferiority, although well graced and honoured, in the queen of Sheba. Her present is of the nature of tribute. Solomon gives her of “his bounty,” both what she asked for (probably by praising it) and what else he would.

Gold from Ophir.—The insertion of this notice is obviously suggested by the mention of the gold and precious stones brought from Sheba. The wood of the “almug” tree, called (apparently more properly) the “salmug” tree in 2 Chron. ix. 10, is (see Note on chap. ix. 25) the red sandal-wood found in China and the Indian Archipelago, and still used for precious utensils in India. The “pillars for the house of the Lord” could not have been any of the larger supports of the Temple. They are usually supposed to have been (see margin) “rails” or “balustrades” for stairs. (See 2 Chron. ix. 17) For the harps and the “psalteries” (which appear to have been like our guitars) the beauty and hardness of the word would be...
The Ivory Throne.

I. KINGS, X.

The Drinking Vessels.

threecore and six talents of gold, (13) beside that he had of the merchants, men, and of the traffic of the spice merchants, and of all the kings of Arabia, and of the governors of the country. (14) And king Solomon made two hundred targets of beaten gold; six hundred shekels of gold went to one target. (15) And he made three hundred shields of beaten gold; three pound of gold went to one shield: and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon. (16) Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the best gold. (17) The throne had six steps, and the top of the throne was round behind: and there were stays on either side on the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the stays. (18) And twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps: there was not the like made in any kingdom. (19) And all king Solomon’s drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold; none were of silver: it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon. (20) For the king had at sea a navy of Tharshish with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tharshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks.

The governors of the country.—The word “governor” (pechah) is supposed to be of foreign origin—possibly cognate to the Semitic word palkaha “friend.” It is used constantly of foreign officers, or satraps; as in chap. xx. 24, of the Syrian officers; in 2 Kings xviii. 24 and Isa. xxxvi. 9, of the Assyrians; in Jer. li. 23, of the Babylonians; in Esther viii. 9, Neh. v. 14, 15, xii. 26, &c., of the Persians. Hence it would seem to be used here, not for the officers in the land of Israel described in chap. iv., but for governors (Israelite or foreign) in tributary countries; and it may possibly be a word of later origin than the age of Solomon, introduced by the compiler of the book.

(18, 17) The shields overlaid with gold—the larger called “targets,” and the lesser called “shields”—were evidently used for ornamenting the king’s palace, and as we may gather from the notice in 2 Chron. xii. 11, of the brazen shields which superseded them) taken down and borne before the king on solemn occasions, as “when he went to the house of the Lord.” We have notices of shields of gold among the Syrians of Zobah (2 Sam. vii. 7; 1 Chron. xviii. 7), and of shields hung on the walls of Tyre (Ezek. xxvii. 10. 11). The use of such ornaments argues a plethora of gold, too great to be absorbed either in currency or in personal and architectural decorations.

(17) Pound—that is, maneh, equal (see 2 Chron. x. 16) to one hundred shekels.

(18) Tyre—This seems to have been brought in by the Tyrians (verse 22), and it may be noted that the only other notice of ivory in the history is in the “ivory house” of Ahab (chap. xxi. 39), who was allied with Tyre. In Ps. xlv. 8 (presumably of the age of Solomon) we find mention of “ivory palaces,” or possibly “caskets.” The Tyrians are described in Ezek. xxvii. 15 as receiving it through Dedan in Arabia, whither, no doubt, it came from India. But the Egyptians used ivory largely, drawing it from Africa; and there was, in later times, a port on the Red Sea which was a mart for ivory. The Tyrians may, therefore, have imported it both from India and from Africa. The throne of Solomon was probably inlaid with ivory and gold. Traces of such inlaying are found in Assyrian and Egyptian monuments. It is probable that, like his other architectural and decorative work, it was executed by Tyrian workmen, and the detailed description of it shows how greatly it impressed the imagination of Israel. The lion was the emblem of the house of Judah; the number twelve corresponded to the twelve tribes; and the exaltation of the throne—especially remarkable in a country where men sat commonly on the ground or on cushions—was the emblem of majesty. In the Dictionary of the Bible (“Throne”) is given a sketch of an Assyrian throne, from a Nineveh bas-relief, which has horses in the position, supporting “the stays,” or arms of the throne, here ascribed to the lions.

(21) None were of silver.—See 2 Chron. ix. 27. “The king made silver in Jerusalem as stones.” The importation of silver (see verse 22) was by the navy of Tarshish; and the mention of the plentifulness of silver seems the reason for noticing the existence of this navy.

(22) A navy of Tarshish.—There seems little doubt that the Tarshish of Scripture is properly Tarsus in Spain, which name, indeed, is drawn from an Aramaic form of Tarshish. For (a) Tarshish is first noted in Gen. vi. 4 as among the descendants of Javan, the son of Japhet, which probably points to a European position; (b) in some other places (Isa. xxiii. 1, 6, 10, 14; Ezek. xxvii. 12, 13) as here, and in chap. xxvii. 48, it is closely connected with Tyre, of which Tarsus is expressly said by Arrian to have been a colony; (c) from Jonah i. 3, iv. 2, we gather that it was on the Mediterranean Sea; (d) the silver, which was evidently the chief import by this navy of Tarshish, was in ancient times found in large quantities in Spain, as also “the iron, lead, and tin,” mentioned with the silver in Ezek. xxvii. 12. But the phrase “ships of Tarshish” appears to have become a technical phrase for ships of large size (see Isa. ii. 17; Jer. x. 9; Ps. xlivii. 8); hence a “navy of Tarshish” would not necessarily mean a navy going to Tarshish.

Now, the fleet of Solomon here named is not in the text identified with the navy of Ophir, starting from Ezion-geber. Its imports (except gold, which is not distinctive) are not the same, and the separate mention of it seems rather to argue its distinctness. The
So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom. And all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. And they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments, and armour, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year. And Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, whom he bestowed in the cities for chariots, and with the king at Jerusalem. And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he to be as the sycamore trees that are in the vale, for abundance. And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn: the king’s merchants received the linen yarn at a
price. (29) And a chariot came up and went out of Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and an horse for an hundred and fifty: and so for all the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, did they bring them out by their means.

CHAPTER XI.—(1) But king Solomon loved many strange women, togetherness with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites; (2) of which the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, ‘Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall ye marry them;’ for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love.

(3) And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. (4) For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and the nations of Egypt. The parallel passages of 2 Chron. i. 16, 17, ix. 25, give us no help, for the former is exactly the same as this, and the latter runs thus: “And they brought unto Solomon horses out of Egypt and out of all lands.”

(29) A chariot. This is the chariot and its team of two or three horses; the "horse" is the charger. The price (though so far considerable as to indicate a large expenditure on the whole) shows that the supply was large, and the commerce regular.

The kings of the Hittites, and the kings of Syria—evidently allies or tributaries of Solomon, who were allowed, or compelled, to purchase his horses and chariots through his merchants. Of all the earlier inhabitants of Palestine the Hittites alone are mentioned as having existed in power after the conquest (as here and in 2 Kings vii. 6); and this statement is curiously confirmed by both Egyptian and Assyrian inscriptions, describing a powerful confederacy of Hittites in the valley of the Orontes in Syria, not far from Phoenicia, with whom both empires waged war. The possession of horses and chariots by the northern confederacy round Hazor is especially noted in the history of the Conquest (Josh. x. 4—6).

XI.

The historical order in this chapter is curiously broken. (a) In verses 1—13 we have a notice of the polygamy and idolatry of Solomon, and the prediction of the transference of the kingdom to his servant; (b) This reference to Jeroboam suggests a brief record of the rising up of "adversaries" to Solomon, Hadad and Rezon, as well as Jeroboam himself, which belongs to the earlier times of Solomon’s reign (verses 14—40). (c) After this digression there is the formal notice of Solomon’s death and burial (verses 41—45).

(1—8) The defection of Solomon is distinctly traced to his polygamy, contracting numerous marriages with "strange women." Polygamy is also attributed to David (see 2 Sam. iii. 2—5; xv. 16), marking perhaps the characteristic temperament of voluptuousness, which seduced him into his great sin; but it was carried out by Solomon on a scale corresponding to the magnificence of his kingdom, and probably had in his case the political object of alliance with neighbouring or tributary kings. We find it inherited by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 18—21), and it probably became in different degrees the practice of succeeding kings. Hitherto, while polygamy, as everywhere in the East, had to some degree existed in Israel from patriarchal times, yet it must have been checked by the marriage regulations of the Law. Nor had there yet been the royal magnificence and wealth, under which alone it attains to full development. We have some traces of it in the households of some of the Judges. Gideon (Judg. viii. 30), Jair (Judg. x. 4), Ibzan and Abdon (Judg. xii. 9, 14). Now, however, it became, in spite of the prohibition of the Law (Deut. xvii. 17), a recognised element of royal self-indulgence—such as is described in Eccl. ii. 7, 8, and is perhaps traceable even through the beauty of the Song of Solomon. In itself, seen without any incidental consequences, it must necessarily be a demoralising power, as sinning against the primeval ordinance of God, and robbing natural relations of their true purity and sacredness. But in actual fact it sinned still more by involving forbidden marriages with idolatrous races, with the often-predicted effect of declension into idolatry.

(1) Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, Hittites.—The first three of these races were kindred to Israel and of the stock of Abraham, and were now among the subjects of Solomon; the last two were of the old Canaanitish stock, and were now inferior allies. To the last alone properly attached the prohibition of the Law (Exod. xxxiv. 12—16; Deut. vii. 3, 4), but the reason on which that prohibition was grounded was now equally applicable to the others; for they also had fallen into the worship of false gods. Hence the extension of it to them, recognised by the Jews after the captivity (Ezra ix. 2, 11, 12; Neh. xiii. 23—29).

It is to be noted that the marriage with the daughter of Pharaoh is apparently distinguished from these connections, which are so greatly censured, and that there is no mention of the introduction of any Egyptian idolatry.

(3) Seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines.—The harem of an Eastern king is simply an adjunct of his magnificence, and the relation of the wives to him little more than nominal. (Comp. Esth. ii. 14.) Nor does the statement here made necessarily imply that at any one time the whole number existed. Still, the numbers here given, though found also in the LXX. and in Josephus, are not only extraordinarily large, but excessive in comparison with the "three-score queens and fourscore concubines" of Caut, vi. 8, and disproportionate in the relative number of the superior and inferior wives. It is possible that, in relation to the former, at any rate, the text may be corrupt, though the corruption must be of ancient date.

(4) When Solomon was old.—It is clearly implied that the evil influence belonged to the time of scale, feebleness, possibly the premature result of a life of indulgence; for he could not have been very old, if he was "but a child" at the time of his accession. But, as it is not at all likely that Solomon forsook the worship of God (see verses 5, 6, and ix. 25), it would seem
his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father. (5) For Solomon went after "Ash- 
toreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. (6) And Solomon did

nered, I. KINGS, XI. to Idolatry. 

that his idolatry was rather the inclination to an eclectic adoption of various forms of faith and worship, as simply various phases of reverence to the One Supreme Power, each having its own peculiar significance and beauty. Such a spirit, holding itself superior to the old laws and principles of the faith of Israel, was the natural fruit of an overweening confidence in his own wisdom—the philosophic spirit, "holding no creed, but contemplating" and condescending to "all." Whatever it may have owed to the baser female influence, the Ammonite idolatry, so well known in the countries where woman is held a mere toy, it seems likely to have been, still more naturally, the demoralising effect of an absolutely despotick power, of a world-wide fame for wisdom, and of an over-luxurious magnificence. It may have even had a kind of harmony with the weary and hopeless conviction that "all things were vanity:" for there is something of kinship between the belief that all wor- ships are true, and that all worships are false. It may also have been thought good policy to conciliate the subject races, by doing honour to their religions, much as the Roman Empire delighted to do, when faith in its own religion had died out. How absolutely incompatible such a spirit is with the faith in the One only God of Israel, and in itself even more monstrous than avowed devotion to false gods, is indignantly declared by Ezekiel (Ezek. xiv. 3, 4, xx. 39). How utter the practi-
cal incongruity, is obvious on the slightest consideration of the contrast between the impure and bloody worship of the false gods, and the lofty spiritual worship of the God of Israel.

Ashtaroth (or, Astarte).—The goddess of the Zidonians, and possibly the Hittites, corresponding to Baal, the great Tyrian god, and representing the recep-
tive and productive, as Baal the active and originative, power in Nature. As usual in all phases of Nature-worship, Ashtaroth is variously represented, sometimes by the moon, sometimes by the planet Venus (like the Assyrian Ishtar, which seems a form of the same name) -in either case regarded as "the queen of heaven." (See Jer. xlv. 25). There seems, indeed, some reason to believe that the name itself is derived from a root which is found both in Syriac and Persian, and which became aster in the Greek and astarte in Latin, and has thence passed into modern European languages, signifying a "star," or luminary of heaven. With this agrees the ancient name, Ashterōth-Karnain (or, "the horned Ashereth") of a city in Bashan (Gen. xiv. 5; Deut. i. 4; Josh. xiii. 12). This place is the first in which the name Ashereth is used in the singular number, and expressly limited to the "goddess of the Zidonians." In the earlier history we hear not unfre-
quently of the worship of the "Ashtaroth," that is, of the "Ashtoreths," found with the like plural Baalim, as prevalent in Canaan, and adopted by Israel in evil times (see Judges ii. 13, x. 6; 1 Sam. vii. 3, xii. 10, xxi. 10). The worship of the goddesses of various kinds of idolatry. The worship of the Tyrian Ashtoreth, as might be supposed from the idea which she was supposed to represent, was one of chartered license and impurity.

Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites. —The name Milcom (like the Malcham of Jer. xlix. 1. 3) is probably only a variety of the well-known Molech, which is actually used for it in verse 7. The name "Molech" (though here connected expressly with the Amnonite idolatry) is a general title, signifying only "king" (as Baal signifies "lord"), and might be applied to the supreme god of any idolatrous system. Thus the worship of "Molech," with its horrible sacrifice of children "passing through the fire," is forbid-

evil in the sight of the Lord, and I went not fully after the Lord, as did David his father. Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomi-
naution of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the aboma-

Chemosh, the abomination of the Moabites. —The name Chemosh probably means "the Conqueror," or "Subjugator," and indicates a god of battles. He is again and again described as the god of the Moabites, who are called Chemosh people in Numbers xxii. 29; Jer. xlviii. 7, 13, 46; and the Moabite Stone speaks of the slain in war as an offering to Chemosh, and even refers to a deity, "Ashtar-Chemoosh," which looks like a conjunction of Chemosh, like Baal, with Ashtoreth. In Judges xi. 24, Jephtah refers to Chemosh as the god of the Ammonite king, an ex-
pression which may indicate a temporary supremacy of Moab over Ammon at that time, through which the name "Chemosh" superseded the name "Milcom" as descriptive of the Supreme Power. In the history, more-
over, of the Moabite war against Jehoram (2 Kings iii. 26. 27) it seems that to Chemosh, as to Molech, human sacrifice was offered.

Probably, in actual practice the various worships of the Tyrians and Canaanites, the Ammonites and the Moabites might run into each other. Unlike the awful and exclusive reverence to the Lord Jehovah, the devotion of polytheistic systems readily welcomes strange gods into its Pantheon. Polytheism is also apt to pass into what has been called "Nenotheism," in which, of many gods each is for the moment wor-
shiped, as if he stood alone, and concentrated in him-
self the whole attributes of deity. The generality and
David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. (13) Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen.

(14) And the Lord stirred up an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite: he was of the king's seed in Edom. (15) For it came to pass, when David was in Edom, and Joab the captain of the host was gone up to bury the slain, after he had smitten every male in Edom; (16) (for six months did Joab remain there with all Israel, until he had cut off every male in Edom;) (17) that Hadad fled, he and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him, to go into Egypt; Hadad being yet a little similarity of meaning in the names, Baal ("lord"), Molech ("king"), and Chemosh ("conqueror"), seem to point to this direction. Still, these worships are described as taking, in Jerusalem, distinct forms and habitations, which continued till the days of Josiah (2 Kings xxiii. 13), no doubt disused and condemned in days of religious faithfulness, such as those of Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah, but revived, and associated with newer idolatries, in days of apostasy.

(18) Which had appeared unto him twice. (See chap. iii. 5; lx. 2.) Stress is laid on these direct visions of the Lord to Solomon, as contrasted with the usual indirect revelation through the prophets, and so carrying with them peculiar privilege and responsibility.

(12, 13) For David my servant's sake—that is, evidently, in order to fulfil the promise to David. By the postponement of the chastisement, the blessing promised to his son personally would be still preserved; by the retaining of the kingdom, though shorn of its splendour, and limited to Judah, the larger and more important promise, the continuance of the family of David till the coming of the Messiah, would be fulfilled. The "one tribe" is, of course, Judah, with which Benjamin was indissolubly united by the very position of the city, and would lie not far from the foot of the mountain, which had appeared unto him twice. (See chap. iii. 5; lx. 2.)

(14) Hadad the Edomite. The name (or rather, title) Hadad (with the kindred names Hadar, Hadadzer or Hadarazer, and Benhadad) is most frequently found as a designation of the kings of Syria. Here, however, as also in Gen. xxxvi. 35, 1 Chron. i. 46, 50, it is given to members of the royal family of Edom. According to ancient authorities, it is a Syriac title of the sun—in this respect like the more celebrated title Pharaoh—assumed by the king, either as indicating descent from the sun-god, or simply as an appellation of splendour and majesty. The Hadad here mentioned seems to have been the last seign of the royal house, escaping alone, as a child, from the slaughter of his kindred and people.

(15) The war here described is briefly noted, with some differences of detail, in 2 Sam. viii. 12—14, 1 Chron. xvii. 11—13, and Ps. lx. (title and verse 8). It is there closely connected with the great struggle with the Syrians, and the victory is ascribed in one record to Joab, in the other to Abishai. Here David himself is described as taking part in the war—perhaps completing the conquest, as in the war with Ammon, after it had been successfully begun by Joab (2 Sam. xii: 26—31). (Instead of "David was in Edom," the LXX. and other versions read "David destroyed Edom," by a slight variation of the Hebrew text.) The war was evidently one of ruthless extermination of "every male," except those who fled the country, or found refuge in its rocky fastnesses, and was carried on by systematic ravage under the command of Joab. How it was provoked we do not know; for we have no previous notice of Edom since the time of the Exodus, except a reference to war against it in the days of Saul (1 Sam. xiv. 47).
child. (18) And they arose out of Midian, and came to Paran: and they took men with them out of Paran, and they came to Egypt, unto Pharaoh king of Egypt; which gave him an house, and appointed him victuals, and gave him land. (19) And Hadad found great favour in the sight of Pharaoh, so that he gave him to wife the sister of his own wife, the sister of Tahpenes the queen. (20) And the sister of Tahpenes bare him Genubath his son, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh’s house: and Genubath was in Pharaoh’s household among the sons of Pharaoh. (21) And when Hadad heard in Egypt that David slept with his fathers, and that Joab the captain of the host was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, ‘Let me depart, that I may go to mine own country.’ (22) Then Pharaoh said unto him, But what hast thou lacked with me, that, behold, thou seestest to go to thine own country? And he answered, ‘Nothing: howbeit let me go in any wise.’ (23) And God stirred him up another adversary, Rezon the son of Eliadah, which fled from his lord Hadadezer king of Zobah: (24) and he gathered men unto him, and became captain over a band, when David slew them of Zobah: and they went to Damascus, and dwelt

(19) They arose out of Midian.—The expression is a curious one: for we should have expected the starting-point of the Midianitish tribes settled between Edom and the desert of Paran, or to a city Midian, not far from the Gulf of Elath, of which some ancient authorities speak, and to which the LXX. expressly refers here.

Paran (see Gen. xx. 21; Num. x. 12, xii. 16, xiii. 3, 26; 1 Sam. xxv. 1) is part of the Sinai region, adjacent to the wilderness of Zin, and north of the range now called the El-Tih mountains. It lies to the west of the Edomite territory, and was then evidently inhabited by an independent race, from which the fugitive companions of Hadad enlisted support.

Pharaoh king of Egypt.—The dynasty then reigning in Lower Egypt is that called the twenty-first, or Tanite, dynasty. Chronological considerations, and perhaps internal probabilities, suggest that this Pharaoh was not the same as the king who became father-in-law to Solomon. But the same policy of alliance with the occupants of Palestine and the neighbourhood is equally exemplified in both cases, though by different methods; and accords well with the apparent decadence of Egyptian power at this time, of which very little record is preserved in the monuments. Jealousy of the growing power of Israel under David and Solomon might prompt this favourable reception of Hadad, as afterwards of Jeroboam. The marriage of Solomon with the daughter of Pharaoh, and the active co-operation of Pharaoh against Gezer (chap. ix. 16), indicate an intervening variation of policy, without, however, any change in the general design of securing Egypt by alliances on the north-east. In this case the intermarriage of Hadad with the royal house, and the inclusion of his son Genubath among the children of Pharaoh, argue an unusual distinction, which could only have been due to a high estimate of the importance of influence over the strong country of Edom, and of the future chances of Hadad’s recovery of the throne.

(10) Tahpenes the queen—a name unknown, either in history or in the Egyptian monuments. (20) Genubath is similarly unknown. The meaning in the house of Pharaoh, no doubt with the customary festival (comp. Gen. xx. 18), indicated the admittance of the child into the royal family of Egypt.

(21, 22) When Hadad heard.—If (as the text seems to suggest) this took place on the news of the death of David and of Joab, the scourge of Edom, it belongs, of course, to the early part of the reign of Solomon, before his power was established. The courteous evasion by the Pharaoh of that time of Hadad’s request for permission to return, may probably indicate the beginning of the change of attitude towards the powerful monarchy of Israel, which took effect in the subsequent close alliance of the kingdoms. As the text stands, the record here stops abruptly, and then recurs to Hadad by a curious allusion in verse 25. It can hardly be doubted that there is some omission or dislocation of the text. The LXX. (in the Vatican MS.) introduces after the words “Hadad the Edomite” in verse 16, the words “and Rezon the son of Eliadah . . . all the days of Solomon” from verses 23—25; and then, resuming the story of Hadad, adds, after the record of his request to Pharaoh, “and Hadad returned to his land. This is the mischief which Hadad did, and he abhorred Israel, and reigned over Edom.” Josephus, on the other hand, says that at the time of the original request, Pharaoh refused permission; but that in the declining years of Solomon it was granted, and that Hadad, finding it impossible to excite rebellion in Edom, which was strongly garrisoned, joined Rezon in Syria, and with him established an independent power, and did mischief to Israel. (Ant. viii. 6, 6.) This account is itself probable enough; it accounts, moreover, for the close connection in the history (especially in the LXX. reading) between Hadad and Rezon, and for the insertion of the whole matter in this place; and accords also with the fact that, while Syria seems at once to become independent after the death of Solomon, we hear of no revolt of Edom till the time of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. xx.).

Rezon the son of Eliadah.—The name Rezon, which is not unlike the “Rezin” of 2 Kings xvi., appears to signify “ prince,” and might naturally mark the founder of a new power. In I Kings xv. 18 we read of a Rezin, king of Damascus, who would belong to this generation, and may be identical with Rezon. The tradition quoted by Josephus (Ant. vii. 5, 2) from Nicolaus of Damascus, that for ten generations from the days of David, all the kings of Syria bore the name of Hadad, probably means only that the title Hadad was the official title of the monarchy.

(24) When David slew them of Zobah.—The account of this war is found in 2 Sam. vii. 1—13. The kingdom of Zobah was evidently a powerful state at that time, at war with the Syrian kingdom of Hamath,
Jeroboam was a mighty man of valour: and Solomon seeing the young man that he was industrious, he made him ruler over all the charge of the house of Joseph. (20) And it came to pass at that time when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way; and he had clad himself with a new garment; and they two were alone in the field: (20) and Ahijah caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces: (31) and he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for

but holding supremacy over the Syrians of Damascus, and the “Syrians beyond the river” Emphrates; and (as the record shows) accumulating vast treasures of gold, silver, and brass. The establishment of Rezon (and Hadad?) at Damascus must have taken place later; for at the time we find that David “put governors in Damascus,” and reduced its inhabitants to a tributary condition. Possibly there may have been some rising early in the reign of Solomon; for in 2 Chron. viii. 3, we find that Solomon had to “go up against Hamath-zobah,” with which expedition the foundation of Tadmor seems to be connected. But it is probable that the establishment of an independent power in Damascus dated only from the later days of Solomon.

Beside the mischief that Hadad did.—The expression, as it stands, is curiously abrupt in its original condition. Possibly it was a phrase, “beside the mischief that God had done,” which was abbreviated in the following verse. (20) Beside the mischief that Hadad did.—The expression, as it stands, is curiously abrupt in its original condition. Possibly it was a phrase, “beside the mischief that God had done,” which was abbreviated in the following verse.

The son of a widow woman.—This phrase, livered by Ahijah first repeats exactly the former symbolical acts is frequent in subsequent prophecy (especially see Jer. xiii. 1, xix. 1, xxvii. 2; Ezek. iv. v., xii. 1—7, xxiv. 3, 15), often alternating with symbolical visions and symbolical parables or allegories. The object is, of course, to arrest attention, and call out the inquiry (Ezek. xxiv. 19): “Wilt thou not tell us what these things are to us?” Ahijah’s rendering of his own new garment is used, like Samuel’s rendering of Samuel’s mantle (1 Sam. xx. 27, 28), to symbolise the rending away of the kingdom. (See verses 11—13.)

Take thee ten pieces.—The message delivered by Ahijah first repeats exactly the former warning to Solomon (verses 9—13), marking, by the
God's Promises

I. KINGS, XI. to Jeroboam.

thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee: (32) but he shall have one tribe for my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel:) (33) because that they have forsaken me, and have worshipped Ashtaroth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon, and have not walked in my ways, to do that which is right in mine eyes, and to keep my statutes and my judgments, as did David his father. (34) Howbeit I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand: but I will make him prince all the days of his life for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept my commandments and my statutes: (35) but "I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and will give it unto thee, even ten tribes. (36) And unto his son will I give one tribe, that David my servant may have a light alway before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen me to put my name there. (37) And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt be king over Israel. (38) And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do that is right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did; that I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee. (39) And I will for this afflict the seed of David, but not for ever. (40) Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam. And Jeroboam arose, and fled into Egypt, unto Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon. (41) And the rest of the acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wisdom, two reserved pieces of the garment, the duality of the "one tribe" reserved for the house of David; next, it conveys to Jeroboam a promise like that given to David (so far as it was a temporal promise), "to build thee a sure house, as I built for David," on condition of the obedience which David, with all his weakness and sin, had shown, and from which Solomon, in spite of all his wisdom, had fallen away; and lastly, declares, in accordance with the famous declaration of 2 Sam. vii. 14—16, that sin in the house of David should bring with it severe chastisement, but not final rejection. In estimating the "sin of Jeroboam," the existence of this promise of security and blessing to his kingdom must be always taken into consideration. (40) Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam.—The knowledge of the promise in itself would be sufficient to excite the jealousy of the old king, and incite him to endeavour to falsify it by the death of Jeroboam. But from verse 26 it may be inferred that Jeroboam, characteristically enough, had not patience to wait for its fulfilment, and that he sought in some way by overt act to clutch, or prepare to clutch, at royalty. The addition to the LXX. describes him, before his flight into Egypt, as collecting three hundred chariots, and assuming royal pretensions, taking advantage of his presidency over "the house of Joseph." Shishak king of Egypt.—The Shishak of the Old Testament is certainly to be identified with the Sheshenq of the Egyptian monuments, the Sesonchis or Sesonechos of the Greek historians; and the identification is an important point in the Biblical chronology, for the accession of Sheshenq is fixed by the Egyptian traditions at about B.C. 880. It is a curious proof of historical accuracy that the generic name Pharao is not given to Shishak here. For it appears that he was not of the old royal line, but the founder of a new dynasty (the 23rd), called the Bubastite dynasty, in which several names are believed to have a Semitic origin, arguing foreign extraction; and in one genealogical table his ancestors appear not to have been of royal rank. It seems that he united (perhaps by marriage) the lines of the two dynasties which previously ruled freely in Upper and Lower Egypt, and so inaugurated a new era of prosperity and conquest. His invasion of Judah in the fifth year of Rehoboam (see chap. xiv. 25) is chronicled in the monuments as belonging to the twentieth year of his own reign. He was, therefore, king for the last fifteen years of Solomon's reign; and his favourable reception of the rebel Jeroboam indicates a natural change of attitude towards the Israelite power. The LXX. addition describes Jeroboam (in a passage clearly suggested by what is recorded in verses 19, 20 about Hadad) as receiving from Shishak: "Ano, the elder sister of Tahpenes, his queen," which involves an anachronism, for Tahpenes belonged to an earlier Pharaoh. But the whole history implies a close political alliance of Shishak with Jeroboam, both as an exile and as a king. (41) The book of the acts of Solomon.—In 2 Chron. ix. 29 the acts of Solomon are said to be "written in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer against Jeroboam the son of Nebat." The prophets appear here in the character of annalists. The book of Nathan presumably contained only the history of the early years; that of Ahijah may have well covered most of the later reign; and the "visions of Iddo" could but have dealt incidentally with the closing acts of Solomon. The narrative as given in the Book of Kings is evidently a compilation drawn from various sources, differing in various parts, both in style and in degree of detail. Thus the account of the Temple building and dedication evidently comes from some temple record; and the references to Solomon's territory, and the arrangements of his kingdom, look like notes drawn from official archives.
are they not written in the book of the acts of Solomon? (42) And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years. (43) And Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father:

and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XII.—(1) And Rehoboam went to Shechem: for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king.

(42) Forty years.—The reign of Solomon was thus of the same length as that of his father. (See chap. ii. 11.) The coincidence is curious; but the accurate historical character of the whole narrative forbids the idea that the numbers given are merely round numbers, signifying long duration. Josephus gives eighty years—either by error in his Hebrew text, or perhaps by confusing together the duration of the two reigns.

NOTE.—The insertion in the LXX. version, found in the Vatican MS. after chap. xii. 24, runs as follows:—

"And there was a man of Mount Ephraim, a servant of Solomon, and his name was Sarira; a woman who was a harlot. And Solomon made him taskmaster, to divide the Israelite people. (c) But the Scriptural story altogether; nor is it found in any other version. Its origin is unknown, and its growth curious enough. But it does not seem to throw much fresh light on the history.

The narrative of the great revolution which led to the disruption of the kingdom, illustrates very strikingly the essential characteristic of the Scriptural history, which is to be found, not principally in the miraculous events recorded from time to time as an integral part of the history, but rather in the point of view from which all events alike are regarded. (a) Thus it is clear that the revolution had, in the first place, personal causes—in the stolid rashness of Rehoboam, mistaken obstinacy for vigour, and not knowing how and when rightly to yield; and in the character of Jeroboam, bold and active, astute and unscrupulous, the very type of a chief of revolution. (b) Behind these, again, lay social and political causes. The increase of wealth, culture, and civilisation under an enlightened despotism, which by its peaceful character precluded all scope and distraction of popular energies in war, created, as usual, desire and fitness for the exercise of freedom. The division of feeling and interest between the royal tribe of Judah and the rest of the people, headed by the tribe of Ephraim (for so many generations the strongest and the most leading tribe of Israel)—already manifested from time to time, and fostered perhaps by the less absolute allegiance of Israel to the house of David—now gave occasion to rebellion, when the strong hand of Solomon was removed. Perhaps, moreover, the intrigues of Egyptian jealousy may have already begun to divide the Israelite people. (c) But the Scriptural narrative, although it enables us to discover both these causes, dwells on neither. It looks exclusively to moral and spiritual causes: "The thing was from the Lord."—His righteous judgment on the idolatry, the pride, and the despotic self-indulgence of the Court, shared, no doubt, by the princes and people of Jerusalem, perhaps exciting a wholesome refection of feeling elsewhere. What in other history would be, at most, in—

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I. KINGS, XII.

Relaxation of the Yoke.

And it came to pass, when Jero- 
boam the son of Nebat, who was yet in 
Egypt, heard of it, (for he was fled from 
the presence of king Solomon, and Jero-
boam dwelt in Egypt;) (3) that they sent 
and called him. And Jeroboam and all 
the congregation of Israel came, and 
spake unto Rehoboam, saying, (4) Thy 
father made our yoke grievous: now 
therefore make thou the grievous service 
of thy father, and his heavy yoke which 
he put upon us, lighter, and we will 
serve thee. (5) And he said unto them, 
Depart yet for three days, then come 
again to me. And the people departed. 
(6) And king Rehoboam consulted with 
the old men, that stood before Solomon 
his father while he yet lived, and said, 
How do ye advise that I may answer 
this people? (7) And they spake unto 

him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant 
unto this people this day, and wilt serve 
them, and answer them, and speak good 
words to them, then they will be thy 
servants for ever.

(8) But he forsook the counsel of 
the old men, which they had given him, 
and consulted with the young men that were 
grown up with him, and which stood 
before him: (9) and he said unto them, 
What counsel give ye that we may 
answer this people, who have spoken to 
me, saying, Make the yoke which thy 
father did put upon us lighter? (10) And 
the young men that were grown up with 
him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt 
thou speak unto this people that spake 
unto thee, saying, Thy father made our 
yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter 
unto us; thus shalt thou say unto them,

(2) And it came to pass, when Jero-
boam the son of Nebat, who was yet in 
Egypt, heard of it, (for he was fled from 
the presence of king Solomon, and Jero-
boam dwelt in Egypt;) (3) that they sent 
and called him. And Jeroboam and all 
the congregation of Israel came, and 
spake unto Rehoboam, saying, (4) Thy 
father made our yoke grievous: now 
therefore make thou the grievous service 
of thy father, and his heavy yoke which 
he put upon us, lighter, and we will 
serve thee. (5) And he said unto them, 
Depart yet for three days, then come 
again to me. And the people departed. 
(6) And king Rehoboam consulted with 
the old men, that stood before Solomon 
his father while he yet lived, and said, 
How do ye advise that I may answer 
this people? (7) And they spake unto 

ferred by conjecture, as underlying more obvious causes, 
is here placed in the forefront as a matter of course. 
For the history of Israel, as a history of God's dealings 
with the chosen people, is the visible and supernatural 
type of the dealings of His natural Providence with all 
His creatures.

(1) All Israel came to Shechem to 
make him king.—In the case of David, we find that, 
when he was made king over Israel, "he made a 
league" with the elders of Israel (2 Sam. v. 3), ap-
parently implying a less absolute royalty than that to 
which he had been anointed, without conditions, over 
the house of Judah (2 Sam. ii. 4); and in his restora-
tion after the death of Absalom, there appears to be 
some recognition of a right of distinct action on the 
part of the men of Israel in relation to the kingdom 
(2 Sam. xix. 9, 10, 41—43; xx. 1, 2). Even in the 
coronation of Solomon, we find distinction made be-
tween royalty "over all Israel and over Judah." (See 
chap. i. 35; and comp. chap. iv. 1.) Accordingly, Reho-
boam seems to succeed without question to the throne 
of Judah, but to need to be "made king" by the rest 
of Israel, with apparently some right on their part to 
require conditions before acceptance. It is significant, 
however, that this ceremonial is fixed, not at Jerusalem, 
but at Shechem, the chief city of Ephraim, of ancient 
dignity, even from patriarchal times, as of singular 
beauty and fertility of position, which became, as a 
matter of course, the capital of the northern kingdom 
after the disruption. Perhaps, in this arrangement, 
which seems to have had no precedent, there was some 
omen of revolution.

(2) For he was fled.—In 2 Chron. x. 2, and in 
the LXX. version (or, rather versions, for there is 
variety of reading) of this passage, Jeroboam is made 
to return from Egypt, on hearing of the death of Solo-
mon, to his own city, and to be "sent for" thence. 
This is obviously far more probable, and might be read 
in the Hebrew by a slight alteration of the text.

(4) We will serve thee.—It seems evident from 
the tone of the narrative, and especially from the 
absence of all resentment on the part of the king on the 
presentation of these conditions, that they were acting 
within their right; and whatever Jeroboam's designs 
may have been, there is no sign of any general predeter-
nation of rebellion. The imposition of the burdens 
of heavy taxation and forced labour on the people was 
against old traditions, and even against the practice of 
Solomon's earlier years. (See chaps. iv. 20, ix. 20— 
22.) To demand a removal, or alleviation of these, 
was perfectly compatible with a loyal willingness to "serve" 
the new king. The demand might naturally be sug-
gested by Jeroboam, who, by his official position, knew 
well the severity of the burden.

(7) If thou wilt be a servant.—Both the policies 
suggested show how corrupt and cynical the govern-
ment of Israel had become. For the advice of the old 
counsellors has no largeness of policy or depth of 
wisdom. It is simply the characteristic advice of 
experienced and crafty politicians—who had seen the 
gradual development of despotic power, and had still 
remembrance of the comparative freedom of earlier 
days—understanding at once the dangerous vehemence 
of popular excitement, and the facility with which it 
may be satisfied by temporary concessions, and perhaps 
desiring to defeat that private ambition, which was 
making use for its own purposes of the natural sense 
of grievance. It is to give "good words," and to be 
for the moment "a servant to the people," with, perhaps, 
the intention of abolishing certain excessive grievances, 
but by no means of yielding up substantial power. 
Whether it was in itself more than superficially prudent, 
would depend on the seriousness of the grievances, 
and the social and political condition of the people.

(10) Thus shalt thou speak.—The advice of the 
young men—the spoilt children of a magnificent and 
luxurious despotism, of which alone they had experi-
ence—is the language of the arrogant self-confidence, 
which mistakes obstinacy for vigour, and, blind to all 
signs of the times, supposes that what once was possible, 
and perhaps good for the national progress, must last for 
ever. It is couched in needlessly and absurdly offen-
uous language; but it is, as all history shows—perhaps 
not least the history of our own Stuart dynasty—a not 
infrequent policy in revolutionary times; holding that 
yield in one point is to endanger the whole fabric 
of sovereign power; relying on the prestige of an
My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins. (11) And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions. (12) So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, saying, Come to me again the third day. (13) And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him; (14) and spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke; my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions. (15) Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people; for the cause was from the Lord, that he might perform his saying, which the Lord spake by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat. (16) So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents. (17) But as for the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them. (18) Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the tribute; and all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. Therefore king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem. (19) So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day. (20) And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again, that Jeroboam follows the counsel of the Young Men.

I. KINGS, XII.

1 Reign, hard by.

2 Rich, strength, and fell away.

3 Or, fell away.

authority proudly confident in itself; and trusting to cow by threats the classes long subject to despotic oppression, and despised accordingly by those who wield it. It can succeed only when the popular disaffection is superficial, or when a nation is wearied out with revolutionary fanaticism and failure. (11) The scorpion is probably (like the Roman flagellum) a whip, the lash of which is loaded with weights and sharp points. (12) For the cause was from the Lord.—The very idea of the Scriptural history, referring all things to God, necessarily brings us continually face to face with the great mystery of life—the reconciliation of God's all-foreseeing and all-ordaining Providence with the freedom, and, in consequence, with the folly and sin of man. The whole of Holy Scripture—on this point confirming natural reason—simply recognises both powers as real, without any attempt, even by suggestion, to harmonise them together. It, of course, refers all to God's will, fulfilling or answering itself in many ways, inspiring and guiding the good, and overcoming the evil, in man. But it as invariably implies human freedom and responsibility. Rehoboam's folly and arrogance worked out the ordained judgment of God; but they were folly and arrogance still. (12) To your tents.—This war-cry was not new. It had been heard once before, during the conflict between Judah and Israel after the rebellion of Absalom, when it was silenced instantly by the relentless promptitude of Joab (2 Sam. xx. 1). Only the last ironical line is added, "See to thine own house, David" (which the LXX. explains as "Feed, as a shepherd, thine own house, David"). There is perhaps a sarcastic allusion to God's promise to establish the house of David: "Be a king, but only in thine own house!"

(17) The children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah.—The expression is doubly significant. (a) Historically the tribe of Judah had its semi-independent tribes—Simeon, already absorbed into Judah; Dan, in great part transferred to the extreme north; and Benjamin, closely united to Judah by the position of Jerusalem. All these, it would seem, are here included so that the territory of the southern kingdom would be really the Judea of later times. In addition to these, we find from 2 Chron. xi. 13—16, that, at any rate after the idolatry of Jeroboam, priests and Levites and other Israelites made their way into the cities of Judah. (b) But, besides this, there may be a significance in the phrase "children of Israel." Although the northern kingdom henceforth inherited the proud title of the kingdom of Israel, the phrase, as here used, is perhaps intended to remind the reader that in Judah also dwelt "children of Israel"—true descendants of the "Prince of God," and inheritors of the promise.

(19) Unto this day.—The phrase argues the incorporation into the narrative of an older document.

(20) Jeroboam was come again.—The assembly at Shechem probably broke up in disorder, carrying everywhere the news of the rebellion. It would be quite in harmony with Jeroboam's sagacity, if, after setting the revolution on foot, he himself stood aloof from leadership, and waited till "the congregation," the duly summoned assembly, sent for him and offered him the crown. The title "king over all Israel" certainly indicates a claim on the part of the ten tribes to be the true Israel, relying perhaps on the prophetic choice and
Rehoboam Raises an Army, but I. KINGS, XII. is Forbidden by Shemaiah.

they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel: there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.

(21) And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon. (22) But the word of God came unto Shemaiah the man of God, saying, (23) Speak unto Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the remnant of the people, saying, (24) Thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren; for this thing is from me. They hearkened therefore to the word of the Lord, and returned to depart, according to the word of the Lord.

(25) Then Jeroboam built Shechem, and dwelt therein; and went out from thence, and built Peniel. (26) And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David: (27) if this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah. (28) Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem:

blessing of Jeroboam, and professing to have risen in the name of the Lord against the idolatry of Solomon and his house. Perhaps it also indicated a desire for the subjugation of Judah, which Jeroboam, with the aid of Shishak, certainly seems to have subsequently attempted.

(20, 21) In these two verses we have again the same curious juxtaposition of “the tribe of Judah only” and “the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin.” The army gathered would be, no doubt, drawn from Solomon’s established and disciplined forces, as well as from the levy of Judah and Benjamin generally—perhaps including (as in 2 Sam. xvi. 27) contingents from the tributary races—who would be attached with a strong personal allegiance to the house of Solomon, and prepared to stamp out the rebellion, before it could thoroughly organise itself for disciplined resistance.

(22) Shemaiah the man of God. —From the notices in 2 Chron. xii. 5–8, 15, it would seem that, while Ahijah belonged to Shiloh in Ephraim, and continued to dwell there, Shemaiah was rather attached to Judah, and hence, that his interference to protect the new kingdom was the more striking and unexpected. In this interposition, to which probably the very preservation of Jeroboam’s half-formed kingdom was due, there is a fresh indication of the great opportunity given to that kingdom to maintain itself under the blessing of God and in devotion to His service. The phrase “your brethren, the children of Israel,” marks this with much emphasis.

(23) Jeroboam built Shechem. —Shechem had passed through many vicissitudes of fortune. It was already a city when Abraham entered the Promised Land (Gen. xii. 6), and is from time to time mentioned in the patriarchal history (Gen. xxxiii. 18, xxxiv. xxxv. 4, xxxvii. 12, 15). At the Conquest it became a city of refuge (Josh. xx. 7, xxxi. 20, 21), and the scene of the solemn recital of the blessings and curses of the Law (Josh. viii. 33–35). From its proximity to Shiloh, and to the inheritance of Joshua, it assumed something of the character of a capital (Josh. xxxiv. 1, 32). Then it became the seat of the usurpation of Abimelech, which allied itself with the native inhabitants of the region; but rebelling afterwards against him, it was destroyed (Judges ix.). We then hear nothing more of it till this chapter, when the tribes assemble at Shechem, under the shadow of the famous hills of Ebal and Gerizim, to meet Rehoboam. Jeroboam is said to have “built it” anew. This may be taken literally, as indicating that it had never recovered from its destruction by Abimelech, or it may simply mean that he fortified and enlarged it as his capital. Subsequently it gave way to Tirzah and Samaria; but its almost unrivalled position preserved it in importance among the Samaritans after the Captivity, even down to our Lord’s time, and under the name of Nablious (Neapolis) it has lasted to the present day, while many other cities once famous have passed away.

Penuel.—See Gen. xxxiii. 30, 31; Judges viii. 17. It lay on or near the Jabok, on the other side of Jordan, commanding the road from the east by Succoth to the fords of Jordan. Jeroboam built it—perhaps out of the ruin in which it had been left by Gideon—as an outpost to his new capital, and a royal stronghold among the tribes on the east of Jordan.

(27, 28) In these verses is recorded the adoption of the fatal policy which has caused Jeroboam to be handed down in the sacred record as “the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.” Hitherto his new royalty had been inaugurated under a Divine sanction, both as receiving distinct promise of permanence and blessing (chap. xi. 37, 38), and as protected by open prophetic interference, at the critical moment when its ill-consolidated force might have been crushed. Nor is it unlikely that it may have been supported by a wholesome reaction against the idolatry, as well as against the despotism, of Solomon. Now, unsatisfied with these securities of his kingdom, and desirous to strengthen it by a bold stroke of policy, he takes the step which mars the bright promise of his accession. Yet the policy was exceedingly natural. In Israel, beyond all other nations, civil and religious allegiance were indissolubly united; it was almost impossible to see how separate national existence could have been sustained without the creation, or (as it might seem)
Idolatry of Jerusalem apparently a serious one. The worship at Dan and Bethel was not the bloody and sensual worship of false gods, but the worship of the Lord Jehovah under the form of a visible emblem, meant to be a substitute for the ark and the overshadowing cherubim. It might have been plausibly urged that, to save Israel from all temptation to the abominations which Solomon had introduced, it was necessary to give their faith the visible support of these great local sanctuaries, and the laying on of hands (which is profanesim); but the occasion was the critical moment of choice between a worldly policy—"doing evil that good might come"—and the higher and more arduous path of simple faith in God's promise, and obedience to the command designed to protect the purity and spirituality of His worship. The step, once taken, was never retraced. Eminently successful in its immediate object of making the separation irreparable, it purchased success at the price, first, of destruction of all religious unity in Israel, and next, of a natural corruption, opening the door at once to idolatry, and hereafter to the grosser apostasy, against which it professed to guard. It needed the faith of David—as shown, for example, in the patient acquiescence in the prohibition of the erection of a Temple to be the spiritual glory of his kingdom—to secure the promise of "a sure house, as for David." That promise was now forfeited for ever.

(29) Calves of gold.—The choice of this symbol of the Divine Nature—turning, as the Psalmist says with indignant scorn, "the glory of God into the similitude of a calf that eateth hay" (Ps. cvi. 20)—was probably due to a combination of causes. First, the very repetition of Aaron's words (Exod. xxvii. 8) indicates that it was a revival of that ancient idolatry in the wilderness. Probably, like it, it was suggested by the animal worship of Egypt, with which Jeroboam had been recently familiar, and which (as is well known) varied from mere symbolism to gross creature worship. Next, the bull, as the emblem of Ephraim, would naturally become a religious cognizance of the new kingdom. Lastly, there is some reason to believe that the figure of the cherubim was that of winged bulls, and the form of the ox was undoubtedly used in the Temple, as for example, under the brazen sea. It has been thought that the "calves" were reproductions of the sacred cherubim,—made, however, symbols, not of the natural powers obeying the Divine word, but of the Deity itself.

It is, of course, to be understood that this idolatry, against which the prohibition of many sanctuaries was meant to guard, was a breach, not of the First Commandment, but of the Second—that making of "a similitude of the true God," forbidden again and again in the Law. (See, for example, Dunt. iv. 15—18.) Like all such veneration of images, it probably degenerated. From looking on the image as a mere symbol it would come to attach to it a local presence of the Deity and an intrinsic sacredness; and so would lead on, perhaps to a veiled polytheism, certainly to a superstitious and carnal conception of the Godhead.

(29) Bethel and Dan, chosen as the frontier towns of the kingdom, had, however, associations of their own, which lent themselves naturally to Jeroboam's design. Bethel—preserving in its name the memory of Jacob's vision, and of his consecration of the place as a sanctuary (Gen. xxvii. 18, 19)—had been seen (see Judg. xx. 26; 31; xxi. 2; 1 Sam. vii. 16) a place of religious assembly, and, possibly, of occasional sojourn of the Ark. At Dan, it is not unlikely that the use of the local sanctuary, set up at the conquest of the city by the Danites, still lingered; and from the notice in Judg. xvii. 30, that the posterity of Jonathan, the grandson of Moses, were priests till "the day of the captivity of the land," it seems as if these priests of this old worship became naturally the appointed ministers of the new

(30) Even unto Dan.—It has been thought that there is here a corruption of the text, and that words referring to Bethel have fallen out. But there is no sign of such variation in the LXX. (which only adds, in some MSS., and deserted the house of the Lord) or other versions. The reason of the mention of Dan only is probably that there the old sanctuary remained, and the priesthood was ready: hence, in this case, "the people went to worship at once. The verses which follow describe the erection of a temple and the creation of a priesthood at Bethel, necessary before the inauguration of the new worship at what naturally became the more prominent and magnificent sanctuary. This temple is called a "house of high places," partly perhaps from its actual position, partly to connect it with the use of "the high places" condemned in the Law. Indeed, as we have no notice of any time spent in building it, it is possible that some old "high place" was restored for the purpose.

(31, 32) Of the lowest of the people.—This is universally recognised as a mistranslation, though a natural one, of the original, "the ends of the people." The sense is "from the whole mass of the people," without care for Levitical descent—the Levites having (see 2 Chron. xi. 13, 14) generally returned into the kingdom of Judah on the establishment of this idolatry. It is hardly likely that the king would have lacked persons of the higher orders for his new priesthood. It is said that this was done "at Bethel," probably because at Dan an unauthorised Levitical priesthood was (as has been said) forthcoming.

(32) In the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month...—The "feast that was in Judah," to which this is said to be like, is clearly the Feast of Tabernacles on the fifteenth day of the seventh month. The fixing of Jeroboam's festival of dedication for the Temple at Bethel to this special day...
the priests of the high places which he had made. (33) So he offered upon the altar which he had made in Bethel the fifteenth day of the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised of his own heart; and ordained a feast unto the children of Israel: and he offered upon the altar, and burnt incense.

CHAPTER XIII. — (1) And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the Lord unto Beth-el: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. (2) And he cried against the altar in the word of the Lord, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, a Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee. (3) And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the Lord hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out.

(4) And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Beth-el, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold

is characteristic. It at once challenged likeness to the Feast of Tabernacles, which was (see chap. viii. 2) the occasion of Solomon's dedication at Jerusalem, and yet took liberty to alter the date, and fix it in the month “which he had devised of his own heart,” thus assuming the right to set aside the letter of the old law, while professing still to observe the worship of Jehovah.

Offered—or (see margin) went up—upon the altar.—The expression seems to imply that he ventured on a still greater innovation by taking on himself both functions of the priestly office—to offer sacrifice and (see verse 33) to burn incense. This is not, indeed, necessarily implied; for (see chap. viii. 63) the sacrificer is often said to offer, when he evidently does so only through the priests. But Jeroboam had set aside the peculiar sanctity of the Levitical priesthood already; and so was very naturally prepared to crown this process by acting as head of the unauthorised priesthood which he had created. Perhaps he had witnessed the exclusive prominence of Solomon at the great dedication festival, and desired to imitate and outdo it.

So he offered upon the altar.—The repetition of this verse is accounted for by its belonging properly in sense to the next chapter, opening the story of the mission of the “man of God from Judah.” The idea of the verse would be best conveyed by rendering the verbs of this verse in the imperfect tense: “So Jeroboam was offering,” &c.

XIII.

In this history, as in that of Elijah and Elisha, the compiler clearly draws from prophetic traditions or records. Here, accordingly, as there, the character of the narrative changes, and becomes full of graphic vividness and spiritual significance. In 2 Chron. ix. 29 we read of “the visions of Iddo the seer against Jeroboam the son of Nebat.” It is natural to conjecture that from these this record is drawn.

1 A man of God out of Judah.—Josephus calls him Jadon (Iddo); but from 2 Chron. xiii. 22 it appears that Iddo was the chronicler of the reign of Abijah, and must, therefore, have lived till near the close of Jeroboam’s reign. Probably the tradition came from a mistaken interpretation of the “visions of Iddo against Jeroboam.”

By the word of the Lord.—A weak rendering of the original, “in the word of the Lord.” The constantly recurring prophetic phrases are, “the word of the Lord came to me,” and “the Spirit of the Lord was upon me,” enabling, or forcing, to declare it. The original phrase here implies both. The prophet came clothed in the inspiration of the word put into his mouth.

Thus saith the Lord.—This is one of those rather unfrequent prophecies found in Holy Scripture, which, not content to foreshadow the future in general outline, descend to striking particularity of detail. It has been indeed suggested that the words “Josiah by name” are a marginal gloss which has crept into the text, or the insertion of the chronicler writing after the event, and not a part of the original prophetic utterance. The latter supposition is in itself not unlikely. But the mention of the name in prediction is exemplified in the well-known reference to Cyrus in Isa. xlv. 28; and in this instance, as perhaps also in that, the name is significant (for Josiah means “one healed” or “helped by Jehovah”), and is not, therefore, a mere artificial detail. The particularity of prediction, which is on all hands recognised as exceptional, will be credible or incredible to us, according to the view which we take of the nature of prophetic prediction. If we resolve it into the intuitive sagacity of an inspired mind forecasting the future, because it sees more clearly than ordinary minds the germs of that future in the present, the particularity must seem incredible. If, on the other hand, we believe it to be the supernatural gift of a power to enter, in some measure, into “the mind of God,” in whose foreknowledge all the future is already seen and ordained, then it will be to us simply unusual, but in no sense incredible, that from time to time foreknowledge of details, as well as generalities, should be granted. It is beyond controversy that the latter view is the one put forward in Holy Scripture, both in the Old Testament and in the New. Prophecy is, indeed, something higher and greater than supernatural prediction; but it claims to include such prediction, both as a test of mission from God, and as a necessary part of its revelation of the dispensations of God. On the fulfilment of this prediction, see 2 Kings xxii. 15—20.

5. (4) The sign.—Both the signs, like most miraculous signs, shadow forth plainly the thing signified. The sign, announced to secure credence to the prediction, is itself a visible type of what that prediction foretold, in the shattering of the altar and the scattering of the ashes of the burnt-offering. The sign actually given includes, besides this, the sudden wither-
on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him. (5) The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the Lord. (6) And the king answered and said unto the man of God, Intreat now the face of the Lord thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God besought the Lord, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as it was before. (7) And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward. (6) And the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: (6) for so was it charged me by the word of the Lord, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest. (10) So he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Beth-el. (11) Now there dwelt an old prophet in Beth-el; and his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Beth-el: the words which he had spoken unto the king, then they told also to their father. (12) And their father said unto them, What way went he? For his sons had seen what way the man of God went, which came from Judah. (13) And he said unto his sons, Saddle me the ass. So they saddled him the ass: and he rode thereon, (14) and went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak; and he said unto him, Art thou the man of God that camest from Judah? And he said, I am. (15) Then he said unto him, Come home with me, and eat bread. (10) And

Nor turn again...—The significance of this command is less obvious. It may have meant that he should not suffer the way of his return (which would clearly not be the obvious way) to be known, but should vanish swiftly, like the messenger of Elisha to Jehu (2 Kings ix. 5, 10), when his work was done. If so, his neglect of the spirit of the command was the first step in the way of his destruction.

(11) An old prophet in Beth-el.—The narrative clearly implies—and, indeed, part of its most striking instructiveness depends on this—that this old prophet was not a mere pretender to prophetic inspiration, nor an apostate from the worship of Jehovah. Like Balaam, he united true sceptic gifts with a few worldliness of temper, capable on occasion of base subterfuge and deceit. Such union of elements, which should be utterly discordant, is only too characteristic of man's self-contradictory nature. He had thrown in his lot with Jeroboam's policy, which did not want plausible grounds of defence: in spite of this adhesion, he desired to continue still a prophet of the Lord, and to support the king's action by prophetic influence. It has been noticed that, after the maintenance of the idolatry of Beth-el, even the true prophets did not break off their ministry to the kingdom of Israel, and that, indeed, they never appeared in open hostility to that kingdom, till the introduction of Baal-worship. But their case is altogether different from that of the old prophet. He deliberately supports the idolatry, and that by the worst of falsehoods—a falsehood in the name of God. They rebuke the sin (see chap. xiv. 9), but do not forsake their ministry to the sinner.

(14) An oak.—Properly, the oak, or terebinth; supposed to be known in that comparatively treeless country, like the oak at Shechem (Gen. xxxv. 4, 8; Josh. xxiv. 26; Judg. ix. 6), the oak at Ophrah (Judg. vi. 11), and the palm-tree of Deborah (Judg. iv. 5). This expression is an evident mark of the antiquity of the document from which the history is taken. It has been suggested that the narrative implies a needless
I. KINGS, XIII.

is slain by a Lion.

he said, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee: neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in this place: (17) for 'tis was said to me by the word of the Lord, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest. (18) He said unto him, I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the Lord, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But he lied unto him. (19) So he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water. (20) And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of the Lord came unto the prophet that brought him back: (21) and he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the Lord, and hast not kept the commandment which the Lord thy God commanded thee, (22) but camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of the which the Lord did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers. (23) And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, to wit, for the prophet whom he had brought back. (24) And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcase was cast in the way, and the ass stood by the carcase: and they came and told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt. (25) And when the prophet that brought him back from the way heard thereof, he said, It is the man of God, who was disobedient unto the word of the Lord; therefore the Lord hath delivered him unto the lion, which hath torn him, and slain him, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake unto him. And he spake to his sons, saying, Saddle me the ass. And they saddled him. (26) And he went and found his carcase cast in the way, and the ass and the lion standing by the carcase: the lion had not eaten the carcase, nor torn the ass. (27) And the prophet took up the carcase of the man of God, and laid it upon the ass, and brought it back: and the old prophet came to the city, to mourn and to bury him. (28) And he laid his carcase in his sepulchre.
Abijah the son of Jeroboam fell sick.

To destroy this thing became sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the earth.

CHAPTER XIV.—(1) At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam fell sick.

(2) And Jeroboam said to his wife, Arise, I pray thee, and disguise thyself, that thou be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam; and get thee to Shiloh: behold, there is Ahijah the prophet, which told me that "I should be king over this people."

(3) And take with thee ten loaves, and cracknels, and a cruse of honey, and go to him: he shall tell thee what shall become of the child.

(4) And Jeroboam's wife did so, and arose, and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. But Ahijah could not see; for his eyes were set by reason of his age.

(5) And the Lord said unto Ahijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son; for he is sick: thus and thus shalt thou say unto her: for it shall be, when she cometh in, that she shall feign herself to be another woman.

(6) And it was so, when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said, Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou

probably show some touch of remorse and personal compassion for the victim of his treacherous policy, mingled with the desire of preserving the tomb, which was to be his own last resting-place, from desecration, when the prediction of the prophet of Judah should be accomplished. But, even setting aside the rather prosaic tradition of his attempts to remove any impression made on the mind of Jeroboam, which place about the same time, when Jeroboam was in favour with Solomon, it is evident that his policy was only too successful. The messenger of wrath had been enticed to familiar intercourse with the prophet of the new idolatry, and had been publicly proclaimed as his "brother:" probably his death had been used to discredit his warning. The result is seen in the significant notice of verse 33: "After this thing, remained there, and exercised his prophetic office for all times with some present, however trifling. In itself

Whosoever would.—See chap. xii. 32. The emphatic tone of the words, "whosoever would, he consecrated him," possibly indicates that, in spite of all that Jeroboam and his prophet could do, there was some difficulty in securing candidates for his unauthorised priesthood.

And this thing.—The comment of the author of the book, evidently based on the prophetic denunciation of Ahijah in chap. xiv. 9—11, and its subsequent fulfilment. (See chap. xv. 27—30.)

XIV.

The first section of this chapter (verses 1—20) concludes the first division of the book, which gives in considerable detail the history of the reign of Solomon, and the revolution, political and religious, which marked the disruption of the kingdom. The second (verses 21—31) begins the short annalistic notices which make up the next division of the book, extending to the begin-
thyself to be another? for I am sent to thee with heavy tidings. (7) Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over my people Israel, (8) and rent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it thee: and yet thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in mine eyes; (9) but hast done evil above all that were before thee: for thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke me to anger, and hast cast me behind thy back; (10) therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel, and will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam, as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone. (11) Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat: for the LORD hath spoken it. (12) Arise thou therefore, get thee to thine own house: and when thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die. (13) And all Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing toward the LORD God of Israel in the house of Je-

I. KINGS, XIV. on Jeroboam.

drawn from the solid opaque look of the iris, when affected by cataract or some similar disease.

(7, 8) I exalted thee.—There is throughout a close allusion to Ahijah’s prophecy (chap. xi. 31, 37, 38), which promised Jeroboam “a sure house, like that of David,” on condition of the obedience of David. The sin of Jeroboam lay in this—that he had had a full probation, with unlimited opportunities, and had deliberately thrown it away, in the vain hope of making surer the kingdom which God’s promise had already made sure. The lesson is, indeed, a general one. The resolution to succeed at all hazards, striking out new ways, with no respect for time-honoured laws and principles, is in all revolutions the secret of immediate success and ultimate disaster. But in the Scripture history, here as elsewhere, we are permitted to see the working of God’s moral government of the world, unveiled in the inspired declarations of His prophetic messenger.

(9) But hast done evil above all that were before thee.—The language is strong, in the face of the many instances of the worship of false gods in the days of the Judges, and the recent apostasy of Solomon—to say nothing of the idolatry of the golden calf in the wilderness, and the setting up of the idolatrous sanctuaries in olden times at Ophrah and at Dan (Judges viii. 27, xviii. 30, 31). The guilt, indeed, of Jeroboam’s act was enhanced by the presumptuous contempt of the special promise of God, given on the sole condition of obedience. In respect of this, perhaps, he is said below—in an expression seldom used elsewhere—to have “cast God Himself behind his back.” But probably the reference is mainly to the unprecedented effect of the sin, coming at a critical point in the history of Israel, and from that time onward poisoning the springs of national faith and worship. Other idolatries came and passed away: this continued, and at all times “made Israel sin.”

Other gods and molten images.—See in chap. xi. 28 the repetition of the older declaration in the wilderness, “These be thy gods, O Israel.” Jeroboam would have justified the use of the calves as simply emblems of the true God; Ahijah rejects the plea, holding these molten images, expressly forbidden in the Law, to be really objects of worship—“other gods”—as, indeed, all experience shows that such forbidden emblems eventually tend to become. Moreover, from verse 15 it appears that the foul worship of the Asherah (“groves”) associated itself with the idolatry of Jeroboam.

(10) Him . . . and him.—The first phrase is used also in 2 Sam. xxi. 22, 1 Kings xxi. 21, 2 Kings ix. 8, to signify, “every male,” implying (possibly with a touch of contempt) that even the lowest should be destroyed. The words following have in the original no conjunction and between them. They are in antithesis to each other, signifying in some form two opposite divisions of males. The literal sense seems to be “him who is shut up, or bound, and him who is left loose;” and this phrase has been variously interpreted as “the bond and the free,” “the married and the unmarried,” “the child” who keeps at home, “and the man” who goes abroad. Perhaps the last of these best suits the context; it is like “the old and young” of Josh. vi. 21, Esther iii. 13, Ezek. ix. 6, &c.

As a man taketh away dung.—The same contentious tone runs on to the end of the verse. The house of Jeroboam is the filth which pollutes the sacred band of Israel; to its last relics it is to be swept away by the besom of destruction. (Comp. 2 Kings ix. 37; Ps. lxxiii. 10.)

(11) Him that dieth.—The same judgment is repeated in chaps. xvi. 4, xxi. 24. (Comp. also Jer. xxxvi. 30.) The “dogs” are the half-wild dogs, the scavengers of every Eastern city; the “fowls of the air” the vultures and other birds of prey. In ancient times the natural horror of insult to the remains of the dead was often intensified by the idea, that in some way the denial of the rites of burial would inflict suffering or privation on the departed soul. Whether such ideas may have lingered in the minds of the Israelites we have no means of knowing. But certainly their whole system of law and ritual was calculated to give due honour to the body in life, as consecrated to God; and this would naturally tend to teach them that the body was a part of the true man, and therefore to deepen the repugnance, with which all reverent feeling regards outrage on the dead.

(15) Because in him there is found some good thing.—There is something singularly pathetic in this declaration of early death, in peace and with due mourning, as the only reward which can be given to piety in the time of coming judgment. It is much like the prophetic declaration to Josiah at the time of his death.
roboam. (14) Moreover the Lord shall raise him up a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam that day: but what? even now. (15) For the Lord shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water, and he shall root up Israel out of this good land, which he gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the river, because they have made their groves, provoking the Lord to anger. (16) And he shall give Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, who did sin, and who made Israel to sin.

(17) And Jeroboam’s wife arose, and departed, and came to Tirzah: and when she came to the threshold of the door, the child died; (18) and they buried him; and all Israel mourned for him, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by the hand of his servant Ahijah the prophet.

(19) And the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he warred, and how he reigned, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. (20) And the days which Jeroboam reigned were two and twenty years: and he slept with his fathers, and Nadab his son reigned in his stead.

(21) And Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. *Rehoboam was of the approaching fall of the kingdom of Judah (2 Kings xxii. 18–20). But, at the same time, we find in the Old Testament little indication of that general view of the prevalent sorrow and burden of life, which makes Herodotus, in his celebrated story of Cleobis and Biton (Book i. c. 31), imply that at all times early death is Heaven’s choicest blessing. Such a view, indeed, is expressed in such passages as Job iii. 11–22, Eccl. iv. 1–3; but these are clearly exceptional. Life is viewed—sometimes, as in Ps. lxxxviii. 10–12, Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19 even in contrast with the unseen world—as a place of God’s favour and blessing, which nothing but man’s willful sin can turn to sorrow. The presence and the penalty of sin are recognised from the day of the Fall onwards, yet as only impairing, and not destroying, man’s natural heritage of joy.

(14) Shall raise him up a king.—Baseah. (See chap. xv. 27–30.) For, like Jeroboam, he had (see chap. xvi. 2–4) a probation before God, in which he failed, drawing down doom on his house.

But what? even now.—The exact meaning of these words has been much disputed. The LXX. renders “and what? even now,” the Vulgate has “in this day and in this time,” the Chaldee Targum, “what is now, and what besides shall be.” Modern interpretations vary greatly. On the whole, perhaps, our version gives a not improbable rendering, and a simple and striking sense—“in that day; but what say I? the judgment is even now at hand.” (Comp. our Lord’s saying in Luke xii. 49: “I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?”)

(15) And he shall root up Israel.—The first prophecy of future captivity, and that “beyond the river” (Euphrates), is here pronounced against the kingdom of Israel, on account of their share in the idolatry of Jeroboam, and in the worse abominations of the “groves.” Of all such utterances we must remember the express declaration of Jer. xviii. 7, 8: “At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation . . . to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy; if that nation . . . turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.” The prophecy uttered does not foreclose the probation of future ages. This is, after all, only one illustration of the great truth that—however impossible it is for us to comprehend the mystery—the foreknowledge of God does not preclude the freedom and responsibility of man.

The metaphor is of the reed shaken to and fro in the river, till at last it is rooted up, swept down the stream, and cast up on some distant shore.

Their groves.—The word rendered “grove” is properly Asherah, an idol: apparently the straight stem of a tree, surmounted by an emblem of the goddess represented (whence, perhaps, the wrong translation which, from the LXX. and Vulgate, has made its way into our version). (See Exod. xxxiv. 13; Deut. vii. 5, xii. 2; Judges iii. 7, vi. 25, 28, &c.) It is thought to have been an image of some deity like Ashtarte; and Gesenius infers from the derivation of the name that it was dedicated to her, as the goddess of good fortune. But the worship dates from a far earlier time than the introduction of the worship of the Tyrian Ashtaroth, and the word itself is etymologically distinct from Ashlorth or Ashstaroth. It is notable that in 2 Kings xxii. 13 Josiah is said not only to have destroyed the altar and high places at Bethel, but to have “burned the Asherah,” whence it may probably be concluded that (as is perhaps implied in this passage) the old worship of the Asherah, with all its superstitious and profligate accompaniments, grew up under the very shadow of the newer idolatry. From the worship of images as emblems to superstitious veneration of the images themselves, and thence to worship of many gods, the transition is unhappily only too easy.

(17) Tirzah.—From this incidental notice it would seem that Jeroboam had removed his habitation, temporarily or permanently, to Tirzah, a place renowned for beauty (Cant. vi. 4), and farther from the hostile frontier than Shechem. It seems to have continued as the capital till the foundation of Samaria. Its site is generally identified with a spot now called Tell as-sah, about nine miles north-east of Shechem, still in the high ground of Mount Ephraim.

(19) And the rest.—The preceding verse closes the detailed record of Jeroboam’s reign. His exaltation and the promise to him, his idolatry and its punishment, are all that the historian cares to narrate. All else is summed up in the words “how he warred” (see below, verse 30, and chap. xx. 6) and “how he reigned.” It is probable that his reign was prosperous enough in peace and war, though his attempt to subdue Judah failed. (See 2 Chron. xiii.) But all this the Scriptural record passes over, and only commemorates him as “Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.”

And Rehoboam.—Here begins the second series of the book—a series of brief annals, touching
Rehoboam reigns. I. KINGS, XIV.

forty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the Lord did choose out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there. And his mother's name was Naamah an Ammonitess.

(23) And Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord, and they provoked him to jealousy with their sins which they had committed, above all that their fathers had done. (23) For they also built them high places, and images, and groves, on every high hill, and under every green tree. (24) And there were also sodomites in the land: and they did ac-
pected, the judgment which had fallen upon the house of David for idolatry, the rallying of the national feeling round the sacredness of the Temple, and the influx from Israel of the priests and Levites, produced a temporary reaction: "for three years they walked in the way of David and Solomon." With, however, the excitement, and perhaps the sense of danger (2 Chron. xii. 1), this wholesome reaction passed by, and gave way to an extraordinarily reckless plunge into abominations of the worst kind. These are ascribed not, as in the case of Solomon and most other kings, to the action of Rehoboam, but to that of the people at large; for the king himself seems weak, unfit for taking the initiative either in good or evil. The apostasy of Judah was evidently the harvest of the deadly seed sown by the commanding influence of Solomon, under whose idolatry the young men had grown up. It is said to have gone beyond "all that their fathers had done," even in the darkest periods of the age of the Judges: perhaps on the ground that the sins of a more advanced state of knowledge and civilisation are, both in their guilt and in their subtlety, worse than the sins of a semi-barbarous age. (25) High places, and images, and groves.—On the "high places," see chap. iii. 2, and Note there. The "images" of this passage seem undoubtedly to have been stone pillars, as the "groves" (i.e., the asherahs) were wooden stumps of trees (possibly in large; for the king

only the main points of the history of the kings of Israel and Judah, till the appearance of Elijah (chap. xvii. 1). In respect of the kingdom of Judah, and of Israel so far as it is connected with Judah, it is largely supplemented by the fuller record of the Chronicles (2 Chron. xiii.—xxvi.).

During this first epoch of the existence of the two kingdoms, including about sixty years, their relations appear to have been incessantly hostile, the aggression being on the side of the kingdom of Israel. In the reign of Rehoboam the invasion of Shishak was probably instigated, perhaps aided, by Jeroboam; subsequently the attack on Ashkelon, victoriously repelled, seems a direct attempt at subjugation; the same policy in substance is pursued by Baasha, and only checked by the desperate expedient of calling in the foreign power of Syria; till at last, wearied out by continual war against a superior force, Judah, even under such a king as Jehoshaphat, is forced to ally itself, apparently on a footing of something like dependence, with the kingdom of Israel. 

(23) Forty and one years old when he began to reign.—It has been noticed that the age of forty-one assigned to Rehoboam at his accession, here and in the Chronicles (both in the Hebrew text and the ancient versions) and in the history of Josephus, presents some difficulty in relation to the youth ascribed to him and his companions at the time of his accession; and, moreover, if only forty years are given to Solomon's reign, must throw back his birth to a time when his father must have been very young. It has been accordingly proposed to read "twenty-one" (by a slight change of the Hebrew numerals); but the combined authority supporting the present reading is strong, and the difficulties above noted, though real, are not insurmountable.

The city which the Lord did choose.—This emphatic notice is, no doubt, intended to place Jerusalem and its worship in marked contrast with the new capitals and unauthorised sanctuaries which either unauthorised emblems of God's presence or, of Baal, as the asherahs) were wooden stumps of trees (possibly in large; for the king

Naamah an Ammonitess.—The reference to the queen-mother is almost invariable in the annals of the kings, marking the importance always attaching to it in Eastern monarchies; but the mention (here and in verse 31) of Naamah as an Ammonitess is perhaps significant in relation to the description of the manifold idolatries of Rehoboam. It is curious that the succession should pass without question to the son of another such in the land, whether Canaanites or apostate Israelites, is evidently noted as the climax of the infinite corruption which had set in, rivalling and exceeding in depth of wickedness—the abominations of the old inhabitants of the land. That such horrors are
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Invasion of Shishak.

and brought them back into the guard chamber.

(25) Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? (26) And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days. (27) And Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. And his mother's name was Naamah an Ammonitess. And Abijam his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XV.—(1) Now in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam the son of Nebat reigned Abijam over Judah. (2) Three years reigned he in Jerusalem.

(25) When the king went.—Hence we see that Rehoboam still worshipped in the house of the Lord. If his idolatry were like that of his father, it would not have prevented this; but in 2 Chron. xii. 6—8, 12 it is implied that after the invasion he "himself," and returned to the Lord.

(26) The chronicles of the kings of Judah. —In 2 Chron. xii. 15 the acts of Rehoboam are said to be "written in the book of Shemaiah the prophet, and of Iddo the seer concerning genealogies."

(27) There was war. —Of such war we have no record, since the day when Shemaiah forbade Rehoboam's invasion of the new kingdom; nor is there even mention of any action of Israel in aid of the Egyptian attack, although it is likely enough that such action was taken. The meaning may simply be that there was continued enmity, breaking off all peaceful relations; but in the scantiness of the record we can have no certainty that actual war did not take place, though it has found no place in the history.

The brief annals still continue, although with some details as to the important reign of Asa. It is evident that the attempt on the part of Israel to subjugate Judah continues, still (see 2 Chron. xiv. 9—15) aided by invasion from Egypt; it is checked by Abijah's victory (2 Chron. xiii. 3—20), but not baffled, till, by a desperate policy, the foreign power of Syria is invoked, and a serious blow inflicted on Israel.

(1) Abijam.—The form of the name given in 2 Chron. xiii., "Abijah," is probably correct, as having a more distinct significance. The variation here, if not (as some think) a mere false reading, may have been made for the sake of distinction from the son of Jeroboam.

(2) Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom. — The Abishalom of this passage, called, in 2 Chron. xi. 20, Absalom, is in all probability the rebel son of David, whose mother (2 Sam. iii. 3) was also named Maachah. In 2 Chron. xi. 21, 22, it seems that of all the wives ("eighteen wives and threescore concubines") whom Rehoboam, following the evil traditions of his father, took, she was the favourite, and that even in his lifetime Rehoboam exalted Abijam "to be ruler among his brethren." In 2 Chron. xiii. 2 she is called Michaiah.

not incompatible with advance in knowledge and material civilisation; history tells us but too plainly. To find them sanctioned under cover of religious ritual marks, however, a lower depth still.

(25) Shishak.—His invasion is narrated at greater length in the record of Chronicles (2 Chron. xii. 2—12), which contains a description of his army, and a notice of the preservation of Jerusalem from destruction, though not from surrender on the repentance of the people at the call of Shemaiah. It records also the taking of "fenced cities," having noticed previously the fortifications of many such "cities of defence" by Solomon (2 Chron. xii. 5—10). This record is remarkably confirmed by the celebrated inscription at Karnak (see Dict. of the Bible: "Shishak") enumerating the conquests of Sheshenq (Shishak), in which names of cities, partly in Judah, partly in Israel, are traced. The latter are Levitical or Canaanitish cities; and it has been conjectured that, much as the Pharaoh of Solomon's day took Gezer and gave it to Israel (see chap. ix. 15), so the Egyptian army, coming as allies of Jeroboam, took, or helped him to take, those cities which were hostile or disloyal to him. It is not unlikely that the whole invasion was instigated by Jeroboam, in that desire to crush the kingdom of Judah which afterwards suggested his war with Abijam. (See 2 Chron. xiii.)

(26) He even took away all.—There is a touch of pathos in the description of the utter spoil of the treasures in which Solomon and Israel had gloried, and which now served only to buy off the victorious Egyptians. There is no notice of any sack of Jerusalem, nor, as in later cases, of any desecration of the Temple, or even of the plunder of its decorations. The record seems to imply surrender of the city and its treasures. The idea sometimes advanced, that, like the capture of Rome by the Gauls, the invasion of Shishak destroyed all ancient monuments and archives, has therefore no historical support from this passage; and with it many conclusions derived from it as to the dates of our Scriptural records must pass away.

(27) In their stead.—The notice of this substitution is not only a curious point of accurate detail, but perhaps intended as a symbolic representation of the change which had passed upon Judah, by which only the semblance of its old glory remained, and its "fine gold had become brass."
And his mother's name was Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom. (3) And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father. (4) Nevertheless for David's sake did the Lord his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem: (5) because David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from any thing that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. (6) And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life.

(7) Now the rest of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam. (8) And Abijam slept with his fathers; and they buried him in the city of David: and Asa his son reigned in his stead.

(9) And in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel reigned Asa over Judah. (10) And forty and one years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Maachah, the daughter of Abishalom. (11) And Asa did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, as did David his father. (12) And he took away the sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made. (13) And also Maachah his mother, even her he removed from being queen, because she had made an idol in a grove; and Asa destroyed her idol, and burnt it by the brook Kidron. (14) But the high places and said to be the daughter of "Uriel of Gibeah." This shows that, as indeed chronological considerations would suggest, she must have been the granddaughter of Abishalom. She is mentioned below (verse 18) as prominent in the evil propensity to idolatry.

(15) Walked in all the sins of his father.—This adoption of the idolatries of Rehoboam did not prevent Abijam (see 2 Chron. xiii. 4—12) from representing himself as the champion of the Temple and the priesthood against the rival worship of Jeroboam, and dedicating treasures—perhaps the spoils of his victory—in the house of the Lord. "From the qualified phrase "his heart was not perfect before God," however, it may be inferred that, like Solomon and Rehoboam, he professed to worship Jehovah only as the supreme God of the Pantheon; and it is a curious irony of circumstance that he should be recorded as inveighing against the degradation of His worship in Israel, while he himself countenanced or connived at the worse sin of the worship of rival gods in Judah.

(16) Give him a lamp in Jerusalem.—There is here a brief allusion to the victory recorded in the Chronicles, which obviously was the turning-point in the struggle, saving the "lamp" of the house of David from extinction, and "establishing" Jerusalem in security. "For David's sake" is, of course, for the fulfillment of the promise to David (2 Sam. vii. 12—16). In virtue of the continuity of human history, the Divine law always ordains that, in respect of consequences, the good deeds as well as the sins of fathers are "visited on their children."

(17) Save only in the matter of Uriah.—In this passage alone do we find thisqualification of the praise of David. In the Vatican MS. and other MSS. of the LXX. it is omitted. Possibly it is a marginal note which has crept into the text, or a comment of the compiler of the book on the language of the annals from which he drew.

(18) And there was war.—In this verse (omitted in the Vatican MS. of the LXX.), the repetition of the notice of Rehoboam, in spite of some artificial explanations, seems inexplicable. Probably there is error in the text.

(19) His mother's name was Maachah.—Maachah was (see verse 2) the wife of Rehoboam, and, therefore, grandmother of Asa. She appears, however, still to have retained the place of "queen-mother," to the exclusion of the real mother of the king.

(20) Asa did that which was right.—This reign—happily, a long one—was a turning-point in the history of Judah. Freed from immediate pressure by the victory of Abijah over Jeroboam, Asa resolved—perhaps under the guidance of the prophets Azariah and Hanani (2 Chron. xv. 1, xvi. 7)—to renew the true strength of his kingdom by restoring the worship and trusting in the blessings of the true God, extirpating by repeated efforts the false worship introduced by Rehoboam and continued by Abijah, and solemnly renewing the covenant with the Lord, in the name of the people, and of the strangers from Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon, who joined them. Of all this the text here gives but brief notice: the record in the Chronicles (2 Chron. xiv. xv.) contains a detailed account. From the same record we find that he fortified his cities and strengthened his army, and that he was able to repel with great slaughter a formidable invasion from Egypt, under "Zerah the Ethiopian," in his fifteenth year.

(21) An idol in a grove.—The original word for "idol"—peculiar to this passage and its parallel (2 Chron. xv. 16)—appears to signify a "horrible abomination" of some monstrous kind; and instead of "in a grove," we should read "for an asherah," the wooden emblem of the Canaanitish deity (on which see chap. xiv. 22). There seems little doubt that some obscene emblem is meant, of the kind so often connected with worship of the productive powers of nature in ancient religions, substituted as an idol by the Israelites under the walls of Jerusalem.

(22) But the high places were not removed.—The record of the Chronicles—contrasting 2 Chron. xiv. 5 with xv. 17—indicates with tolerant plainness an
were not removed: nevertheless Asa's heart was perfect with the LORD all his days. (10) And he brought in the things which his father had dedicated, and the things which himself had dedicated, into the house of the LORD, silver, and gold, and vessels.

(10) And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days. (17) And Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah, and built Ramah, that he might not suffer any to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.

(18) Then Asa took all the silver and the gold that were left in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and delivered them into the hand of his servants: and king Asa sent them to "Ben-hadad, the son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying, (15) There is a league between me and thee, and between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent unto thee a present of silver and gold; come and break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me. (20) So Ben-hadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of the hosts which he had against the cities of Israel, and smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-beth-maacha, and all Chinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali. (21) And it came to pass, when Baasha heard there-
of, that he left off building of Ramah, and dwelt in Tirzah.

(22) Then king Asa made a proclamation throughout all Judah; none was exempted: and they took away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha had builded; and king Asa built with them Geba of Benjamin, and Mizpah.

(23) The rest of all the acts of Asa, and all his might, and all that he did, and the cities which he built, are not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah. Nevertheless in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet.

(24) And Asa slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father; and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead.

(25) And Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned over Israel two years. And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.

And Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him; and Baasha smote him at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines; for Nadab and all Israel laid siege to Gibbethon. (29) Even in the third year of Asa king of Judah did Baasha slay him, and reigned in his stead. And it came to pass, when he reigned, that he smote all the house of Jeroboam; he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed, until he had destroyed him, according unto the saying of the Lord, which he spake by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite: because of the sins of Jeroboam which he sinned, and which he made Israel sin, by his provocation wherewith he provoked the Lord God of Israel to anger.

(31) Now the rest of the acts of Nadab, and all that he did, are not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. (32) And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.

(33) In the third year of Asa king of Judah began Baasha the son of Ahijah, the Lord, but to the physicians” (2 Chron. xv. 7–12); and from the same records it appears that in his last days Asa ventured to defy the prophetic authority by the imprisonment of Hanani the seer. Prosperity, it is implied, had somewhat deteriorated his character, though he still continued faithful to the worship of God. Certainly, Jehoshaphat on his accession still found much to do for the religious condition of his people.

(34) Did evil in the sight of the Lord. This constantly-recurring phrase signifies (as, indeed, the context here shows) perseverance in the idolatrous system introduced by Jeroboam.

(35) Baasha, sprung from an obscure tribe, hardly at any time distinguished in the history, and himself, as it would seem (chap. xvi. 2), of low origin in it, is the first of the many military chiefs who by violence or assassination seized upon the throne of Israel. The constant succession of ephemeral dynasties stands in striking contrast with the unchanged royalty of the house of David, resting on the promise of God.

Gibbethon—a Levitical town in the territory of Dan (Josh. xix. 44, xvi. 23), probably, like other places in that region, still held by the Philistines till their subjugation by David. The text here implies a revolt of the Philistines against the enfeebled power of Israel, and the occupation of Gibbethon, commanding a pass from the plain of Sharon to the interior. The siege must have been fruitless, at least of any permanent result; for twenty-six years after we find Gibbethon still in the hands of the enemy. (See chap. xvi. 15.)

(37) According unto the saying of the Lord. See chap. xiv. 10—14. There seems no reason to suppose that Baasha had any formal mission of vengeance, or that his conspiracy and assassination were due to any motive but his own ambition. The contrary,
to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, twenty and four years. (34) And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin.

CHAPTER XVI.—(1) Then the word of the Lord came to Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha, saying, (2) Forasmuch as I exalted thee out of the dust, and made thee prince over my people Israel; and thou hast walked in the way of Jeroboam, and hast made my people Israel to sin, to provoke me to anger with their sins; (3) behold, I will take away the posterity of Baasha, and the posterity of his house; and will make thy house like as much as I exalted thee out of the dust, and will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. (4) Him that dieth of Baasha in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth of his in the fields shall the fowls of the air eat.

(5) Now the rest of the acts of Baasha, and what he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? (6) So Baasha slept with his fathers, and was buried in Tirzah: and Elah his son reigned in his stead.

(7) And also by the hand of the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani came the word of the Lord against Baasha, and against his house, even for all the evil that he did in the sight of the Lord, in provoking him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam; and because he killed him.

(8) In the twenty and sixth year of Asa king of Judah began Elah the son of Baasha to reign over Israel in Tirzah, two years. (9) And his servant Zimri, captain of half his chariots, conspired against him, as he was in Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza steward of his house in Tirzah.

(10) And Zimri went in and smote him, and killed him, in the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned in his stead.

(11) And it came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he sat on his throne, that he slew all the house of Baasha: he left him not one that pisseth against a wall, neither of his kinsfolks, nor of his friends. (12) Thus did Zimri destroy all the house of Baasha, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake against Baasha, by Jehu the prophet, for all the sins of Baasha, and the sins of Elah his son, by which they sinned, and by which they made Israel to sin, in provoking the Lord God of Israel to anger with their vanities.

(13) Now the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

(14) In the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah did Zimri reign seven

Indeed, may be inferred from the declaration of chap. xvi. 7, that the judgment on Baasha was in part "because he killed" Nadab and his house. Sin which works out God's purpose is not the less truly sin. Of Baasha we know nothing, except his attempt on the independence of Judah, and its failure (verses 16-22).

XVI.

The brief record continues of the troubled times of civil war and foreign danger in Israel, to which, perhaps, the tranquillity of Judah under Asa was partly due.

(1) Jehu the son of Hanani—probably of Hanani the seer of Judah in the reign of Asa (2 Chron. xv. 7). Jehu must have been now young, for we find him rebuking Jehoshaphat after the death of Ahab, and writing the annals of Jehoshaphat's reign (2 Chron. xix. 2, xx. 34).

(2) Forasmuch as I exalted thee ...—The prophecy—closely resembling that of Ahijah against Jeroboam—clearly shows that Baasha had a probation, which he neglected; and it seems to be implied in verse 7 that his guilt was enhanced by perseverance in the very sins for which, by his hand, so terrible a vengeance had been inflicted.

(3) And also.—This second reference to the prophecy of Jehu seems to be a note of the historian—perhaps added chiefly for the sake of the last clause, which shows that Baasha's act, though foretold, was not thereby justified.

(4) Drinking himself drunk.—There seems an emphasis of half-contemptuous condemnation in the description of Elah's debauchery, evidently public, and in the house of a mere officer of his household, while war was raging at Gibbethon. On the other hand, Zimri—noted emphatically as "his servant"—was apparently the high officer left in special charge of the palace and the king's person, while the mass of the army was in the field. Hence his name passed into a proverb for unusual treachery. (See 2 Kings ix. 31.)

(5) Vanities—that is, idols (as in Deut. xxxii. 21; 1 Sam. xii. 21; Ps. xxxi. 6; Isa. xii. 29; Jer. viii. 19; &c.): not only the idols of Dan and Bethel, but the worse abominations which grew up under cover of these. In the Old Testament generally the contempt for idolatry and false worship as a gross folly, wasting faith on unrealities, is at least as strong as the condemnation of them, as outraging God's law, and connected with sensual or bloody rites. (See, for example, the utter scorn of Isa. xlv. 9-20; Ps. cxv. 4-8.)
days in Tirzah. And the people were encamped against Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines. (16) And the people that were encamped heard say, Zimri hath conspired, and hath also slain the king: wherefore all Israel made Omri, the captain of the host, king over Israel that day in the camp. (17) And Omri went up from Gibbethon, and all Israel with him, and they besieged Tirzah. (18) And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the palace of the king's house, and burnt the king's house over him with fire, and died, (19) for his sins which he sinned in doing evil in the sight of the Lord, in walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he did, to make Israel to sin. (20) Now the rest of the acts of Zimri, and his treason that he wrought, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

(21) Then were the people of Israel divided into two parts: half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king; and half followed Omri. (22) But the people that followed Omri prevailed against the people that followed Tibni the son of Ginath: so Tibni died, and Omri reigned. (23) In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel, twelve years: six years reigned he in Tirzah. (24) And he bought the hill Samaria for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, Samaria. (25) But Omri built on the hill—Omri only followed the usual practice of a new dynasty in the East, of which Jeroboam had set an example at Shechem, and probably Baasha at Tirzah. Possibly the seeds of disaffection may have still lurked in Tirzah, the place of Zimri's birth, in the days which followed his assassination. But the site of Samaria must have been chosen by a soldier's eye. Its Hebrew name (Shomeron) means a "watch-tower," and may well have had a double derivation, from its natural position, as well as from its owner's name. Its position was one of great beauty, and, in the warfare of those days, of singular strength, as is shown by the long sieges which it withstood (1 Kings xx. 1; 2 Kings vi. 24, xvii. 5, xviii. 9, 10). It lay north-west of Shechem, on an isolated hill with precipitous sides, rising in the middle of a basin of hills of Ephraim, not far from the edge of the maritime plain, and commanding a view of the sea. Its history vindicated the sagacity of its founder. Even after its destruction and depopulation by the Assyrians, it seems to have revived, for Alexander took it on his invasion of Palestine, and placed a Greek colony there. Again destroyed by John Hyrcanus, it was rebuilt by Herod, and called Sebaste, in honour of Augustus. In the Assyrian inscriptions it is known as Beth-Khumri ("the house of Omri").

(26) Did worse than all that were before him.—This phrase, used of Jeroboam in chap. xiv. 9, may indicate, in addition to the acceptance and development of the old idolatry, some antievolution of the
wrought evil in the eyes of the Lord, and did worse than all that were before him. (30) For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger with their vanities.

(31) Now the rest of the acts of Omri which he did, and his might that he shewed, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? (32) So Omri slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria: and Ahab his son reigned in his stead.

(33) And in the thirty and eighth year of Asa king of Judah began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty and two years. (34) And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him. (35) And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him. (36) And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. (37) And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.

(38) In his days did Hiel the Beth-elite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun.

CHAPTER XVII.—(1) And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants

1 Sam. vii. 4; and we have traces of the same vague use in the Baal-pecor of Numbers xxv., the Baal-berith of Judges viii. 33, ix. 4, the Baal-zebub of 2 Kings i. 2, 3, and in the various geographical names having the prefix Baal. The worship of the Phcenician Baal—variously represented, sometimes as the Sun, sometimes as the planet Jupiter, sometimes half-humanised as the "Tyrian Hercules"—was now, however, introduced on a great scale, with profuse magnificence of worship, connected with the Asherah ("grove"), which in this case, no doubt, represented the Phcenician Astarte, and enforced by Jezebel with a high hand, not without persecution of the prophets of the Lord. The conflict between it and the spiritual worship of Jehovah became now a conflict of life and death.

(39) Did Hiel . . . build Jericho.—This marks both the growth of prosperity and power, and the neglect of the old curse of Joshua (Josh. vi. 20). The place had not, it would appear, been entirely deserted. (See Judges iii. 13; 2 Sam. x. 5.) But it was now made—what it continued to be down to the time of Herod—an important place. Its natural advantages were great. It stood in a position well watered, and accordingly of great beauty and fruitfulness ("the city of palm trees"), and was, moreover, a city of military consequence, as commanding the pass from the valley of the Jordan to the high ground of Ai and Bethel. Having been assigned to Benjamin (Josh. xvii. 21), it should have properly belonged to the kingdom of Judah. Its being rebuilt by a Bethelite, evidently under the patronage of Ahab, is one of the indications of a half-dependent condition of the Southern kingdom at this time.

XVII.

With this chapter begins the third section of the book, marked by a complete change in the character of the history. Drawn evidently not from official annals, but from records of the lives of the last of the elder line of prophets, Elijah and Elisha—probably preserved in the prophetic schools—it becomes detailed and graphic, full of a spiritual beauty and instructiveness,
Elijah fed of Gilead, said unto Ahab, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word. (2) And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, (3) Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. (4) And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. (5) So he went and did according unto the word of the Lord: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. (6) And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook. (7) And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land. (8) And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, (9) Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and which have stamped it on the imagination of all succeeding ages. The two great prophets themselves stand out as two distinct types of the servants of God. Elijah's mission, one of narrow and striking intensity, is embodied in his name—"My God is Jehovah." Appearing at the great crisis of the conflict against the sensual and degrading Baal-worship, he is not a teacher or a law-giver, or a herald of the Messiah, but simply a warrior of God, bearing witness for Him by word and by deed, living a reclusive ascetic life, and suddenly emerging from it again and again to strike some special blow. The "spirit of Elias," well expressing itself in the indignant expostulation at Mount Carmel, has become proverbial for its stern and fiery impatience of evil, wielding the sword of vengeance in the slaughter at the Kishon, and calling down fire from heaven to repel the attack of earthly force. It is high and noble, but not the highest spirit of all. It breathes the imperfection of the ancient covenant, adapted to the "hardness of men's hearts," leading to alternations of impetuosity and despondency, but doing the special work as, perhaps, no calm and well-balanced character could have done. Elisha builds on the ground which Elijah had cleared, filling a place hardly equalled since the days of Samuel, as a teacher and guide both of king and people. His very miracles, with one exception, are miracles of kindness and mercy, helping the common life from the indigent exigencies of Mount Carmel, has become proverbial for its stern and fiery impatience of evil, wielding the sword of vengeance in the slaughter at the Kishon, and calling down fire from heaven to repel the attack of earthly force. It is high and noble, but not the highest spirit of all. It breathes the imperfection of the ancient covenant, adapted to the "hardness of men's hearts," leading to alternations of impetuosity and despondency, but doing the special work as, perhaps, no calm and well-balanced character could have done.

The Lord God of Israel, before whom I stand. This adoration repeated in xvii. 15, and with some alteration by Elisha in 2 Kings iii. 14, 15, 16, is characteristic. Elijah is the servant of God, standing to be sent whither He wills. This is evidently not the first appearance of Elijah. In James v. 17, the withholding of rain, foretold again and again as a penalty on apostasy (see Lev. xxvi. 19, Jer. v. 17; and comp. 1 Kings viii. 38), is noted as an answer to the prophet's prayer, calling down judgment on the land. Evidently there had been a struggle against the Baal-worship of the time, and, no doubt, previous warnings from Elijah or from some one of the murdered prophets. This chapter introduces us suddenly to the catastrophe.

The brook Cherith—properly "the torrent (or valley) Cherith, facing the Jordan;" evidently one of the ravines running into the Jordan valley; probably on the east from the prophet's own land of Gilead.

The ravens. Of the accuracy of this rendering, which is that of almost all the ancient versions and of Josephus, there can be little doubt. The singular prolix interpretations, substituted for this striking and significant record of miracle by some ancient and modern writers (adopting slight variations of the Hebrew vowel points) — such as "Arabia," "merchants," "inhabitants of a city Orbi or the rock Orbi"—seem to have arisen simply from a desire to get rid of what seemed a strange miracle, at the cost (be it observed) of substituting for it a gross improbability; for how can it be supposed that such regular sustenance by human hands of the persecuted prophet could have gone on in the face of the jealous vigilance of the king? But it is idle to seek to explain away one wonder in a life and an epoch teeming with miracles. It is notable, indeed, that the critical period of the great Baal apostasy, and of the struggle of Elijah and Elisha against it, is the second great epoch of recorded miracle in the Old Testament—the still more critical epoch of Moses and Joshua being the first. It is hardly less idle to determine that this or that miracle is so improbable, as to introduce any difficulty of acceptance which does not apply to miracles in general.

Zarephath—the Sarepta of the LXX. and of the New Testament (Luke iv. 26). It is said by Josephus to have lain between Tyre and Sidon, and by St. Jerome to have been on the coast. It seems not unlikely that it has been identified with a modern village, Suwafend, in that position. The words, "which belongeth to Zidon," appear to be emphatic, marking the striking providence of God, which, when the land of Israel was
dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. (10) So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel that I may drink. (11) And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee a morsel of bread in thine hand. (12) And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it and die. (13) And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. (14) For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth. (15) And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. (16) And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah. (17) And it came to pass after these things, that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him. (18) And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son? (19) And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed. (20) And he cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son? (21) And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee, let my son live. (22) And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. (23) And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and adoption of the regular Israelitish description of the prophet as her own. (See Judges xiii. 6; chaps. xii. 52, xiii. 1.)

To call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?—The words express the unreasonable ableness of natural sorrow. The underlying idea is that of the exclamation, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." The better knowledge of God, gained through the presence of the prophet, had, of course, brought out in her a deeper sense of sin, and now makes her feel that her sorrow is a just punishment. With pathetic confusion of idea, she cries out against his presence, as if it were the actual cause of judgment on the sin, which it has simply brought home to her conscience.

Hast thou also brought evil.—Elijah's complaint is characteristic of the half-presumptuous impatience seen more fully in chap. xix. He apparently implies that his own lot, as a hunted fugitive not protected by God's Almighty power, is so hard, that it must be his presence which has brought trouble even on the home that sheltered him.

He stretched himself upon the child.—To suppose that this implies merely the use of some natural means of reviving the dead, is simply to explain the whole description away. The idea in this passage (as in 2 Kings iv. 34, xiii. 21, and, perhaps, Acts xx. 10) clearly is of a certain healing "virtue," attaching in measure to the person of the prophet, as without measure it belonged to our Lord Himself (Luke viii. 45, 46). But it is to be noted that in the case of the prophet, the power to heal or raise
Elijah said, See, thy son liveth. (24) And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in thine mouth is truth.

CHAPTER XVIII.—(1) And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth. (2) And Elijah went to shew himself unto Ahab. And there was a sore famine in Samaria. (3) And Ahab called Obadiah, which was the governor of his house. (Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly: (4) for it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.) (5) And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts. (6) So they divided the land between them to pass throughout it: Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself. (7) And as Obadiah was in the way, behold, Elijah met him: and he knew him, and fell on his face, and said, Art thou that ••• •••? (8) And he answered him, I am: go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here. (9) And he said, What have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me? (10) As the LORD thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, He is not there; he took an oath of the kingdom.

Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts. (24) So they divided the land between them to pass throughout it: Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself.

(7) And as Obadiah was in the way, behold, Elijah met him: and he knew him, and fell on his face, and said, Art thou that ••• •••? (8) And he answered him, I am: go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here. (9) And he said, What have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me? (10) As the LORD thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, He is not there; he took an oath of the kingdom.

up is made distinctly conditional on prayer, “the Lord heard the voice of Elijah.”

(24) Now by this I know ... In these words we trace the final victory of faith, brought out by the crowning mercy of the restoration of her son. First, the widow had spoken of Jehovah from without, as “the Lord thy God” (verse 14); next, had come to recognize Him as God (verse 18); now she not only believes, as she had never believed before, that His servant is “a man of God”; but, in accepting the “word of Jehovah” in his mouth as “the truth,” seems undoubtedly to express conversion to Him.

(Compare the stages of faith in the nobleman at Capernaum, John iv. 47, 50, 53.)

XVIII.

In this and the succeeding chapter we pass from the domestic and peaceful simplicity of the quiet refuge at Zarephath to a grand description, first, of the struggle and victory of the great warrior of God, then of his momentary failure and rebuke—brought out to us with fresh dramatic beauty by the glorious music in which it has been clothed by the genius of Mendelssohn. The narrative of this chapter, full of picturesque vividness and graphic touches of detail, shows in every line the record of an eye-witness of facts; yet, like all great historical scenes, it is symbolical, typifying the victorious conflict of unaided simple spiritual power against the pomp and material force of the world, of the one man who knows and feels his mission from God against the many, only half persuaded of their superstitions, and of the religion of the God of righteousness and truth against the base and sensual worship of physical power. The latter chapter, perhaps even more sublime, is in a graver and more solemn strain. It marks the reaction after triumph in a character of impulsive and vehement earnestness, looking for visible and immediate victory, and, while it foretells the continuance of his struggle through other hands, teaches the higher lesson of the subtler power of the “still small voice” of spiritual influence.

(1) The third year.—By the accurate tradition, preserved in Luke iv. 25, James v. 17, it would seem that the drought lasted “three years and six months.”

(2) Obadiah.—The name ("servant of Jehovah") here corresponds to the character of the man. It is curiously significant of the hesitating and temporising attitude of Ahab, that, while Jezebel is suffered to persecute, a high officer in the court is able to profess openly the service of Jehovah, and secretly to thwart the cruelty of the queen. In his heart Ahab always seems to acknowledge the true God, but is overborne by the commanding and ruthless nature of Jezebel.

(3) Jezebel cut off the prophets.—The persecution here referred to, in which for the first time the royal power was placed in distinct antagonism to the prophetic order, is only known by this allusion. It may probably have followed on the denunciation of judgment; and Jezebel's retirement to Cherith and Zarephath may have been a means of escape from it. If Elijah's oft-repeated phrase, "I, even I, alone remain," is to be taken literally, Obadiah's merciful interposition must have availed only for a time, or have simply given opportunity of escape.

(4) Art thou that ... The sense is either (as the LXX. has it) "Is it thy very self, my lord Elijah?" or (perhaps more suitably to the context), "Thou here, my lord Elijah," when all seek thy life? The prophet's answer is still simpler in its original brevity, "Behold, Elijah!" standing in dignified contrast with the humble and almost servile address of Obadiah, which is clearly the offering not only of reverence, but of fear.

(5) There is no nation.—This unrelenting search—implying perhaps some supremacy or authority over neighbouring kingdoms—suites ill with the half-hearted enmity of Ahab. No doubt it was the work of Jezebel in Ahab's name, connived at (as in the murder of Naboth) by his timidity.
Elijah meets Ahab.

I. KINGS, XVIII. He speaks to the People.

and nation, that they found thee not. (11) And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here. (12) And it shall come to pass, as soon as I am gone from thee, that the Spirit of the Lord shall carry thee whither I know not; and so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me: but I thy servant fear the Lord from my youth. (13) Was it not told my lord what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the Lord, how I hid an hundred men of the Lord's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water? (14) And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here: and he shall slay me. (15) And Elijah said, As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely shew myself unto him to day.

(16) So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him: and Ahab went to meet Elijah. (17) And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? (18) And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim. (19) Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. (20) So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel.

(21) And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.

(22) Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. (23) Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: (24) and call ye on the name of your gods. And I will call on the name of the Lord; and he shall answer thee. (25) And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? (26) And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim. (27) Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. (28) So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel.

(29) And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.

(30) Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. (31) Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: (32) and call ye on the name of your gods. And I will call on the name of the Lord; and he shall answer thee. (33) And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? (34) And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim. (35) Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. (36) So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel.

(37) And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.

(38) Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. (39) Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: (40) and call ye on the name of your gods. And I will call on the name of the Lord; and he shall answer thee. (41) And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? (42) And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim. (43) Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. (44) So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel.

(45) And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.

(46) Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. (47) Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: (48) and call ye on the name of your gods. And I will call on the name of the Lord; and he shall answer thee.
Elijah and the Prophets of Baal.

on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, 'It is well spoken.

(28) And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under. (29) And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made. (27) And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. (28) And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. (29) And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.

(30) And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down. (31) And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, 'Israel shall be thy name: (32) and with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. (33) And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels—presumably even blunter and more scornful in the sense of the original—has been with over-ingenuity misunderstood. The exclusive consecration of the altar, in Oriental frenzy, was possibly a portion, or a survival, of human sacrifice, in the notion that self-torture and shedding of human blood must win Divine favour—a delusion not confined to heathen religions, though excusable only in them. (34) They prophesied—raved in their frenzy; like Saul in the hour of madness (1 Sam. xvi. 10), or of overpowering religious excitement (1 Sam. xix. 20—24). As a rule, not perhaps without some rare exceptions, the true prophetic inspiration, even if felt as over-mastering the will (see Jer. xx. 7—9), gave no place to frenzy. 'The spirits of the prophets are subject to the Lord's condemnation of the worship of the heathen, and even religious separations, the tribes were still united in the covenant of God.

Measures.—The "measure," the third part of a shalosh (a "thistle," or "third"), was something less than three gallons. A trench to contain only six gallons seems too insignificant for the context; hence it is supposed that the sense is "large enough for the sowing (as in a furrow) of two measures of seed."
Elijah's Sacrifice.  I. KINGS, XVIII.  Death of the Prophets.

and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God. (40) And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

(41) And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain. (42) So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, (43) and said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he speculated. A ready surmise, by those unacquainted with the country, was that the water was taken from the sea flowing at the base of Carmel; but a glance at the position and the height of the mountain puts this not unnatural supposition out of the question, as difficult, if not impossible. Examination of the locality has discovered a perennial spring in the neighbourhood of the traditional scene of the sacrifice, which is never known to fail in the severest drought. From this, no doubt (as indeed Josephus expressly says), the water was drawn, with, of course, the object of precluding all idea of fraud or contrivance, and bringing out strikingly the consuming fierceness of the fire from heaven, so emphatically described in verse 38.

(36) Lord God of Abraham.—In this solemn and earnest invocation of God, as in Exod. iii. 15, vi. 2, 3, the name JEHOVAH, describing God as He is in Himself—the One eternal self-existent: Being—is united with the name which shows His special covenant with “Abraham, and Isaac, and Israel.” In His own nature incomprehensible to finite being. He yet reveals Himself in moral and spiritual relations with His people, through which they “know that which passeth knowledge.” The prominence of the name “Jehovah,” thrice repeated in this short prayer of Elijah, is significant as of the special mission, symbolised in his very name, so also of his immediate purpose. He desires to effect himself. The God of Israel is to show Himself as the true worker, not only in the outer sphere by miracle, but in the inner sphere by that conversion of the hearts of the people, which to the prophet’s eye is already effected. Like his antitype in the New Testament, Elijah is but a voice calling on men “to prepare the way of the Lord.”

(39) They fell on their faces.—Exactly as in Lev. ix. 24, at the inauguration of the sacrifices of the new Tabernacle by the fire from heaven, with the characteristic addition of the cry, “Jehovah; He, and He only, is God.”

(40) Slew them.—This ruthless slaughter of Baal’s prophets, as a judgment on their idolatry and perversion of the people, belongs alike to the fierce righteousness of the character of Elijah, and to the spirit of the old Law. (See, for example, Deut. xiii. 6–18, xvii. 2–7.) The law was adapted (as in the terrible crucial example of the slaughter of the Canaanites) to the “hardness of men’s hearts.” In the imperfect moral and religious education of those times, it did not recognise the difference between moral and political offences punishable by human law, and the religious sin or apostasy which we have been taught to leave to the judgment of God alone; and it enjoined an unrelenting severity in the execution of righteous vengeance, which would be morally impossible to us, who have been taught to hate the sin, and yet spare, as far as possible, the sinner. The frequent quotation of such examples by Christians—of which Luke ix. 54 is the first example—is a spiritual anachronism. In this particular case, however, it is also to be remembered that those slain were no doubt implicated in the persecution headed by Jezebel, and that the Baal-worship was a licentious and perhaps bloody system. Elijah, presiding over the slaughter which dyed the waters of the Kishon with blood, felt himself the avenger of the slaughtered prophets, as well as the instrument of the judgment of God.

(41) Get thee up, eat and drink.—There seems a touch of scorn in these words. Ahab, remaining passive throughout, had descended to the place of slaughter in the valley, looking on silent—if not unmoved—while the priests, whose worship he had openly or tacitly sanctioned, were slain by hundreds. Now Elijah bids him get up to his palace, taking it for granted that, fresh from that horrible sight, he is yet ready to feast, and rejoice over the approaching removal of the judgment, which alone had told on his shallow nature. The king goes to revel, the prophet to pray.

(42) Put his face between his knees.—The attitude is, of course, one of prayer, but a peculiar attitude—distinct from the ordinary postures of standing and kneeling—which has been noted as existing still among the modern dervishes. Possibly it is characteristic of the vehement excitement of the moment, and of the impulsive nature of Elijah.

(43) Go again seven times.—From this delay of the answer to prayer Elijah’s example became pro-
went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man’s hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the Lord was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab 2 to the entrance of Jezreel.

CHAPTER XIX.—(1) And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and verbal for intensity and perseverance in supplication (James v. 17). The contrast is remarkable between the immediate answer to his earlier prayer (see verses 36, 37) and the long delay here. The one was for the sake of the people; the other for some lesson—perhaps of humility and patience—to Elijah himself. When the answer does come, it fulfils itself speedily. The “little cloud” becomes all but immediately (for so “in the mean while” should be rendered) a storm blackening the whole heavens, borne by a hurricane from the west.

(2) Jezreel.—This is the first mention of the city Jezreel, a city of Issachar (Josh. xix. 18), as a royal city. The name (signifying “Jehovah hath sworn”) was applied to the whole of the rich plain, the garden and battlefield of northern Palestine. (See Judges vi. 33; 1 Sam. xix. 1; 2 Sam. ii. 9.) The city was made a royal residence by Ahab, as Samaria by Omri. It stands in a position of some strength and great beauty, supplied by unfailing springs of water, visible from Carmel, and commanding views east and west far over the plain.

(3) The hand of the Lord was on Elijah.—in a striking reaction of enthusiasm thankfulness after the stern calmness of his whole attitude throughout the great controversy, and his silent earnestness of prayer. At the head of the people he brings the king, conquered, if not repentant, home in triumph. To our conception of a prophet this frenzied excitement seems strange. Nor could it have belonged to a Samuel, an Elijah, or an Isaiah. In the simple and enthusiastic warrior of God it is natural enough.

XIX.

(1, 2) There is a certain grandeur of fearlessness and ruthlessness in the message of Jezebel, which marks her character throughout, and places it in striking contrast with the vacillating impressibility of Ahab, whom she treats with natural scorn. (See xii. 7.) Ahab, as before, remains passive; he has no courage, perhaps no wish, to attack Elijah, before whom he had quailed; but he cares not, or dares not, to restrain Jezebel. She daubs to strike secretly and without warning; in fact, her message seems intended to give the opportunity for a flight, which might degrade Elijah in the eyes of the people. We note that the prophet (see chap. xviii. 46) had not ventured to enter Jezreel till he should know how his deadly foe would receive the news of the great day at Carmel.

(3) He arose, and went for his life.—The sudden reaction of disappointment and despondency, strange as it seems to superficial observation, is eminently characteristic of an impulsive and vehement nature. His blow had been struck, as he thought, triumphantly. Now the power of cool unrelenting antagonism makes itself felt, unshaken and only embittered by all that had passed. On Ahab and the people he knows that he cannot rely; so once more he flees for his life.

(4) Juniper tree.—A sort of broom, found abundantly in the desert. It has been noted that its roots were much prized for charcoal, the “coal” of verse 6. I am not better than my fathers.—The exclamation is characteristic. Evidently he had hoped that he himself was “better than his fathers” as a servant of God—singled out beyond all those that went before him, to be the victorious champion of a great crisis, “he, and he alone” (chaps. xviii. 22, xix. 10—14). Now he thinks his hope vain, and sees no reason why he should succeed when all who went before have failed. Why, he asks, should he live when all the rest of the prophets have died?

(5) An angel touched him.—The word may signify simply “a messenger,” human or super-human; but the context suggests a miraculous ministration of some unearthly food. It is notable that, except as ministers of God in the physical sphere (as in 2 Sam. xxiv. 16, 17; 2 Kings xix. 35), the angels, whose appearances are so often recorded in earlier days, hardly appear during the prophetic period, as though the place of their spiritual ministry, as messengers of God, to the people had been supplied by the prophetic mission. Here, and in 2 Kings
him, Arise and eat. (6) And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baked on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. (7) And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. (8) And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God. (9) And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah? (10) And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and (11) I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. (12) And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: (13) and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. (14) And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah? (15) And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and
with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. (15) And the Lord said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria; and Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha, the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. (16) And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. (17) Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

19 So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him. (20) And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again: for what have I done to thee? (21) And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the

implies in "the still small voice"—the voice (as the LXX. has it) of a light breath—a manifestation like that expressed plainly to Moses, of the higher power of the Spirit, penetrating to the inmost soul, which the terrors of external power cannot reach. The lesson is simply, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit saith the Lord of hosts" (Zech. iv. 6). The prophet so far reads it that he acknowledges, by veiled face of reverence, the presence of the Lord in "the still small voice," yet, with singular truth to nature, he is recorded as repeating, perhaps mechanically, his old complaint.

Go, return.—The charge conveys indirectly a double rebuke. His cry of disappointment, "Lord... I am not better than my fathers," implying that he stood out beyond all others, to meet the stern requirements of the time, is met by the charge to delegate the task of vengeance for God to others; the complaint, "I, even I alone, am left," by the revelation of the faithful remnant—the seven thousand who had not bowed to Baal—unknown to him, perhaps to one another, but known and loved by God.

And Jehu.—Of this charge Elijah fulfilled in person but one part, in the call of Elisha: for the fulfillment of the other two parts, see 2 Kings vii. 8—13; ix. 1—6. This apparently imperfect correspondence of the event to the charge, is a strong indication of the historical character of the narrative.

The history, indeed, records no actual anointing of Elisha; and it is remarkable that in no other place is any such anointing of a prophet referred to, unless Ps. ev. 15 be an exception. The anointing, signifying the gift of grace, was first instituted for the priests (Exod. xii. 15; Num. iii. 3); next it was extended to the royal office, and became, in common parlance, especially attached to it. The prophetic office, as the third great representative of the power of Jehovah, might well be hallowed by the same ordinance, especially as the prophets dispensed it to the kings; but, whether the prophets were always consecrated with the sacred oil, or whether, as in the Prophet of prophets, the "anointing with the Holy Ghost and with power" sometimes superseded the outward sign, we do not know. Abel-meholah ("the meadow of the dance," see chap. iv. 13) lay in the rich country near the Jordan valley and the plain of Edrauelon; it was therefore on Elijah's way.

Him that escapeth the sword of Hazael. —The vengeance wrought by Hazael and Jehu on the faithlessness of Israel speaks for itself; it is marked in bloody letters on the history (2 Kings x.). But Elisha's mission was obviously not one of such vengeance. He had to destroy enmity, but not to slay the enemies of God. The difficulty, such as it is, is one of the many marks of historic accuracy in the whole passage. Probably Elisha's mission is here described in the terms in which Elijah would best understand it. His spirit was for war; he could hardly have conceived how the completion of his mission was to be wrought out by the weapons of peace in the hand of his successor. (Comp. 2 Cor. x. 3—6.)

I have left.—It should be "I leave, or" will leave," through all this vengeance, the seven thousand faithful: like the faithful remnant sealed in the visions of Ezekiel and St. John in the day of God's judgment (Ezek. ix. 4—6; Rev. vii. 3—8).

Kissed him.—(See Job xxxi. 26, 27; Hos. xiii. 2.) The passage is vividly descriptive of the worshipper on the first approach bowing the knee, on nearer access kissing the image, or the altar, or the threshold of the temple.

Twelve yoke of oxen, or (as Ewald renders it) of land, indicate some wealth in Elisha's family, which he has to leave to follow the wandering life of Elijah. The character and mission of Elisha will appear hereafter; but the contrast between the prophets is marked in the difference of their home and origin; even the quiet simplicity of Elisha's call stands contrasted with the sudden, mysterious appearance of Elijah.

Cast his mantle—i.e., the rough hair-mantle characteristic of the ascetic recluse. The act is said to have been a part of the form of adoption of a child; hence its spiritual significance here, which, after a moment's bewildermment, Elisha seems to read.

Let me, I pray thee.—It is impossible not to compare this with the similar request made to our Lord (Luke ix. 61, 62) by one who declared readiness to follow Him. The comparison suggests that the answer of Elijah is one of half-ironical rebuke of what seemed hesitation—"Go back, if thou wilt; what have I done to constrain thee?" In both cases we have the stern but necessary rejection of half-hearted service, even if the heart be distracted by the most natural and sacred love. But Elijah sees that Elisha means simply farewell, and he apparently waits till it is over.

And he returned.—Like Matthew in Luke ix. 27—29, Elisha, probably after sacrifice, makes a feast of farewell to his home, and of homage to his new master. The hasty preparation is made by the use of the...
Ben-hadad sends

wooden implements for fuel, as in the sacrifice at the
threshold-floor of Araunah (2 Sam. xxiv. 22). Hence-
forth from a master he became a servant, ministering to
Elijah, and willing to be known, even when he became
himself the prophet of God, as " he that poured water
on the hands of Elijah." (2 Kings iii. 11).

XX.

This chapter, evidently drawn from a different source,
is interposed in the middle of the record of the pro-
phetic career of Elijah. The history evidently belongs
to the latter years of Ahab's reign, probably some time
after the events of the previous chapter. The exis-
tence of the schools of the prophets, and the prophetic
authority exercised, appear to indicate that for some
reason Jezebel's influence on behalf of Baal had been
reduced to impotence, and the worship of God restored.
(Comp. xxii. 5-28.) It touches mainly on the external
history of the reign, and shows it to have been one of
no inconsiderable prosperity.

(1) Ben-hadad.—This is the inherited title of the
Syrian kings. (See Amos i. 4; Jer. xlix. 27.) From
the allusion in verse 24 it appears that this Ben-
hadad was the son of a king who had been victorious
against Omri—possibly pushing still further the ad-
vantage gained in the time of Baasha. It is evident
that he assumed, perhaps by inheritance, a sovereignty
over Israel.

Thirty and two kings.—All the notices of Syria
show it as divided into small kingdoms, confederated
from time to time under some leading power. In the
days of David this leading power was that of Hadad-
peror of Zobah (2 Sam. viii. 1-13; x. 19), although
Hamash was apparently independent. Now Damascas,
under the dynasty of Hadad, assumes a most formid-
bable predominance. Ahab cannot stand before it, but
shuts himself up, probably after defeat, within the
strong walls of Samaria.
for handfuls for all the people that 1 follow me. (13) And the king of Israel answered and said, Tell him, Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off. (12) And it came to pass, when Ben-hadad heard this 2 message, as he was drinking, he and the kings in the 3 pavilions, that he said unto his servants, 4 Set yourselves in array. And they set themselves in array against the city.

(13) And, behold, there 3 came a prophet unto Ahab king of Israel, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou seen all this great multitude? behold, I will deliver it into thine hand this day; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord. (14) And Ahab said, By whom? And he said, Thus saith the Lord, Even by the 6 young men of the princes of the provinces. Then he said, Who shall order the battle? And he answered, Thou.

(15) Then he numbered the young men of the princes of the provinces, and they were two hundred and thirty two: and after them he numbered all the people, even all the children of Israel, being seven thousand. (16) And they went out at noon. But Ben-hadad was drinking himself drunk in the pavilions, he and the kings, the thirty and two kings that helped him. (17) And the young men of the princes of the provinces went out first; and Ben-hadad sent out, and they told him, saying, There are men come out of Samaria. (18) And he said, Whether they be come out for peace, take them alive; or whether they be come out for war, take them alive. (19) So these young men of the princes of the provinces came out of the city, and the army which followed them. (20) And they slew every one his man: and the Syrians fled: and Israel pursued them: and Ben-hadad the king of Syria escaped on an horse with the horsemen. (21) And the king of Israel went out, and smote the horses and chariots, and slew the Syrians with a great slaughter.

(22) And the prophet came to the king of Israel, and said unto him, Go, strengthen thyself, and mark, and see what thou doest: for at the return of the year the king of Syria will come up against thee. (23) And the servants of the king of Syria said unto him, Their gods are gods of the hills; therefore they were stronger than we; but let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be received the message at a feast, "drinking himself drunk," and, stung by its tone of sarcasm, does not condescend to bestir himself, but orders his servants to an instant attack. The command is given, with a haughty brevity, in a single word ("Set"), which may be "Array troops," or "Place engines," as in the margin. The LXX translates, "Build a stockade" (for attack on the walls).

(13) There came a prophet.—The appearance of this unknown prophet evidently shows (see also chap. xxii. 6, 7) that Ahab's emnity to the prophetic order was over since the great day at Carmel, and that the schools of the prophets were forming themselves again—perhaps not free from connection with the idlatry of Jeroboam, but safe from all attacks from the worshippers of Baal. It is notable that in all these political functions of prophecy Elijah does not appear, reserving himself for the higher moral and religious mission from God. Ahab receives the prophet's message with perfect confidence and reverence; he has returned in profession to the allegiance to Jehovah, which he had, perhaps, never wholly relinquished.

(14) Who shall order the battle?—The marginal reading seems right, "Who shall give battle?" "Who shall begin the fray?"

The young men—incl. the attendants or armor-bearers of the territorial chiefs, no doubt picked men and well armed. The whole garrison is stated as seven thousand—enough, perhaps, to man the walls, but wholly unfit to take the field. The sally is made at noon, when (as Josephus relates) the besiegers were resting unarmed in the heat of the day.

(20) And they slew . . .—The attack of this handful of men, supported by a sally of the whole garrison, is not unlike the slaughter of the Philistine garrison and host in the days of Saul (1 Sam. xiv.), or the still earlier rout of the army of Midian by the night attack of Gideon (Judg. vii. 16—23). Probably, as in these cases, the Israelites may have risen from various lurking-places to join in the pursuit and slaughter. It does not necessarily follow that the event was miraculous. Such dispersions of vast Oriental armies are not uncommon in history. The lesson is that drawn with noble simplicity by Jonathan: "There is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few" (1 Sam. xiv. 6).

(22) The return of the year.—The early part of the next year, after the winter was over, "when kings go out to battle" (2 Sam. xi. 1).

(23) Gods of the hills.—The idea of tutelary gods, whose strength was greatest on their own soil, is naturally common in polytheistic religions, which, by the very multiplication of gods, imply limitation of the power of each. Now the greater part of the territory where Jehovah was worshipped, was a hill-country. Samaria in particular, the scene of recent defeat, lay in the mountain region of Ephraim. The Israelite armies, moreover, being mostly of infantry—having, indeed, few or no cavalry, except in the time of Solomon—naturally encamped and fought, as far as possible, on the hills; as Barak on Mount Tabor (Judges iv. 6—14), Saul on Mount Gilboa (1 Sam. xxxi. 1), and Ahab himself (in verse 27). Perhaps the worship of Jehovah in the "high places" may have also conduced to this belief.
stronger than they. (24) And do this thing, Take the kings away, every man out of his place, and put captains in their rooms: (25) and number thee an army, like the army 1 that thou hast lost, horse for horse, and chariot for chariot: and we will fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they. And he hearkened unto their voice, and did so. (26) And it came to pass at the return of the year, that Ben-hadad numbered the Syrians, and went up to Aphek, 2 to fight against Israel. (27) And the children of Israel were numbered, and 3 were all present, and went against them: and the children of Israel pitched before them like two little flocks of kids; but the Syrians filled the country.

(28) And there came a man of God, and spake unto the king of Israel, and said, Thus saith the Lord, Because the Syrians have said, The Lord is God of the hills, but he is not God of the valleys, therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand, and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

(29) And they pitched one over against

that the "gods of Israel were one of the hills," whose power vanished in the plains; where, of course, the Syrian armies of chariots and horsemen would naturally fight at advantage. Shrewd policy might, as so often is the case, lurk in the advice of Ben-hadad's counsellors under the cover of superstition; as, indeed, it seems also to show itself in seizing the opportunity to increase the central power, by organising the troops of the tributary kings under officers of his own.

(26) Aphek.—The name, signifying simply a "fortress," as applied to several different places. There are two places which suit well enough with the Aphek of this passage and 2 Kings xiii. 17, as being a battlefield in the plain country between Israel and Syria. One is the Aphek of 1 Sam. xvii. 1, evidently in the plain of Esdraelon; the other a place on the road to Damascus, about six miles east of the Sea of Galilee.

(Were all present.—The marginal reading "were victorious," or, perhaps, more generally, "were supplied," with all things necessary for war, seems correct. The comparatively small number of the Israelite forces, even after the great victory of the year before, appears to show that, previous to the siege of Samaria, Ahab had suffered some great defeats, which had broken the strength of Israel.

(A man of God—apparently not the same as before. We see from verse 35 that the prophetic order was now numerous. The vindication of the majesty of God before the Syrians, as well as before Israel—like the more celebrated case of the rebuke of the blasphemy of Sennacherib (2 Kings xix. 16—34)—is in accordance with the prayer of Solomon, or the similar utterances in the Psalms (Psa. cxlvii. 2, cii. 15, cxxviii. 4). "That all the people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee;"

and also with such prophetic declarations as those of Ezek. xx. 9, "I wrought for my Name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen." It is a foreshadowing of that view of all nations, as in some degree having knowledge of God and probation before Him, which is afterwards worked out fully in the prophetic writings. The intense and powerful Monotheism of the religion of Israel, in spite of all its backslidings, could hardly have been without influence over the neighbouring nations (see 2 Kings v. 15), especially at a time when the remembrance of Solomon's vast empire, and still wider influence, would yet linger through the tenacious traditions of the East.

A wall—properly, the wall of the city, whether falling by earthquake, or in the storming of the place, by Israel. The numbers in the text are very large, as in many other instances. It is possible (see Introduction) that there may be corruption, although the same numbers are found in the ancient versions. But the massing in small space of Oriental armies, and the extraordinary slaughter consequent on it, are well illustrated in history; as, for instance, in the Greek wars with Persia, or even our own experience in India.

(Ropes upon our heads—like the ropes round the necks of the burgurers of Calais, in the days of Edward III. The envoys offer themselves as naked, helpless criminals, to sue for mercy.

(33) Now the men.—There has been much discussion of the meaning here, and some proposals of slight emendations of the reading. But the general sense seems accurately rendered by our version. "The men watched" ("as for augury," says the LXX.), "and hasted, and caught up" (so as to make it sure) "what fell from him." What follows may be a question,
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God’s Judgment on Ahab.

to come up into the chariot. (34) And Ben-hadad said unto him, The cities, which my father took from thy father, I will restore; and thou shalt make streets for thee in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria. Then said Ahab, I will send thee away with this covenant. So he made a covenant with him, and sent him away.

(35) And a certain man of the sons of the prophets said unto his neighbour in the word of the Lord, Smite me, I pray thee. And the man refused to smite him. (36) Then said he unto him, Because thou hast not obeyed the voice of the Lord, behold, as soon as thou art departed from me, a lion shall slay thee. And as soon as he was departed from him, a lion found him, and slew him. (37) Then he found another man, and said, Smite me, I pray thee. And the man smote him, so that in smiting he wounded him. (38) So the prophet departed, and waited for the king by the way, and disguised himself with ashes upon his face. (39) And as the king passed by, he cried unto the king: and he said, Thy servant went out into the midst of the battle; and, behold, a man turned aside, and brought a man unto me, and said, Keep this man: if by any means he be missing, then shall thy life be for his life, or else thou shalt pay a talent of silver. (40) And as thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone. And the king of Israel said unto him, So shall thy judgment be; thyself hast decided it. (41) And he hasted, and took the ashes away from his face; and the king of Israel discerned him that he was of the prophets. (42) And he said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, “Because thou hast let go out of thy hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people. (43) And the king of Israel went to his house heavy and displeased, and came to Samaria.

“Is Ben-hadad thy brother?” but probably the simple acceptance of the title is better. The whole description is graphic. The Syrians speak of “thy slave Ben-hadad.” Ahab, in compassion or show of magnanimity, says, “my brother.” Eagerly the ambassadours catch up the word, which, according to Eastern custom, implied a pledge of amity not to be recalled; and Ahab accepts their inference, and seals it publicly by taking the conquered king into his chariot. (Comp. 2 Kings x. 15, 16.)

(34) Make streets—properly, squares, or quarters of a city. This concession implies a virtual acknowledgment of supremacy; for the right to have certain quarters for residence, for trade, perhaps even for garrison, in the capital of a king, belongs only to one who has sovereignty over him. Hence it goes beyond the significance of the restoration of the cities—conquered, it would seem, from Omri, unless, indeed, taking “father” in the sense of predecessor, the reference is to the Syrian victories in the days of Baasha. (See chap. xv. 20.) The narrative seems to convey an idea that the covenant was made hastily, on insufficient security. The great point, however, was that a war, victoriously conducted under prophetic guidance, should not have been concluded without prophetic sanction.

(35) A certain man—according to Josephus, Micaiah, the son of Imlah. This tradition, or conjecture, agrees well with the subsequent narrative in chap. xxii.

The sons of the prophets.—This phrase, constantly recurring in the history of Elijah and Elisha, first appears here. But the thing designated is apparently as old as the days of Samuel, who is evidently surrounded by “a company” of disciples. (See 1 Sam. x. 5, 10, xix. 20.) The prophetic office seems never to have been, like the priesthood or kingship, hereditary. “Sonship,” therefore, no doubt means simply discipleship; and it is likely enough that the schools of the sons of the prophets were places of higher religious education, including many who did not look for the prophetic vocation; although the well-known words of Amos (Amos vii. 14), “I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet’s son,” clearly indicate that from their ranks, generally though not invariably, the prophets were called. Probably the institution had fallen into disuse, and had been revived to seal with the appearance of a wounded soldier. Unless the wound had some symbolic significance in application to Ahab or Israel, it is difficult to see what purpose it could serve.

(39) A lion shall slay thee.—It is obvious to compare the example of chap. xiii. 24.

(35) Ashes upon his face.—It should be a “bandage over his head,” to cover his face, and to accord with the appearance of a wounded soldier. Unless the wound had some symbolic significance in application to Ahab or Israel, it is difficult to see what purpose it could serve.

(36) Thy servant.—The parable is, of course, designed (like those of 2 Sam. xii. 1—4, xiv. 5—11) to make Ahab condemn himself. In Ahab, however, it excites not compunction, but characteristic sullenness of displeasure, like that of chap. xxi. 4.

(42) A man whom I appointed—properly, a man under my curse. The rash action of Ahab, like the deliberate disobedience of Saul (1 Sam. xiv.), may have been due partly to compassion, partly to weakness. In either case it had no right to stand unauthorised between God’s judgment and him on whom it was pronounced; for even soft-heartedness, as in the case of Eli, may be treason to the cause of righteousness. The prophet (like Elisha, in 2 Kings xii. 19) speaks partly as a patriot, jealous—and, as the event proved, with a sagacious jealousy—of the leitum which left the deadly enemy of Israel unsubdued; but he speaks also as the representative of God’s stern and righteous judgment, which Ahab, after signal deliverance, had treated as of
CHAPTER XXI.- (1) And it came to pass after these things, that Ahab the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. (2) And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house: and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money. (3) And Naboth said to Ahab, The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee. (4) And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread. (5) But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread? (6) And he said unto her, Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it please thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it: and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard. (7) And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite. (8) So she

XXI.

The narrative of this chapter, clearly drawn once more from the prophetic record of Elijah's life and mission, returns to the same vividness of style and lofty spiritual teaching perceptible in chaps. xvii., xix. It describes the turning-point of Ahab's probation, which, like the great crisis of David's history, is an act of unrighteous tyranny, so common in Eastern despotism, that it would hardly be recorded by an ordinary historian. So in the prophetic writings moral evils, especially profligacy and bloodshed and oppression of the weak, are denounced at least not less severely, and even more frequently, than religious unfaithfulness. The whole description is strikingly illustrative of Ahab's character, in its essential weakness and subervience, more fatal in high place of authority than resolute wickedness. It might be painted in the well-known description of Felix by Tacitus, as "swaying the legality and justice of Naboth's action, nor dares to resent the curt defiance of his refusal. Like a spoilt child, he comes back sullen and angry, throws himself on his bed, and will eat no bread. All that he has is as nothing, while the little plot of ground is refused; as to Haman all was worthless, while Mordecai the Jew sat in the king's gate (Esth. v. 13). This temper of a slave is characteristic of the weak and petulant nature of Ahab, that he neither recognises the legality and justice of Naboth's action, nor dares to resent the curt defiance of his refusal. Like a spoilt child, he comes back sullen and angry, throws himself on his bed, and will eat no bread. All that he has is as nothing, while the little plot of ground is refused; as to Haman all was worthless, while Mordecai the Jew sat in the king's gate (Esth. v. 13). This temper of a slave, childish discontent is the natural seedplot of crime, under the instigation of more determined wickedness. (7) Dost thou now.-The scorn of Jezebel is, like the impatience of Lady Macbeth, expressed in a striking boldness of emphasis. First comes the bitter irony of the question, "Dost thou govern the kingdom of Israel, and yet suffer a subject to cross thy will?" expressing her scornful wonder at one who "lets I dare not, wait upon I would." Then in the invitation, "eat bread, and let thine heart be merry," there seems the same half-contemptuous recognition of a self-indulgent weakness of nature, which may be traced in Elijah's words in chap. xviii. 41, "Get thee up, eat and drink, for there is a sound of abundance of rain." Ahab is fit only to desire and to revel; it is for bolder spirits to act for good or for evil. (8) Sealed them with his seal— with the name, or token, of the king, engraved on stone, and impressed (see Job xxxviii. 14) on a lump of clay attached to the
wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city, dwelling with Naboth. (9) And she wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people: (10) and set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king. And then carry him out, and stone him, that he may die. (11) And the men of his city, even the elders and the nobles who were the inhabitants in his city, did as Jezebel had sent unto them, and as it was written in the letters which she had sent unto them. (12) They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people. (13) And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died. (14) Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead. (15) And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead. (16) And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it. (17) And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, (18) Arise, go letter. The sealing (as the modern sense of "signature" implies) was the pledge of authenticity and authority. (See Gen. xxxvii. 18; Neh. ix. 38, x. 1; Esth. ix. 10, 12, viii. 23; Dan. vi. 17, &c.) The use of the seal—ordinarily worn or carried on the person—implies Ahab's knowledge that something is being done in his name, into which he takes care not to inquire.

In his city.—This would be most naturally interpreted as Jezreel; but if Naboth dwelt or sojourned at Samaria, it may be Samaria. Jezebel naturally desires that neither Ahab nor she herself, though close at hand, should appear in the matter; but gives the necessary authority in writing, because without it the deed could not be done.

(9) Proclaim a fast.—This might be only to cover all that was to be so foully done with a cloak of religious observance, or, perhaps more probably, to imply that some secret sin had been committed, which would draw down vengeance on the whole city, and so to prepare for the false accusation. There is a like ambiguity as to the explanation of the command, "set Naboth on high," as either an exaltation of pretended honour, or the "lifting up his head" (Gen. xl. 20) for accusation. It may be noted that the whole scheme implies a return of the people to at least the outward observance of the Law of the Lord.

(10) Two men—in accordance with Num. xxxv. 30; Deut. xvii. 6.

Sons of Belial.—See Judges xix. 23, xx. 13; 1 Sam. i. 16, ii. 12, x. 57, xxv. 17, 25, xxx. 22; 2 Sam. xvi. 7, xx. 1, &c.; properly, "children of lawlessness, or worthless."

Blaspheme.—The word is the same used in Job i. 5, 11, ii. 5, there rendered "curse." It properly signifies "to bless;" "thence, to "part with blessing;" finally to part from, or "disown." It is, rather, therefore, "to renounce" than "to blaspheme." The punishment, however, was stoning, as for positive blasphemy. (See Lev. xxiv. 16; Deut. xiii. 9, 10.)

(11) And the men of his city . . . did.—The pains taken in the invention of this foul plot, and the ready acquiescence of the rulers of the city in carrying it out, are characteristic of the baser forms of organised Eastern despotism—not venturing to take life by simple violence without some cause apparently shown, and yet always able to poison the springs of justice, and do murder under form of law. In Israel, where the king was held to be but a vicegerent of God, subject, in theory, under the old constitution or "manner of the kingdom" (1 Sam. xxvi. 25), to the supreme law, the need of clothing crime with legal form would be especially felt.

(13) Carried him forth—as usual, in order to avoid polluting the city with blood—possibly to his own ground, the coveted vineyard itself.

(15) Take possession.—Naboth's sons (see 2 Kings ix. 26) were murdered with him, so that there was none to claim the inheritance. Even had this not been so, the property of executed traitors would naturally fall to the king, although no enactment to this effect is found in the Law.

(16) When Ahab heard.—It is characteristic of Ahab that he takes care to ask no question about Naboth's death, desirous "to be innocent of the knowledge," and yet tacitly to "applaud the deed." The guilt is Jezebel's; the fruit, his own. In the LXX. there is here a curious and striking insertion: "he rent his clothes and put on sackcloth," representing Ahab as struck with momentary horror, and then, after thus salving his conscience, still resolving to carry out his desire for the coveted vineyard. The picture is equally true to nature, especially to such a nature as his. But the insertion has little authority, and is probably a mistaken interpolation from verse 27.

(17) Elijah.—We have heard nothing of him since the call of Elisha, as though he had once more retired to solitude. In the mere political service of the preceding chapter, important in the eyes of the world, he takes no part; but emerges now for the higher moral duty of rebuking crime, and avenging innocent blood, in what Eastern tyranny would deem a very trivial matter. Ahab's address to him seems to imply wonder at his unusual appearance among men.

(18) Which is in Samaria.—These words are almost meaningless, unless they literally signify that Ahab was then in Samaria, not in Jezreel. To interpret them as
down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which is in Samaria: behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it. (19) And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the Lord, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.

(20) And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord. (21) Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, and will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel, (22) and will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahab, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger, and made Israel to sin. (23) And J of Jezebel also spake the Lord, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the 1 wall of Jezreel. (24) Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.

(25) But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife 2 stirred up. (26) And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all things as did the Amorites, whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel.

(27) And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly. (28) And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, (29) Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his...
son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.

CHAPTER XXII.—(1) And they continued three years without war between Syria and Israel. (2) And it came to pass in the third year, that Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came down to the king of Israel. (3) And the king of Israel said unto his servants, Know ye that Ramoth in Gilead is our's, and we be still, and take it not out of the hand of the king of Syria? (4) And he said unto Jehoshaphat, Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramoth-gilead? And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, 'I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses. (5) And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Enquire, I pray thee, at the word of the Lord to day. (6) Then the

king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall I go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king.

(7) And Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides, that we might enquire of him? (8) And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may enquire of the Lord: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so.

(9) Then the king of Israel called an officer, and said, Hasten hither Micaiah the son of Imlah. (10) And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Israel said unto their servants, Know ye that Ramoth in Gilead is our's, and we be still, and take it out of the hand of the king of Syria? (11) And he said unto Jehoshaphat, Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramoth-gilead? And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, 'I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses. (12) And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Enquire, I pray thee, at the word of the Lord to day. (13) Then the

Prophets... four hundred.—These were clearly not avowed prophets of Baal, or the Asherah (“groves”), as is obvious from the context and from their words in verse 12. But Jehoshaphat’s discontent makes it equally clear that they were not in his view true prophets of Jehovah. Probably they were devoted, like the old prophet of Bethel, to the service of the idolatry of Jeroboam.

(7) In there not here a prophet of the Lord.—The rendering of the great name “Jehovah” by “the Lord” obscures the sense of the passage. In the previous utterance of the prophets the word (Adonai) is merely “Lord” in the etymological sense, which might mean the Supreme God of any religion. Jehoshaphat, struck with their shrinking from the distinctive name Jehovah, asks, “Is there not a prophet of Jehovah?”—one who is not ashamed or afraid to speak in His awful name?

(8) Micaiah (“who is like Jehovah”)—the name being the same as Micah. According to Josephus, he was the prophet of chap. xx. 35—43, who had “prophesied evil” of Ahab for his rash action towards Ben-hadad, and had already been imprisoned by him. The whole description, and especially the words of verse 26, seem to confirm this account.

(10) Each on his throne.—The description evidently implies that, having reluctantly consented to send for Micaiah, Ahab seeks to overawe him by display not only of royal pomp, but of prophetic inspiration, professing to come, like his own, from the Lord Jehovah.
Judah sat each on his throne, having put on their robes, in a void place in the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets prophesied before them. (13) And Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made him horns of iron; and he said, Thus saith the Lord, With these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou hast consumed them. (12) And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, Go up to Ramoth-gilead, and prosper; for the Lord shall deliver it into the king's hand.

(13) And the messenger that was gone to call Micaiah spake unto him, saying, Behold now, the words of the prophets declare good unto the king with one mouth: let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak that which is good. (14) And Micaiah said, As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak. (15) So he came to the king.

And the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we forbear? And he answered him, Go, and prosper: for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king. (16) And the king said unto him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou tell me nothing but that which is true in the name of the Lord? (17) And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the Lord said, These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace.

(18) And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil? (19) And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left. (20) And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner.

(21) And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead. (22) And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he wrapped his clothes; and he said, Is it peace, O Lord? (23) Then the Lord said, Go,ultiple choice (43x114) resulting in the highest spiritual gifts from God, and yet upon as the medium of the prophetic inspiration, which article is explained by some, perhaps rather weakly, others take the phrase to signify the spirit of prophecy, a kind of emanation from the Godhead, looked upon as the medium of the prophetic inspiration, which is an expression conceivable, but certainly unprecedented. Perhaps without introducing into this passage the distinct idea of the Satan, i.e., the enemy, which we find in Job i., ii.; 1 Chron. xxxi. 1; Zech. iii. 1, 2, it may be best to interpret it by the conception, common to all religions recognising the terrible existence of evil in the world, of a spiritual power of evil (called

(11) Zedekiah.—The name itself ("righteousness of Jehovah") must certainly imply professed devotion to the true God, whose Name here is first uttered by him. Symbolic action was not unfrequent in the prophets. (See Note on chap. xi. 30.) The use of the horns, as emblems of victorious strength, is also familiar, as in the utterance of Balaam (Num. xxii. 32), in the blessing of Moses (Deut. xxiii. 17), in the song of Hannah (1 Sam. iii. 1), in the visions of Daniel and Zechariah (Dan. vii. 10; Zech. i. 18, 19).

(12) For the Lord shall deliver it.—The prophets, led by Zedekiah, now venture to use the Name of Jehovah, from which they had at first shrunk. The description, however, of their united reiteration of the cry, evidently with increasing excitement, reminds us of the repeated "O Baal, hear us" of Mount Carmel, and stands in similar contrast with the calm, stern utterance of the true prophet.

(13) Behold now.—In the whole history, as especially in the words of the officer, there is evidence of the strange confusion of idea, so common in superstition at all times, which in some sense believes in the inspiration of the prophets as coming from God, and yet fancies that they can direct it as they will, and that accordingly they can be bribed, or beguiled, or coerced, to "prophesy smooth things." The extreme form of this infatuation is exemplified in Simon Magnus, who believed that the Apostles were the medium for conferring the highest spiritual gifts from God, and yet madly persuaded himself that this power could be bought for money (Acts viii. 18, 19). The natural result is a mingled awe and contempt, such as Balak feels for Balaam, which even Balaam could convey (Num. xxii. 18). But, as all false religions and corruptions of true religion show, it is never rooted out, except by real spiritual knowledge of God and of His dealings with the soul.

(15) Go, and prosper.—Micaiah is a true disciple of Elijah in the defiant irony of the battle, or shall we forbear? And he answered him, Go, and prosper: for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king. (16) And the king said unto him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou tell me nothing but that which is true in the name of the Lord? (17) And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the Lord said, These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace.

(18) And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil? (19) And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left. (20) And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. (21) And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead. (22) And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he wrapped his clothes; and he said, Is it peace, O Lord? (23) Then the Lord said, Go.
persuade him. (24) And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also; go forth, and do so. (25) Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee.

(26) But Zedekiah the son of Che-naanah went near, and smote Micaiah on the cheek, and said, What way went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee? (27) And Micaiah said, Behold, thou shalt see in that day, when thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thyself.

(28) And the king of Israel said, Take Micaiah, and carry him back unto Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son; (29) and say, Thus saith the king, Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I come in peace. (30) And Micaiah said, If thou return at all in peace, the Lord hath not spoken by me. And he said, Hearken, O people, every one of you.

(31) So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead. (32) And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself, and enter into the battle; but put on thy robes. And the king of Israel disguised himself, and went into the battle. (33) But the king of Syria commanded his thirty and two captains that had rule over his chariots, saying, Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king of Israel. (34) And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, Surely it is the king of Israel. And they turned aside to fight against him; and Jehoshaphat cried out. (35) And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Israel, that they turned back to fight against Zedekiah; and they said, Behold, the king of Syria hath sent to Prison.

So it was, when the captains of the chariots came near Jehoshaphat, that they said, Hearken, O people.—It is a curious coincidence that these are the opening words of the prophetic Book of Micah. They are not found in some MSS. of the LXX., and are supposed by some to be an early interpolation in this passage from that book.

So...Jehoshaphat.—The continued adhesion of Jehoshaphat, against the voice of prophecy, which he had himself invoked (severely rebuked in 2 Chron. xvii. 31), and, indeed, the subservient part which he plays throughout, evidently indicate a position of virtual dependence of Jehoshaphat on the stronger power of Israel, of which the alliance by marriage—destined to be all but fatal to the dynasty of David (2 Kings xi. 1, 2) —was at once the sign and the cause.

I will disguise myself.—The precaution of Ahab is almost ludicrously characteristic of his temper of half-belief and half-unbelief. In itself it is, of course, plainly absurd to believe that God's judgment has in all probability been pronounced, and yet to suppose that it can be averted by so puerile a precaution. But, as experience shows, it is not the less on that account true to human nature, especially such a nature as his, always "halting between two opinions."
turned back from pursuing him. (34) And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness; wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am wounded. (35) And the battle increased that day; and the king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and died at even: and the blood ran out of the wound into the midst of the chariot. (36) And there went a proclamation throughout the host about the going down of the sun, saying, Every man to his city, and every man to his own country. (37) So the king died, and was brought to Samaria; and they buried the king in Samaria. (38) And one washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria; and the dogs licked up his blood; and they washed his armour; according unto the word of the Lord which he spake.

(39) Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and the ivory house which he made, and all the cities that he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? (40) So Ahab slept with his fathers; and Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.

(41) And Jehoshaphat the son of Asa began to reign over Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel. (42) Jehoshaphat was thirty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi. (43) And he walked in all the ways of Asa his father; he turned not aside from doing that which was right in the eyes of the Lord; outwrought the other. Naboth, in any case, is likely to have had land in his native place, which would be forfeited to the king; and there would still be an appropriate judgment in making it also the scene of the dishonoured death of the last king of Ahab's house. We may notice, moreover, that the quotation in 2 Kings ix. is not taken from Elijah's words against Ahab, nor does it contain the characteristic notice of the 'dogs licking the blood,' though it is noticed as a fulfilment of the subsequent prophecy of chapter xxi. 24 against Ahab's house.

(44) The Death of Ahab. — The narrative here, so far as it is full and continuous, centres round the prophetic work of Elijah and Elisha, the scene of which was in Israel; and the compiler contents himself with the insertion of a few brief annalistic notices of the kingdom of Judah, taking up the thread of the narrative of chapter xv. 24, except where (as in 2 Kings iii.) it becomes again connected with the history of Israel. In the Chronicles, on the contrary, there is a full and interesting account of the reign of Jehoshaphat, and especially of his great religious revival (2 Chron. xvii.—xx.), coinciding with this chapter, almost verbally, in the account of the battle at Ramoth-gilead. The brief notices here of the religious work of Jehoshaphat, his "might," and his "wars," agree entirely with this fuller record.

(45) The high places were not taken away.—This agrees with 2 Chron. xx. 33, and stands in apparent contradiction with 2 Chron. xvii. 6: "He took
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and Jehoram.

nevertheless the high places were not taken away; for the people offered and burnt incense yet in the high places.

(44) And Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel.

(50) Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might that he shewed, and how he warred, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And the remnant of the sodomites, which remained in the days of his father Asa, he took out of the land.

(47) There was then no king in Edom: a deputy was king.

(46) Jehoshaphat made ships of Tharshish to go to Ophir for gold: but they went not; for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber.

(45) Then said Ahaziah the son of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships. But Jehoshaphat would not.

(50) And Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Jehoram his son reigned in his stead.

(49) Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned two years over Israel.

And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin:

for he served Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked to anger the Lord God of Israel, according to all that his father had done.

away the high places and groves out of Judah." Probably the key to the apparent discrepancy lies in the words "and groves" (Asherah). The high places taken away were those connected with the base Asherah worship; those which were simply unauthorised sanctuaries remained, at any rate in part.

(50) And Jehoshaphat.—This verse is chronologically out of place. It refers to the policy of Jehoshaphat, pursued apparently from the beginning, of exchanging the chronic condition of war with Israel in the preceding reigns, for peace and alliance.

(46) The remnant.—See chaps. xiv. 24, xv. 12.

(47) There was then no king in Edom.—This notice is apparently connected with the following verses; for Ezion-geber is a seaport of the Edomite territory. Whatever may have been the influence of Hadda in the last days of Solomon (chap. xi. 14), Edom does not seem to have regained independence till the time of Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. xxi. 8—10); although in the confederacy against Jehoshaphat, those "of Mount Seir" are included with the Moabites and Ammonites (2 Chron. xx. 10, 22). The "king of Edom," of 2 Kings iii., who is evidently a subject ally, not regarded in consultation (see verses 6—9), must be "the deputy" of this passage.

(48) Ships of Tharshish to go to Ophir.—See Note on chap. x. 22. We note that this revival of maritime enterprise coincides with the renewed alliance through Israel with Tyre. The account in 2 Chron. xx. 35—37 makes the brief narrative of these verses intelligible. The fleet was a combined fleet of Judah and Israel, built at Ezion-geber, which belonged to Judah; the alliance was denounced and judgment threatened by the prophet Eliezer. After the wreck of the fleet, manned, it would seem, by the subjects of Jehoshaphat, Ahaziah of Israel desires to renew the enterprise with the aid of Israelite and probably Tyrian sailors; but Jehoshaphat now refuses.

(51) Ahaziah.—In this short reign the influence of Jezebel, evidently in abeyance in the last days of Ahab, revives; and the idolatry of Baal resumes its place side by side with the older idolatry of Jeroboam, and (see 2 Kings i. 2) with the worship of the Canaanish Baalzebub.
THE SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS.
CHAPTER I. — (1) Then Moab rebelled against Israel "after the death of Ahab.” (2) And Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease. (3) But the angel of the Lord said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to enquire of Baal-zebub out over the window-sill. (Comp. chap. ix. 30; Ps. xiv. 2.) He perhaps fell into a gallery underneath, as the palace would be several storeys high, and he was not killed by his fall. The word sebaak had means “net” in Job xviii. 8, and decorative “network” in metal in 1 Kings vii. 18; 2 Chron. iv. 12. The Rabbis explain it here as a sort of skylight to the chamber beneath the upper chamber, or a spiral stairway; both improbable. He sent messengers.—By Jezabel’s advice. (S. Ephrem.)

Baal-zebub.—Here only in the Old Testament. “Lord of Flies” is generally compared with the Greek ἀγωγός, or μωσέας, the “fly-averting Zeus” of the Eleans (Pans., viii. 26, 4), and it is no doubt true that flies are an extraordinary pest in the East. But when we remember that “myliomancy,” or divination by watching the movements of flies, is an ancient Babylonian practice, we can hardly doubt that this is the true significance of the title “Baal-zebub.” In the Assyrian deluge tablet the gods are said to have gathered over Izdubar’s sacrifice “like flies” (κίμα ζυμβίε). The later Jewish spelling (באל-סוב) probably contains an allusive reference to the Talmudic “Lord of Flies” (Baal-zebub, which flies are an extraordinary pest in the East. But when we remember that “myliomancy,” or divination by watching the movements of flies, is an ancient Babylonian practice, we can hardly doubt that this is the true significance of the title “Baal-zebub.” In the Assyrian deluge tablet the gods are said to have gathered over Izdubar’s sacrifice “like flies” (κίμα ζυμβίε). The later Jewish spelling (באל-סוב) probably contains an allusive reference to the Talmudic words (באל-סוב) which flies are an extraordinary pest in the East.

1. The Reign of Ahab Continued.

The division of the Book of Kings at this point is inartificial and arbitrary. The present narrative obviously continues that of 1 Kings xxii. 51—53.

(1) Then.—And.
Moab rebelled against Israel.—David reduced Moab to vassalage (2 Sam. viii. 2; comp. chap. xxiii. 20). After that event, Scripture is silent as to the fortunes of Moab. It probably took occasion of the troubles which ensued upon the death of Solomon, to throw off the yoke of Israel. The famous Moabite stone supplements the sacred history by recording the war of liberation which Mesha, king of Moab, successfully waged against the successors of Ahab. The inscription opens thus: “I am Mesha, son of Chemosh-gad, king of Moab the Dibonite. My father reigned over Moab thirty years, and I reigned after my father. And his son (i.e., Ahab) succeeded him, and he, too, said, ‘I will oppress Moab.’ In my days he said (it), but I saw my desire upon him and his house, and Israel perished utterly for ever. And Omri, king of Israel, and he oppressed Moab many days, for Chemosh was angry with his land. And his son (i.e., Ahab) succeeded him, and he, too, said, ‘I will oppress Moab.’ In my days he said (it), but I saw my desire upon him and his house, and Israel perished utterly for ever. And Omri occupied the land of Medeba, and dwelt therein, and (they oppressed Moab he and) his son forty years. And Chemosh looked (?) on it (i.e., Moab) in my days.” From this unique and unhappily much injured record it appears that Omri had reduced Moab again to subjection, and that Ahab, who, like his father, was a strong sovereign, had maintained his hold upon the country. The death of Ahab and the sickness of Ahaziah would be Moab’s opportunity. The revolt of Moab is mentioned here parenthetically. The subject is continued in chap. iii. 4—27. (See the Notes there.)

(2—16) A new and (according to Ewald and Thenius) later fragment of the history of Elijah.

(3) Through a lattice.—Rather, the lattice, i.e., the latticed window of the chamber on the palace roof, looking into the court below. The word rendered “through” (be’ad) implies that Ahaziah was leaning through a lattice in his upper chamber on the palace roof, looking into the court below. The word rendered “through” (be’ad) implies that Ahaziah was leaning through a lattice in his upper chamber on the palace roof, looking into the court below. The word rendered “through” (be’ad) implies that Ahaziah was leaning through a lattice in his upper chamber on the palace roof, looking into the court below. The word rendered “through” (be’ad) implies that Ahaziah was leaning through a lattice in his upper chamber on the palace roof, looking into the court below.
the god of Ekron? (4) Now therefore thus saith the Lord, 1 Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. And Elijah departed.

(5) And when the messengers turned back unto him, he said unto them, Why are ye now turned back? (6) And they said unto him, There came a man up to meet us, and said unto us, Go, turn again unto the king that sent you, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that thou sendest to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? therefore thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. (7) And he said unto them, What manner of man was he which came up to meet you; and told you these words? (8) And they answered him, He was an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite.

(9) Then the king sent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty. And he went up to him: and, behold, he sat on the top of an hill. And he spake unto him, Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down. (10) And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down
Fire from Heaven.

II. KINGS, I.

Elijah and the King.

and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties with their fifties: therefore let my life now be precious in thy sight. (15) And the angel of the Lord said unto Elijah, Go down with him: be not afraid of him. And he arose, and went down with him unto the king.

(16) And he said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Forasmuch as thou hast sent messengers to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, is it not because there is no God in Israel to enquire of his word? therefore thou shalt not come down on that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die.

(17) So he died according to the word of the Lord which Elijah had spoken. And Jehoram reigned in his stead in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah; because he ateeth His own cause by the means most adequate to the necessities of the time, viz., a manifest miracle.

(11) Again also he sent.—Although he had heard what had befallen his former envoys.

He answered.—LXX., “went up” (way-yat’al for way-yo’an), as in verses 9 and 13.

And said.—Heb., spake. Yet some MSS., and Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic, as Authorised Version.

Thus hath the king said.—Or, commanded (’amar).

Come down quickly.—“Impudentior fuit hic ... priore; tum quia audito ejus supplicio non respuit, tum quia auxit impudentiam addendo ‘Festina’” (a Lapide). (But see Note on verse 12.)

(12) Said (spake) unto them.—LXX. and Syriac, “unto him,” which seems original.

The fire of God.—“The” is not in the Hebrew. The LXX., Vulgate, Arabic, and Targum, with some MSS., omit “of God.” The phrase occurs in the sense of lightning (Job i. 16).

Consumed him and his fifty.—According to Thuenius, the story of the destruction of the captains and their companies emphasises (1) the authority properly belonging to the prophet; (2) the help and protection which Jehovah bestows on His prophets. The captains and their men are simply conceived as the willing tools of the king, and are accordingly annihilated. These considerations, he thinks, render irrelevant all questions about the moral justice of their fate, and comparative degrees of guilt. (Comp. chaps. ii. 23, seq., vi. 17.)

(13) A captain of the third fifty.—Literally, a captain of a third fifty. But verse 11, “another captain of fifty,” and the phrase which follows here, “the third captain of fifty,” indicate the right reading, “a captain of fifty.” (So LXX. and Vulg.)

(14) Burnt.—Eat, or devoured (verses 10, 12).

The two captains of the former fifties.—Rather, the former two captains of fifties.

Therefore let my life now.—And now (i.e., this time) let my life. Some MSS., and LXX., Vulg., and Arabic add the prepositive “now,” that is, “I pray,” as in verse 13 (“I pray thee” = nd). (15) Said.—So LXX. (‘e’y). Heb., spake. Vulgate and Arabic add “saying.” (See Note on verse 3.)

Go down.—From the mountain top into the city.

With him.—“Otho,” later form for ‘oth, which some MSS. read here.

Be not afraid of him—i.e., the captain. The former two, as being the willing tools of the king, might have shown their zeal by instantly slaying the prophet. (Comp. the case of the knights who murdered St. Thomas of Canterbury.)

(16) And he said.—Heb., spake. The LXX. adds, “and Elijah said.”

Is it not because.—Omit “not.” The question is here parenthetic, the connection of the main sentence being, “Forasmuch as thou hast sent . . . therefore thou shalt not come down,” &c.

Off.—From, as in verses 4 and 6. The words of the oracle are thrice repeated verbally.

“Here, just as in other cases,” says Bähr, “Elijah reappears suddenly and disappears again, and no one knows whence he comes or whither he goes.” The peculiar form of the story suggests that it was derived from the first instance from oral tradition rather than from a written source.

(17, 18) Concluding remarks added by the compiler.

(17) And Jehoram.—LXX. (Alex.), Syriac, and Vulgate add “his brother,” an expression which has fallen out of the Hebrew text, owing to its resemblance to the next (tahād, “in his stead”). (Comp. chap. iii. 1, “son of Abah.”)

In the second year of Jehoram.—Vat. LXX., “in the eighteenth year,” which is probably right. (Comp. 1 Kings xxii. 52, “Ahaziah . . . reigned over Israel in . . . the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat . . . and he reigned two years.” Either, therefore, our present Heb. text is corrupt, or the compiler followed a different source in this place.) Thuenius proposes the
II. KINGS, II.

The Lord hath sent me to Beth-el.—Why? Not merely to “see once more that holiest place in Israel, the spiritual centre of the kingdom of the ten tribes” (Ewald), but to visit the prophetic schools, or guilds, established there, and at Gilgal and Jericho, and to confirm their fidelity to Jehovah. Gilgal and Beth-el, as ancient Canaanite sanctuaries, were centres of illegal worship of the God of Israel. The guilds of the prophets may have been intended to counteract this evil influence at its head-quarters (Bähr).

As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth.—Chap. iv. 30; 1 Sam. xx. 3. A more solemn and emphatic oath than “As the Lord liveth” (Judges viii. 21), or “As thy soul liveth” (1 Sam. i. 26). Literally, By the life of Jehovah and by the life of thy soul (i.e., of thyself, thine own life).

They went down.—From Gilgal. The phrase proves that the Gilgal between the Jordan and Jericho cannot be meant in verse 1. (See Josh. iv. 19, v. 10.)

The sons of the prophets.—See Notes on 1 Kings xx. 35; 1 Sam. x. 10, xix. 20. There was a guild of prophets at Beth-el.

Came forth to Elisha.—Who probably walked a little way before his master, to announce his approach. And said unto him.—The prophetic college had been divinely forewarned of Elijah’s departure.

The Lord will take away . . . to day.—“To day” is emphatic. “Knowest thou that this day Jehovah is about to take away thy lord from beside thee?” (2 Sam. i. 16.) Others explain “from under thy head,” i.e., from his position of superiority over thee as thy master and teacher. (See 1 Kings xix. 21; Acts xxii. 3.) Others again, but very improbably, take the words literally as a reference to Elijah’s ascension, “away over thine head.”

Yea, I know.—Rather, I, too, know.

Hold ye your peace.—Elisha says this, not to prevent the gathering of a crowd to witness the spectacle of Elijah’s departure, nor yet to intimate that his master’s modesty will be shocked by much talk of his approaching exaltation, but simply to suggest that the subject is painful both to him and to his beloved master. The Hebrew term, habĕshah, imitates the sound, like our “hush!”

(4) And Elijah said.—The exact repetition of the language of verses 2, 3 in this and the next two verses, appears to indicate that the narrative had originally been handed on by oral tradition, probably in the prophetic guilds at the local sanctuaries.

CHAPTER II.—(1) And it came to pass, when the Lord would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. (2) And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Beth-el. And Elisha said unto him, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Beth-el. (3) And the sons of the prophets that were at Beth-el came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he said, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace. (4) And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho.

The compiler has prefixed this heading to the following narrative by way of connection with the general thread of the history. See chap. i. 2-16; a mark of different origin.

And the Lord sent me to Beth-el.—Why? Reading, “in the twenty-second year of Jehoshaphat,” in place of “in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat.”

The acts.—Dibor, i.e., history, which he did.—Some MSS. and the Syriac read “and all that he did,” which seems correct.

The book of the chronicles of the kings.—See Introduction, and 1 Kings xiv. 19.

II.

The close of the history of Elijah. He is succeeded by Elisha.

(1-18) Elijah is miraculously taken away from the earth.

(1) And it came to pass . . . whirlwind.—The compiler has prefixed this heading to the following narrative by way of connection with the general thread of the history. It seems to be indicated that the event happened in the beginning of the reign of Jehoram; but see Note on 2 Chron. xxii. 12.

When the Lord would take up.—When Jehovah caused Elijah to go up, or ascend. This anticipates the conclusion of the story.

Into heaven.—Heb. accusative of direction, as in verse 11. The LXX. renders ἀπὸ εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, “as into heaven,” perhaps to suggest that not the visible heavens, but God, was the real goal of the prophet’s ascension.

By a whirlwind.—In the storm.

Gilgal.—Heb., the Gilgal, i.e., the Ring (comp. Isa. xxvii. 28, “wheel”), a descriptive name of more than one place. Here, Gilgal in Ephraim, the present Jiljilla, which stands on a hill south-west of Scilien (Shiloh), near the road leading thence to Jericho. (See Deut. xi. 30; Hosea iv. 15; Amos iv. 15.) Hosea and Amos connect Gilgal with Bethel, as a sanctuary. It was probably marked by a ring of stones like those at Stonehenge and Avebury. From this spot the mountain land of Gilead, the Great Sea, and the snowy heights of Hermon, were all visible; so that the prophet could take from thence a last look at the whole country which had been the scene of his earthly activity.

(3) Said.—Not spate, as throughout the account in chap. i. 2-16; a mark of different origin.

Tarry here, I pray thee.—This was said, not to test Elisha’s affection, nor from a motive of humility, that Elisha might not witness his glorious ascension, but because Elijah was uncertain whether it was God’s will that Elisha should go with him. (Comp. verse 10.) Elisha’s threefold refusal to leave him settled the doubt. (Comp. John xxi. 15, seq.)

had no son. (18) Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?
(5) And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he answered, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace. (6) And Elijah said unto him, Tarrey, I pray thee, here; for the Lord hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.

(7) And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off: and they two stood by Jordan. (8) And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.

(9) And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. (10) And he said, 'Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so.

(11) And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder;

Elisha asks to be treated as the firstborn among "the sons of the prophets," and so to receive twice as great a share of "the spirit and power" of his master as any of the rest. "Let me be the firstborn among thy spiritual sons;" "Make me thy true spiritual heir;" not "Give me twice as great a share of the spirit of prophecy as thou possessest thyself," as many have wrongly interpreted. The phrase, "a mouth of two," seems to be a metaphor derived from the custom of serving honoured guests with double, and even greater, messes (Gen. xliii. 34).

Ask what I shall do for thee . . . from thee.

As a dying father, Elijah might wish to bless his spiritual son ere his departure (Gen. xxvii. 4). (Comp. verse 12 infra, "My father, my father").

Thou hast asked a hard thing. Because to grant such a petition was not in Elijah's own power, but in God's only. And therefore in the next words the prophet connects the fulfillment of his follower's wish with a condition depending entirely upon the Divine will: "If thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee" (Keil). "If the Lord think thee worthy to witness my departure, thou wilt be worthy to win thy boon." Elijah thus disclaims power to fulfill the request. At the same time, it is implied that his departure will be something exalted above the perception of ordinary men (Thomei).

When I am taken.

-Literally, taken (participle pual, shortened form, as in Exod. iii. 2; Isa. viii. 3).

(11) And it came to pass . . . talked. Literally, And it came to pass, they (emphatic) were walking a walking and talking, i.e., were going on farther and farther, talking as they went. Whither they went is not told; probably some height of the mountains of Gilead, Elijah's native country, was the scene of his departure. (Comp. Deut. xxxiv. 5; Num. xx. 28.)

That, behold, there appeared . . . fire.

-Literally, and, behold, chariots of fire and horses of fire. Rōkeb is generally collective; so the Targum here. (Comp. chap. vi. 17; "Horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha").

Parted them both asunder. Or, made parting between them twice, i.e., the appearance of fiery chariots and horses came between Elijah and Elisha, surrounding the former as with a flaming war-host. (Comp. chap. vi. 17.)

Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

-Rather. Elijah went up in the storm howbeitward, or, perhaps, into the air. Sā'ārah, properly storm-blast; and
Elijah is

II. KINGS, II.  
Carried to Heaven.

And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

(12) And Elisha saw it, and he cried, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more." And he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces. (13) He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan; and he said, Where is the God of Elijah now also?—and he smote the waters, and they were divided. (14) And they said unto him, Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty 'strong men; let them go, we pray thee, to search for him."

so storm, thunderstorm. (Comp. Ezek. i. 4, seq., where Jehovah appears in a "whirlwind," which is described as a great fiery cloud; and Job xxxviii. 1, where He answers Job "out of the whirlwind;" and Neh. i. 3: "The Lord hath His path in whirlwind and in storm (Greek), and the clouds are the dust of His feet." The Hebrew mind recognised the presence and working of Jehovah in the terrific phenomena of nature; the thunder-cloud or storm-wind was His chariot, the thunder His voice, the lightning His arrow. (Comp. Psl. xviii. 6-15, civ. 3.) We must therefore be cautious of taking the words before us in too literal a sense. The essential meaning of the passage is this, that God suddenly took Elijah to Himself, amid a grand display of His power in and through the forces of nature. The popular conception, which we see embodied in such pictures as William Blake's Translation of Elijah, that the prophet ascended to heaven in a fiery car drawn by horses of fire, is plainly read into, rather than gathered from, the sacred text.

Went up.—Bähr may be right in asserting that 'alāh here means "disappeared, was consumed" (like the German aufgehen). He compares Judges xx. 40, "The whole city went up heavenward," i.e., was consumed, and the Hebrew name of the burnt offering ('olōh). But the same phrase ("to go up to heaven") is used in Psalm cvii. 26 of a ship rising heavenward on the stormy waves.

As regards the miraculous removal of Elijah and Enoch (Gen. v. 24), Von Gerlach remarks: "All such questions as whether they were removed, and where they now are, and what changes they underwent in translation, are left unanswered by the Scriptures." It may be added, that the ascension of Elijah into heaven is nowhere alluded to in the rest of the Bible.

(12) And Elisha ... cried.—Literally, And Elisha was seeing, and he (emphatic) was shouting. (Comp. verse 10, "If thou see me taken away.")

My father, my father.—Expresses what Elijah was to Elisha. (See Note on verse 9.)

The chariot (chariote—rēḥēb) of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.—Expressing what Elijah was to the nation. The Targum paraphrases, "My master, my master, who was better to Israel than chariots and horsemen by his prayers." The personal work and influence of a prophet like Elijah was the truest safeguard of Israel. The force of the expression will be seen, if it is remembered that chariots and horsemen constituted, in that age, the chief military arm, and were indispensable for the struggle against the Aramean states. (Comp. chaps. vii. 6, x. 2, xiii. 14; I Kings xx. 1; Ps. xx. 7.)

He saw him no more.—After his outcry. He had seen him taken up.

saw, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over.

(13) And when the sons of the prophets which were "to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him. (16) And they said unto him, Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty 'strong men; let them go, we pray thee, to search for him."

Rent them in two pieces.—From top to bottom, in token of extreme sorrow. (For the phrase, comp. 1 Kings xi. 50.)

The mantle of Elijah.—See verse 8, and comp. 1 Kings xix. 18. The badge of the prophet's office was naturally transferred to his successor.

The bank.—Literally, lip. So χειρον is used in Greek (Herod. ii. 70).

Where is the Lord God of Elijah?—Has He left the earth with His prophet? If not, let Him now show His power, and verify the granting of my request (verse 9). The words are a sort of irony of faith. Elisha "seeks" Jehovah as the only source of power. (Comp. Jer. ii. 6, 8, where the priests and prophets are blamed for having recourse to idols, instead of asking, "Where is Jehovah?")

And when he also had smitten.—The Hebrew is, also (or, even) he—and he smote. There is clearly something wrong. The LXX. does not render the Hebrew `aph hā', "also he," but copies the words in Greek (ἐγκρεία). Keil connects them with the foregoing question, "Where is Jehovah, the God of Elijah, even He?" Thenius objects that this use of `aph is doubtful, and supports Houbigant's correction, ἐπόθε, an enclitic then.—"Where, then, is Jehovah, the God of Elijah? and he smote," &c. Perhaps `epōth "where?" was the original reading: "Where is Jehovah, the God of Elijah? Where?"—an emphatic repetition of the question. Or it may be that the words `aph hā' wayyyakhek should be transposed: "and he smote—he also (like Elijah)," &c. The Vulgate has the curious rendering, "and with the cloak of Elias which had fallen from him, he smote the waters, and they were not divided: and he said, Where is the God of Elias now also? and he smote the waters, and they were divided," &c. Such also is the reading of the Complutensian LXX.; but the variation is simply an old attempt to account for the twofold "and he smote the waters."

To view.—Opposite, over against. LXX., ὑπάρχει; Vulg., "e contra" (Deut. xxxii. 52). It is not clear whether these sons of the prophets are the fifty who "went and stood opposite afar off" (verse 7), or not. On the whole, it seems likely that all the guild residing at Jericho is meant. Awaiting Elisha's return, they had assembled at the river side, and witnessed the miracle, which was evidence to them that Elisha was to be their future head.

The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha.—Hath alighted, i.e., settled, rested. The proof was that Elisha had just repeated his master's miracle.

(16) And they said unto him, After he had told them of the Assumption of Elijah (Thenius).

Fifty strong men.—See margin. Perhaps these were attendants on the members of the prophetic guild.
Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth: but the water is naught, and the ground barren. (20) And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought it to him. (21) And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land. (22) So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake.

(10) The men of the city.—Not "the sons of the prophets," but the citizens make this trial of the prophet's miraculous powers.

The situation of this (Heb., the) city is pleasant (Heb., good).—Jericho, "the city of palms" (Deut. xxxiv. 3), had a fine position, "rising like an oasis from a broad plain of sand." The water is naught.—Heb., bad. "Naught" i.e., "naughty." And the ground barren.—Verse 21 ("from thence") shows that the waters, not the soil, were the cause of the evil complained of. "The ground," or rather, the land is here put for its inhabitants, including the lower animals; and what is said is either "the country bears dead births," or "the country has many miscarriages" (y'el may be either factitious or intensive). (Comp. Exod. xxii. 26; Mal. iii. 11.) The use of different waters is said to have good and bad effects upon the functions of conception and parturition (not "a popular superstition," as Reuss suggests). "The ground is barren," or unfruitful, is therefore an incorrect translation.

A new cruse.—Vessel; either dish, bowl, or cup (ẓəlēḥîth); only here. (Comp. ẓəlēḥîth, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 16; and the Targum, ẓəlēḥîthā.) A new one, because the holy purpose demanded an instrument uncontaminated by use. (Comp. Num. xix. 2; 2 Sam. vi. 3.) Salt.—As an antiseptic, an appropriate sacramental medium of the Divine influence which was to expel the corruption of the spring.

The spring of the waters.—Now called 'Ain es Sultan ("the Sultan's Fountain"), a fine spring of sweet water, which irrigates the neighbouring plain.

Thus saith the Lord.—Not the prophet's own power, nor the natural virtues of the salt, but the Divine creative will was effectual to the healing of the spring. There shall not be.—Many MSS., and all the versions, save LXX., read "and there shall not be," or "arise." Death.—Caused by the unwholesome water, either to the people, or to their unborn offspring.

Or barren land.—The same word as in verse 19. Literally, and making (or, multiplying) abortion, which is apparently used as a substantive here (i.e., cause of abortion).

Unto this day.—The time when the narrative was first committed to writing.
(23) And he went up from thence unto Beth-el: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head. (24) And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord. And there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them. (25) And he went from thence to mount Carmel, and from thence he returned to Samaria.

CHAPTER III. — (1) Now Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years. (2) And he wrought evil in the sight of the Lord; but not like his father, and like his mother: for he put away the image of Baal that his father had made. (3) Nevertheless he cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.

(4) And Mesha king of Moab was a sheeppmaster, and rendered unto the

prominent than mercy, and directly fulfils the menace of Lev. xxvi. 21, seq.

Two she bears.—Hosea xiii. 8; Prov. xvii. 12; Amos v. 19. (Comp. chap. xvii. 25.) Wild beasts were common in Palestine in those days.

FORTY AND TWO.—This may be a definite for an indefinite number. It shows that the mob of young persons who beset the prophet was considerable.

(28) To mount Carmel.—To cultivate the memory of his master in solitude. Elijah had often lived there (comp. 1 Kings xviii.), as its caves were well fitted for solitude and concealment. Elisha may have retired thither to prepare himself for his public ministry by prayer and fasting. (Comp. Matt. iv. 1, seq.)

To Samaria.—Where he had his permanent abode. (Comp. chap. vi. 32.)

III.

THE REIGN OF JEHORAM OF ISRAEL, AND HIS EXPEDITION AGAINST MOAB, IN WHICH JEHOHAPHTH OF JUDAH TAKES PART.

(1) Began to reign.—Literally, reigned.

The eighteenth year.—Comp. Note on chap. i. 17, and viii. 16.

(2) Wrought evil.—Did the evil in the eyes, &c., i.e., maintained the illicit worship of the bullock at Beth-el (verse 3).

Like his mother.—Jehu lived throughout his reign (chap. ix. 20), which explains why he did not eradicate the Baal-worship (chap. x. 18-28).

For he put away.—And he removed, sfell, from its place in the temple of Baal. (Comp. 1 Kings xvi. 31, 32.) It must have been afterwards restored, probably by the influence of Jezebel. (Comp. chap. x. 26, 27, and Notes.)

The image.—Pillar. (Comp. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 4.) The LXX., Vulg., and Arabic read “pillars” (a different pointing); and the LXX. adds at the end, “and brake them in pieces.” This seems original. Ahab would be likely to set up more than one pillar to Baal.

(7) He cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam.—1 Kings xii. 23, seq., xvi. 2, 3, 9.

Therewith.—Hab., from if (a collective feminine). So in chap. xiii. 2, 6, 11.

(4) The revolt of Moab, continued from chap. i. 1. Ahaziah did not reign two full years, and his accident seems to have prevented any attempt on his part to reduce the Moabites.

Mesha.—The name means “deliverance, salvation,” and occurs on the monument set up by this king, do-
king of Israel an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams, with the wool. (5) But it came to pass, when Ahab was dead, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel.

(6) And king Jehoram went out of Samaria the same time, and numbered all Israel. (7) And he went and sent to Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, saying, The king of Moab hath rebelled against me; wilt thou go with me against Moab to battle? And he said, I will go up: 'I am as thou art, my people as thy people, and my horses as thy horses. (8) And he said, Which way shall we go up?

And he answered, The way through the wilderness of Edom. (9) So the king of Israel went, and the king of Judah, and the king of Edom; and they fetched a compass of seven days' journey: and there was no water for the host, and for the cattle 'that followed them. (10) And the king of Israel said, Alas! that the LORD hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab! (11) But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD, that we may enquire of the LORD by him? And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, Here is Elisha the son of Shaphat, which poured

**Jehoram and Jehoshaphat**

**II. KINGS, III.**

**March against Moab.**

Against Moab to battle? — Or, into Moab to the war! (8) And he said — i.e., Jehoram said.

Which way? — They might cross the Jordan, and attack the northern frontier of Moab, or they might round the southern end of the Dead Sea, and invade Moab from the side of Edom. The former was the shortest route for both kings. But Moab's strongest defences were on the north frontier, and the allies would be liable to attacks from the Syrians in Ramoth-gilead (chap. viii. 28). The longer and more difficult southern road may have been chosen partly on these grounds, and partly because Jehoshaphat wished to march as far as might be within his own territory, and to get a contingent from Edom, which was at this time subject to him (1 Kings xxii. 48), and perhaps to hold it in check. Moreover, the Moabites were less likely to be on their guard on the southern border, which was more difficult of access.

And he answered. — Said — i.e., Jehoshaphat.

(9) The king of Edom. — A vassal king appointed by Jehoshaphat (1 Kings xxii. 48).

They fetched a compass. — Went round (scil. the Dead Sea) a journey of seven days. The confederates appear to have lost their way among the mountains of Seir. They would, in any case, be greatly delayed by the cattle which it was necessary to take with them for subsistence. It is evident from the context that the distress began after the Edomite contingent had joined.

For the host, and for the cattle that followed them. — The stopping is wrong. It should be, and there was not water for the army and for the cattle which followed them. "Them," i.e., the kings. (Comp. Judges v. 15.) "The cattle," i.e., the herds and flocks for the maintenance of the army.

The allies appear to have marched through the deep, rocky glen of El-Ahaz (or El-Qurqiy), between Moab and Edom. They expected to find water there, as it is usually the case, even in the dry season; but on this occasion the water failed.

That. — Omit (ki, emphatically introducing the assertion).

Together. — Omit.

(11) But (and) Jehoshaphat. . . by him? — The same question is asked by Jehoshaphat in 1 Kings xxii. 7.

By him. — Heb., from with him (mê'dêho for mêtêlê, both here and in the parallel place — a mark of the same hand). Jehoshaphat is for "seeking Jehovah" through
Elisha and Jehoshaphat.

II. KINGS, III. the Minstrel.

water on the hands of Elijah.  

And Jehoshaphat said, The word of the Lord is with him. So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him. And Elisha said unto the king of Israel, What have I to do with thee? get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother. And the king of Israel said unto him, Nay: for the Lord hath delivered them into the hand of Moab.

And Elisha said, As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, that I will surely deliver the Moabites also into your hand.

Went down to him. From the royal tents, which were probably pitched on an eminence, so as to overlook the camp. The three kings go to consult the prophet as persons of ordinary station might do. This shows the estimation in which he was held. Keil says the style of the oracle is stamped with the liveliness and sure and serenity of soul that were essential, if the prophet was to hear the voice of God within. Cicero tells us that the Pythagoreans were wont to tranquillise their minds after the strain of thought with harp music and singing (Tusc. iv. 2). (Comp. 1 Sam. x. 5; 1 Chron. xxv. 1, Note.) The incident is a striking mark of the historical truth of the narrative.

And it came to pass. Perfect with weak vow: a later idiom. (Comp. 1 Sam. xvii. 48.)

The hand of the Lord came upon him. Targum and some MSS., "the Spirit of the Lord," but comp. 1 Kings xviii. 46.

Make. Right (infinite, equivalent to an energetic imperative).

Valley. Nahal, wady, torrent-bed, gully. According to Thuenius, "the brook Zered" of Deut. ii. 13 is meant; the present Wady el-Ahey, (or el-Hasea) which forms the natural southern boundary of Moab, and from which several wadys lead up into the Moabite highlands. (See Isa. xv. 7.)

Full of ditches. Literally, pits, pits. (Comp. Gen. xiv. 10: "Wells, wells of bitumen.") The pits were to gather the water, which otherwise would soon run away in the bed of the torrent (Jer. xiv. 3, 4). The style of the oracle is stamped with the liveliness and originality of historic truth.

And ye shall smite every fenced city, and every choice city, and shall fell that valley, i.e., "the one of which I spoke." (Comp. Gen. xix. 21; xxxii. 21.) Bring me a minstrel. Ménaggon—i.e., a harper, player on a stringed instrument (négînâh).

Regard the presence. Literally, lift the face. (Comp. Gen. xix. 21; xxxii. 21.)

Surely.—K. (for); used as in verse 10 ("I cry, alas!""). "I thus swear," for, &c. Jehoshaphat is accepted because of his faithful dependence on Jehovah (verse 11). Jehoram still maintained or tolerated the cultus of Bethel and Dan. (See verse 3.)

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II. KINGS, III.

over the Moabites.

The Victory

every good tree, and stop all wells of water, and 1 mar every good piece of land with stones.

(20) And it came to pass in the morning, when the meat offering was offered, that, behold, there came water by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water. (21) And when all the Moabites heard that the kings were come up to fight against them, they gathered all that were able to put on armour, and upward, and stood in the border. (22) And they rose up early in the morning, and the sun shone upon the water, and the Moabites saw the water on the other side as red as blood:

(23) and they said, This is blood: the kings are surely slain, and they have smitten one another: now therefore, Moab, to the spoil. (24) And when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and smote the Moabites, even in their country. (25) And they beat down the cities, and on every good piece of land cast every man his stone, and filled it; and they stopped all the

All that were able to put on armour.—From every one girding on a girdle, and upwards—i.e., all of adult age, all who could bear arms. It was a levy en masse of the male population for the defence of the country.

Stood in.—Had taken their stand on the frontier. (29) They rose up early.—The Moabite camp on the frontier mountains.

And the sun shone upon the water.—A parenthesis (now the sun had risen upon the water). The red sunrise tinged the water with the same colour.

On the other side.—Min-neged, “opposite,” “over against them” (chap. ii. 7, 15). The sun rose behind the Moabites.

Red.—Adom. There may be an allusion to the red earth of the locality (Edom), which would further redder the water.

(30) The kings are surely slain.—Have surely fought with (or destroyed) one another. LXX., ἡ χειριστής. The supposition was not improbable. Confederates of different races not seldom had been known to fall out among themselves (comp. Judges vii. 22; 2 Chron. xx. 23, and Note), and in this case the old enmity of Edom towards Israel, and the suppressed jealousies between Israel and Judah, made such a result very likely. The Moabites would know also that the wady had been waterless, so that their mistake was natural. When once their instinct for plunder was aroused they did not stop to think, but with a wild cry of “Moab, to the spoil!” they rushed in disorder upon the Israelite camp.

(31) Smote the Moabites.—Who were unprepared for resistance.

But they went forward smiting . . . country.

—The Hebrew text (Kethib) has, and he went (way-yob, spelt defectively, as in 1 Kings xii. 12) into it (i.e., the land of Moab), and smote (literally, smiting, an infinitive for a finite form) Moab. This is better than the Hebrew margin (Qeri), and they smote it (i.e., Moab), or the reading of some MSS. and the Targum and Syriac, “and they smote them, and smote Moab,” which is tautologous. The original reading is perhaps represented by that of the LXX., καὶ εἰσῆλθαν εἰς τοὺς Μωάβιους, καὶ τόντως τὴν Μωάβιον, “and they entered the country, destroying as they went on.” (In Hebrew the participles would be infinitives.)

(32) And they beat down the cities.—Rather. And the cities they would overthrow, describing what happened again and again.

On every . . . filled it.—Literally, And every good plot, they would cast each man his stone, and fill
wells of water, and felled all the good trees: only in Kir-hareseth left they the stones thereof; howbeit the slingers went about it, and smote it. (26) And when the king of Moab saw that the battle was too sore for him, he took with him seven hundred men that drew swords, to break through even unto the king of Edom: but they could not. (27) Then he took his eldest son that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt offering on the wall. And there was great indignation against Israel: and they departed from him, and returned to their own land.

CHAPTER IV.—(1) Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, 'Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bond-

it; and every fountain of water they would stop, and every good tree they would fell. All this as Elisha foretold, verse 19. 1 Heb., until he left the places whereof in Kir-hareseth.

And when the king of Kir-hareseth left they the stones thereof; howbeit the slingers went about it, and smote it. (26) And when the king of Moab saw that the battle was too sore for him, he took with him seven hundred men that drew swords, to break through even unto the king of Edom: but they could not. (27) Then he took his eldest son that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt offering on the wall. And there was great indignation against Israel: and they departed from him, and returned to their own land.

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And there was great indignation against Israel.—Or, And great wrath fell upon Israel. This phrase always denotes a visitation of Divine wrath. (Comp. 2 Chron. xix. 10, xxiv. 18.) The manifestation of wrath in the present case was apparently a successful sort of the Moabite garrison, whose faith in this terrible expedient of their king inspired them with new courage, while the besiegers were proportionally disheartened. The result was that "they (i.e., the allied forces) departed from him (raised the siege), and returned to the land" (of Israel). Why did Divine wrath fall upon Israel rather than upon Moab? upon the involuntary cause rather than the voluntary agents in this shocking rite? If the wrath of Jehovah be meant, we cannot tell. But, as the present writer understands the words of the text, they rather indicate that the object of the dreadful expiation was attained, and that the wrath of Chemosh fell upon the Hebrew alliance. It is certain that belief in the supremacy of Jehovah did not hinder ancient Israel from admiring the real existence and potency of foreign deities. (See Note on 1 Chron. xvi. 25, 26; xvii. 21; and comp. Num. xxi. 39; Judges xi. 24.) This peculiar conception is a token of the antiquity of the record before us. In the second half of Isaiah the foreign gods are called non-entities.

After the events described in this verse we may suppose that Mesha's successors carried on, as described on the stone of Dibon. (See Note on chap. i. 1.)

IV.—VIII. THE WONDROUS WORKS OF ELISHA THE PROPHET.

(1-7) He multiplies the widow's oil. (Comp. 1 Kings xvii. 12 seq.)

(1) Of the wives of the sons of the prophets.—This shows that "the sons of the prophets" were not young unmarried men leading a kind of monastic life under the control of their prophetic chief. Those who were heads of families must have had their own separate homes. (See Note on 1 Kings xx. 29.)

Thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord.—She makes this the ground of her claim on the prophet's assistance. In 1 Kings xviii. 3, 12 it is said of Obadiah, Ahab's steward, that he "feared the Lord," and on account of this slight resemblance, the Targum, Josephus, and Ephrem Syrus identify the dead man of this verse with Obadiah, who is supposed to have spent all his property in maintaining the prophets (1 Kings xvii. 4) (!) Possibly the widow meant to say that her husband's debts were not due to profligate living (Thenius).

The creditor is come to take unto him my two sons.—According to the law (Lev. xxiv. 39), They would have to continue in servitude until the year of jubilee. The ancient Roman law was more severe, for it contained no provision for the future release of the unhappy debtor. (Comp. also Matt. xviii. 26, and Notes.)
And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread. (And she said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive that this is an holy man of God, which passeth by us continually.) Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither.

(And it fell on a day, that he came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest.)

And the oil stayed. (Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest.)

And all the versions have it.

And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil. (Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few. (And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full. (So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured out. (And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said to her, There is not a vessel more. (And the oil stayed. (Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest.)

(And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread. (And she said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive that this is an holy man of God, which passeth by us continually. Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither. (And it fell on a day, that he came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest.)

And all the versions have it.
The Shunammite

II. KINGS, IV.

and her Son.

thither, and he turned into the chamber, and lay there. (13) And he said to Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunammite. And when he had called her, she stood before him. (13) And he said unto him, Say now unto her, Behold, thou hast been careful for us with all this care; what is to be done for thee? wouldest thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host? And she answered, I dwell among mine own people. (13) And he said, What then is to be done for her? And Gehazi answered, Verily she hath no child, and her husband is old. (14) And he said, Call her. And when he had called her, she stood in the door. (14) And he said, About this season, according to the time of life, thou shalt embrace a son. And she said, Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not lie unto me.

(12) Gehazi his servant.—First mentioned here. His name means “valley of vision,” and is perhaps derived from his native place, which may have got its name from being a haunt of prophets.

His servant.—His young man (Gen. xxii. 3). She stood before him—i.e., before Gehazi. The sentence, “And when he had called her, she stood before him,” is an anticipation of the result, and might be placed within a parenthesis.

(15) And he said unto him—i.e., Elisha, as he said to Gehazi to say this would be said. (Comp. the incredulity of Sarah, Gen. xxvii. 1.)

Thou hast been careful . . . with all this care.—Literally, trembled all this trembling. Comp. Luke x. 41 (μορφησις).

Wouldst thou be spoken for to the king?—Literally, is it to speak for thee to the king? that is, dost thou stand in need of an advocate at court? Is there any boon thou desirest from the king? This shows what influence Elisha enjoyed at the time; but it does not prove that Jehu, whom he anointed, was already on the throne, for Jehoram respected and probably feared the prophet.

The captain of the host.—The commander-in-chief, who was the most powerful person next the king.

I dwell among mine own people.—Literally, In the midst of my people I am dwelling.—Lit., far from the court and courtly interests. I have nothing to seek from such exalted personages; I am a mere commoner living quietly in the country.

(14) And he said—i.e., when Gehazi had reported the woman’s reply.

She hath no child.—Which was at once a misfortune and a reproach. (Comp. Gen. xxx. 23; 1 Sam. i. 6, 7; Luke i. 25; 2 Kings viii. 17, 18; Ps. xxxviii. 3, 4.)

(15) Call her.—The Shunammite is now summoned into the presence of the prophet himself.

She stood.—Or, took her stand. Modesty, or reverence for Elisha, prevented her from going farther.

About this season.—At this set time.

According to the time of life.—Rather, at the reviving time—i.e., next spring; or, when the time revolves—i.e., in the following year: a phrase occurring in Gen. xviii. 10, 15. Bottcher renders, “when the year has revolved,” assuming the ground meaning of the term “life” to be something joined in a circle.

Thou shalt embrace.—Thou art about to embrace.

Do not lie—i.e., raise no delusive hopes. (Comp. Isa. lviii. 11.) We can imagine the emotion with which this would be said. (Comp. the incredulity of Sarah, Gen. xviii. 12, 13.)

(17) And the woman conceived.—Comp. with this verse Gen. xxii. 2.

Said.—Promised.

According to the time of life.—See Note on verse 16.

It fell on a day.—See Note on verse 8.

My head, my head.—The boy had a sunstroke. It was the hot season of harvest, and his head was probably uncovered.

A lad.—Rather, the young man. The servant waiting on him.

(20) Taken.—Carried.

Brought him.—Brought him in—i.e., in-doors.

Till noon.—We gather from this that the boy was hurt in the forenoon.

(21) Laid him on the bed of the man of God.—She wished to keep the death secret, and the corpse inviolate, during her intended absence.

(22) One of the young men.—To lead and drive the ass.

Asses.—She-asses.

That I may run.—Notice the striking naturalness of the language, in which she promises to be back soon.

(23) Wilt thou go.—Art thou going. Archaic forms of the pronoun and participle are here used.

It is neither new moon, nor sabbath.—Comp. Amos viii. 5. This remark is interesting, because it implies that the faithful in the northern kingdom were wont to visit prophets on these holy days for the sake of religious instruction and edification. Themius suggests a doubt whether the later practice of resorting to the
Elisha and

II. KINGS, IV.

the Shunammite.

man of God said, Let her alone; for her soul is vexed within her: and the Lord hath hid it from me, and hath not told me. (28) Then she said, Did I desire a son of my lord? Did I not say, Do not deceive me? (29) Then he said to Gehazi, Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again: and lay my staff upon the face of the child. (30) And the mother of the child said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And he arose, and followed her.

(31) And Gehazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child; but there was neither voice, nor

Scribes on these days has not here been transferred by an anachronism to the days of Elisha. (Comp. Num. xviii. 11 seq.; Lev. xxvii. 3, for the legal mode of observing new moons and Sabbath days.)

It shall be well.—Omit it shall be. The expression may be equivalent to our common "all right;" admitting the truth of what is said, yet persisting in one's purpose. She did not want to delay, nor to have her faith shaken by argument.

(25) To mount Carmel.—Elisha, then, must have dwelt there at least occasionally. (Comp. verse 9.) Carmel probably served as a fixed centre of prophetic teaching for the north, as Gilgal, Beth-el, and Jericho for the south. (Comp. also Elisha's sacrifice there, Kings xviii. 31 seq.)

Aftar off.—The same word (minneged) as to view (chap ii. 7, 15).

Shunammite.—Syriac, Shulamite.

(26) Run now, I pray thee, to meet her.—This perhaps indicates the respect in which Elisha held the Shunammite. But it may denote surprise and apprehension at an unusual visit. Hence the inquiries about each member of the family.

It is well.—She said this merely to avoid further explanation. She would open her grief to the prophet's own ear, and to none other. 

(27) To thee.—Probably to the summit.

She caught him by the feet.—She laid hold of (clasped) his feet. Assuming the posture of an humble and urgent suppliant, and no doubt pouring out a flood of passionate entreaties for help.

But (and) Gehazi came near to thrust her away.—He thought her vehemence a trespass upon Wherefore he went

II. KINGS, IV.

1 Heb., peace.

2 Heb., restrain not for me to ride.

3 Heb., by his feet.

4 Heb., bitter.
Elisha raises the Shunammite’s Son.

1. Hearing. Wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him, saying, The child is not awaked. (32) And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed. (33) He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the Lord. (34) And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands; and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm. (35) Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him; and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. (36) Take up thy son. — So our Lord “delivered to his mother” the young man whom He raised from death by His word (Luke vii. 15). (37) Then she went in. — And she came. Bowed herself to the ground. — In deep veneration for the prophet of Jehovah.

(38) And Elisha among the sons of the prophets at Gilgal during the famine.

(39-44) Elisha, the son of Shaphat, came again to Gilgal. (41) And there was a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets were sitting in a running plant, like a vine. Cornelius a Lapide thinks the prophet walked “ut ambulando excitaret majorem calorium quem puero communicaret” (!) The child sneezed. — The verb occurs here only. It denotes a faint rather than a loud sneeze. (Heb., ‘atishah; Job xli. 10.) It is omitted by the LXX., which has, “and he bowed himself over the boy until seven times.” The repeated sneezing was a sign of restored respiration. (Comp. Luke vii. 15.) Keil supposes that whereas Elijah raised the widow’s son at once, his successor only restored the Shunammite’s son by degrees; and that this betokens an inferiority on the part of Elisha. But the narrative in 1 Kings xvii. 17 seq. is plainly abridged.

Other grounds, which, in the absolute silence of the text, cannot be substantiated. The prophet says no word of censure when he receives the announcement of the failure. Bähr thinks that Elisha himself was at fault in supposing he could transfer the spirit and power of a prophet to his servant; and acted in over-haste without a Divine incentive. (Comp. 2 Sam. vii. 3 seq.) The true explanation is suggested in the Note on verse 29. (Bähr is wrong in taking the staff to be other than a walking staff. A different word would be used for rod or sceptre.) (33) He went in therefore. — Comp. the narrative of Elijah’s raising the widow’s son (1 Kings xvii. 17–24), which is imitated in the present account.

Then twain.—Himself and the body. (34) He went up. — Upon the bed (chap. i. 6).

And lay upon the child. — Comp. 1 Kings xvii. 21. What is hinted at is described here (Thenius).

Stretched himself upon the child. — Bowed himself. So LXX., Syriac, and Vulg. (Comp. 1 Kings xviii. 42.) This expression summarises the preceding details.

The flesh of the child waxed warm. — The life of the Divine Spirit which was in Elisha was miraculously imparted by contact to the lifeless body. (Comp. Gen. ii. 7.)

(35) He returned. — From off the bed.

Walked in the house to and fro. — Or, in the chamber. Elisha’s walking to and fro is an index of intense excitement. He was earnestly expecting the fulfilment of his prayer. Cornelius a Lapide thinks the prophet walked “ut ambulando excitaret majorem calorium quem puero communicaret” (!)

A wild vine. — Vulg., “quasi vitem silvestrem,” i.e., a running plant, like a vine.

Wild gourds. — In 1 Kings vi. 18 a related word is used to describe one of the decorations of the Temple (“knops”). Wild gourds, or cucumbers (cucumeres agrestes, or asinni), are oval in shape, and taste bitter. Their Hebrew name (paggida/dbh) is expressive of the fact that when ripe they are apt to burst upon being touched. If eaten they act as a violent purgative. They were mistaken on the present occasion for edible gourds, a favourite food of the people (Num. xi. 5). The Vulg. renders “colocythis,” or coloquintida, a plant of the same family, bearing large orange-like fruits, which
II. KINGS, V.  

The Twenty Loaves.

The Syriac gives "garment." LXX. place. The Vatican omits the word. It reads: "twenty barley loaves and cakes of pressed fruit"-Heb., visitors "tender and fresh ears of corn." In some parts -Heb., occurs besides in Lev. ii. 14, xxiii. 14. The Targum person brought his opportune gift to Elisha. Dent. xviii. 4, according to which all firstfruits of time of dearth" (verse 42 is connected by the concurrent. 5 Heb., or, in his apron, or, garment. 3 John ii. 11. 4 Or, before. 1 Or, gracious. 6 Heb., lifted vp, or, accepted in 9 Or, victory. The Syriac gives "garment." 1 Or, wallet. 2 Or, Master, or, attendant. 41 l But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot. 42) And there came a man from Baal-shalisha, and brought the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley, and full ears of corn in the husk thereof. And he said, Give unto the people, that they may eat. 43) So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof. 44) But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot. 45) And his servitor said, What, should I set this before an hundred men? He said again, Give the people, that they may eat: for thus saith the LORD, They shall eat, and shall leave thereof. 44) So he set it before them, and they did eat, and left thereof, according to the word of the LORD.

CHAPTER V.—Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man 3 with his master, and 45 honourable, because by him the Lord had given 4 deliverance unto Syria: he

What, should I set this before an hundred men?—Or, How am I to set it? &c. (Comp. Matt. xiv. 33.)

He said again. And he said. They shall eat, and shall leave thereof. Heb., eating and leaving! an exclamatory mode of speech, natural in hurried and vehement utterance. 44) And they did eat, and left thereof. Comp. our Lord's miracles, already referred to. Bähr denies any miraculous increase of the food. He makes the miracle consist in the fact that the one hundred men were satisfied with the little they received, and even had some to spare. Similarly, Thennius thinks that the provisions were not inconsiderable for a hundred men (?), and that the emphasis of the narrative lies rather on Elisha's absolute confidence in God than on His wonder-working powers; but this is certainly opposed to the sacred writer's intention. Keil rightly calls attention to the fact that Elisha does not perform, but only predicts, this miracle.

V.

Elisha Heals Naaman the Syrian's Leprosy, and Punishes Gehazi Therewith.

What should I set this before an hundred men?—Or, How am I to set it? &c. (Comp. Matt. xiv. 33.)

He said again. And he said. They shall eat, and shall leave thereof. Heb., eating and leaving! an exclamatory mode of speech, natural in hurried and vehement utterance. 44) And they did eat, and left thereof. Comp. our Lord's miracles, already referred to. Bähr denies any miraculous increase of the food. He makes the miracle consist in the fact that the one hundred men were satisfied with the little they received, and even had some to spare. Similarly, Thennius thinks that the provisions were not inconsiderable for a hundred men (?), and that the emphasis of the narrative lies rather on Elisha's absolute confidence in God than on His wonder-working powers; but this is certainly opposed to the sacred writer's intention. Keil rightly calls attention to the fact that Elisha does not perform, but only predicts, this miracle.

V.

Elisha Heals Naaman the Syrian's Leprosy, and Punishes Gehazi Therewith.

(1) Now.—The construction implies a break between this narrative and the preceding. Whether the events related belong to the time of Jehoram or of the dynasty of Jehu is not clear. Evidently it was a time of peace between Israel and Syria.

Naaman (beauty).—A title of the sun-god. (See Note on Isa. xvii. 10.)

A great man with his master.—Literally, before his lord. (Comp. Gen. x. 9.)

Honourable.—In special favour. Literally, lifted up of face. (Comp. chap. iii. 14, Note; Isa. iii. 3.)

By him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria. Notice the high prophetic view that is Jehovah, not Hadad or Rimmon, who gives victory to Syria as well as Israel. (Comp. Amos ix. 7.) It is natural to think of the battle in which Ahab received his mortal wound (1 Kings xxii. 30, seq.). The Midrash makes Naaman the man who "drew the bow at a venture" on that occasion. The "deliverance" was victory over Israel.

He was also a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper. Literally, and the man was a brave warrior, striken with leprosy. His leprosy need not have been so severe as to incapacitate him for military duties. The victor over Israel is represented as a leper.
II. KINGS, V.

Naaman and the King of Israel.

was also a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper. (3) And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman’s wife. (4) And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were 2 with the prophet that is in Samaria ! for he would 3 recover him of his leprosy. (5) And one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel. (6) And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, and took 4 with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten

changes of raiment. (9) And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy. (10) And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? Wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me. (11) And it was so, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent

who has to seek, and finds, his only help in Israel (Thenius). (2) The Syrians.—Heb., Aram, the word rendered “Syria” in verse 1. By companies.—Or, in troops, referring to a marauding incursion made at some time prior to the events here recorded. (3) Would God. —O that ’Ahari here; in Ps. cxix. 5, ’Ahlay. The word seems to follow the analogy of *aḥrē, “ Of the bliss of !” (Ps. 1. 1). It perhaps means “O the delight of !” the root ’ahal being assumed equivalent to the Arabic ḥalā, Syriac ḥallā, “dulcis fuit.” For he would recover him.—Then he would receive him back. (Comp. Num. xii. 14, 15.) In Israel lepers were excluded from society. Restoration to society implied restoration to health. Hence the same verb was used to be in the sense of healing as well as of receiving back the leper. Thenius, however, argues that as the phrase “from leprosy” is wanting in Num. xii., the real meaning is, “to take a person away from leprosy,” to which he had been, as it were, delivered up. (4) And one went in.—And he (i.e., Naaman) went in: scil., into the palace. Some MSS.: “and she went in and told.” Thus and thus.—To avoid repetition of her actual words. (5) Go to, go.—Depart thou (thither), enter (the land of Israel). A letter.—Written, probably, in that old Aramean script of which we have examples on Assyrian seals of the eighth century B.C., and which closely resembled the old Phoenician and Hebrew characters, as well as that of the Moabite stone (chap. i. 1, Note). With him.—In his hand. (Comp. the expression “to fill the hand for Jehovah” —i.e., with presents; 1 Chron. xxxix. 5.) Changes of raiment.—Or, holiday suits. Reus, *halēpēa de fāte. (See the same word, ḫālēphōth, in Gen. xiv. 22.) Curiously enough, similar expressions (naktlum, hiliopotum) were used in the like sense by the Assyrians (Schrader). Ten talents of silver.—About £3,750 in our money. The money talent was equivalent to sixty

minas, the mina to fifty shekels. The shekel came to about 45s. of our currency. The total sum appears much too large, and the numbers are probably corrupt, as is so often the case. (6) Now.—Heb., And now, continuing an omitted passage. Only the principal sentence of the letter is given. The message pre-supposes a not altogether hostile relation between the two kings; and the words of the next verse, “He seeketh a quarrel against me,” point to the time of comparative lull which ensued after the luckless expedition to Ramoth-gilead (2 Kings xxii.), and the short reign of the invalid Ahaziah; i.e., to the reign of Jehoram, not to that of Jehoahaz, in which Israel was wholly crushed by Syria (chap. xii. 3—7). Schenkel thinks the Syrian inroads (verse 2) indicate the reign of Jehoahaz, and that Hazael was the king who wrote the letter, as he was personally acquainted with Elisha (chap. v. 5, seq.). But, as Thenius remarks, he forgets that the relations between Jehu and Syria were throughout strained to the last degree, so that such a friendly passage between the two kings as is here described is not to be thought of. (7) He rent his clothes.—As if he had been blasphemy. (Comp. Matt. xxvi. 65.) Am I God, to kill and to make alive?—Deut. xxxii. 39. “I kill, and I make alive; ” 1 Sam. ii. 6, “The Lord killeth, and maketh alive.” Leprosy was a kind of living death. (Comp. Num. xii. 12, Heb., “Let her not become as the dead, who, when he cometh forth of his mother’s womb, hath half his flesh consumed.”) Wherefore.—Heb., For only know (i.e., notice), and see. Plural verbs are used, because the king is addressing his grandees, in whose presence the letter would be delivered and read. He seeketh a quarrel.—This form of the verb (hithpael) occurs here only. (Comp. the noun, Judges xiv. 4.) Jehoram was hardly in a position to renew the war, after the severe defeat of his father (1 Kings xxii. 30, seq.). (8) There is a prophet.—With stress on there is (yēṣāh); scil., as his message pre-supposes. When Elisha . . . . had heard.—He was in Samaria at the time (verse 3), and would hear of the
thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel. (9) So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha. (10) And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean. (11) But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. (12) Are not coming of the great Syrian captain and of the king's alarm. Why did not Jehoram think at once of Elisha? King and prophet were not on good terms with each other. (Comp. chap. iii. 14.) Besides, Elisha had no trace of pride about Naaman. But, as Thenius says, there is no trace of pride about Naaman. Perhaps reverence held back those who consulted a great prophet from entering his presence (comp. chap. iv. 43.) The prophet had "a messenger" (verse 10) at his command. Perhaps reverence held back those who consulted a great prophet from entering his presence (comp. chap. iv. 12.) and therefore, Naaman stopped with his followers outside the house. Keil suggests that Elisha did not come out to Naaman, because he wished to humble his pride, and to show that his worldly magnificence did not impress the prophet. But, as Thenius says, there is no trace of pride about Naaman.

Go.—Infinitive, equivalent to the imperative. (Comp. chap. iii. 16; and perhaps chap. iv. 43.)

Wash in (the) Jordan.—This command would make it clear that Naaman was not cured by any external means applied by the prophet. "The Syrians knew as well as the Israelites that the Jordan could not heal leprosy." (Bahr.) Naaman was to understand that he was healed by the God of Israel, at His prophet's prayer. (Comp. verse 15.)

Thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.—Literally, and let thy flesh come back to thee, and be thou clean. Leprosy is characterized by raw flesh and running sores, which end in entire wasting away of the tissues. (11) But (and) Naaman was wroth.—Because, as his words show, he thought he was mocked by the prophet.

I thought: I said to myself. Strike his hand.—Rather, wave his hand towards the place. (Comp. Isa. x. 15, xi. 15.) He would not touch the unclean place.

4 Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage. (13) And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean? (14) Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

Recover the leper.—Or, take away the leprous (part). So Thenius; but everywhere else meyjôr means "leprous man," "leper." (Lev. iv. 2).

Abana.—Ed. Hebrew text, Hebrew margin, Amana; and so many MSS., Complut., LXX., Targum, Syriac. (Comp. Amana, Cant. iv. 8, as name of a peak of the Lebanon, which is common in the Assyrian inscriptions also.) The river is identified with the present Barûdû, or Barûdî ("the cold"), which descends from the Anti-Lebanon, and flows through Damascus in seven streams. (The Arabic version has Bârdî.)

Pharpar.—Parpar ("the swift"), the present Nahr el-Awdî, which comes down from the great Hermon, and flows by Damascus on the south. Both rivers have clear water, as being mountain streams, whereas the Jordan is turbid and discoloured.

Rivers of Damascus.—Add the. Damascus is still famous for its wholesome water.

May I not wash in them, and be clean?—If mere washing in a river be enough, it were easy to do that at home, and to much better advantage.

Seven times.—In the Assyrian monuments there is an almost exact parallel to the above method of seeking a cure. It occurs among the so-called exorcisms, and belongs to the age of Sargon of Agadê (Accad), before 2200 B.C. Merodach is represented as asking his father Hea how to cure a sick man. Hea replies that the sick man must go and bathe in the sacred waters in the month of the Euphrates. It thus appears that in bidding Naaman bathe seven times in the Jordan, Elisha acted

EI. KINGS, V. 
Naaman is Healed.
And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came, and stood before him: and he said, Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant.

And he said, As the Lord liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of that which he brought: but, as the Lord liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him.

So Gehazi followed after Naaman the man of God, said, Behold, my master hath spared Naaman this Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought: but, as the Lord liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him.

This Syrian. He justifies his purpose on the principle of "spoil the Egyptians."

But, as the Lord liveth, I will run. Rather, by the life of Jehovah, but I will run. (Comp. Note on chap. iv. 30.)

He lighted down from the chariot to meet him. An Oriental mark of respect. Literally, fell from off the chariot: an expression denoting haste.
man. And when Naaman saw him running after him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, 1 Is all well? (25) And he said, All is well. My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now there be come to me from mount Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets: give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of garments. (26) And Naaman said, Be content, take two talents. And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and laid them upon two of his servants; and they bare them before him. (27) And when he came to the 2 tower, he took them from their hand, and bestowed them in the house: and he let the men go, and they departed. (28) But he went in, and stood before his master. And Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went no whither. (29) And he said unto him, Went not mine heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and maidservants? (29) The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. (Gen. xxi. 64). The LXX. has “he turned,” which implies an ellipsis of “and descended.” Is all well?—Naaman feared something might havebefallen the prophet. The LXX. omits this. (25) Even now.—Or, this moment, just. Mount Ephraim.—The hill-country of Ephraim, or highlands of Ephraim, where Gilgal and Bethel were situate. Changes of garments.—The same phrase as in the LXX. (Vat.). Which the prophet’s house may have stood. There be much more suitable. The prophet’s question comes in verse 5. (25) Be content.—Be willing, consent to take. The Vatican LXX. omits; the Alexandrian renders ὃσοὶ ὁσων, owing to a transposition of the Hebrew letters (ḥâlô‘ for ḫâlô‘). Bound.—Deut. xiv. 25. Bags.—Only here and in Isa. iii. 22, where it means “purses.” Laid them upon two.—Gave them to two of his (i.e., Naaman’s) young men. The courtesy of the act is obvious. Before him.—Gehazi. (24) The tower.—Heb., the ’ophel, the mound, on which the prophet’s house may have stood. There would be no window in the exterior wall from which Gehazi and his companions might have been observed for yielding to your desire of gain, when you ought not to have been studiously disinterested in your behaviour to such an one, that he might learn not to confound the prophets of Jehovah with the mercenary diviners and soothsayers of the false gods? The prophet’s disciple is bound, like his master, to seek, not worldly power, but spiritual; for the time is one of ardent struggle against the encroachments of paganism. And oliveyards . . . maidservants?—The prophet develops Gehazi's object in asking for the money: he wished to purchase lands, and live stock, and slaves—whatever constituted the material wealth of the time. The Targum inserts the explanatory: “And thou thoughted in thy heart to purchase oliveyards,” &c. So Vulg.: “ut eimas oliveta.” (27) Shall cleave.—Or, cleave! i.e., let it cleave. The prophet's sentence is naturally expressed as an imperative. A leper as white as snow.—Comp. Exod. iv. 6; Num. xii. 10. A sudden outbreak of leprosy may follow upon extreme fright or mortification (Michaelis). Unto thy seed for ever.—Like other skin diseases, leprosy is hereditary. If it be thought that the sentence is too strong, it should be remembered that
And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.

CHAPTER VI.—(1) And the sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold now, the place where we dwell with thee is too strait for us. (2) Let us go, we pray thee, unto Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and let us make us a place there, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye. (3) And one said, Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go. (4) So he went with them.

The prophet is really pronouncing inspired judgment upon the sins of Gehazi, and milder language might have produced erroneous impressions. Covetousness and lying are never spared in Scripture, and it is well that the one (whoever it was) to whom the mishap occurred, as presently related.

The ax head fell. —Heb., and as for the iron, it fell. The subject of the verb is made prominent by being put first in the accusative. It is thus implied that something happened to the iron. Perhaps, however, it is better to consider that the particle, which usually marks the object of the verb, in cases like the present has its etymological meaning of “something” (the being regarded as equivalent to yath, and so to yāḥ.) (See Winer, Chaldaic Grammar, ed. Fischer.)

Master! —My lord, Elisha. He instinctively appeals to Elijah for help.

For it was borrowed. —Heb., and that one was borrowed. Vulg., “et hoc ipsum mutuo accipieram.”

Where. —Whereinto? Where fell it in?

The iron did swim. —He caused the iron to float. (Comp. Deut. xi. 4 for the verb.) The iron ax-head did not swim, but simply rose to the surface. It had fallen in near the bank. Elisha’s throwing in the stick was a symbolic act, intended to help the witnesses to realise that the coming up of the iron was not a natural, but a supernatural, event, brought about through the instrumentality of the prophet. As in the case of the salt thrown into the spring at Jericho, the symbol was appropriate to the occasion. It indicated that iron could be made to float like wood by the sovereign power of Jehovah. The properties of material substances depend on His will for their fixity, and may be suspended or modified at His pleasure. The moral of this little story is that God helps in small personal troubles as well as in great ones of larger scope. His providence cares for the individual as well as the race.

Therefore. —And he said.

Elisha causes iron to swim.

And when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood. (3) But as one was falling, the ax head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, Alas, master! for it was borrowed. (4) And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he shewed him the place. And he cut down a stick, and cast it in thither; and the iron did swim. (5) Therefore said he, Take it up to thee. And he put out his hand, and took it.

(6) Then the king of Syria warred against Israel, and took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a
Elisha Warns the King.  

**II. KINGS, VI.**  
The Syrians encompass Dothan.

place shall be my camp. (9) And the man of God sent unto the king of Israel, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place; for this thing is not found elsewhere in the Old Testament. (Comp. Syrians lay. Num. xxii. 31.)

But the Syriac, “Set ye an ambush, and lurk;” the Vulg., “ponamus insidias;” and similarly the Arabic. This has suggested that the true reading is “hide ye,” i.e., lies in ambush (tēbhāḥ, i.e., tēbhē’ū: Thenius). It is, however, a more obvious change to read, “ye shall go down” (sīnāḥāthā: Ps. xxxviii. 3). This agrees better with the construction, “Unto (el) such and such a place shall ye go down,” i.e., on a plundering incursion.

(9) Pass.—Pass over, across, or through.

Such a place.—This place.

Thither.—There.

Come down.—Coming down. Another anomalous Hebrew form (nehēthūm). Some would recognise here again a corruption of the same verb as in verse 8, and render, “for there the Syrians are about hiding” (nehēhim, i.e., nehēthē’im). This is supported by the LXX., “εἰς ἑκεῖνα ζῳρία καίγοντας;” the Syriac and Arabic, “are lurking,” the Vulg., “in insidiis sunt;” and the Targum, “are hidden.” But the word (Heb.) is really an irregular participial formation from nahath, “to descend,” and the Authorised Version is therefore correct. The versions have deduced the idea of hiding from that of going down, as if crouching on the ground were meant.

(10) Sent.—A sufficient force to hold the place, so that the Syrians had to return unsuccessful.

Warned.—Ezek. iii. 19; 2 Chron. xix. 10.

Saved himself.—Was weary; on his guard (verse 9).

Not once nor twice refers to the statement of the entire verse. On more than one occasion, and in regard to different inroads of the Syrians, Elisha gave the king forewarning.

(11) Troubled.—Literally, storm-test. The phrase is not found elsewhere in the Old Testament. (Comp. the use of the same verb in Jonah i. 11, 13; Isa. liv. 11.)

Which of us is for the king of Israel?—Which of us? is an expression only found here (mishēkhellēnū). Pointed differently, the word would give the sense of the LXX., τις προδέχεσθαι μετ’ Ἰσραήλ—‘Who betrays me to the king of Israel?’—masīshēhenēnū, our betrayer,” an Aramaic term. (Comp. Prov. xxx. 10.) Better still is Böttcher’s correction, “Who leads us astray unto the king of Israel?” (masēhēnēnū). This would be the natural supposition of the Syrian king when he found himself unexpectedly confronting an armed Israelitish force, and harmonises well enough with the LXX. and Vulg. The received text, which the Targum, Syriac, and Arabic support, can only mean, “Which of those who belong to us inclines to the king of Israel?” (Comp. Ps. cxxiii. 2.) The phrase commanded a view of the valley below, where the Syrians had to return unsuccessful. surprise.

They came by night.—So as to take the city by surprise.

The servant of the man of God.—One waiting on (i.e., a minister of) the man of God. Not Gehazi, who is never called Elisha’s minister, and is usually mentioned by name.

Was risen early.—For the Hebrew construction, comp. Ps. cxxvii. 2; Isa. v. 11; Hos. vi. 4.

Gone forth.—To the outside of the house, which commanded a view of the valley below, where the Syrians lay.

And his servant said.—On returning into the house. The narrative is contracted.

They that be with us . . . with them.—Comp. Num. xiv. 9; Ps. iii. 6, “I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that have set themselves against me round about”; and 2 Chron. xxxii. 7, 8, with Notes.

And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw.—Just as the Lord had opened Elisha’s own eyes to see the like vision of unearthly glory when his master was taken away (chap. ii. 10, 12). (Comp. also Num. xxiii. 31.)
hold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. (18) And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the LORD, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he smote them with blindness according to the word of Elisha. (19) And Elisha said unto them, This is not the way, neither is this the city: follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye seek. But he led them to Samaria. (20) And it came to pass, when they were come into Samaria, that Elisha said, LORD, open the eyes of these men, that they may see. And the LORD opened their eyes, and they saw; and, behold, they were in the midst of Samaria. (21) And the king of Israel said unto Elisha, when he saw them, My father, shall I smite them? shall I smite them? (22) And he answered, Thou shalt not smite them: wouldst thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword and with thy bow? set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master. (23) And he prepared great provision for them: and when they had

The mountain.—On which Dothan stood. Horses and chariots of fire.—Literally, horses and chariots, to wit, fire. Fire was the well-known symbol of Jehovah's visible presence and protective or destructive. It is the day of the patriarchs onwards (Gen. xv. 17; Exod. iii. 2, xiii. 21; seq., xix. 16, seq.; Isa. xxix. 6, xxx. 30, 35, xxxii. 14). As fiery chariots and horses parted Elijah from Elisha (chap. ii. 12), so now a similar appearance surrounds and protects the latter. "It is a fine thought," says Thenius, "that on this occasion the veil of earthly existence was lifted for a moment for one child of man, so as to allow him a clear glimpse of the sovereignty of Providence." The form of the supernatural appearance was, no doubt, conditioned by the circumstances of the time. Chariots and horses were the strength of the Aramean oppressors of Israel; therefore, Jehovah causes His earthly ministers to see that He also has at His command horses and chariots, and that of fire. (19) And when they came down to him.—This would mean that the Syrians came down to Elisha. But the prophet was, to begin with, in the city, which lay on the top of the hill; and the heavenly host intervened between him and his enemies, so that the latter must have occupied the lower position. The reading of the Syriac and Josephus is, "and they (i.e., Elisha and his servant) went down to them"—i.e., to the Syrian power, the latter. "It is a fine thought," says Thenius, "that the sight of the heavenly host guarding his master had inspired the prophet's follower with courage to face any danger in his master's company.

Elisha prayed.—And Elisha prayed—mentally, as he approached his foes. This people.—Perhaps in the sense of multitude. Blindness.—Sama'ei'm: the term used in Gen. xix. 11, and nowhere besides. It denotes not so much blindness as a dazzling effect, accompanied by mental bewilderment and confusion. "They saw, but knew not what they saw" (Rashi). Ewald pronounces the passage in Genesis the model of the present one. (19) This is not the way, neither is this the city.—These words pre-suppose, according to Josephus, that the prophet had asked them whom they were seeking, and that they had replied, "The prophet Elisha." Thenius and Bahr accept this. Keil says, "Elisha's words contain a falsehood, and are to be judged of in the same way as by which an enemy is deceived." Thenius declares that "there is no untruth in the words of Elisha, strictly taken; for his home was not in Dothan (where he had only stayed for a time), but in Samaria; and the phrase 'to the man' might well mean 'to his house.'" Surely it is easier to suppose that the "dazing" had caused the Syrians to go wandering about in the valley at the foot of the hill, vainly seeking to find the right way up to the city gate. (Comp. Gen. i.e., "They wearied themselves to find the door.") If the prophet found them in this plight, his words would be literally true.

Shall I smite them? shall I smite them?—Or, May I smite? may I smite, my father? The repetition expresses the king's eagerness to slay his enemies. He overlooks the supernatural bewilderment which had fallen upon them. When their eyes were opened, and they realised their whereabouts, dismay and astonishment would paralyse their energies. (21) My father.—Comp. chaps. ii. 12, viii. 9 ("Thy son Ben-hadad"). (22) Thou shalt not.—Or, thou must not. Wouldest thou smite... thy bow?—The Hebrew order is, "An quos ceperis gladio et arcu percusurus es?" (Comp. Gen. xlvi. 22.) Elisha says, "These men are virtually prisoners of war, and therefore are not to be slain in cold blood."

The LXX., Targum, Syriac, and Vulg., ignore the interrogative particle. The Targum and Syriac render, "Lo those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword, &c., thou dost (or mayst) kill." (Comp. Deut. xx. 16.) The Vulg., "neque enim cespitisti nos, ut percutias," and the Arabic, "Didst thou take them captive with thy sword, &c., that thou shouldest slay them?" come to the same thing. These renderings are interesting, as they make Elisha deny the king's right of disposal of these prisoners of Jehovah. The purpose of the miracle would have been frustrated by killing the Syrians. That mercy is decisive as to force their king and them to acknowledge the might of the true God. (23) He.—The king of Israel. Prepared great provision.—Or, a great feast. The Hebrew verb (kârâh) occurs nowhere else in this
eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. So the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel.

(24) And it came to pass after this, that Ben-hadad king of Syria gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria. (25) And there was a great famine in Samaria; and, behold, they besieged it, until an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and the four part of a cab of dove's dung for five pieces of silver. (26) And as the king of Israel was passing by upon the wall, there cried a woman unto him, saying, Help, my lord, O king. (27) And he said, 'If the Lord do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? out of the barnfloor, or out of the winepress? (28) And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, Give thy son, that we may eat him to day, and we will eat my son to morrow. (29) So we boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto her on the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him. And she said, I will not be idle, that I should declares that when Hannibal was besieging Cas­

The fourth part of a cab of dove's dung.—The cab was the smallest Hebrew dry measure. It held, according to the Rabbis, one-sixth of a seah (chap. vii. 1), or a little over a quart (4terah. — Josephus, Ant. ix. 6 § 4). The term 'dove's dung,' in all probability, denotes some kind of common vegetable produce, perhaps a sort of pulse or pease, which was ordinarily very cheap. Such a designation is not unparalleled. The Arabs call the herb kali "sparrow's dung;" and Assafetida is in German devil's dung. In some places in Eng­

The Famine therein.

vania, where that which we see at such old places as Chester, the king went round to encourage the garrison and to superintend the defence. A woman in the street below, or perhaps on a housetop near the rampart, appeals to him for justice against her neighbour. (27) If the Lord do not help thee. This is right. The marginal rendering, "Let not the Lord help thee!" —i.e., "May the Lord destroy thee!" would be possible in another context. Another rendering is, "Nay (i.e., do not supplicate me), let the Lord help thee!"

Out of the barnfloor.—Comp. Hosea i. 10: "The floor and the vinepress shall not feed them, and the new wine shall fail in her." Jehovah, in the irony of despair, reminds the woman of what she well knows—viz., that the corn and wine, the staple foods of the time, are long since exhausted. The words, "If the Lord do not help thee," may be compared with chap. iii. 10, "Alas! that the Lord hath called," &c. The character of Jehoram is consistently drawn. But perhaps the point is: "Jehovah alone is the giver of corn and wine (Hosea ii. 8, 9). Appeal not to me for these."

And the king said. —When he had explained what she wanted. With the hideous facts here re­corded, comp. Deut. xxviii. 56, seq. Similar things were done during the sieges of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (Sam. iv. 10; Ezek. x. 10: —Josephus, Bell. Jud. vi. 3, 4).

She hath hid her son. —Perhaps to save him. (Comp. 1 Kings iii. 26.)
II. KINGS, VII.

Elisha Prophecies Plenty.

eat him; and she hath hid her son. (30) And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he rent his clothes; and he passed by upon the wall, and the people looked, and, behold, he had sackcloth within upon his flesh. (31) Then he said, God do so and more also to me, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day. (32) But Elisha sat in his house, and the elders sat with him; and the king sent a man from before him: but ere the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, See ye how this son of a murderer hath sent to take away mine head? look, when the messenger cometh, shut the door, and hold him fast at the door: is not the sound of his master's feet behind him? (33) And while he yet talked with them, behold, the messenger came down unto him: and he said, Behold, this evil is of the Lord; what should I wait for the Lord any longer?

CHAPTER VII. — (1) Then Elisha said, Hear ye the word of the Lord; Thus saith the Lord, To mourn about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Saph.

(30) And he passed.—Now he was passing. The people in the streets below would see him well as he passed along the rampart.

Looked.—Saw.

He had sackcloth.—Rather, the sackcloth was. "The sackcloth," i.e., the well-known garb of penitence and woe (1 Kings xxi. 27). Jehoram had secretly assumed this ascetic garment in order to appease the wrath of Jehovah. That the king should wear sackcloth was a portent in the eyes of his subjects. The prophets wore it over the tunic as an official dress.

Within.—Under his royal robes, "upon his flesh"—i.e., near the skin. (Comp. Isa. xx. 2, 3.)

(31) Then he said.—And he (i.e., the king), said.

God do so ... to me.—Literally, So may God do to me, and so may he add: a common form of oath. (Comp. Ruth i. 17; 1 Sam. iii. 17; 1 Kings ii. 23.)

If the head of Elisha ... this day.—The king's horror at the woman's dreadful story is succeeded by indignation against Elisha, who had probably counselled an unyielding resistance to the foe, in the steadfast faith that Jehovah would help His own; and who, prophet though he was, and ended with miraculous powers, had yet brought no help in this hour of urgent need. (Comp. with the oath that of Jezebel against Elijah, 1 Kings xix. 2.)

(32) But Elisha sat ... with him.—Rather, Now Elisha was sitting in his house, and the elders were sitting with him. This shows the important position which the prophet occupied at the time. The elders, who were the nobles and chiefs of Samaria, were gathered round him in his house to learn the will of Jehovah, and to receive comfort and counsel from his lips. (Comp. the way in which Zedekiah and his princes consulted Jeremiah during the last siege of Jerusalem—Jer. xxxv. 1, 2; xxxviii. 14, seq.)

And the king sent a man.—To behead the prophet, according to his oath.

From before him.—Comp. chap. v. 16, iii. 14; 1 Kings x. 8. One of the royal attendants—probably a soldier of the guard—is meant.

But ere.—"But" is wanting in the Hebrew. (The conjunction we has, perhaps, fallen out after the preceding w.)

He said to the elders.—Elisha foreknew what was about to happen. (Comp. chap. v. 26.) The he is emphatic: "He (the prophet) said."

This son of a murderer.—Referring to Ahab's murder of Naboth (1 Kings xxi. 19) and the prophets of Jehovah; as if to say, "The son takes after his father" (filius patris). At the same time, we must not forget the idiom by which a man is called a son of any quality or disposition which he evinces. (Comp. "son of Belial," "sons of pride," "sons of wickedness;"

2 Sam. vii. 10; Job xii. 34.)

Hold him fast at the door.—Literally, press him back with the door. The door opened inwards, and the prophet bade his friends the elders hold the door against the messenger of death.

Is not the sound ... behind him?—Elisha's reason for bidding the elders hold the door. He foresaw that Jehovah would hasten in person after his messenger, to see that his savage order was carried out. (Bähr and Keil think, with Josephus, that Jehovah repented, and hurried off to restrain the sword of his minister.)

(33) Yet talked.—Was still speaking.

The messenger.—Ewald's correction, "the king" (melek for mal'ak), is certainly right. In the rapid progress of the story, the arrival and momentary exclusion of the messenger is understood. The approach of the king may have been seen from the upper part of Elisha's house.

Came down.—Was coming down, to the prophet's house, from the ramparts. (Comp. chap. v. 34.)

And he said.—That is, the king said.

Behold, this evil is of the Lord.—Rather, Behold, such (this) is the distress from Jehovah. Things have come to this pitch by the will of Jehovah.

What (rather, why) should I wait for the Lord any longer?—As I have hitherto done, at your persuasion. Why should I not now surrender to the Syrians, and slay the prophet who has so long detained me with vain hopes?

VII.

(1) Then Elisha said.—And Elisha said. The division of the chapters is unfortunate, there being no break in the story here. The prophet addresses the king and his attendants (verse 18).

A measure.—Heb., a seah: the most usual corn measure. (Comp. 1 Kings xviii. 32; chap. vi. 25.) The prophet's words are more abrupt in the original: "Thus hath Jehovah said, About this time to-morrow a seah (in) fine flour at a shekel, and two seahs (in) barley at a shekel, in the gate of Samaria!"

Fine flour.—Gen. xviii. 6.

Barley.—Not only as fodder for the horses (The- nius), but also for human consumption, in the shape of barley cakes, &c. (Judges vii. 18).
The Leprous Men. — II. Kings, VII. 

Flight of the Syrians.

The gate.—The corn market, therefore, was held in the open space just within the gate.

(2) Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

(3) And there were four leprous men at the enter ing in of the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die? (4) If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there; and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive,

we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die. (5) And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold, there was no man there. (6) For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us. (7) Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the horsemen that were before the host.

The kings of the Hittites.—Comp. I Kings ix. 20, x. 29. The tract of north Syria between the Euphrates and the Orontes was the cradle of the Hittite race, and it was over this that these kings of the several tribes bore sway. In the thirteenth century (B.C.) their power extended over great part of Asia Minor, as rock inscriptions prove. Carchemish, Kadesh, Hamath, and Helbon (Aleppo) were their capitals. Ramses II. made a treaty of peace with Hada-sira, the prince of the Hittites. In the time of Tiglath Pileser I. (B.C. 1138), the Hittites were still paramount from the Euphrates to the Lebanon. Shalmaneser II. mentions a Hittite prince, Sapatulme, king of the Patina, a tribe on the Orontes. The Hittites from whom Solomon exacted forced labour were those who were left in the land of Israel (comp. Gen. xxiii., xxvi. 34; 1 Sam. xxxi. 6), not the people of the great cities mentioned above, which remained independent, as we know from the Assyrian inscriptions. (Comp. Amos vi. 2; 2 Chron. viii. 4 for Hamath.) Tiglath Pileser II. conquered Hamath (B.C. 740). Twenty years later it revolted under Yahu-bihdi ("Jah is around me;") comp. Ps. iii. 5, but was again reduced, and made an Assyrian prefecture by Sargon, who afterwards stormed Carchemish (B.C. 717). (Comp. chap. xvii. 24, 30.)

The kings of the Egyptians.—The plural may be rhetorical. (Comp. 2 Chron. xxviii. 16: "The kings of Assyria, and Note.") Little is known of the state of Egypt at this time (towards the close of the twenty-second dynasty). The Syrians were seized with panic, under the idea that they were about to be attacked on all sides at once. Some such wild rumour as that expressed by the words of the text must have been spread through the camp; but we need not press the literal accuracy of the statement, for who was there to report the exact nature of the alarm to the historians of Israel? Moreover, it is evident from the style of the narrative in chapters vi. and vii. that it rests upon oral tradition, so that it would be a mistake to press subordinate details. Prof. Robertson Smith considers that the sudden retreat of the Syrians is explained by the fact that the Assyrians were already present upon them.

(7) Wherefore (and) they arose.—The verse gives a vivid picture of a wild flight, in which everything was forgotten except personal safety.

1 Heb. a lord which belonged to the king's hand.
The Flight

of the Syrians.

II. KINGS, VII.

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The Plundering

II. KINGS, VIII. of the Syrian Camp.

ites that are consumed:) and let us send and see. (14) They took therefore two chariot horses; and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, Go and see. (15) And they went after them unto Jordan: and, lo, all the way was full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians had cast away in their haste. And the messengers returned, and told the king.

(16) And the people went out, and spoiled the tents of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of Lord. (17) And the king appointed the lord on whose hand he leaned to have the charge of the gate: and the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died, as the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him. (18) And it came to pass as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be to morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria: (19) that lord answered the man of God, and said, Now, behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof. (20) And so it fell out unto him: for the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died.

CHAPTER VIII.-(1) Then spake Elisha unto the woman, whose son he had restored to life, saying, Arise, and go thou and thine household, and sojourn wheresoever thou canst sojourn: for the Lord hath called for a famine; and it shall also come upon the land.

The Israelites.—Israel. Syriac: “Let them bring five of the horsemen who are left: if they are taken, they are accounted of as other, or perhaps in order that, if one were captured by the enemy, the other might escape with the news.

In their haste.—Comp. 1 Sam. xiii. 6; Ps. xlviii. 6, civ. 7—passages which prove that the Hebrew text is right here, and the Hebrew margin wrong.

Unto Jordan.—Not all the way to the river, which would be at least twenty miles, but in the direction of it.

So.—And it came to pass. (17) And the king appointed.—Rather, Now the king had appointed.

The lord.—The adjutant (verse 2).

To have the charge of the gate. —To maintain order as the famished crowd poured out of the city.

Trode upon him.—Trampled him down, as he was trying to discharge his duty. This probably happened, as Thenius suggests, when the crowd was returning from the Syrian camp, wild with excess of food and drink, after their long abstinence. Thus he “saw the plenty with his eyes, but did not eat thereof” (verse 2). Reuss thinks the charge of the gate is equivalent to the charge of the market, as the market was held on the space adjoining the gate.

Had said.—Spake. Who spake.—This is probably a spurious repetition. It is wanting in some Hebrew MSS., and in the Syriac, Vulg., and Arabic versions. If retained in the text, we must render, “And he died, according to that which the man of God spake, which he spake when the king,” &c. But perhaps the reading of one Hebrew MS. is correct: “And he died, according to the word of the man of God, which he spake,” &c.

To the king.—The LXX. and Syriac have, “to the messenger.” (See Note on chap. vi. 23.)

In this and the following verse the author repeats the prediction and its fulfilment with obvious satisfaction. The moral is a warning against unbelief.

That lord.—The adjutant.

Now.—And.

Might such a thing be?—Literally, Might it happen according to this word? But the LXX., Syriac, and Vulg., with many Hebrew MSS., read, as in verse 2, “Might this thing (or word) be?” (9) For the people trode upon him.—And the people trampled him down, or under foot.

VIII.

(1—6) How the kindness of the Shunammite woman to Elisha was further rewarded through the prophet’s influence with the king.

(1) Then spake Elisha.—Rather, Now Elisha had spoken. The time is not defined by the phrase. It was after the raising of the Shunammite’s son (verse 1), and before the healing of Naaman the Syrian, inasmuch as the king still talks with Gehazi (verse 3).

Go thou.—The peculiar form of the pronoun points to the identity of the original author of this account with the writer of chap. iv. Moreover, the famine here foretold appears to be that of chap. iv. 38, seq., so that the present section must in the original document have preceded chap. v. Thenius thinks the compiler transferred the present account to this place, because he wished to proceed chronologically, and supposed that the seven years’ famine came to an end with the raising of the siege of Samaria.

For a famine.—To the famine. The sword, the famine, the noisome beasts, and the pestilence were Jehovah’s “four sore judgments,” as we find in Ezek. xiv. 21.

And it shall also come upon.—And, moreover, it cometh into.

Seven Years.—Perhaps not to be understood literally, any more than Dante’s

“O caro Duca mio che più di sette
Volte m’hai sicurà renduta.”—Inferno 8. 6.
The Shunammite

II. KINGS, VIII.

seven years. (2) And the woman arose, and did after the saying of the man of God: and she went with her household, and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years. (3) And it came to pass at the seven years’ end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines: and she went forth to cry unto the king for her house and for her land. (4) And the king talked with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done. (5) And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how he had restored a dead body to life, that, behold, the woman, whose son he had restored to life, cried to the king for her house and for her land. And Gehazi said, My lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life. (6) And when the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king appointed unto her a certain officer, saying, Restore all that was her’s, and all the fruits of the field since the day that she left the land, even until now. (7) And Elisha came to Damascus; and Ben-hadad the king of Syria was sick; and it was told him, saying, The man of God is come hither. (8) And the king said unto Hazael, Take a present in thine hand, and go, meet the man of God, and enquire of the Lord by him,
Elisha

II. KINGS, VIII.

and Hazael.

saying, Shall I recover of this disease? (9) So Hazael went to meet him, and took a present with him, even of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels’ burden, and came and stood before him, and said, Thy son Ben-hadad king of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this disease? (10) And Elisha said unto him, Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover: howbeit the Lord hath shewed me that he shall surely die. (11) And he settled his countenance stedfastly, until he was ashamed; and the man of God wept.

(12) And Hazael said, Why weepest my lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child. (13) And Hazael said, But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing? And Elisha answered, The Lord hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria. (14) So he departed from Elisha, and came to his master; who said to him, What said Elisha to thee? And he answered, He told me that thou shouldst recover of this disease; and take a present with me, even of the best of the things which thou hast, and go to meet the man of God, and present thyself unto him; and say unto him, Thus saith thy servant Hazael: Now I know that thou hast a spirit of conjuration in thine hand; now therefore, I pray thee, let my lord thy servant pass over before thee. And Elisha answered, The Lord hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria. And he settled his countenance stedfastly, until he was ashamed; and the man of God wept.

(15) And Hazael said, Why weepest my lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child. (16) And Hazael said, But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing? And Elisha answered, The Lord hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria. (17) So he departed from Elisha, and came to his master; who said to him, What said Elisha to thee? And he answered, He told me that thou shouldst recover of this disease; and take a present with me, even of the best of the things which thou hast, and go to meet the man of God, and present thyself unto him; and say unto him, Thus saith thy servant Hazael: Now I know that thou hast a spirit of conjuration in thine hand; now therefore, I pray thee, let my lord thy servant pass over before thee. And Elisha answered, The Lord hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria.
Murder of the King of Syria. II. KINGS, VIII. Jehoram Reigns in Judah.

est surely recover. (15) And it came to pass on the morrow, that he took a thick cloth, and dipped it in water, and spread it on his face, so that he died: and Hazael reigned in his stead.

(16) And in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel, Jehoshaphat being then king of Judah, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah began to reign. (17) Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. (18) And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab: for the daughter of Ahab was his wife: and he did evil in the sight of the Lord. (19) Yet the Lord would not destroy Judah for David his servant's sake, as he promised him to give him alway a light, and to his
with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and "Ahaziah his his son reigned in his stead. (25) In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel did Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah begin to reign. (26) Two and twenty years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign; and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. And his mother’s name was Athaliah, the daughter of Omri king of Israel. (27) And he walked in the way of the house of Ahab, and did evil in the sight of the Lord, as did the house of Ahab: for he was the son in law of the house

assents that the promise was made to David alone. He would omit the conjunction, and render, “To give him always a lamp in respect of (i.e., through) his sons.” (Comp. Gen. xii. 17.) He would always express, “To give him, that is, his sons, a lamp,” making “to his sons” an explanatory apposition.

(20) In his days Edom revolted.—The connection of ideas is this: Although Jehovah was not willing to extirpate Judah, yet He suffered it to be seriously weakened by the defections recorded in verses 20-22.

Made a king over themselves.—Josephus says they slew the vassal king appointed over them by Jehoshaphat (1 Kings xxii. 48). Edom appears to have been subject to the hegemony of Judah from the time of the disruption under Rehoboam.

(21) So Joram went over to Zair.—No town called Zair is otherwise known. Hitzig and Ewald would read Zoor, but Zoor lay in Moab, not in Edom. (Jer. xlviii. 34; Isa. xv. 5; Gen. xix. 30, 37.) The Vulg. has Seira, and the Arabic Sīʿira, which suggest an original reading, “to Seir,” the well-known mountain chain which was the headquarters of the Edomite prince. Perhaps the reading of the text Cēʿrāḥ represents a dialectic pronunciation. (Comp. the forms Yishqah and Yíchqah for Isaac.)

And he rose by night.—There may be a lacuna of a few lines in the text here, or the compiler, in his desire to be brief, may have become obscure. Jehoram appears to have been hemmed in by the Edomites in the mountains, and to have attempted escape under cover of night.

Smote the Edomites which compassed him about.—Cuts his way through their ranks.

And the captains of the chariots.—Part of the object of the verb “smote.” Jehoram smote (cut his way through) the Edomites—that is to say, the captains of the Edomite war-chariots which hemmed him and his army in.

And the people fled into (unto) their tents.—That is to say, the army of Jehoram was glad to escape from the scene of its ill success, and made its way homeward as best it could. (Comp. for the proverbial expression, “to their tents.”) Sam. xx. 1; 1 Kings vii. 66.) From Joel iii. 19 (“Edom shall be a desolate wilderness for the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land”) it has been conjectured that when the Edomites revolted they massacred the Jews who had settled in the country in the time of subjection. (Comp. Gen. xxvii. 40.)

(22) Yet.—Rather, and (i.e., so).

Unto this day.—Down to the time of composition of the original account from which this epitome is extracted. This notice is borne out by the Assyrian monuments. Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal mention Qaʾuṣ-gabri king of Udumu (Edom), along with Masaseh of Judah, among their tributaries. Esarhaddon also states that his father Sennacherib had reduced "Adumā, a fortified city of Arabia."

Then Libnah revolted at the same time.—The point of the statement is that the success of Edom encouraged Libnah to throw off the Judean supremacy. For the locality see Josh. x. 29 seq., xv. 42, xiii. 13. Kell thinks the revolt of Libnah coincided with (it was probably supported by) the Philistine invasion recorded in 2 Chron. xxi. 16, and continued until Uzziah reduced the Philistines (2 Chron. xxvi. 6 seq.). From the time of Hezekiah, Libnah again belonged to Judah (chap. xii. 8, xxii. 31, xxiv. 18).

(23) The rest of the acts.—Or, history. (See especially 2 Chron. xxi. 11-19, and the Notes there.)

(24) Was buried with his fathers in the city of David.—But not in the royal tombs (2 Chron. xx. 20).

(25) The reign of Ahaziah king of Judah. His expedition with Joram of Israel against Hazael at Ramoth-gilead. (Comp. 2 Chron. xxii. 1-6.)

Two-and-twenty years old.—He was Jehoram’s youngest son (2 Chron. xxi. 17, xxii. 1), and, as his father died at the age of thirty-nine or forty (verse 17), he must have been begotten in Jehoram’s seventeenth or eighteenth year. There is no difficulty in this, nor even in the supposition that Jehoram had begotten sons before Ahaziah, as Thoemen seems to imagine. He may have become a father at thirteen or fourteen, and Athaliah was certainly not his only wife.

(26) Ahaziah.—Called Jehoahaz (2 Chron. xxii. 17). Ewald thinks he assumed the name of Ahaziah on his accession.

The daughter of Omri — i.e., granddaughter. Omri is mentioned rather than Ahab as the founder of the dynasty, and the notorious example of his wickedness. (Comp. Micah vi. 16: “The statues of Omri are kept.”)

(27) The son-in-law of the house of Ahab.—Comp. 2 Chron. xxii. 4, “his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly;” and notice the threefold repetition of the words “the house of Ahab.”
of Ahab. (29) And he went with Joram the son of Ahab to the war against Hazael king of Syria in Ramoth-gilead; and the Syrians wounded Joram. (29) And king Joram went back to be healed in thine hand, and go to Ramoth-gilead: (2) and when thou comest thither, look out there Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi, and go in, and make him arise up from among his brethren, and carry him to an inner chamber; (3) then take the box of oil, and pour it

Ahaziah Visits Joram. II. KINGS, IX. A Messenger sent to Jehu.

CHAPTER IX.—(1) And Elisha the prophet called one of the children of the prophets, and said unto him, Gird up thy loins, and take this box of oil in thine hand, and go to Ramoth-gilead: (2) and when thou comest thither, look out there Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi, and go in, and make him arise up from among his brethren, and carry him to an inner chamber; (3) then take the box of oil, and pour it
on his head, and say, Thus saith the Lord, I have anointed thee king over Israel. Then open the door, and flee, and tarry not. (4) So the young man, even the young man the prophet, went to Ramoth-gilead.

(5) And when he came, behold, the captains of the host were sitting; and he said, I have an errand to thee, O captain. And Jehu said, Unto which of all us? And he said, To thee, O captain.

(6) And he arose, and went into the house; and he poured the oil on his head, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I have anointed thee king over the people of the Lord, even over Israel. (7) And thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master, that I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the Lord, at the hand of Jezebel. (8) For the whole house of Ahab shall perish: and I will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel: (9) and I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah: (10) and the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her. And he opened the door, and fled.

(11) Then Jehu came forth to the servants of his lord: and one said unto him, Is all well? wherefore came this mad fellow to thee? And he said unto them, Ye know the man, and his communication. (12) And they said, It is the word of the Lord, which he sent by his servant Elijah the Tishbite. (13) For thus saith the Lord, I will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel. (14) And I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah: (15) and the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her. (16) Then Jehu came to the city of Samaria, and laid siege against Naboth's vineyard, for which Naboth the Jezreelite had refused to give him money, saying, It is not for thee to have it, because it is mine inheritance. (17) And he said unto his stewards, Call Naboth the Jezreelite, and bring him hither to me, that I may prophesy upon him in his vineyard; and afterward he shall return again to his house, and I will give him for money; or if he will redeem it, well; but if he refuse, then shall he be an heir of the vineyard, according to the law of Hebron. (18) So they called Naboth, and brought him hither, to Jehu, saying, Are you ready for what I have prepared for you? (19) And he answered, I have no backbiting woman, I am able to bear my reproach. And the men of his city went out with swords, and slew him on the top of the city gate, and it was told Jehu. (20) And he said, Cast him into the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, even into his vineyard, and slay his sons, and cut them with the sword, and destroy his wives, and his children, and his cattle, and his inheritance, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah the Tishbite. (21) Then Jehovah spake unto Jehu, saying, Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not utterly cut off the descendants of Jehoram, have ye not utterly killed the children of Ahab thy lord? Now therefore, see, the Lord shall smite his seed in the time of evil, and shall make the remainder of his house as the house of Israel. (22) But Jehu thought, If now I shall return, I shall be put to death; but if I go, I shall be put to death. (23) And he said, Take two bottles of wine, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, I have heard thy reproach against me, and thy words against me, and thou hast said, I have killed me a man for no cause, to be slain; therefore, I will deliver his blood upon thee, and the blood of his sons shall be with thee, until thou have taken away the remnant of his house, and established the kingdom of David. (24) And, behold, when thou comest into Samaria, whosoever meeteth thee, thou shalt kill him: and all the men of the city shall fall on thee by night, and all the men of the night watch by day. (25) And he said, As Jehovah liveth, what thou sayest, Jehovah thy God liveth, I will do as thou hast said. (26) And he arose, and left Samaria, and came to 7 Kings xxi. 23.)

(11) The servants of his lord.—Jehoram's captains.

And one said.—Many MSS. and all the versions, except the Targum, have “and they said.”

Is all well?—They dreaded some sinister news.

This mad fellow.—They were stricken by his wild demeanour and furious haste. Or, perhaps, “this inspired one,” in a tone of ridicule. (Comp. Hosea ix. 7.)

Ye know the man.—There is emphasis on the ye. Jehu apparently implies that the man was sent to him by his fellow-generals—that they had planned the whole thing. His purpose is to find out their disposition. Or, more probably, his reply may simply mean: “Why ask me, when you yourselves must have divined the right answer to your question?”

His communication.—Or, his meditation (comp. 1 Kings xviii. 27)—i.e., the thing he had in his mind, his purpose in coming. Corn. à Lapide: “Ye know that he is mad, and accordingly what he says is mad, and therefore neither to be credited nor repeated.”

LXX., “Ye know the man and his tattle,” the Targum, “and his story,” the Syriac, “and his folly,” the Vulg., “and what he said;” the Arabic, “and his news.”

(13) It is false.—This is rather too strong, and does not convey the exact force of the reply. The captains
false; tell us now. And he said, Thus and thus spake he to me, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I have anointed thee king over Israel. (13) Then they hasted, and took every man his garment, and put it under him on the top of the stairs, and blew with trumpets, saying, Jehu is king. (14) So Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi conspired against Joram. (Now Joram had kept Ramoth-gilead, he and all Israel, because of Hazael king of Syria. (15) But when Joram was returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which he had given him, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria.)

And Jehu said, If it be your minds, then let none go forth nor escape out of the city to go to tell it in Jezreel. (16) So Jehu rode in a chariot, and went to Jezreel; for Joram lay there. And Ahaziah king of Judah was come down to see Joram. (17) And there stood a watchman on the tower in Jezreel, and he spied the company of Jehu as he came, and said, I see a company. And Joram said, Take an horseman, and send to meet them, and let him say, Is it answer to Jehu's "Oh, you know all about it!" with the one word, "trickery!" i.e., "you are pretending!" "mere evasion!" They then assume a tone of persuasion: "Do tell us." Even if they had really guessed the impromptu of Jehu's visit, the manner now convince Jehu that he might safely trust them.

(13) Then (and) they hasted. —LXX., "and they heard, and hasted." This is probably original, the sense being that the moment they heard it, they hastily took up their outer garments, and laid them as a carpet for Jehu to walk upon. (Comp. Luke xix. 36.) The instantaneous action of the generals shows that there must have existed a strong feeling against Joram in the army and an enthusiasm for Jehu which only required a word from him to precipitate a revolution.

Put it under him on the top of the stairs. —So Kimchi, "at the uppermost step." The words are much discussed by commentators. The LXX. has, "and put it under him on the garem of the steps" (retaining the Hebrew word garem); the Syriac, "and put it under him on a seat of steps;" the Targum, "at the steps of the hours," i.e., a flight of steps which served as a sundial (comp. chap. xx. 11); the Vulg., "put it under his feet in similitudinem tribunalis," i.e., in the fashion of a rostrum, or elevated platform; the Arabic, "on the steps of the rise" (or "elevation").

The word garem, rendered "top," can hardly have that meaning. In Hebrew it rarely occurs (Prov. xxvi. 22; xxv. 10), and means bone, for which in Aramaic it is the usual term (Dan. vi. 25). In Arabic the word means "body," and it is usually so explained in one passage of the Bible (Gen. xlix. 14), "Issachar is a strong ass;" literally, an ass of body. As the Aramaic garmá is used in the sense of "self," some would render the present phrase, "on the stairs themselves." But perhaps we may better translate on the analogy of the Arabic word, "they put (their cloaks) under him, on to (el) the body of the stairs." The stairway on the outside of the house, leading to the roof, served as an extemporised throne, or rather platform, for the king. (Comp. chap. xi. 14.) Some Hebrew MSS. have "upon" for "on to." (Comp. 2 Sam. xxi. 10, "on the rock.

(14, 15) Now Joram had kept Ramoth-gilead ... But king Joram was returned. —Rather, Now Joram had been on guard in Ramoth-gilead ... And Jehoram the king returned. The whole is a parenthesis intended to explain Jehu's words in verse 15. "Let none go forth: to tell it in Jezreel." Although substantially a repetition of chap. viii. 28-29, it was hardly "superfluous" (Thenius) to remind the reader at this point of Joram's absence —a material element in the success of the conspiracy. Graf's conjecture that Jehu should be read instead of Joram is an obvious one, but hardly correct.

Because of Hazael. —Rather, against Hazael. (15) If it be your minds. —Literally, if it be your soul; some MSS., "if it be with your soul," as in Gen. xxiii. 8. The Vulg. paraphrases correctly, si vobis placet.

Let none go forth. —Literally, let not a fugitive go forth. This proves that Ramoth was in the hands of the Israelite army. If they were besieging the city, as Josephus relates, Jehu's command is unintelligible. (16) Lay. —Was lying. His wounds were not yet quite healed.

Ahaziah king of Judah was come down. —See chap. vii. 29. After relating what had meanwhile occurred with the army at Ramoth, the narrative returns to this point. Instead of Joram was lying there, the LXX. has, "Joram king of Israel was being healed in Jezreel of the shots wherewith the Arameans shot him in Ramoth, in the war with Hazael king of Syria, because he was mighty and a man of might." The first sentence, "Joram king of Israel ... King of Syria," was probably a marginal note of a different reading of the first half of verse 15. This was inadvertently inserted by some transcriber in connection with Joram in the present verse. The sentence, "Because he was mighty and a man of might," was originally a marginal note on the words "Hazael king of Syria" (verse 14), but in like manner came to be erroneously connected with the same words in the various readings of verse 15 (Thenius).

(17) And there stood a watchman. —Literally, and the watchman was standing. The tower was attached to the palace, and the latter was, perhaps, near the eastern wall of the town.

The company of Jehu. —The word shiph'ah literally means overflow, and so a multitude of waters (Job xxii. 11), of camels (Isa. lxx. 6), of horses (Ezek. xxvi. 10). Jehu was accompanied, therefore, by a considerable force. Joram said. —Not to the watchman, but to one of his courtiers. The narrative is very concise.

Is it peace? —This hardly represents the force of the original. Joram is not yet apprehensive. His question merely means, "What is the news?" He expects news from the army at Ramoth. Thenius, however, explains "Come ye with friendly or hostile intention?" In that case, would the king have sent a single horseman to ascertain the truth?
The Messengers Return not.

II. KINGS, IX.

Death of Jehoram.

peace? (18) So there went one on horseback to meet him, and said, Thus saith the king, Is it peace? And Jehu said, What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me. And the watchman told, saying, The messenger came to them, but he cometh not again. (19) Then he sent out a second on horseback, which came to them, and said, Thus saith the king, Is it peace? And Jehu answered, What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me. (20) And the watchman told, saying, He came even unto them, and cometh not again: and the 'driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he driveth furiously. (21) And Joram said, Make ready. And his chariot was made ready. And Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah went out, each in his chariot, and they went out against Jehu, and met him in the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite.

(22) And it came to pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, Is it peace, Jehu? And he answered, What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many? (23) And Joram turned his hands, and fied, and said to Ahaziah, There is treachery, O Ahaziah. (24) And Jehu drew a bow with his full strength, and smote Jehoram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart, and he died.
Joram cast into Naboth’s Field.  

**II. KINGS, IX.**  

Death of Ahaziah.

1 sank down in his chariot. (25) Then said Jehu to Bidkar his captain, Take up, and cast him in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite: for remember how that, when I and thou rode together after Ahab his father, the Lord laid this burden upon him; (26) surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons, saith the Lord; and I will requite thee in this plat, saith the Lord. Now therefore take and cast him into the plat of ground, according to the word of the Lord.

But when Ahaziah the king of Judah saw this, he fled by the way of the garden house. And Jehu followed after him, and said, Smite him also in the chariot. And they did so at the going up to Gur, which is by Ibleam. And he fled to Megiddo, and died there. (28) And his servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his sepulchre with his fathers in the

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In his chariot.—LXX., “on his knees,” owing to a partial obliteration of one letter in their Hebrew text.

(25) Then said Jehu.—Literally, And he said.

Bidkar.—The Syriac gives Bar-dekar, “son of stabbings,” i.e., “stabber,” “slayer,” a very suitable name for Jehu’s squire. The Hebrew name is, therefore, a contraction of Ben-dekar. (Comp. Bedan, “son of Dan,” 1 Sam. xii. 11; and Bedad, “son of Hadad,” in 1 Chron. i. 46.)

Captain.—Adjutant, aide-de-camp, chief (chap. vii. 2).

Remember how that, when I and thou rode together.—This gives the sense of the Hebrew correctly. Literally, remember thou me and thee riding together. The word rendered “together” probably means riding side by side on horseback in attendance on the king. The Targum, Vulg., and Kimchi interpret, riding together in the same chariot; Josephus, riding together in Ahab’s chariot behind him.

The Lord laid this burden upon him.—Rather, Jehovah uttered this (prophetic) utterance upon (i.e., about) him. (Comp. the oracle uttered by Elijah against Ahab when taking possession of Naboth’s vineyard, 1 Kings xix. 17, seq., 29.)

Surely.—Literally, if not; a formula of emphatic asseveration, which originally must have run somewhat as follows: “If I have not seen, may I perish.” The inappropriateness of such an expression in the mouth of the Deity is obvious; but that only shows how completely the original meaning of the formula was forgotten in everyday usage.

Yesterday.—So that Ahab seized the vineyard the day after the murder of Naboth, a detail not exactly specified in 1 Kings xx. 16.

The blood.—The plural (margin) implies death by violence (Gen. iv. 10).

And the blood of his sons.—The murder of the sons of Naboth is neither stated nor implied in 1 Kings xxi., an omission which has needlessly troubled the minds of commentators. As to the fact, it would be quite in accordance with ancient practice to slay the sons of one accused of blasphemy along with their father (comp. Josh. vii. 24, 25); and the crafty Jezebel would not be likely to spare persons whose wrongs might one day prove dangerous. The difference in the two narratives is accounted for by the circumstance that the present is the exact version of an eye-witness, viz., Jehu himself, while the former was probably derived from a less direct source.

Saith the Lord.—Literally, is the thing uttered of Jehovah. This phrase, which is uncommon except in the writings of the prophets, and the word rendered “burden” in the last verse, which also belongs to prophetic terminology, together establish the historical authenticity of the short oracle of Elijah, recorded in this verse. Its brevity and the solemnity with which it was pronounced would, we may be sure, stamp it irrefutably upon the memory of those who heard it. (Comp. 1 Sam. ii. 30; and chap. xix. 33, infra.)

I will requite thee in this plat.—Another important detail not given in the former account.

Plat.—Portion, as in verse 25 (twice).

(27) But when... saw this.—Now Ahaziah... had seen it; and he fled, &c.

By the way of the garden house—i.e., in the direction of the garden house, which was probably a sort of arbour or drinking pavilion near the gates of the palace gardens, of which Naboth’s vineyard formed a part. Ahaziah wished to escape from the royal park as fast as he could.

Smite him also in the chariot.—The Hebrew is much more suited to the excitement of the occasion: Him too! shoot him in the chariot! (Here and in verse 13, supra, “el “into,” seems equivalent to “at,” “upon.”)

And they did so.—Some such words as these may have fallen out of the Hebrew text. So the Syriac: “Him also! slay him! and they slew him in his chariot, on the ascent of Gur,” &c. But the rendering of the LXX. involves the least change, and is probably right: “Him too! And he smote him in the chariot, in the going up,” &c. This is more graphic. Jehu simply ejaculates, “Him too!” and, after a hot pursuit, shoots his second victim, at the ascent or declivity of Gur, where Ahaziah’s chariot would be forced to slacken speed.

The ascent of Gur is not mentioned elsewhere. Ibleam lay between Jezreel and Megiddo. (Comp. Judges i. 27; Josh. xvii. 11.)

And he fled to Megiddo, and died there.—See the Note on 2 Chron. xxix. 9, where a different tradition respecting the end of Ahaziah is recorded. The definite assignment of localities in the present account is a mark of greater trustworthiness. The way in which Rashi, whom Keil follows, attempts to combine the two accounts, is revolting to common sense. It would be better to assume a corruption of the text in one or the other narrative.

Megiddo.—Identified in the cuneiform inscriptions as Magidil or Mageddi.

(28) Carried him in a chariot.—Literally, made him ride. After this verb the LXX., Syriac, and Vulg. supply what the Hebrew text almost demands, “and brought him.”

In his sepulchre.—In his own sepulchre, which he had in his lifetime prepared, according to the custom of antiquity.
city of David. (29) And in the eleventh year of Joram the son of Ahab began Ahaziah to reign over Judah.

(30) And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window. (31) And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, 

And she said:—And Jehu had come into the gate, and she said.

Had Zimri . . . master?—Rather, Art well (literally, Is it peace), thou Zimri, his master’s murderer? The “Is it peace?” which Jezreel addresses to Jehu, appears to be an ironical greeting. Thenius explains: “Is there to be peace or war between me and thee, the rebel?” referring to the same phrase in verses 17, 18, 19, 22, supra. The phrase is vague enough to admit of many meanings, according to circumstances. Perhaps Jezreel, in her mood of desperate defiance, repeats the question which Jezreel had thrice asked of Jehu, as a hint that she herself is now the sovereign to whom Jehu owes an account of his doing. She goes on to call him a second Zimri—i.e., a regicide like him who slew Baasha, and likely to enjoy as briefly a reign as he. (See 1 Kings xvi. 15-18.)

(32) And he lifted up his face to the window, and looked out at a window. (33) And there looked out to him two or three eunuchs. (34) And he said, This is the word of the

Throw her down. So they threw her down: and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and he trode her under foot.

(35) And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and said, Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her: for she is a king’s daughter. (36) And they went to bury her: but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands. (37) Wherefore they came again, and told him. And he said, This is the word of the

In the eleventh year of Joram.—Chap. vii. 25 says “in the twelfth year of Joram.” Such a difference is not remarkable, inasmuch as the synchronisms between the reigns of the two kingdoms are not based upon exact records. Moreover, different computations might make the same year the eleventh or twelfth of Joram. (The verse is a parenthesis, and perhaps spurious.)

(33) And who is on my side? who?—This hardly implies, as Thenius thinks, that Jezreel had made preparations for resistance. Jehu knew that the impious and cruel queen was well hated by the palace officials. The “two or three eunuchs,” who a moment before had crouched in servile dread before Jezreel, would now be eager to curry favour with the regicide, and, at the same time, wreak their malice upon their former tyrant. (The repetition, “Who is on my side? who?” accords well with Jehu’s character. The LXX. has the strange reading, “he saw her, and said, Who art thou? Come down with me.” Josephus adopts this; but Thenius shows clearly that it has originated in easy corruptions of the present Hebrew text.)

(34) Throw her down.—Comp. Note on 1 Chron. iii. 9. Was sprinkled on.—Spirited on to. He trode her under foot.—All the versions have they—i.e., the horses—trode. Thenius supposes they were excited by the blood being sprinkled upon them. But “he”—i.e., Jehu—“trode her under foot,” plainly means, he drove over her fallen body. Ewald goes beyond the text in stating that Jehu spurned her with his own feet. (For the verb, comp. chap. vii. 20.)

(35) And when . . . drink.—Rather, And he went in (into the palace), and ate and drank. Jehu takes possession of the palace, having slain its former occupants. Savage warrior as he was, he forgot all about the victim of his violence until he had appeased the demands of his appetite. Then he could remember that even Jezreel was of royal rank, and perhaps a touch of remorse may be discerned in the mandate for her burial. Go, see now.—Rather, Look, I pray, after. This cursed woman.—Jehu was thinking of the curse pronounced on Jezreel by the prophet Elijah. (See next verse.)

She is a king’s daughter.—Compare 1 Kings xvi. 31.

(36) Her hands.—Heb., the hands. (37) This is the word of the Lord.—See 1 Kings xxi. 23, where this oracle of Elijah is given.
Jehu’s Letter

Lord, which he spake by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, “In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel: (37) and the carcase of Jezebel shall be as dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel; so that they shall not say, This is Jezebel.

CHAP'LER X.—(1) And Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu wrote letters, and sent to Samaria, unto the rulers of Jezreel, to the elders, and to them that brought up Ahab’s children, saying, (2) Now as soon as this letter cometh to you, seeing your master’s sons, and set them on his father’s throne, and fight for your master’s house. (4) But they were exceedingly afraid, and said, Behold, two kings stood not before him: how then shall we stand? (5) And he that was over the house, and he that was over the city, the elders also, and the bringers up of the children, sent to Jehu, saying, We are thy servants, and will do all that thou shalt bid us; we will not make any king: do thou that which is good in thine eyes.

Portion—i.e., domain, territory (hêleq). In 1 Kings xxii. 23, the word is “wall” (hel), an error due to the loss of the final letter; not an original difference, as Keil assumes.

Dogs. —The dogs.

(37) And the carcase of Jezebel.—This continuation of the prophecy is not given in 1 Kings xxii. 23. It is probably original; not “a free expansion” by Jehu, as Keil asserts.

We prefer the second view.

As dung.—Comp. Ps. lxxxii. 10.

So that they shall not say.—Comp. Gen. vi. 7 for the construction. The sense is, So that men will no longer be able to recognise her mangled remains.

X.

Jehu Massacres the Family of Ahab, the Kinsmen of Ahaziah, and the Baal-worshippers.

(1) Ahab had seventy sons.—His posterity in general are meant. Ahab had been dead about fourteen years (chap. iii. 1; 1 Kings xxii. 51), and had had two successors on the throne. The name Ahab seems to be used here as equivalent to the house of Ahab. Many of the number might be strictly sons of Ahab, as he no doubt had a considerable harem.

Jehu wrote letters, and sent to Samaria.—Jehu was crafty as well as fierce. He could not venture to the capital without first sounding the inclinations of the nobles of the city.

Unto the rulers of Jezreel.—“Jezreel” is an ancient error. The LXX. has “unto the rulers of Samaria.” So Josephus. Thenius accordingly suggests that the original reading was, “and sent from Jezreel.” The Vulg. gives “ad optimates civitatis,” which seems preferable. Before “the elders,” we must restore “and unto” with some MSS., the LXX., Syriac, and Vulg. The original text would then run: “And sent to the princes of the city and unto the elders,” &c. Reuss, on the other hand, reads “Israel” for “Jezreel.”

Them that brought up Ahab’s children.—Literally, them who brought up Ahab (i.e., the house of Ahab). The word occurs in Num. xi. 12; Isa. lxix. 23 (“nursing father”). The nobles entrusted with this charge would be responsible for the good behaviour of their wards. Ahab may have dreaded the evils of an education in the harem, and possible disputes about the succession.

(2) Now as soon as this letter cometh.—Rather, And now when this letter cometh. Only the conclusion of the letter, containing the gist of it, is reported here. (Comp. chap. v. 6.)

Seeing your master’s sons . . . look even out (verse 3).—Rather, there are with you both your master’s sons, and the chariots and the horses, and a fenced city, and the armoury: so look out the best, &c.

A fenced city.—All the versions but the Arabic have “fenced cities;” and so Josephus. There is a tone of mocking irony in Jehu’s challenge to the nobles of Samaria, who were probably as luxurious and cowardly now as in the days of Amos, a few years later (Amos iii. 12, vi. 3–6). (Comp. also Isa. xxviii. 1–10.) By his careful enumeration of their resources, he as good as says that his defiance is not the fruit of ignorance.

(3) The best and meetest—i.e., the one you think best qualified in every sense (not merely in the moral sense).

Your master’s sons.—“Your master” need not mean Jehoram. The story relates to Ahab (verse 1).

His father’s throne—i.e., Ahab’s throne. (Comp. 2 Chron. xvii. 3, xii. 12, xix. 2, where David is called the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, and Hezekiah in turn.)

Fight for your master’s house.—Jehu thus declares his own warlike intentions, leaving the nobles, whom his prompt and decisive action had taken by surprise, no choice between improvised resistance and instant submission. Knowing Jehu’s character as a soldier, they chose the latter.

(4) But they were exceedingly afraid.—Literally, And they feared mightily, mightily. (Comp. Gen. vii. 19.)

Two kings.—Rather, the two kings. The word kings is emphatic.

(5) He that was over the house.—The prefect of the palace, or major-domo. A similar official is mentioned on the Egyptian monuments. His position and influence would resemble that of the great chamberlain of the Byzantine court.

He that was over the city.—The prefect or governor of the city, called in 1 Kings xxii. 26 “the prince (sar) of the city.” These two are the “rulers” (adrim) of verse 1.
(6) Then he wrote a letter the second time to them, saying, If ye be mine, and if ye will hearken unto my voice, take ye the heads of the men your master’s sons, and come to me to Jezreel by this time. Now the king’s sons, being seventy persons, were with the great men of the city, which brought them up. (7) And it came to pass, when the letter came to them, that they took the king’s sons, and slew seventy persons, and put their heads in baskets, and sent them by the hand of a messenger, and told him, saying, They have brought the heads of the king’s sons. And he said, Lay ye them in two heaps at the entering in of the gate until the morning. (8) And it came to pass in the morning, that he went out, and stood, and said to all the people, Ye be righteous : behold, I conspired against my master, and slew him: but who slew all these? (9) Know now that there shall fall unto the earth nothing of the word of the Lord, which the Lord spake concerning the house of Ahab: for the Lord hath done that which he spake by his servant Elijah. (11) So Jehu slew all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his kinsfolks.

Heaps.—The noun (qabbâr) occurs nowhere else in the Old Testament. In the Talmud it means “congregation,” as we say colloquially “a heap of persons.” The verb (qabbâr) means “to heap up.” (See Exod. viii. 10.)

At the entering in of the gate.—The place of public business, where all the citizens would see them. (Comp. chap. vii. 3; 1 Kings xxv. 17.) But perhaps not the city gate, but the gate of the palace is to be understood. Parallels to this deed of Jehu are not wanting in the history of modern Persia. (Comp. 1 Sam. xvi. 54; 2 Macc. xxiv. 30; and the comparatively recent custom in our own country of fixing up the heads of traitors on London Bridge.)

And stood.—Or, took his place—i.e. (according to Reuss), sat as judge in the palace gateway, according to royal custom, and gave audience to the people.

The citizens would naturally be struck with consternation at the sight of the two ghastly pyramids in front of the palace, and would crowd together in expectancy at the gates. Jehu goes forth to justify himself, and calm their fears.

Ye be righteous—i.e., guiltless in respect of the deaths of these men, and therefore have nothing to dread. Thenius explains: “Ye are just, and therefore will judge justly.” Others render: “Are ye righteous?” implying that Jehu wished to make the people guilty of the murders of the princes, while owning his own murder of the king.

I.—Emphatic: I am myself; or, I indeed.

But who slew all these?—Slew should be smote. Jehu professes astonishment, by way of self-exculpation. He hints that as Jehovah had foretold the destruction of the house of Ahab, He must have brought it to pass; and therefore nobody is to blame. (See next verse.)

Nothing of the word of the Lord.—No part of Elijah’s prediction shall fail of accomplishment.

For the Lord hath done.—Rather, and Jehovah, He hath done; or, and Jehovah it is who hath done.

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By to morrow this time.—Jehu is urgent for despatch, because time is all-important. He wishes to convince the people of Jezreel as soon as possible that none of the royal princes were left to claim the crown, and that the nobles of Samaria have joined his cause.

Now the king’s sons... brought them up.—This is a correct translation. According to the Masoretic punctuation, and supposing that the particle ‘eth (rendered “with”) might here be used merely to introduce the subject, we might render: “Now the king’s sons were seventy persons; the great men of the city were bringing them up.” But such a usage of ‘eth is very doubtful. (Comp. chap. vi. 5.) The sentence, in any case, is only a parenthetic reminder of what was stated in verse 1. The total seventy is, perhaps, not to be taken as exact, seventy being a favourite round number. (See Note on 1 Chron. i. 42.)

And slew.—Rather, butcheted, or slaughtered. The way in which the writer speaks of this massacre—“they took the king’s sons, and butcheted seventy persons”—shows that he did not sympathize with Jehu’s deeds of blood. His interest rather centres in the fact that the predictions of Elijah were fulfilled by the wickedness of Jehu. (See verse 10.)

In baskets.—Rather, in the baskets. The word (dåd) means a “pot” elsewhere (1 Sam. ii. 14). In Ps. lxxxi. 6, the LXX. renders κόφω: here it gives κραταλιζω (“pointed baskets”).

There came a messenger.—Literally, and the messenger came in. Josephus says Jehu was giving a banquet.
his great men, and his kinsfolks, and his priests, until he left him none remaining. (12) And he arose and departed, and came to Samaria. And as he was at the shearing house in the way, (13) Jehu met with the brethren of Ahaziah king of Judah, and said, Who are ye? And they answered, We are the brethren of Ahaziah; and we go down to salute the children of the king and the children of the queen. (14) And he said, Take them alive. And they took them alive, and slew them at the pit of the shearing house, even two and forty men; neither left he any of them.

None remaining.—No survivor. (12) And he arose ... and came.—So the Syriac, rightly. The common Hebrew text has, “And he arose and came and departed.” And as he was at the shearing house in the way.—Rather, He was at Beth-eqad-harom on the way. The Targum renders: “He was at the shepherds’ meeting-house on the way.” The place was probably a solitary building, which served as a rendezvous for the shepherds of the neighbourhood. (The root ‘aqad means “to bind,” or “knot together;” hence the common explanation of the name is “the shepherds’ binding house,” i.e., the place where they bound their sheep for the shearing. But the idea of binding is easily connected with that of meeting, gathering together: comp. our word band, knot.) The LXX. has: “He was at Baith. akad (or Baithakath) of the shepherds.” Eusebius mentions a place called Beithakad, fifteen Roman miles from Legio (Lejjun), identical with the present Beit-akad, six miles east of Jenin, in the plain of Esdraelon; but this seems too far off the route from Jezreel to Samaria, which passes Jenin. (13) Jehu met with.—Literally, And Jehu found. The brethren of Ahaziah king of Judah—i.e., Ahaziah’s kinsmen. His brothers, in the strict sense of the word, were slain by a troop of Arabs, in the lifetime of his father Jehoram (2 Chron. xxii. 17, xxii. 1). (See the Notes on 2 Chron. xxii. 8.) Jehu makes this reply. The LXX. has: “He was at Baithakad, (or Baithakath) of the shepherds.” Eusebius mentions a place called Beithakad, fifteen Roman miles from Legio (Lejjun), identical with the present Beit-akad, six miles east of Jenin, in the plain of Esdraelon; but this seems too far off the route from Jezreel to Samaria, which passes Jenin. (14) Take them alive.—Perhaps they made some show of resistance. Jehu slew them because of their connection with the doomed house of Ahab. Kell thinks he dreaded their conspireing with the partisans of the fallen dynasty in Samaria. Slew them at the pit of the shearing house.—Literally, “slaughtered them into the cistern of Beth-


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(15) And when he was departed thence, he lighted on Jehonadab the son of Rechab coming to meet him: and he saluted him, and said to him, Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart? And Jehonadab answered, It is. If it be, give me thine hand. And he gave him his hand; and he took him up to him into the chariot. (16) And he said, Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord. So they made him ride in his chariot. (17) And when he came to Samaria, he slew all that remained unto Ahab in Samaria, till he had destroyed him, ac-


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Ahab.—Again put for the house or family so called. Some MSS. and the Syriac express it so, reading “the house of Ahab.” (Comp. 1 Kings xvi. 29.)

(19) Ahab served Baal a little; but Jehu shall serve him much. —Ahab had, as the people well knew, served Baal more than a little; but the antithesis was not too strong for Jehu’s hidden meaning. He was thinking of his intended holocaust of human victims (verse 23).

(19) Call unto me all the prophets of Baal.—Comp. the similar convocation of the prophets of the Baal and Asherah by the prophet Elijah, 1 Kings xviii. 21. Here we have the proper name Ishiih, “vessels” ; comp. Latin, capsa. The LXX. does not translate the word.

The Syrie has, “And he said to the treasurer” (pibardé). The Vulg., “And he said to those who were over the vestments.” Thenius thinks the word merely means “cell” or “store chamber,” like tishkhé, the root of which may be cognate (1 Chron. xxviii. 12). It is said that there is an Ethiopic word, meaning “linen robe,” which is connected with this curious term. Thus it would be literally “vestry.”

Brought them forth vestments.—Literally, the vestments—viz., those which were customary on such occasions. Thenius supposes that festival attire from Jehu’s palace was meant, rather than from the wardrobe of the Baal temple. But it seems more natural to understand that Jehu simply gives directions that the worshippers of Baal were to be specially great one. (Comp. Herod. v. 5; Sil. Ital. iii. 24 seq.)

(20) And Jehu went . . . into the house—i.e., into the outer court before the temple, where all the worshippers were waiting.

To the court.—That there be here with you none of the servants of the Lord.—This precaution of Jehu’s suggests suspicion to a modern reader, but it would suggest the very contrary to the Baal-worshippers—viz., an extraordinary reverence for Baal; a dread lest some profane person should be present in his sanctuary.

Servants of the Lord.—Worshippers of Jehovah.

When.—Omit.

They went in.—The priests and prophets went into the inner court of the Baal temple, which probably resembled in general construction that of Jehovah at Jerusalem.

Sacrifices and burnt offerings—i.e., peace offerings and burnt offerings, which could only be offered in an open court.

Jehu appointed fourscore men without.—Rather, now Jehu had set him on the outside (of the building) fourscore men.

If any of the men . . . life of him.—Literally, The man that escapeth of the men whom I am bringing into your hands—his life for his life! This is a little incoherent, as is natural in energetic speech, but the
Death of the

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Prophets of Baal.

whom I have brought into your hands
escape, he that letteth him go, his life shall be for the life of him. (28) And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, that Jehu said to the guard and to the captains, Go in, and slay them; let none come forth. And they smote them with 1 the edge of the sword; and the guard and the captains cast them out, and went to the city of the house of Baal. (26) And they brought forth the 2 images out of the house of Baal, and burned them. (27) And they brake down the image of Baal, and brake down the house of Baal, and made it a draught house unto this day.

(28) Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel. (29) Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, to wit, the golden calves that were in Beth-el, and that were in Dan.

(30) And the Lord said unto Jehu, Because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel. (31) But Jehu 3 took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his

sense is clear. Thenius, however, suggests that the verb "escapeth" should be pointed as a transitive form (pīhāl instead of nāḥāl). This gives: "The man that letteth escape any of the men," i.e., an improvement next verse. The Syriac has the singular "statue" in the present Hebrew pointing of the word.

(23) As soon as he had made an end. - The Syriac has, when they (i.e., the Baal priests) had made an end. This is probably right. (Comp. the beginning of verse 24). We can hardly suppose with Ewald that Jehu personally offered sacrifice in the character of an ardent Baal-worshipper. For the massacre Jehu chose the moment when all the assembly was absorbed in worship.

To the guard and to the captains. - Literally, to the runners (or couriers) and to the adjutants (or squires; chap. ix. 25). (Comp. 1 Kings ix. 22.) The royal guardsmen and their officers are meant.

Cast them out. - That is, threw the dead bodies out of the temple. This is the explanation of the Tamgum and the other versions. Thenius asks why this should be specially mentioned, and proposes to understand the verb intransitively, "rushed out," which suits very well what follows.

And went to the city of the house of Baal. - The word city has here its original meaning, which is also that of the Greek οἶκος—viz., citadel, stronghold; properly, a place surrounded by a ring-fence or rampart. Jehu's guards, after the completion of their bloody work in the court of the temple, rushed up the steps into the sanctuary itself, which, like the temple of Solomon, resembled a fortress. ("Ex atrio irraprunt satellites Jehu in ipsam arcem templi."—Sebastian Schmidt.) Gesenius explains the word as meaning the temenos or sacred enclosure of the temple, that is, that which does not suit the context. (The origin of the word 'ir, "city," obscure in Hebrew, is revealed by the cuneiform inscriptions in the Accadian word ērim or eri, meaning "foundation," and ērū—i.e., Ur, a proper name, meaning "the city." (29) The images. - Rather, the pillars; which were of wood, and had a sacred significance. (Comp. Hosea iii. 4.) "In primitive times a pillar was the distinguishing mark of a holy place. Idolatrous pillars were commanded to be destroyed (Exod. xxii. 24), but most critics think that pillars to Jehovah were quite allowable till the time of Hophni and Josiah, to which they assign the Book of Deuteronomy. (Comp. Deut. xvi. 21, 22.) At any rate, the prophet (Isaiah) gives an implicit sanction to the erection of a sacred pillar in Egypt" (Cheyne's Note on Isaiah xix. 19). The LXX. has the singular here (ἡ στήλη) and the plural in the next verse. The Syriac has the singular "statue" in the plural.

The image of Baal. - Again the word is pillar, which in this case is the conical pillar of stone representing the Baal himself. The wooden pillars of verse 26 probably symbolised companion deities (Ἀρχές σφυγδόνων) of the principal idol.

Made it a draught house. - By way of utter desecration. (Comp. Ezek. vi. 11; Dan. ii. 5.) Unto this day. - On the bearing of this phrase, see the Introduction to the Books of Kings.

(26) Thus Jehu destroyed Baal. - Objectively considered, the slaughter of the servants of Baal was in perfect harmony with the Law; but, subjectively, the motive which influenced Jehu was thoroughly selfish. The priests and prophets of Baal in Israel, as depending entirely on the dynasty of Ahab, the king who had originally introduced the Baal-worship, might prove dangerous to Jehu. By exterminating them he might hope to secure the whole-hearted allegiance of the party that stood by the legitimate worship.

His maintenance of the cultus established by Jeroboam (verse 29) proves that he acted from policy rather than religious zeal.

(29-36) Jehu's reign and death.

(29) Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam. - Comp. 1 Kings xii. 28, seq., xv. 26, 30, 34. Jehu maintained the worship at Bethel and Dan on the same grounds of state policy as the kings who preceded him.

Howbeit. - Only; the word constantly used by the reductor to qualify his estimate of the conduct of the kings. (Comp. chap. xii. 3, xiv. 4, xv. 4.) The verse is, therefore, a parenthetic qualification of the approval implied in verse 28.

(30) And the Lord said. - Perhaps through Elisha. And hath done. - So the Syriac and Arabic versions. The Hebrew wants the and.

Thy children of the fourth generation. - The fulfilment of this oracle is noticed in chap. xv. 12. (Comp. the words of the commandment, "visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation;" Exod. xx. 5.)

(31) But Jehu took no heed. - Or, Now Jehu had not been careful. This verse, rather than the next, begins a new paragraph.
Death of Joram. (32) In those days the Lord began to cut Israel short: and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel; (33) from Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the river Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan. (34) Now the rest of the acts of Joram, and all that he did, and all his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? (35) And Joram slept with his fathers: and they buried him in Samaria. And Jehoahaz his son reigned in his stead. (36) And the time that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria was twenty and eight years.

CHAPTER XI.—(1) And when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the ‘seed royal’. (2) But Jehosheba, the daughter of king Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king’s sons which were slain; and they hid him, even him and his nurse, in the bed-room, that the word of the Lord began to prosper by them. (3) For it was of Jehovah said, ‘Arev shall recover the spoils of his kinsmen against Syria, and shall get the prey of his enemies toward the west.’ (4) Therefore, when Athaliah saw that she was left alone to rule over the house of Judah, she conspired against Joash the son of Ahaziah, for she saw that he was young and weak, and the son of Jehosheba his sister. (5) Then she conspired with her servants, and smote the king’s sons, and slew all his sons, save one son, Joash the son of Ahaziah. (6) For the Lord said, ‘The throne of Joram shall not be established against Israel.’ (7) Now Athaliah was a very wicked woman, and killed all the children of the king. (8) But Jehosheba, the sister of the king, took Joash, and they hãy her uncle, the priest Jehoiada. (9) And when she spake to him, she hid him in the bed-room of Jehoiada the priest. (10) And he was with the priests, and saw the king, and spoke to him. And he set him on the seat of the kings. (11) And the days of Athaliah were seven years. (12) And when Athaliah saw that she was left alone to rule over the house of Judah, she conspired against the king’s son Joash. (13) And she sent men, and set watchers upon the gates of the house of the Lord, that no one might get them to the king in any wise. (14) And she conspired against the king’s son, and smote all his brethren and his kinsmen. (15) But Joash the son of Ahaziah strengthened himself, and hired seventy eunuchs out of the king’s sons who were with him, and made them battle against her. (16) And he sought her, and found her in the house of Jehovah; for she was an image, and she was smitten by the eunuchs, and they slew her. (17) And Joash was made king over the people of Judah, when he was seven years old, and reigned forty years. (18) And Joash did that which was right in the sight of Jehovah. (19) And it came to pass that Athaliah heard when Joash was made king over the people of Judah. (20) And Athaliah envied, and sought to kill Joash. (21) But Jehoiada the priest took the king’s son, and made a covenant with him, and said unto him, ‘Thus shalt thou do, and so shalt thou sovrevive: (22) And he shall sit upon the seat of the kings in the temple of Jehovah, and come near the altar, and shall offer sacrifices and libations, and do the work of the kings of Judah, and dwell in the temple of Jehovah. (23) And Jehoiada the priest appointed two hundred porters, who should be over the people, and two hundred who should be over the people. (24) And he set every one of them with instruments of musick, psaltery, and harp, of them which did make a sound by musick, and set them to sing with musick, and caused all Israel to sing. (25) And he said, ‘A light unto the Gentiles, and the beauty of their people. (26) And Joash did that which was right in the sight of Jehovah all his days in which Jehoiada the priest instructed him. (27) And the rest of the acts of Joash not spoken of in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah. (28) And his servants conspired against him, and they slew him in his house in the year that he was seven years old. And his servants made the young Joash king over the people of Judah. (29) And the five years before he was made king, and the two years in which he reigned, for Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah had slain all the sons of Ahaziah, they buried him in the sepulchre of Jehoshaphat his father, in the valley of the sons of his fathers. (30) And Jehoash the son of Ahaziah made a covenant with the priests, and the Levites, and took from the king’s house the furniture of his father, and the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, that his father had gathered in great abundance, even out of the house of Jehovah, even out of the king’s house, and gave it to the priests, and the Levites. (31) And they had charge over the house of Jehovah, every man according to his office. (32) And they made the Levites to clean all those things, and to take them to the temple of Jehovah. (33) And as soon as they had made all clean, they brought the people’s fee, and the tithes, and the consecrations, and the precious things, upon the altar. (34) And they did repair the breaches of the temple, and made the walls thereof to be set up. (35) And they repaired the roof above, and washed the walls thereof, and made the foundations of the temple to be set up with timber and stone. (36) And they repaired the house of the temple, and the altar of Jehovah, and brought in the vessels that Solomon his father had made for the temple of Jehovah, and the vessels of gold, and of silver, and they put them in the house of Jehovah. (37) And the priests and the Levites purified themselves, and sanctified the temple of Jehovah. (38) And when they had sanctified the temple, they brought in the vessels of the temple, and the vessels of gold and of silver, and they put them in the库 of the temple. (39) And it came to pass, when they saw that there was much money in the temple of Jehovah, that the princes and the Levites gave charge over it. (40) And they numbered all the men of the earth, and the priests, and the Levites, and found them altogether twenty and three thousand and six hundred. (41) And Joash was twenty and seven years old when he began to reign. And he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. In the days of Joash the king of Judah, the kings of Syria fought against Jehoshaphat king of Judah, till they made a covenant with him. (42) And after three years he smote him and his people, and brought their goods and their good things down to Damascus, even to Laba. (43) And Athaliah the sister of Joash began to reign over the people of Judah. (44) And Jehoash reigned forty years in Jerusalem. And his mother’s name was Zibiah of Beersheba. (45) And Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead. (46) And the rest of the acts of Joash not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah. (47) And his servants conspired against him, and slew him in his own house. And Jehoahaz his son reigned in his stead.
chamber from Athaliah, so that he was not slain. (3) And he was with her hid in the house of the Lord six years. And Athaliah did reign over the land.

(4) And  the seventh year Jehoiada sent and fetched the rulers over hundreds, with the captains and the guard, and brought them to him into the house of the Lord, and made a covenant with them, and took an oath of them in the house of the Lord, and showed them the king's son. (5) And he commanded them, saying, This is the thing that ye shall do; A third part of you that enter in on the sabbath shall even be keepers of the watch of the king's house; (6) and a third part shall be at the gate of Sur; and a third part at the gate behind the chamber of the beds, in the chamber of the princes.
Rather, the chronicler says it was the palace, where the king might walk safely from the Temple to the court. Every man with his weapons in his hand was to guard the Temple and the young prince. The troops relieved on the Sabbath were not to be posted in three companies at three different points, like those who came on duty in their turn; but they were to form in two ranks—Carians and the two branches among you, all that go forth on the Sabbath-guard the entrances and exits of the royal palace. They were now to be used, appropriately enough, for the royal arrangements. The whole body of guards relieved on the Sabbath are to guard the Temple and the young prince. They took every man his men that were to come out on the Sabbath, with them that should go out on the Sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the priest. And to the captains over hundreds did the priest give king David’s spears and shields, that were in the temple of the Lord.

And the guard stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, round about the king, from the right corner of the temple to the left corner of the temple, along by the altar and the temple. And he brought forth the king’s son, and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony; and they made him king, and anointed him; and they brought forth the king’s son, who did it. It is difficult to see what objection can fairly be taken to this explanatory addition, unless we are to suppose that, although the high priest was present, the soldiers of the guard were to guide the procession, with that should go out on the Sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the priest. And to the captains over hundreds did the priest give king David’s spears and shields, that were in the temple of the Lord.

And the guard stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, round about the king, from the right corner of the temple to the left corner of the temple, along by the altar and the temple. And he brought forth the king’s son, and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony; and they made him king, and anointed him; and they brought forth the king’s son, who did it. It is difficult to see what objection can fairly be taken to this explanatory addition, unless we are to suppose that, although the high priest was present, the soldiers of the guard were to guide the procession.
clapped their hands, and said, 1 God save the king. (13) And when Athaliah heard the noise of the guard and of the people, she came to the temple into the temple of the Lord. (14) And when she looked, behold, the king stood by a pillar, as the manner was, and the princes and the trumpeters by the king, and all the people of the land rejoiced, and blew with trumpets: and Athaliah rent her clothes, and cried, Treason, Treason. (15) But Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains of the hundreds, the officers of the host, and said unto them, Have her forth without the ranges: and him that followeth her kill with the sword. For the priest had said, Let her not be slain in the house of the Lord. (16) And they laid hands on her; and she went by the way by which the horses came into the king's house: and there was she slain.

(17) And Jehoiada made a covenant between the Lord and the king and the people, that they should be the Lord's people; between the king also and the people of the land. Secrecy was no longer necessary, as Thenius supposes, when once the centurions of the guard had heartily taken up with the plot.

Rejoiced . . . blew.—Rejoicing . . . blowing. Treason.—Literally, Conspiracy.

(13) Of the guard and of the people.—This is correct. The and has fallen out of the Hebrew text.

The guard.—The Aramaic form of the plural, rare in prose, occurs here. (Comp. 1 Kings i. 33.) In 2 Chron. xxiii. 11 the words are transposed. This gives a different sense—viz., “of the people running together”—to which is added, “and acclaiming the king.”

The chronicler may have found this in the work which he reserved for the king only, which stood before the great altar, at the entrance to the inner court (2 Chron. xxiii. 13, vi. 13). Thenius maintains that the king stood on the top of the flight of steps leading into the sanctuary. Why, then, does not the text express this meaning more exactly? (Comp. chap. ix. 13.)

As the manner was—i.e., according to the custom on such occasions.

The princes.—The chiefs of the people, not the centurions of the royal guard, who have their full designation throughout the chapter. (See verses 4, 9, 10, 15, 18.) The present account has nowhere stated that the nobles were present in the Temple; but this sudden mention of them, as if they had been present throughout the proceedings, is in striking harmony with the chronicler’s express assertion that, after their conference with Jehoiada, the centurions of the guard assembled the Levites and the heads of the clans in the Temple (2 Chron. xxiii. 3). (The LXX. and Vulg. render “singers,” instead of se'irim, “princes.”)

The trumpeters.—Literally, the trumpets; as we speak of the “violins,” meaning the players on them.

The sacred trumpets or clarions blown on solemn occasions by the priests are intended. (Comp. chap. xii. 14; Num. x. 2; 1 Chron. xv. 24.) This is an indication that the priests and Levites were present as the chronicler so conspicuously represents, and as, indeed, was to be expected on an occasion when the high priest took the lead, and when the scene of action was the Temple. The acting classes of priests and Levitical musicians, warders, and priestly attendants must certainly have participated in the proceedings.

All the people of the land.—Secrecy was no longer necessary, as Thenius supposes, when once the centurions of the guard had heartily taken up with the plot.

Him that followeth her i.e., whoever shows any sympathy with her, or attempts to take her part. There might have been some of her partisans in the large gathering in the Temple court.

For the priest had said.—This is a parenthetic statement accounting for the order just given; and “had said” may mean “thought.”

They laid hands on her.—So the LXX. and Vulg. The Hebrew phrase means: and they made room for her on both sides i.e., the crowd fell back, and a lane was formed for her exit (so the Targum and Rashi).

She went ... king’s house.—She entered the palace by way of the entry of the horses. Athaliah was conducted to the royal stables which adjoined the palace, and there put to death.

A covenant.—Rather, the covenant. The high priest solemnly renewed the original compact between Jehovah and the king and people—a compact which had been violated by the Baal-worship of recent reigns.

That they should be the Lord’s people.—Comp. Deut. iv. 20; Exod. xix. 5, 6.

Between the king also and the people.—For the protection of their mutual rights and prerogatives. (Comp. 1 Sam. x. 25.) The king was bound to govern according to the law of Jehovah—“the testimony” which had been put upon him (verse 12).
people. 

(18) And all the people of the land went into the house of Baal, and brake it down; his altars and his images brake they in pieces thoroughly, and slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. And the priest appointed officers over the house of the Lord. 

(19) And he took the rulers over hundreds, and the captains, and the guard, and all the people of the land; and they brought down the king from the house of the Lord, and came by the way of the gate of the guard to the king's house. And he sat on the throne of the kings. 

(20) And all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was in quiet: and they slew Athaliah with the sword beside the king's house.

(21) Seven years old was Jehoash when he began to reign.

CHAPTER XII.—(1) In the seventh year of Jehu Jehoash began to reign; and forty years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Zibiah of Beer-sheba. 

(22) And Jehoash did that which was right in the sight of the Lord all his days wherein Jehoiada the priest...
Jehoash Orders the Temple to be Repaired.

Instructed him. (3) But the high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places.

(4) And Jehoash said to the priests, All the money of the dedicated things that is brought into the house of the Lord, even the money of every one that passeth the account, the money that every man is set at, and all the money that cometh into any man's heart to bring into the house of the Lord, let them repair the breaches of the house, wheresoever any breach shall be found.

(6) But it was so, that in the three and twentieth year of king Jehoash the priests had not repaired the breaches of the house. (7) Then king Jehoash called for Jehoiada the priest, and the other priests, and said unto them, Why repair ye not the breaches of the house? now therefore receive no more money of your acquaintance, but deliver it for the breaches of the house. (8) And the priests consented to receive no more money.
money of the people, neither to repair the breaches of the house. (9) But Jehoiada the priest took a chest, and bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one cometh into the house of the Lord: and the priests that kept the 1 door put therein all the money that was brought into the house of the Lord. (10) And it was so, when they saw that there was much money in the chest, that the king’s scribe and the high priest came up, and they 2 put up in bags, and told the money that was found in the house of the Lord. (11) And they gave the money, being told, into the hands of them that did the work, that had the oversight of the house of the Lord: and they 3 laid it out to the carpenters and builders, that wrought upon the house of the Lord, (12) and to masons, and hewers of stone, and to buy timber and hewed stone to repair the breaches of the house of the Lord, and for all that 4 was laid out for the house to repair it. (13) Howbeit there were not made for the house of the Lord bowls of silver, snuffers, basons, trumpets, any vessels of gold, or vessels of silver, of the money that was brought into the house of the Lord: (14) but they gave that to the workmen, and repaired therewith the house of the Lord. (15) Moreover they reckoned not with the men, into whose hand they delivered the money to be bestowed on workmen: for they dealt faithfully. (16) The trespass money and sin money was not brought into the house of the Lord: it was the priests’.
Then Hazael king of Syria went up, and fought against Gath, and took it: and Hazael set his face to go up to Jerusalem. (18) And Jehoash king of Judah took all the hallowed things that Jehoshaphat, and Jehoram, and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own hallowed things, and all the gold that was found in the treasures of the house of the Lord, and in the king's house, and sent it to Hazael king of Syria: and he went away from Jerusalem.

And the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? (30) And his servants arose, and made a conspiracy, and slew Joash in the house of Millo, which goeth down to Silla. (31) For Jozachar the son of Shimmeath, and Jehozabad the son of Shomer, his servants, smote him, and he died; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XIII.—In the three and twentieth year of Joash the son of Ahaziah king of Judah Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began to reign over Israel and he went away from Jerusalem—i.e., withdrew his forces. Thenius asserts that the present expedition of Hazael is distinct from that recorded in 2 Chron. xxiv. 23, seq., which he admits to be historical. But it is not said here that Hazael went in person against Jerusalem. (Comp. verse 17, “set his face to go up,” i.e., prepared to march thither.) The serious defeat of the army of Jehoash, related in Chronicles, accounts very satisfactorily for the sacrifice of his treasures here specified; while the withdrawal of the Syrians after their victory, as told in Chronicles, is explained by the bribe which Jehoash is here said to have paid them. The two narratives thus supplement each other. (30) His servants.—His immediate attendants. (Comp. chap. viii. 15.)

Arose—i.e., against him.

In the house of Millo.—Or, at Beth-Millo. The precise locality cannot be determined. Thenius supposes that the sorely wounded (2) king had retired for greater safety into “the castle palace.” Ewald says the king was murdered while engaged in the fortress. For “the Millo,” see 2 Sam. v. 9; 1 Kings ix. 15. The chronicler relates that Jehoash was murdered in his bed.

Which goeth down to Silla.—These words convey no meaning to us, the name Silla being otherwise unknown. The text is probably corrupt, for Silla is almost exactly like Millo in Hebrew writing. (The Vatican LXX. omits “which goeth down.”)

For Jozachar . . . smote him.—Rather, And Jozachar . . . it was that smote him. The names are different in Chronicles. (See the Note on 2 Chron. xxiv. 26.) Thenius notices the curious coincidence of the names as given here with the last words of the murdered Zechariah, “Jehovah see, and avenge!” The prophet was avenged by Jozachar (“Jehovah remembereth”), the son of Shimmeath (“hearing”), and Jehozabad (“Jehovah bestows”), the son of Shomer (“watcher”).

With his fathers—i.e., in the city of David; but “not in the sepulchres of the kings” (2 Chron. xxiv. 25).

(1—3) The reign of Jehoahaz.

In the three and twentieth year of Joash.—Josephus makes it the twenty-first year of Joash, but wrongly. According to chap. xil. 1, Joash succeeded in the seventh year of Jehu, and Jehu reigned twenty-eight years (chap. x. 36).
in Samaria, and reigned seventeen years.

(2) And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom. (3) And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, all their days.

(4) And Jehoahaz besought the Lord, and the Lord hearkened unto him: for he saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Syria oppressed them.

(5) (And the Lord gave Israel a saviour, hand of the Syrians: and the children of Israel dwelt in their tents, as before-time. (6) Nevertheless they departed not from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who made Israel sin, but walked therein: and there remained the grove also in Samaria.)

(7) Neither did he leave of the people to Jehoahaz but fifty horsemen, and ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen; for the king of Syria had destroyed them, and had made them like the dust by threshing.

(8) Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, and all that he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? Seventeen years.—This agrees with chap. xiv. 1.

(2) And he did.—See Notes on chap. iii. 3.

(3) He delivered them into the hand of Hazael.—Comp. chap. x. 32, seq. The meaning is that Jehovah allowed Israel to be defeated in successive encounters with the Syrian forces, and to suffer loss of territory, but not total subjugation. According to the Assyrian data, Shalmaneser warred with Hazael in 842 B.C., and again in 839 B.C. (See Notes on chap. xiv. 15, ix. 2.)

All their days.—Rather, all the days, i.e., continually (not all the days of Jehoahaz, nor of Hazael and Ben-hadad). The phrase is an indefinite designation of a long period of disaster.

(4) Besought.—Literally, stroked the face of; a metaphor which occurs in Exod. xxxii. 11; 1 Kings xiii. 6.

And the Lord hearkened unto him.—Not, however, immediately. (See verse 7.) The Syrian invasions, which began under Jehu, were renewed again and again throughout the reign of Jehoahaz (verse 22), until the tide of conquest began to turn in the time of Joash (verse 15), whose incomplete victories (verses 17, 19, 25) were followed up by the permanent successes of his son Joash (verse 25—28).

The parenthesis marked in verse 5 really begins, therefore, with the words, “And the Lord hearkened.” The historian added it by way of pointing out that although the prayer of Jehoahaz did not meet with immediate response, it was not ultimately ineffectual.

For he saw the oppression.—Comp. Exod. iii. 7; Deut. xxvi. 7.

The king of Syria.—Intentionally general, so as to include both Hazael and Ben-hadad III., his son (verse 24).

A saviour.—Jeroboam II., the grandson of Jehoahaz, a vigorous and successful sovereign, of whom it is said that Jehovah “saved” Israel by his hand (chap. xiv. 27).

They went out from under the hand.—Referring to the oppressive supremacy of Syria. From these words, and from those of verse 22, it would appear that Israel was tributary to Syria during some part of this period.

Dwelt in their tents.—i.e., in the open country. In times of war they were obliged to take refuge in strongholds and fortified cities.

As before time.—See Note on 1 Chron. xi. 2; Gen. xxxi. 2.

Nevertheless they departed not.—The restoration of Divine favour did not issue in the abolition of the irregular worship introduced by Jeroboam I. as the state religion of the northern kingdom. This is written, of course, from the point of view of the Jewish editor of Kings, who lived long after the events of which he is writing in the period of the exile. It does not appear from the history of Elijah and Elisha, incorporated in his work, that either of those great prophets ever protested against the worship established at Bethel and Dan.

The house of Jeroboam.—Some MSS., the Syrians, Targum, and Arabic omit “house.” But the specification of the dynasty is here very appropriate.

But walked therein.—Rather, therewith they walked; the reading of the LXX. (Alex.), Vulg., and Targum being probably correct. It is the conduct of the nation that is being described.

And there remained the grove also in Samaria.—Rather, and moreover the Asherah stood (i.e., was set up) in Samaria. The Asherah was the sacred tree, so often depicted in Assyrian art. It symbolised the productive principle of nature, and was sacred to Ashtoreth. With the return of peace, and the renewal of prosperity, luxury also soon reappeared, and the idolatriy that specially countenanced it filled up its head again. (See the Note on chap. xvii. 16.)

Neither did he leave of the people to Jehoahaz.—Rather, For he had not left to Jehoahaz (any) people (i.e., war folk; 1 Kings xvi. 15). The subject appears to be Jehovah. The narrative returns, after the long parenthesis, to the statement of verse 4, “And Jehoahaz besought Jehovah (for he had not left, &c.).” Or we might render, “one had not left,” i.e., “there was not left.”

Fifty horsemen, and ten chariots.—The mention of so small a number appears to indicate the result of the Israelite losses in some great battle, or in successive engagements. The destruction of these particular kinds of forces was equivalent to complete disarmament, and rendered further resistance hopeless, as the Syrians were especially strong in chariots and horsemen. (See Note on chap. ii. 12.)

Had made them like the dust by threshing.—Rather, and set them like the dust to trample on or tread under foot—Israel, when the conqueror.

Comp. 2 Sam. xxii. 43; Isa. x. 6.)

And his might.—Or, process. The reference is to his wars with the Syrians.

Hand of the Syrians: and the children of Israel dwelt in their tents, as before-time. (6) Nevertheless they departed not from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who made Israel sin, but walked therein: and there remained the grove also in Samaria. (7) Neither did he leave of the people to Jehoahaz but fifty horsemen, and ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen; for the king of Syria had destroyed them, and had made them like the dust by threshing. (8) Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, and all that he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? Seventeen years.—This agrees with chap. xiv. 1. (2) And he did.—See Notes on chap. iii. 3. (3) He delivered them into the hand of Hazael.—Comp. chap. x. 32, seq. The meaning is that Jehovah allowed Israel to be defeated in successive encounters with the Syrian forces, and to suffer loss of territory, but not total subjugation. According to the Assyrian data, Shalmaneser warred with Hazael in 842 B.C., and again in 839 B.C. (See Notes on chap. xiv. 15, ix. 2.) All their days.—Rather, all the days, i.e., continually (not all the days of Jehoahaz, nor of Hazael and Ben-hadad). The phrase is an indefinite designation of a long period of disaster. (4) Besought.—Literally, stroked the face of; a metaphor which occurs in Exod. xxxii. 11; 1 Kings xiii. 6. And the Lord hearkened unto him.—Not, however, immediately. (See verse 7.) The Syrian invasions, which began under Jehu, were renewed again and again throughout the reign of Jehoahaz (verse 22), until the tide of conquest began to turn in the time of Joash (verse 15), whose incomplete victories (verses 17, 19, 25) were followed up by the permanent successes of his son Joash (verse 25—28). The parenthesis marked in verse 5 really begins, therefore, with the words, “And the Lord hearkened”; the historian added it by way of pointing out that although the prayer of Jehoahaz did not meet with immediate response, it was not ultimately ineffectual. For he saw the oppression.—Comp. Exod. iii. 7; Deut. xxvi. 7. The king of Syria.—Intentionally general, so as to include both Hazael and Ben-hadad III., his son (verse 24). A saviour.—Jeroboam II., the grandson of Jehoahaz, a vigorous and successful sovereign, of whom it is said that Jehovah “saved” Israel by his hand (chap. xiv. 27). They went out from under the hand.—Referring to the oppressive supremacy of Syria. From these words, and from those of verse 22, it would appear that Israel was tributary to Syria during some part of this period. Dwelt in their tents.—i.e., in the open country. In times of war they were obliged to take refuge in strongholds and fortified cities. As before time.—See Note on 1 Chron. xi. 2; Gen. xxxi. 2. (6) Nevertheless they departed not.—The restoration of Divine favour did not issue in the abolition of the irregular worship introduced by Jeroboam I. as the state religion of the northern kingdom. This is written, of course, from the point of view of the Jewish editor of Kings, who lived long after the events of which he is writing in the period of the exile. It does not appear from the history of Elijah and Elisha, incorporated in his work, that either of those great prophets ever protested against the worship established at Bethel and Dan. The house of Jeroboam.—Some MSS., the Syrians, Targum, and Arabic omit “house.” But the specification of the dynasty is here very appropriate. But walked therein.—Rather, therewith they walked; the reading of the LXX. (Alex.), Vulg., and Targum being probably correct. It is the conduct of the nation that is being described. 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Jehoash Reigns over Israel.  
II. KINGS, XIII.

Elisha’s Last Prophecy.

(9) And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers; and they buried him in Samaria: and Joash his son reigned in his stead.

(10) In the thirty and seventh year of Joash king of Judah began Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned sixteen years.

(11) And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD; he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin: but he walked therein.  

(12) And the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, and his might wherewith he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?  

(13) And Joash slept with his fathers; and Jeroboam sat upon his throne: and Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

(14) Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.  

(15) And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows. And he took unto him bow and arrows.  

(16) And he said to the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground. And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows. And he put his hand upon the bow. And he put his hands upon the king’s hands.  

(17) And he said, Open the window eastward. And he opened it. Then Elisha said, Shoot. And he shot. And he said, The arrow of the Lord’s deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them.

(18) And he said, Take the arrows. And he took them. And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground.
Death of Elisha

II. KINGS, XIII.

And he smote thrice, and stayed. (19) And the man of God was wroth with him, and, said, Thou shouldst have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it; whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.

(20) And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year. (21) And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet.

(22) But Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. (23) And the LORD was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet. (24) So Hazael king of Syria died; and Ben-hadad his son reigned in his stead. (25) And Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz . . .

(19) The man of God was wroth with him.—Because his present want of zeal augured a like deficiency in prosecuting the war hereafter. The natural irritability of the sick man may also have had something to do with it. Thenius well remarks on the manifestly historical character of the entire scene. It may be added, to appreciate it fully, we must remember that belákat, or soothsaying by means of arrows, was a practice of unknown antiquity in the Semitic world. Shooting an arrow, and observing where and how it fell, was one method of trying to fathom the secrets of that Power which overrules events and foreknows the future. The proceedings of David and Jonathan, recorded in 1 Sam. xx. 35, seq., appear to have been an instance of this sort of divination, which in principle is quite analogous to casting lots, a practice so familiar to readers of the Bible. The second process—that described in verse 18—seems equally to have depended upon chance, according to modern ideas. The prophet left it to the spontaneous impulse of the king to determine the number of strokes; because he believed that the result, whatever it was, would betoken the purpose of Jehovah. “The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord” (Prov. xvi. 33). Elisha’s anger was the natural anger of the man and the patriot, disappointed at the result of a divination from which he had hoped greater things. In conclusion, it cannot be too often or too forcibly urged upon students of the true religion that the essential differences which isolate it from all imperfect or retrograde systems are to be found not so much in matters of outward organisation, form, and ritual, such as priest-hoods and sacrifices, prophets and modes of divination, which were pretty much the same everywhere in Semitic antiquity; but in the inward spirit and substance of its teaching, in the vital truths which it handed on through successive ages, and, above all, in its steady progress from lower to higher conceptions of the Divine character and purposes, and of the right relations of man to God and his fellow-creatures.

(20) And the bands of the Moabites invaded.—Rather, And troops of Moabites used to invade. They took advantage of the weakened condition of Israel to revenge the devastation of their country described in chap. iii. 25.

At the coming in of the year.—So the Targum and the LXX. The Syriac, Vulg., and Arabic understand, “in that (or, ‘the same’) year.” The preposition bêt has probably fallen out of the Hebrew text: read, bêt shânah, “when the year came in”—i.e., in the spring. (Comp. 2 Sam. xi. 1.)

(21) As they were burying.—They—i.e., a party of Israelites. The story is told with vivid definiteness.

A band.—Rather, the troop. The particular troop of Moabites which happened to be making an inroad at the time.

They cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha.—Comp. Mark xvi. 3, 4. In this case, we must suppose that the tomb was more easily opened, as the action was obviously done in haste.

And when the man was let down, and touched the bones.—Rather, and they departed. And the man touched the bones. The order of words in the original, as well as the sense, supports old Houbigant’s conjecture. If the meaning were, “and the man went and touched,” the subject in the Hebrew would have followed the first verb, not the second. Moreover, the verb would hardly have been bêtak.

He revived.—Literally, and he lived. Thenius thinks that the sacred writer regarded this miracle as a pledge of the fulfilment of Elisha’s promise to Joash. Bähr says: “Elisha died and was buried, like all other men, but even in death and in the grave he is avouched to be the prophet and servant of God.” Dante’s warning may not be out of place here:

“O voi che avete g’interlacci santi,
Minuo la dottrina, che s’accede
Sotto il velame degli versi strani.”

Inf. ix. 61, sqq.

(22) But Hazael . . . oppressed.—Rather, Now Hazael . . . had oppressed. The narrative returns to verse 3.

And the Lord was gracious.—The verse is a remark of the compiler’s, as is evident from the style, the reference to the Covenant, and the expression “as yet,” or rather, until now—i.e., the day when he was writing, and when the northern kingdom had finally perished.

Had respect.—Turned.

(23) Ben-hadad—III., not mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions. His reign synchronises with that of Samas-Rimmon in Assyria, who made no expeditions to the West (B.C. 825—812). The name Ben-hadad does not, of course, signify any connection with the dynasty overthrown by Hazael. It was a Divine title. (Comp. Note on chap. vi. 24.)

Ben-hadad was probably a feeble sovereign than Hazael. The rule, “Fortes creantur fortibus et bonis,” is perhaps as often contradicted as corroborated by actual experience.

(24) The cities, which he had taken—i.e., which Hazael had taken. The cities referred to must have
Amaziah Reigns, and

II. KINGS, XIV.

Slares his Father's Murderers.

1 took again out of the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael the cities, which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war. Three times did Joash beat him, and recovered the cities of Israel.

CHAPTER XIV.—(1) In the second year of Joash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel, reigned 2 Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah. (2) He was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. (3) And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, yet not like David his father: he did according to all things as Joash his father did. (4) Howbeit the high places were not taken away: as yet the people did sacrifice upon the high places. (5) But the children of the murderers he slew not: according unto that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the LORD commanded, saying, 'The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers; but every man shall be put to death for his own sin. (6) He slew of Edom in the valley of salt ten thousand, and took 2 Selah by war, and called the name of it Joktheel unto this day.

(8) Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash, the son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, Come, let us look one another in the face. (9) And

Ten thousand.—The number slain in one conflict.
Selah.—Heb., the Selah, i.e., the crag. The Hebrew name of the famous rock-hewn town of Petra.
By war.—Or, in the battle. After the decisive engagement, Amaziah's troops forced their way through the narrow defile leading to the Edomite capital, probably meeting no great resistance.
Joktheel.—A town of Judah bore this name (Josh. xv. 39). The name probably means God's rock, referring to the wonderful strength of the natural position of the town. Others explain, subjugated of God.
Unto this day—i.e., unto the time when the original document was written, from which the writer derived this notice.
The reduction of the capital implies that of the country. The defeat of Jehoram (chap. viii. 20, seq.) was thus avenged. Chronicles gives a more detailed account of the re-conquest of Edom, and its consequences (2 Chron. xxv. 5—10). It is there related that Amaziah hired a large force of mercenaries from the northern kingdom, but sent them home again at the bidding of a prophet. On their way back they attacked and plundered certain of the cities of Judah. The fall of Selah was followed by a massacre of captives. The gods of Edom, which Amaziah carried off, proved a snare to him. (See the Notes on the passage.)
Then.—After the reduction of Edom. The more extended narrative which follows is plainly taken from a different source than that of the brief extract preceding it.
Come, let us look one another in the face. —A challenge to battle, the ground of which might be found in the outrages committed by the Israelite mercenaries on their homeward march. It appears likely, however, that Amaziah, intoxicated by his recent success, aimed at nothing less than the recovery of the Ten Tribes for the house of David. So Josephus (Ant. ix. 9, § 2), who gives what purport to be the letters which passed between the two kings on this occasion.

(9) The thistle.—Or bramble or brier. (Comp. Job xxxi. 41; Cant. ii. 2.) The LXX. and Vulg. render "thistle;" the Syriac, "blackthorn" (Prunus silvestris).
Jehoash, the king of Israel, sent to Amaziah, king of Judah, saying, 'The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife; and there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle. (10) Thou hast indeed smitten Edom, and thine heart hath lifted thee up; glory of this, and tarry at home; for why shouldst thou meddle to thy hurt, that thou shouldst fall, even thou, and Judah with thee? (11) But Amaziah would not hear. Therefore Jehoash king of Israel went up; and he and Amaziah king of Judah looked one another in the face at Beth-shemesh, which belongeth to Judah. (12) And Judah was put to the worse before Israel; and they fled every man to their tents. (13) And Jehoash king of Israel took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash the son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh, and came to Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of Ephraim unto the corner gate, four hundred cubits. (14) And he took all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king’s house, and hostages, and returned to Samaria.

(15) Now the rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did, and his might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?
And Jehoash slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel; and Jeroboam his son reigned in his stead.

And Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah lived after the death of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel fifteen years. (12) The rest of the acts of Amaziah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

Now they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem: and he fled to Lachish; but they sent after him to Lachish, and slew him there.

And they brought him upon horses: and he was buried at Jerusalem with his fathers in the city of David.

And all the people of Judah took Amaziah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king instead of his father Amaziah. (13) He built Elath, and restored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers.

In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel began to reign in Samaria, and reigned forty and one years. (14) And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin. (15) He restored the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain, according to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his ser-

position in the document from which he derived the entire section, verses 8—17; a document which was not the same as that upon which chap. xiii. depends, as appears from the differences of language in the two passages.

The two verses are almost necessary here as a suitable introduction of the statement of verse 17, that Amaziah survived Jehoash by fifteen years.

Fifteen years.—He came to the throne in the second year of Jehoash, who reigned sixteen years (chap. xiii. 10), and reigned twenty-nine years (verse 2). The different data are thus self-consistent. Jehoash appears to have died very soon after his victory—perhaps in the following year.

Now... but.—And... and... 

They made a conspiracy.—The fact that no individual conspirators are mentioned appears to indicate that Amaziah's death was the result of a general disaffection; and this inference is strengthened by the other details of the record. Thenius supposes that he had incensed the army in particular by some special act. Probably his foolish and ill-fated enterprise against Israel had something to do with it.

Lachish.—Now Um Lakis. Of old it was a strong fortress. (Comp. 2 Chron. xi. 9; chap. xviii. 14, xix. 8.) Amaziah's flight thither seems to indicate either a popular rising in Jerusalem, or a military revolt.

They sent after him to Lachish.—This, too, may point to a military outbreak.

They brought him on horses.—Rather, they carried him upon the horses—i.e., perhaps in the royal chariot wherein he had fled from Jerusalem. Or, perhaps, the corpse was literally carried on horseback by the regicides.

They took.—The expression seems to imply that Azariah was not the eldest son. As Amaziah was fifty-nine years old at his death he probably had sons older than sixteen. Azariah was therefore chosen as a popular, or perhaps military, favourite.

Azariah.—See Note on 2 Chron. xxvi. 1. Thenius thinks the soldiery gave Azariah the name of Uzziah. At all events, the king may have taken a new name on his accession, though which of the two it was we cannot say. (Comp. chap. xxiv. 17.) Sennacherib on investigating Esarhaddon with sovereignty named him Ashur-e-kil-makan-pal.

He built Elath.—The pronoun is emphatic; he, in contrast with his father. "Built," either rebuilt or fortified. The verse is in close connection with the preceding narrative. Amaziah perhaps had not vigorously prosecuted the conquest of Edom, having been greatly weakened by his defeat in the struggle with Jehoash. He may even have suffered some further losses at the hands of the Edomites; and this, as Thenius supposes, may have led to the conspiracy which brought about his death and the accession of his son. The warlike youth Uzziah took the field at once, and pushed his victorious arms to the southern extremity of Edom, the port of Elath (chap. ix. 26), and thus restored the state of things which had existed under Solomon and Jehoshaphat.

After that the king slept—i.e., immediately after the murder of Amaziah. Thenius explains the verse with most success, but this clause is still somewhat surprising.


Reigned forty and one years.—According to the statement of this verse, Jeroboam reigned fourteen years concurrently with Amaziah, who reigned altogether twenty-nine years (verse 2); and thirty-seven years concurrently with Azariah (chap. xv. 8), so that he reigned altogether not forty-one but fifty-one years. (The discrepancy originated in a confusion of the Hebrew letters נ, fifty-one, with נ, forty-one.)

He restored.—Rather, He it was who restored the border, i.e., he wrested out of the hands of the Syrians the territory they had taken from Israel.

From the entering of Hamath—i.e., from the point where the territory of Hamath began. This was the originally determined boundary of Israel on the north (comp. Num. xiii. 21, xxxiv. 8; Josh. xiii. 5), and the prophet Ezekiel specifies it as the future limit (Ezek. xlvii. 16, xlviii. 1). Israel's territory first reached this limit under Solomon, who conquered a portion of the Hamathite domains (2 Chron. viii. 3, 4).
The sea of the plain—i.e., the Dead Sea (Num. iii. 17, iv. 49; Josh. iii. 16). The whole length of the Dead Sea is included (comp. Amos vi. 14; where virtually the same limits are specified), and the country beyond Jordan. (Comp. Note on 1 Chron. v. 17.)

Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet.—Comp. Jonah i. 1. Ewald remarks that the activity of this prophet must have occupied a very large field, as tradition connects him with Nineveh. Hitzig and Knobel recognize the prophecy referred to here in Isa. xv., xvi. There is no difficulty in the supposition that Isaiah has “adopted and ratified the work of an earlier prophet,” as Jeremiah has so often done. (See Cheyne’s Isaiah, vol. i., p. 93.) But it is easier to prove that these chapters are not Isaiah’s, than that they belong to Jonah.

Gath-hepher.—Josh. xix. 13. The present Meshed, not far north of Nazareth.


For there was . . . left.—Comp. Note on 1 Kings xiv. 10.

Said not.—By any prophet.

Blot out the name.—The figure is taken from blotting out writing. (Comp. Num. v. 23.) The Hebrews used inks that soon faded, and could easily be wiped off the parchment. (Hence the partial obliteration of words and letters which is one of the causes of textual corruption.)

How he recovered Damascus, and Hamath.—Jeroboam II. was probably contemporary with Ramman-nirari, king of Assyria (B.C. 812—783). This king has recorded his exaction of tribute from Tyre and Sidon, “the land of Omri” (i.e., Israel), Edom, and Philistia; and a siege of Damascus, followed by the submission of Mar’i, its king, and the spoiling of his palace. The prostration of his enemy thus accounts for the permanent success of Jeroboam, who was himself a vassal of Assyria.

He recovered.—This verb was rendered “he restored” in verse 25, and that is the meaning here.

Damascus and Hamath.—Not the entire states but bounded, which were powerful independent communities, but portions of their territory, which had belonged to Israel in the days of Solomon. (See Note on 2 Chron. viii. 3, 4.)

Which belonged to Judah.—This is really an epithet restrictive of the phrase, “Damascus and Hamath,” the sense being, “Judahian Damascus and Hamath.” (Comp. the Note on chap. xv. 1.)

For Israel.—Heb., in Israel. The sense is obscure; but the particle “in” appears to refer to the re-incorporation of the Damascus and Hamathite districts with Israel. Ewald would cancel “which belonged to Judah,” and read “to Israel” (so the Syriac and Arabic. But the LXX., Vulg., and Targum support the existing text.) Others explain: “He restored Damascus and Hamath to Judah (i.e., to the theocratic people) through Israel (i.e., the northern kingdom, to which the recovered districts were actually annexed).” No explanation, however, is really satisfactory. It may be that by an oversight the Judcean editor wrote “to Judah,” instead of “to Israel,” and that some scribe added a marginal note “in Israel,” which afterwards crept into the text. It is curious to find certain districts of Hamath leagued with Azariah, king of Judah, against Tiglath Pileser. (See Note on chap. xv. 1.)

Even with the kings of Israel.—Probably some words have fallen out, and the original text was, “and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.” (Comp. verse 16.) The Syriac and Arabic have, “and was buried.”

CHAPTER XV.—(1) In the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel began Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah to reign. (2) Sixteen years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned two and fifty years in Jerusalem. And his mother’s name was...
Azariah Smitten with Leprosy.

II. KINGS, XV.
The Reign of Zachariah.

Jecholiah of Jerusalem. (3) And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father Amaziah had done; (4) save that the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burnt incense still on the high places.

(5) And the Lord smote the king, so that he was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house. And Jotham the king's son was over the house, judging the people of the land.

(6) And the rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? (7) So Azariah slept with his fathers; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.

(8) In the thirty and eighth year of Azariah king of Judah did Zachariah the son of Jeroboam reign over Israel in Samaria six months. (9) And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, as his fathers had done: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin. (10) And Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and smote him before the people, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.

(11) And the rest of the acts of Zachariah, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. (12) This was the word of the Lord which he spake unto Jotham, saying, Thy sons shall sit on the throne of Israel unto the fourth generation. And so it came to pass.

(13) Shallum the son of Jabesh began to reign in the nine and thirtieth year of Uzziah king of Judah; and he reigned a full month in Samaria.

(14) For Menahem the son of Gadi went...
up from Tirzah, and came to Samaria, and smote Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria, and slew him, and reigned in his stead.

(15) And the rest of the acts of Shallum, and his conspiracy which he made, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

(16) Then Menahem smote Tiphsah, and all that were therein, and the coasts thereof from Tirzah: because they opened not to him, therefore he smote it; and all the women therein that were with child he ripped up.

(17) In the ninth and thirtieth year of Azariah king of Judah began Menahem the son of Gadi to reign over Israel, and reigned ten years in Samaria. (18) And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord: he departed not all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin. (19) And the king of Assyria came against the land: and Menahem gave Pul a tribute of a thousand talents of silver.

Menahem.—Tiglath Pileser II. records in his annals that in his eighth regnal year (i.e., B.C. 738) he took tribute of “Ra'qunnu (Rezin) the Damascene, and Monshimmî Samerînâ”—i.e., Menahem the Sama- ritan.

Gadi.—Or, a Gaddite.

Went up from Tirzah.—Menahem was Zachariah's general, who at the time was quartered with the troops at Tirzah, near Samaria (1 Kings xiv. 17). On the news of the murder of Zachariah, Menahem marched to the capital. The month of Shallum's reign was probably taken up with preparations for hostilities on both sides. A battle at Samaria decided matters (Josephus).

Perhaps, however, Menahem simply entered Samaria with a part of his forces.

(16) Then.—After slaying Shallum, and seizing the supreme power.

Tiphsah.—The name means 'ford, and elsewhere denotes the well-known Tappasacus on the Euphrates (1 Kings iv. 24). Here, however, an Israelite city in the neighbourhood of Tirzah is obviously intended. The course of events was apparently this: after slaying Shallum, Menahem returned to Tirzah, and set out thence at the head of his entire army to bring the rest of the country to acknowledge him as king. Tiphsah resisting his claims, he made an example of it which proved to other Babylonian princes in this year amongst them Chinzeros of Ammukkan. (5) Chinzeros became king of Babylon in 731 B.C. according to the canon, and, in fact, along with (or, under) a king of the name of Porus, the hypothesis that the vanished king of Ammukkan of the same name was entrusted by Tiglath Pileser with the vassal-kingship of Babylon is suggested at once by the coincidence of the chronological data. (7) In the year 727–726 B.C. a change of government took place in Assyria in consequence of the death of Tiglath Pileser, and in Babylonia in consequence of the death of Porus. (8) No king appears in the Assyrian lists by a name like Pul, which is anomalous as a royal designation; we can only identify Pul with some other name in the lists, and, on historical grounds, with Tiglath Pileser only. (9) Pul and Poros are forms of the same name (comp. Bēbiru for Bēbīlu in Persian inscriptions). (10) From all this, the conclusion is inevitable that Pul and Poros, Pul and Tiglath Pileser, are one and the same person.

Came against the land.—Rather, came upon the land (Isa. x. 28; Judges xviii. 27). The meaning here is, occupied it.

A thousand talents of silver.—About £375,000.
Pekahiah Reigns,

II. KINGS, XV.

and is Slain by Remaliah.

Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin. (20) But Pekah the son of Remaliah, a captain of his, conspired against him, and smote him in Samaria, in the palace of the king's house, with Argob and Arieh, and with fifty men of the Gileadites: and he killed him, and reigned in his room. (25) And the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

In the two and fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned twenty years. (26) And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.

In the days of Pekah king of pretenders as a vassal of Assyria. (Comp. Hosea v. 13, vii. 11, viii. 9.) Tiglath Pileser had first reduced Rezin king of Syria-Damascus, which was probably much weakened by the victories of Jeroboam II. (See Note on verse 14.)

Exacted.—Literally, caused to go out; a word already used in the sense of to lay out, expend money (chap. xii. 12). Probably, therefore, laid (vegypsisat), i.e., imposed, should be read here (Gen. xxxi. 17).

Of.—Heb. upon.
The mighty men of wealth.—A later use of the Hebrew phrase, which, in older parlance, means “the heroes of the host” ( Judges vi. 12; 1 Sam. ix. 1).

Fifty shekels.—The talent of silver was worth 3,000 shekels. The payment of 1,000 talents (3,000,000 shekels) by Menahem implies a total of 60,000 persons able to contribute. Fifty shekels were one maneh (Assyrian, manu; Greek, μων, and Latin, mina). There was no great Temple treasury to draw from in the northern kingdom, and any palace hoards would have disappeared in the confusions attending the frequent revolutions of the time.

There.—Or, then (Ps. xiv. 5).

The Reign of Pekahiah
(Heb., Pekahyah).

In the fiftieth year.—The forty-ninth, if verse seventeen were exact.

But . . . a captain of his.—And . . . his adjutant (or knight, chap. vii. 2).
The palace of the king's house.—The same expression occurred in 1 Kings xvi. 18. The word armón, rendered “palace,” is usually explained as meaning citadel or keep, from a root meaning to be high. (Comp. § 4 & § 5 in Greek.) Ewald makes it the harem, which, as the innermost and most strongly-guarded part of an Oriental palace, is probably meant here. Thither Pekahiah had fled for refuge before the conspirators.

With Argob and Arieh.—Pekah slew these two persons, probably officers of the royal guard, who stood by their master, as well as the king himself.

The peculiar names are an indication of the historical character of the account. Argob suggests that the person who bore this name was a native of the district of Bashan so designated (1 Kings iv. 13); Arieh (“lion”), like our own Coeur-de-Lion, betokens strength and bravery. (Comp. 1 Chron. xii. 8, “The Gadites, whose faces were as the faces of lions.”)

And with him fifty men of the Gileadites. —Or, and with him were fifty, &c. Pekah was supported by fifty soldiers, probably of the royal guard. Menahem himself was of Gadite origin (verse 17), and so belonged to Gilead. He would therefore be likely to recruit his body-guard from among the Gileadites, who were always famous for their prowess. (Comp. Josh. xvii. 1; Judges xi. 1; 1 Chron. xxvi. 31.) The two names Argob and Arieh agree with this supposition. The LXX. reads, in place of “the Gileadites,” ἀρματοσφαγες, of the four hundred, which reminds us of David's six hundred Gibborim (2 Sam. xv. 18).

Josephus accounts for the short reign of Pekahiah by the statement that he imitated the cruelty of his father.

The Reign of Pekah, Son of Remaliah, in Samaria.

Reigned twenty years.—This does not agree with the duration assigned to the reign of Jotham (verse 33), and the year assigned as the beginning of Hoshea's reign (chap. xvi. 1). For, according to verse 32, Pekah had reigned about two years when Jotham succeeded in Judah, and Jotham reigned sixteen years; and, according to chap. xvi. 1, Pekah was succeeded by Hoshea in the twelfth year of Jotham's successor, Ahaz. These data make the duration of Pekah's reign from twenty-eight to thirty years. We must, therefore, either assume, with Theueni, that the numeral sign for 30 (2) has been corrupted into 20 (2) or, with Ewald, that “and nine” has been accidentally omitted after “twenty.”

Tiglath-pileser. —This Assyrian sovereign, who reigned from 745 to 727 B.C., is called in his own inscriptions, Tukulti- (or Tuklat) 'ab'al-Esarra, which Schrader renders, “my trust is Adar”—literally, Trust is the son of the temple of Barra. (See Note on 1
The Reign of Jotham in Judah.

Israel Invaded by Tiglath-pileser.

II. KINGS, XV.

Israel came Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maachah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria. (30) And Hoshea the son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and smote him, and slew him, and reigned in his stead, in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah. (31) And the rest of the acts of Pekah, and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. (32) In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah king of Israel began *Jotham the son of Uzziah king of Judah to reign. (33) Five and twenty years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jerusha, the daughter of Zadok. (34) And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord: he did according to all that his father Uzziah had done. (35) Howbeit the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burned incense still in the high places. He built the higher gate of the house of the Lord. (36) Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? (37) In those days the Lord began to send against Judah Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah. (38) And Jotham slept with his fathers, and Hoshea began to reign in his stead. (39) And the rest of the acts of Jotham are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?
and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XVI.—(1) In the seventeenth year of Pekah the son of Remaliah Ahaz the son of Jotham king of Judah began to reign. (2) Twenty years old was Ahaz when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem, and did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord his God, like David his father. (3) But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, yea, and made his son to pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel. (4) And he sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.

(5) Then Rezin king of Syria and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel came up to Jerusalem to war: and they besieged Ahaz, but could not overcome him. (6) At that time Rezin king of the last of a series of strong and generally successful princes, had died at a critical moment, when Pekah and Rezin were maturing their plans against Israel’s kingdom. The opposing parties in northern Israel suspended their feuds to make common cause against Judah (Isa. ix. 21), and the proud inhabitants of Samaria hoped by this policy to more than restore the prestige forfeited in previous years of calamity (Isa. ix. 9, 10). At the same time the Syrians began to operate on the eastern dependencies of Judah, their aim being to possess themselves of the harbour of Elath on the Red Sea, while the Phœlæs attacked the Judeans in the rear, and ravaged the fertile lowlands (Isa. ix. 12, verse 6). A heavy and sudden disaster had already fallen on the Judean army, a defeat in which ‘head and tail, palm-branch and rush’ had been mown down in indiscriminate slaughter (Isa. ix. 14). Ahaz was no fit leader in so critical a time; his character was petulant and childish, his policy was dictated in the harem (Isa. iii. 12). Nor was the internal order of the state calculated to inspire confidence. Wealth, indeed, had greatly accumulated in the preceding time of prosperity, but its distribution had been such that it weakened rather than added strength to the nation. The rich nobles were steeped in sensual luxury, the court was full of gallantry, feminine extravagance and vanity gave the tone to aristocratic society (Isa. v. 11, iii. 16; comp. iii. 12, iv. 4), which, like the noblesse of France on the eve of the Revolution, was absorbed in gaiety and pleasure, while the masses were ground down by oppression, and the cry of their distress filled the land (Isa. iii. 15, v. 7).—Prof. Robertson Smith.

They besieged Ahaz. — The allies wanted to compel Judah to join them in their attempt to throw off the burdensome yoke of Assyria, imposed in 738 B.C. (chap. xv. 19); and thought the best way to secure this was to dethrone the dynasty of David, and set up a creature of their own—‘ the son of Tabeal’ (Isa. vii. 6).

Could not overcome him. — Literally, they were not able to war, as in Isa. vii. 2. The allies were not strong enough to storm the city, which had been strongly fortified by Uzziah and Jotham (2 Chron. xxvi. 9, xxvii. 3). (6) At that time. — Bähr regards this verse as a parenthesis, so that verse 7 is the strict continuation of verse 5, and ‘ At that time’ simply assigns this war as theepoch when Judah lost its only harbour and chief emporium—a grave blow to the national prosperity. It is perhaps impossible to weave the various data of Isaiah, Kings, and Chronicles into a single narrative which should be free from all objection. But it seems probable that, after the successes recorded in 2 Chron. xxviii. 5, seq., the confederates advanced upon Jeru-
Syria recovered Elath to Syria, and

drave the Jews from Elath: and the

Syrians came to Elath, and dwelt there

unto this day. (7) So Ahaz sent mes-

senders to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria,

saying, I am thy servant and thy son:

come up, and save me out of the

hand of the king of Syria, and out of the

hand of the king of Israel, which rise up

against me. (8) And Ahaz took the silver

and gold that was found in the house of

the LORD, and in the treasures of the

king's house, and sent it for a present to

the king of Assyria. (9) And the king of

Assyria hearkened unto him: for the

king of Assyria went up against 1 Dam-

ascus, and took it, and carried the

people of it captive to Kir, and slew

Rezin.

(10) And king Ahaz went to Damascus
to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria,

and saw an altar that was at Damascus:

and king Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest

the fashion of the altar, and the pattern

malaka of Edom, Hanun of Gaza, and other princes.

This probably relates to the expedition of 734 B.C.,
in which year, therefore, Ahaz (Jehoahaz) must have put
himself under the protection of Assyria (Schrader,
K.A.T., p. 257 seq.).

(6) Went up against Damascus, and took it.

—We learn from the inscription that Damascus stood

a two years' siege. (The Eponym-list makes Tiglath

Pileser march against Damascus for two successive

years, namely 733 and 732 B.C.)

Carried the people of it captive to Kir.—

(Comp. Amos i. 5, ix. 7.) The name Kir is not found

in the fragmentary remains of the annals of Tiglath

Pileser. Schrader (p. 261 seq.) gives a mutilated in-

scription, apparently relating to the fall of Damascus.

And slew Rezin.—Sir H. Rawlinson found this

fact recorded on a tablet of Tiglath Pileser’s, since un-

fortunately lost. In the inscription just referred to

Tiglath says: “I entered the gate of his city; his

chief officers alive I took, and on stakes I caused to

lift them up” (i.e. impaled them).

Kir was the aboriginal home of the Arameans,

according to Amos ix. 7. It is mentioned along with

Elam in Isa. xxii. 6. “It has been generally identi-

fied with the district by the river Cyrus (the modern

Georgia). But, besides the linguistic objections pointed

out by Delitzsch (Qir cannot be equivalent to Kir), it

appears that the Assyrian empire never extended to the

Cyrus. We must, therefore, consider Kir to be a part

of Mesopotamia.” (Cheyne.)

(10) Ahaz went to Damascus, to meet Tig-
lath-pileser.—The great king appears to have held

his court there after the capture of the city, and to

have summoned the vassal princes of Palestine thither
to do him homage in person before his departure. (See
the Note on verse 8.)

And saw an altar.—Rather, and he saw the

altar, namely, that of the principal Temple. Upon the

account which follows Prof. Robertson Smith well re-

marks that the frivolous character of Ahaz “was so

little capable of appreciating the dangers involved in

his new obligations, that he returned to Jerusalem with

his head full of the artistic and religious curiosities he

had seen on his journey. In a national crisis of the

first magnitude he found no more pressing concern

than the erection of a new altar in the Temple on a

pattern brought from Damascus. The sundial of

Ahaz (2 Kings xxi. 11), and an erection on the roof of

the Temple, with altars apparently designed for the

worship of the host of heaven (2 Kings xxiii. 12), were

works equally characteristic of the trifling and super-

stitious virtuosi, who fancied that the introduction of

a few foreign novelties gave lustre to a reign which had

fooled away the independence of Judah, and sought a
The morning burnt offering, and the evening meat offering.—Not that there was no meat offering in the morning, and no burnt offering in the evening. (See Exod. xxix. 38—42; Num. xxviii. 3—8.) The morning meat offering is implied in the mention of the burnt offering, because no burnt offering was offered without one (Num. vii. 87, xv. 2—12). On the other hand, the evening meat offering was the only part of the evening sacrifice which the congregation could stay out, for the burnt offering had to burn all the night through (Lev. vi. 9).

The brasen altar.—The contrast seems to imply that the new altar was of a different material.

Shall be for me to enquire by—i.e., for consulting God. So Rashi. Others (as Keil): “I will think about what to do with it.” Perhaps it is simply, “It shall be for me to look at,” of the other altar. (Comp. Ps. xxvii. 4.)

The great altar—i.e., as we say, “the high altar,” the new Syrian one. So the Targum renders. But all the other versions: “The king approached to the altar, and the house of Jehovah, and put it thereon.” (Comp. 1 Kings xii. 32, 33.)

The king approached to the altar, and offered thereon. (ll) And Urijah the priest built an altar according to all that king Ahaz had sent from Damascus: so Urijah the priest made it against king Ahaz came from Damascus. (12) And when the king was come from Damascus, the king saw the altar: and the king approached to the altar, and offered thereon. (13) And he burnt his burnt offering and his meat offering, and poured his drink offering, and sprinkled the blood of his peace offerings, upon the altar. (14) And he brought also the brasen altar, which was before the Lord, from the forefront of the house, from between the altar and the house of the Lord, and put it on the north side of the altar. (15) And king Ahaz commanded Urijah the priest, saying, Upon the great altar burn the morning burnt offering, and the evening meat offering, and the king’s burnt sacrifice, and his meat offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land, and their meat offering, and their drink offerings; and sprinkle upon it all the blood of the burnt offering, and all the blood of the sacrifice: and the brasen altar shall be for me to enquire by. (16) Thus did Urijah the priest, according to all that king Ahaz commanded. (17) And king Ahaz cut off the borders of the bases, and removed the laver from off them; and took down the sea from off the brasen oxen that were under it, and put it upon a pave-

momentary deliverance by accepting a service the burden of which was fast becoming intolerable” (Proph. of Israel, p. 251).

Urijah the priest—i.e., the high priest, who appears to be identical with the “credible witness” of Isa. viii. 2. His high official position would secure Urijah’s credit as a witness.

Fashion . . . pattern . . . workmanship.—Those terms indicate that the king’s interest in the matter was artistic rather than religious.

The king approached to the altar, and offered thereon.—So the Targum renders. But all the other versions: “The king approached to the altar, and went up thereon.” (Comp. 1 Kings xii. 32, 33.) It thus appears that Ahaz, like Uzziah, personally exercised the priestly function of sacrifice.

And he burnt his burnt offering . . .—The verse describes the thank-offering of Ahaz for his last deliverance from deadly peril. From the present narrative it does not appear but that he offered it to Jehovah. The account in 2 Chron. xxviii. 23 must be understood to refer to other sacrifices instituted by Ahaz, who, like most of his contemporaries, thought the traditional worship of Jehovah not incompatible with the cultus of foreign deities. (Comp. verses 3, 4.)

And he brought also the brasen altar . . .—Literally, And as for the brasen altar, he brought it near (to the new one), away from the front of the house, to wit, from between the (new) altar, and the house of Jehovah; and put it at the side of the (new) altar northward. The brasen altar used to stand “before the Lord,” i.e., in the middle of the court of the priests, and in front of the Temple proper. The verse seems to imply that Urijah had pushed it forward nearer to the sanctuary, and set the new Syrian altar in its place. Ahaz, not satisfied with this arrangement, which appeared to confer a kind of precedence on the old altar, drew it back again, and fixed it on the north side of his new altar.

The great altar—i.e., as we say, “the high altar,” the new Syrian one. So the high priest is sometimes called “the great priest” (kohen haippadol). Ahaz orders that the daily national sacrifices, the royal offerings, and those of private individuals, shall all be offered at the new altar.
ment of stones. (38) And the covert for the sabbath that they had built in the house, and the king's entry without, turned he from the house of the Lord for the king of Assyria.

(39) Now the rest of the acts of Ahaz which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? (40) And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XVII.—(1) In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah began

The brassen oxen.—These were ultimately carried off by the Babylonians (Jer. lii. 20).

A pavement of stones—i.e., a pedestal or foundation of stonework: et ḫōaw ḫāṭem (LXX.).

The covert for the sabbath.—A very obscure expression. The best interpretation is "the covered hall (or stand) set apart for the use of the king and his attendants when he visited the Temple on holy days" (reading, with the Hebrew margin, μυακή, which is attested by the Vulg., μύακη, and the Syriac "house of the sabbath"). The thing is not mentioned anywhere else.

In the house—i.e., in the sacred precincts, probably in the inner forecourt.

The king's entry without.—The outer entry of the king, i.e., the gate by which the king entered the inner court (Ezek. xlv. 1, 2).

Turned he from the house of the Lord.—Or, he altered in the house of the Lord, i.e., stripped them of their ornamental work.

For.—Or, from fear of...—But comp. Gen. vi. 32, "through them." Ahaz durst not appear before Tiglath without a present. It is possible also that he anticipated a visit from the great king.

Which he did.—Some MSS., and the LXX., Syriac, and Arabic have the usual formula, "and all which he did."

XVII.

The REIGN OF HSHEA, THE LAST KING OF SAMARIA. THE FALL OF SAMARIA. CAPTIVITY OF ISRAEL, AND RE-PeOPLING OF THE LAND BY FOREIGNERS.

(1) In the twelfth year of Ahaz.—If Pekah reigned thirty years (see Note on chap. xv. 27), and Ahaz succeeded in Pekah's seventeenth year (chap. xvi. 1), Ahaz must have reigned thirteen years concurrently with Pekah. Hoshea, therefore, succeeded Pekah in the fourteenth year of Ahaz.

Began Hoshea.—See the inscription of Tiglath Pileser, quoted at chap. xv. 30, according to which, Hoshea (Ĥū-u-zi-du) only mounted the throne as a vassal of Assyria. On the news of the death of Tiglath, he probably refused further tribute.

(2) But not as the kings of Israel that were before him.—The preceding phrase is used of all the northern kings but Shallum, who only reigned a month, and had no time for the display of his religious policy. We can hardly assume that Hoshea abandoned the calf-worship of Bethel, but he may have discontinued the cultus of the Baals and Asherahs. The Soder Olam states that Hoshea did not replace the calf of Bethel, which, it assumes, had been carried off by the Assyrians in accordance with the prophecy of Hosea (Hosea x. 5). We may remember that the last sovereigns of falling monarchies have not always been the worst of their line—e.g., Charles I. or Louis XVI.

(3) Against him came up Shalmaneser king of Assyria.—Shalmaneser IV. (Shalmanu-ushshir, "Shalman be gracious!") the successor of Tiglath Pileser II., and predecessor of Sargon, reigned 727-722 B.C. No annals of his reign have come down to us in the cuneiform inscriptions, but a fragment of the Eponym-list notes foreign expeditions for the three successive years 725-723 B.C. This agrees with what Manander states (Josephus, Ant. ix. 14, 2), according to whom Shalmaneser made an expedition against Tyre (and no doubt Israel, as the ally of Tyre), which lasted five years—i.e., was continued beyond Shalmaneser's reign into that of Sargon. Nothing is known of the death of Shalmaneser.

Conspiracy—i.e., as is presently explained, a conspiracy with the king of Egypt against his suzerain. Shalmaneser regarded Hoshea, and probably the king of Egypt also, as his "servant" (verse 3). (Comp. chap. xii. 20 and Jer. xi. 9.) Thenius wishes to read "falsehood," after the LXX., ἀπελευθέρωσεν (comp. Dext. xii. 18; Micah vi. 12), a change involving transposition of two Heb. letters (晢גור for qezher); but the change is needless.

So.—The Hebrew letters should be pointed differently, so as to be pronounced سلح, or سلح, as this name corresponds to the Assyrian Shah-i', and the Egyptian Shhabaka, the Greek Sabaco, the first king of the XXVth, or Ethiopian dynasty, whom Sargon defeated at Raphia in 720 B.C. Sargon calls him "prince," or "ruler" (šiltān), rather than "king" of Egypt; and it appears that at this time Lower Egypt was divided among a number of petty principalities, whose recognition of any central authority was very uncertain—a fact which rendered an Egyptian alliance of little value to Israel. (See Isa. xix. xx.)

Brought.—Rather, offered. The word elsewhere is always used of sacrifices.

As he had done.—Omit. The Hebrew phrase (according to a year, in a year), which is not found elsewhere, denotes the regular payment of yearly dues. This Hoshea failed to discharge.

Therefore... shut him up.—Comp. Jer. xxxiii. 1, xxvi. 5, xxvii. 2, 3. This statement seems to imply that Shalmaneser took Hoshea prisoner before the siege of Samaria over Israel nine years.
of Samaria: a supposition which finds support in the fact that Sargon, who ended the siege, makes no mention of the capture or death of the Israelite king.

(5) Then (and) the king of Assyria came up . . . and besieged it three years.—Sargon states that he took Samaria (Nameriwa) in his first year. Shalmaneser therefore had besieged the city some two years before his death.

The brief narrative before us does not discriminate between the respective shares of the two Assyrian sovereigns in the overthrow of the kingdom of Israel, but it is noticeable that it does not say that Shalmaneser "besieged Samaria three years," and "took Samaria." (Comp. chap. xviii. 11.)

(6) In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria.—Comp. Hosea x. 5 seq.; Micah i. 6; Isa. xxviii. 1-6. In the great inscription published by Botta, Sargon says: "The city of Samaria I assaulted. I took: 27,250 men dwelling in the midst thereof I carried off: 50 chariots among them I set apart (for myself), and the rest of their wealth I let deal treacherously," Hosea v. 7, with Deut. iii. 3, "ordinance.")

Placed them.—Literally, "made them dwell." LXX., οἰκῶσαν.

In Halah.—This place appears to be identical with Halahu, a name occurring in an Assyrian geographical list between Arrapacha and Rateappa (Rezeph). It probably lay in Mesopotamia, like Rezeph and Gozan. (See Note on 1 Chron. v. 26.)

In Habor the river of Gozan.—Rather, on Habor the river of Gozan.

The cities of the Medes.—The LXX. seems to have read "mountains of the Medes." (Comp. Notes on 1 Chron. v. 26, where "Hara and the river of Gozan" is probably the result of an inadvertent transposition of "The river of Gozan and Hara").

(7-20) Reflections of the Last Editor on the Moral Causes of the Catastrophe.

(7) For so it was.—Literally, and it came to pass. Sinned against the Lord . . . Egypt. —The claim of Jehovah to Israel's exclusive fealty was from the outset based upon the fact that He had emancipated them from the Egyptian bondage—a fact which is significantly asserted as the preamble to Jehovah's laws. (See Exod. xx. 2; and comp. Hosea xi. 1, xii. 9.)

Had feared other gods.—Such as the Baals and Asheras of Canaan, which symbolised the productive powers of Nature, and, further, the heavenly bodies. (Comp. Amos v. 25, 26; Ezek. viii. 14, 16.)

(8) Statutes of the heathen . . . and of the heathen whom the Lord carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the Lord to anger: for they served idols, whereby the Lord had said unto them: Ye shall not do this thing. (13) Yet the Lord testified against
Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, 
14 Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets.

(14) Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God. (15) And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant which he testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the testimonies which he testified against them;" or, "his charges (i.e., precepts) which he had given them.

By all the prophets, and by all the seers.—The Hebrew text is, by the hand of all his prophets—namely, every seer. One or two MSS. and the Targum have prophet, instead of his prophets. The Syriac has "by the hand of all his servants the prophets, and all the seers." The Vulg. and Arabic also have both nouns plural. Seers were such persons as, without belonging to the prophetic order, came forward in times of emergency upon a sudden Divine impulse. Thenius thinks Israel and Judah are mentioned together because similar a casting.

Heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the Lord had charged them, that they should not do like them. (16) And they left all the commandments of the Lord their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. (17) And they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger.

(18) Therefore the Lord was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of way Baal and Asherah stand side by side in Judges vi. 28, 2 Kings xxiii. 4, and in 1 Kings xvii. 19 the 450 prophets of the Baal and the 400 of the Ashera. Further, in 2 Chron. xxv. 16, xxiv. 18, the LXX. render Ashera by Astarte; and in other passages Aquila, Symmachus, and the Peshito do the same thing. He then refers to 1 Kings xiv. 23 and Isa. xvii. 8, xxvii. 9, and continues: "according to these and many other passages, Ashera was used as the designation of the commonest material representation of the goddess. It consisted of a block of wood, of considerable size (Judges vi. 26), and resembling a tree, as is shown by the expressions used in connection with it, such as 'setting up,' 'planting,' and 'cutting down' (2 Kings xvii. 10; Deut. xvi. 21; Judges vi. 28; 2 Kings xvii. 4, &c.). In Isa. xxvii. 9 the LXX. actually renders 'tree'; and so the Peshito in Deut. vi. 21, Micah v. 13. Hence, we must not think of pillars like the Greek Hermae, but of a real trunk planted in the ground, rootless, but not branchless; for which purpose pines and evergreens were preferred. The tree signifies, according to an ancient and widespread conception, nature, or the world, which in this case stands as goddess at the side of the Baal—the lord of the world. (Comp. the Norse tree, Yggdrasil, and the Assyrian sacred tree.) Hence, the Ashera was set up by the altar of Baal (Judges vi. 28). (Comp. Deut. xvi. 21.)" Schlottmann adds that Movers is wrong in making Astarte and Ashera two different goddesses, the former being "the stern, cruel virgin," the latter, "the goddess who excites to pleasure;" and he justly observes that, as in the case of Baal, the same deity may be conceived under contrary aspects (Riehm's Handworterbuch Bibl. Alterthums, pp. 111—114). For the Hebrew conception of Astarte see Jer. vii. 18, xliv. 17 seq. Kuenen, Rel. of Jer. i. 88 seq., agrees with Movers, but hardly proves his case.

Worshipped all the host of heaven.—Chap. xxi. 3; comp. xxiii. 4. (17) And they caused...fire.—The cultus of Moloch (chap. xvi. 3).

Used divination and enchantments.—Deut. xviii. 10; Num. xxiii. 23. "Divinationibus inserviabat et anguiriis" (Vulg.).

Sold themselves.—Idolatry is regarded as a servitude. (Comp. 1 Kings xxii. 20, 25.) (18) Removed them out of his sight.—By banishing them from his land (verse 23)—an expression founded upon the old local conceptions of deity.

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his sight; there was none left but the tribe of Judah only. (19) Also Judah kept not the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made. (20) And the Lord rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight. (21) For he rent Israel from the house of David; and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and Jeroboam drove Israel from following the LORD, and made them sin a great sin. (22) For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them; (23) until the LORD removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day. (24) And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof.

The tribe—i.e., the kingdom. (Comp. 1 Kings xi. 36.)

(19) Also Judah kept not...—Judah was no real or permanent exception to the sins and punishment of Israel; she imitated the apostasy of her sister-kings, and was visited with a similar penalty.

The statutes of Israel which they made.—See Note on verse 8 supra, and comp. Micah vi. 16, "the statutes of Omri." According to chap. viii. 27 and xvi. 3, Azariah and Ahasiyahu especially favoured the idolatry practised in the northern kingdom. The example of her more powerful neighbour exercised a fatally powerful spell upon Judah.

(20) And the Lord rejected all the seed of Israel.—Thenius prefers the reading of the LXX. "and rejected the Lord (as in the last clause of verse 19), and the Lord was angry with all the seed of Israel," &c. It thus becomes plain that the writer goes back to verse 18, after the parenthesis relating to Judah. "Israel" is used in the narrow sense in those verses.

Into the hand of spoilers—e.g., the Syrians (chap. x. 32;) and the Assyrians (chap. xv. 19, 29, xvii. 3. The writer probably remembered Judges ii. 14.

(21) For he rent...—The verse assigns the cause of Israel's ruin. The "for," therefore, refers to what has just been said in verses 15—20.

He rent Israel.—The Hebrew as it stands can only mean "Israel rent himself away" (comp. the Vulg., "scissus est"). (If Israel were the object, 'eth should be expressed.)

Drave.—Hebrew text, put far away (Amos ii. 3). Hebrew margin, misled (2 Chron. xxi. 11); the Targum and Syriac "caused to stray." The argument obviously is this—separation from Judah led to the calf-worship, and that to idolatry pure and simple.

(22) The children of Israel walked...—Israel obstinately persisted in the sin of Jeroboam, in spite of all warnings.

(23) By all his servants the prophets.—Comp. Hosea i. 6; ix. 16; Amos iii. 11, 12, v. 27; Isa. xxviii. 1—4.

So was Israel carried away.—That the land was not entirely depopulated appears from such passages as 2 Chron. xxx. 1, xxxiv. 9. But henceforth "the distinctive character of the nation was lost; such Hebrews as remained in their old land became mixed with their heathen neighbours. When Josiah destroyed the ancient high places of the northern kingdom he slew their priests, whereas the priests of Judean sanctuaries were provided for at Jerusalem. It is plain from this that he regarded the worship of the northern sanctuaries as purely heathenish (comp. 2 Kings xxiv. 20 with verse 5), and it was only in much later times that the mixed population of Samaria became possessed of the Pentateuch, and set up a worship on Mount Gerizim, in imitation of the ritual of the second Temple. We have no reason to think that the captive Ephraimites were more able to retain their distinctive character than their brethren who remained in Palestine. The problem of the lost tribes, which has so much attraction for some speculators, is a purely fanciful one. The people whom Hosea and Amos describe were not fitted to maintain themselves apart from the heathen among whom they dwelt. Scattered among strange nations, they accepted the service of strange gods (Deut. xxviii. 64), and, losing their distinctive religion, lost also their distinctive existence." (Robertson Smith.)

(24—33) Re-peopling of the land with aliens; their worship described.

(24) The king of Assyria.—Sargon (Sargina), who actually records that in his first year (721 B.C.) he settled a body of conquered Babylonians in the land of Hatti or Syria. In another passage he speaks of locating certain Arab tribes, including those of Thamud and Ephah, in the land of Beth-nimri; and in a third passage of his annals he says that he "removed the rest" of these Arab tribes, "and caused them to dwell in the city of Samerina" (Samaria). This notice belongs to Sargon's seventh year (715 B.C.). Kuthah and Sepharvaim were also towns in Babylonia. The former is called Kutiu in the cuneiform inscriptions. It had a temple of Nergal and Laz, the ruins of which have been discovered at Tell-Idrihim, north-east of Babylon. Sepharvaim, in the cuneiform Sipar and Sippur, means "the two Sipars;" in allusion, probably, to the fact that the town was divided between the two deities, Samara (the sun), and Anunnium, and bore the names of Sippur sa Samas ("Sippur of the Sun"), and Sippur sa Anunnium ("Sippur of Anunnit"). Bassam discovered ruins of Eparra, the great sun-temple, at Abu Habba, south-west of Bagdad, on the east bank of the Euphrates.

Avā (Heb., 'Ava) may be the same as Iva (Heb. Iwaw) (chap. xviii. 34, xix. 13).

Hamath.—Sargon has recorded his reduction, in 720 B.C., of Ru-bi'-di (or Ya'u-bi'-di) king of Hamath, and also his settling of colonists in Hamathite territory.
II. KINGS, XVII. and their Worship.

The Aliens

(25) And so it was at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they feared not the Lord; therefore the Lord sent lions among them, which slew some of them. (26) Wherefore they spake to the king of Assyria, saying, The nations which thou hast removed, and placed in the cities of Samaria, know not the manner of the God of the land: therefore he hath sent lions among them, and, behold, they slay them, because they know not the manner of the God of the land. (27) Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, Carry thither one of the priests whom ye brought from thence; and let them go and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner of the God of the land. (28) Then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and dwelt in Beth-
el, and taught them how they should fear the Lord.

(29) Howbeit every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt. (30) And the men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth, and the men of Cuth made Nergal, and the men of Hamath made Ashima, (31) and the Avites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites burnt their children in fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim. (32) So they feared the Lord, and made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places. (33) They feared the Lord, and served their own gods, after the manner of the

Dwelt.—Were dwelling.

Succoth-benoth.—The Hebrew spelling of this name has probably suffered in transmission. The Babylonian goddess Es·miln. or Zarpuitum ("seed-maker ") the consort of Merodach, appears to be meant.

Nergal.—The name of the god represented by the colossal lions which guarded the doorways of Assyrian palaces. These colossal were called nirgali; and a syllabary informs us that Nergal was the god of Kutha.

Ashima.—Nothing is known of this idol. Schrader (in Riehm) pronounces against identification with the Phoenician Eemán. Lane’s lexicon gives an Arabic word, ’usāmātu, or ’al-′usāmātu, "the lion," which may be cognate with Ashima.

Nibhaz and Tartak are unknown, but the forms have an Assyrio-Babylonian cast. (Comp. Ningsis, Nergal with the former, and Ishtar, Nanaar, Merodach, Shadrach, with the latter.) Before Nibhaz the LXX. have another name, Abaazar, or Eblæser (?’abal Assûr "the Son of Assur").

Adrammelech.—Comp. chap. xix. 37. Identified by Schrader with the Assyrian Adar-malik, “Adar is prince” (?’Adrum).

Anammelech—i.e., Anum-malik, “Anu is prince.” Adar and Anu are well-known Assyrian gods.

(32) They feared.—They were fearing. (See Note on verse 25, 28, supra.)

Of the lowest of them.—Rather, of all orders, or promiscuously. (Comp. 1 Kings xii. 31.) This is another indication that it was Jeroboam’s mode of worship which was now restored.

Which sacrificed.—Heb., and they used to do. The verb do is used in the sense of sacra facere, just like the Greek ἔργον, ἔργοις, ἔργοις.

Priests of the high places.—Rather, bāmāh-priests (omit the). Bāmah-priests are opposed to the priests of Jehovah’s Temple.

(33) They feared... gods.—Literally, Jehovah were they fearing, and their own gods were they serving. The verse recapitulates 28—32.

Whom they carried away from thence.—Rather, whence they had been carried away. Literally, whence men carried them away. The meaning

It is, therefore, quite likely that he had, as usual, deported the conquered Hamathites, and, in fact, settled some of them in Samaria, as this verse relates.

Placed them.—Heb., made them dwell, the very phrase used by Sargon himself in describing these arrangements (uṣebītu). At a later period Esarhaddon reinforced these colonists (Ezra iv. 2).

The Lord sent (the) lions.—In the interval between the Assyrian depopulation and the re-peopling of the land, the lions indigenous to the country had multiplied naturally enough. Their ravages were understood by the colonists as a token of the wrath of their new god, Jehovah in a monotheistic sense; they simply understood “judgment,” “decision,” here means “religion,” especially the religion of Islam.

Which slew.—The form of the verb implies a state of things which lasted some time. Literally, and they were killing among them.

They spake.—Rather, men spake, i.e., the prefects of the province.

The manner of the God.—The word mishpāt, “judgment,” “decision,” here means “appointed worship,” or “cultus.” In the Koran the word din, “judgment,” is used in a similar way, as equivalent to “religion,” especially the religion of Islam.

Carry.—Cause to go.

Let them go and dwell.—To be corrected after the Syriac and Vulg.: let him go and dwell.

Ye brought.—Ye carried away.

And taught.—And was teaching, implying a permanent work.

In Bethel.—Because he was a priest of the calf-worship.

Fear the Lord.—Not in the modern ethical but in the ancient ceremonial sense.

Howbeit.—And. The colonists did not fear Jehovah in a monotheistic sense; they simply added his cultus to that of their ancestral deities.

The houses of the high places.—The temples or chapels which constituted the sanctuaries of the different cities in the Samaritan territory.

The Samaritans—i.e., the people of northern Israel. (Comp. Samaria in verse 24.)
nations whom they carried away from thence. (34) Unto this day they do after
the former manners: they fear not the Lord, neither do they after their
statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law and commandment which
the Lord commanded the children of Jacob, *whom he named Israel; (35) with
whom the Lord had made a covenant, and charged them, saying, *Ye shall not
fear other gods, nor bow yourselves to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to
them: (36) but the Lord, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with
great power and a stretched out arm, him shall ye fear, and him shall ye worship,
and to him shall ye do sacrifice. (37) And the statutes, and the ordinances,
and the law, and the commandment, which he wrote for you, ye shall observe
to do for evermore; and ye shall not forget; neither shall ye fear other
gods. (38) And the covenant that I have made with you ye shall not forget;
neither shall ye fear other gods. (39) But the Lord your God ye shall fear;
and he shall deliver you out of the hand of all your enemies. (40) Howbeit
they did not hearken, but they did after their former manner.
(41) So these nations feared the Lord,
and served their graven images, both their children, and their children's
children: as did their fathers, so do they unto this day.

CHAPTER XVIII.—(1) Now it came
to pass in the third year of Hoshea son
of Elah king of Israel, that Hezekiah
the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to
reign. (2) Twenty and five years old was
he when he began to reign; and he
reigned twenty and nine years in Jeru-
salem. His mother's name also was Abi,
the daughter of Zachariah. (3) And
he did that which was right in the sight
of the Lord, according to all that David
his father did. (4) He removed the high
places, and brake the 2 images, and cut
down the groves, and brake in pieces the
dbrasen serpent that Moses had

Two generations later bring us to the times of the exile of Judah—the age of the last Redactor of Kings.

XVIII.—XIX.

THE REIGN OF HEZEKIAH IN JUDAH. THE GREAT DELIVERANCE FROM SENNACHERIB.

(1) Hezekiah.—See Note on chap. xvi. 20 and 2
Chron. xxix. 1. The name in this form means, "My
strength is Jah." (Ps. xviii. 2), and its special
appropriateness is exemplified by Hezekiah's history.
(2) Abi.—This should probably be Abijah, as in
Chronicles and a few MSS.
(3) He removed.—He it was who removed. Ac-
cording to this statement, Hezekiah made the Temple
of Jerusalem the only place where Jehovah might be
publicly worshipped. (Comp. verse 22, and the fuller
account in 2 Chron. xxix. 3—36.)

Brake the images.—Shattered the pillars (1 Kings
xxiv. 23; Hosea iv. 4; 2 Chron. xiv. 2).

The groves.—Heb., the Asherah. It should
probably be plural, the Asherims, as in 2 Chron. xxxi. 1,
and all the versions here. (See Note on chap. xvii. 16.)

Brake in pieces the brasen serpent that
Moses had made.—The attempt of Bahr and others to
evade the obvious force of this simple statement is quite
futile. It is clear that the compiler of Kings believed
that the brasen serpent which Hezekiah destroyed was
a relic of the Mosaic times. (See the narrative in
Num. xxvi. 4—9, and the allusion to the fiery serpents
in Deut. viii. 15.) His authority may have been oral
tradition or a written document. In ancient Egypt
the serpent symbolised the healing power of Deity;
a symbolism which is repeated in the Graeco-Roman
myth of Asclepius. When Moses set up the Brasen
Serpent, he taught the people by means suited to their
then capacity that the power of healing lay in the God
whose prophet he was—namely, Jehovah; and that
made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan. (5) He trusted in the Lord God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him. (6) For he clave to the Lord, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses. (7) And the Lord was with him; and he prospered whithersoever he went forth: and he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not. (8) He smote the Philistines, even unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

(9) And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it. (10) And at the end of three years they took it: even in the sixth year of Hezekiah, that is the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken. (11) And the king of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria, and put them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes: (12) because they obeyed not the voice of the Lord their God, but trespassed his covenant, and all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded, and would not hear them, nor do them.

Prosperity of Hezekiah.

II. KINGS, XVIII. Israel carried Captive.

He trusted ... Israel.—In Jehovah, the God of Israel he trusted. Hezekiah is thus contrasted with idolatrous kings, such as those who trusted in the Nehushtan.

After him was none like him among all the kings of Judah.—This does not contradict what is said of Josiah (chap. xxi. 25). Hezekiah was pre-eminent for his trust in Jehovah, Josiah for his strict adherence to the Mosaic Law.

Nor any that were before him.—Rather, nor among those that were before him.

For he clave.—And he held fast. Hezekiah's pious feeling.

But kept.—And he kept. Hezekiah's practice.

The context shows that the "commandments" specially in the writer's mind were those against polytheism.

(7) And he prospered ... went forth.—Whithersoever he would go forth he would prosper. (The italicised and is needless here, as in verse 6.)
And all.—Omit and, with all the versions. “All that Moses __ ... commanded” is in apposition with “his covenant.”

And would not ... do them.—Literally, and hearkened not, and did not.

(13-17) The Invasion of Sennacherib.

(13) In the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah.—The fall of Samaria is dated 722-721 B.C., both by the Bible and by the Assyrian inscriptions. That year was the sixth of Hezekiah, according to verse 10. His fourteenth year, therefore, would be 714-713 B.C. Sennacherib’s own monuments, however, fix the date of the expedition against Judah and Egypt at 701 B.C. (See the careful discussion in Schrader’s Keilschriften, pp. 313–317.) This divergence is remarkable, and must not be explained away. It must be borne in mind that the Assyrian documents are strictly contemporaneous, whereas the Books of Kings were compiled long after the events they record, and have only reached us after innumerable transcriptions; while the former, so far as they are unbroken, are in exactly the same state now as when they first left the hands of the Assyrian scribes.

Sennacherib.—Called in his own annals Sin-ahhi-rib, or Sin-ahh-ir-erba, i.e., “Sin (the moon-god) multiplied brothers.” He was son and successor of Sargon, and reigned from 705–681 B.C. He invaded Judah in his third campaign.

All the fenced cities ... took them.—See Sennacherib’s own words, quoted in the Note on 2 Chron. xxxii. 1.

Lachish.—Um-Lakis, in the southwestern corner of Judah, close to the Philistine border, and near the high road from Judaea and Philistia to Egypt. The fortress was important to Sennacherib, as it commanded this route. In fact, Sennacherib’s chief aim was Egypt, as appears from chap. xix. 24, and Herodotus (ii. 141), and it was necessary for him to secure his rear by first making himself master of the fortresses of Judah, which was in league with Egypt. (See Note on 2 Chron. xxxii. 9.)

I have offended.—Literally, I have sinned. The term “sin” is constantly used of “revolts” in the Assyrian inscriptions.

That which thou puttest on me.—In the way of tribute. A similar phrase occurs on the monuments. Sennacherib says: “Eight hundred talents of silver, and thirty talents of gold,” estimating the silver by the light Babylonian talent, which was to the heavy Palestinian talent in the ratio of eight to three. The sum mentioned is about a seventh less than that exacted by Pul from Menahem (chap. xv. 19).

The silver.—i.e., the money.

Cut off the gold from the doors.—Literally, trimmed, or stripped the doors (the word used in chap. xvi. 17 of the similar proceeding of Ahaz). The leaves of the doors of the sanctuary were overlaid with gold (1 Kings vi. 18, 32, 35). Hard necessity drove Hezekiah to strip off this gold, as well as that with which he had himself plated “the pillars,” or rather the framework of the doors (literally, the supporters; others think that the door-posts only are meant by this term).

And the king of Assyria sent Tartan and Rab-saris and Rab-shakeh from Lachish to king Hezekiah with a great host against Jerusalem. And they went up and came to Jerusalem. And when they were come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is in the highway of the fuller’s field. (21) And when they had called to the king, there came out to them Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, the gold from the doors of the temple of the Lord, and from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.

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Sennacherib's Message

II. KINGS, XVIII.

to Hezekiah.

which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder.

(19) And Rab-shakeh said unto them, Speak ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What confidence is this wherein thou trustest? (20) Thou sayest, (but they are but vain words,) I have counsel and strength for the war. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me? (21) Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it; so is Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him. (22) But if ye say unto me, We trust in the Lord our God: is it not that he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem? (23) Now therefore, I pray thee, give pledges to my lord the king of Assyria, and I will deliver thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them. (24) How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? (25) Am I now come up without the Lord against this place to destroy it? The Lord said to me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.

king sent out his chief ministers; as to whom see 1 Kings iv. 1-4. For Eliakim and Shebna see further, Isa. xxii. 15, 20. seq.

(19) And Rab-shakeh said.—Tiglath Pileser records that he sent a rab-sak as his envoy to Tyre. Thenius supposes the present rab-sak may have been a better master of Hebrew than his companions. Schrader says it would have been beneath the tartan's dignity to speak, and that such vigorous language as follows would have had a very strange effect in the mouth of a eunuch (the rab-sak). The great king, the king of Assyria.—Comp. the usual grandiloquent style of the Assyrian sovereigns: “I, Esarhaddon, the great king, the mighty king, the king of multitudes, the king of the country of Asshur;” and the title, “king of princes,” which Hosea applies to the king of Assyria (Hos. viii. 10).

(20) Thou sayest (but they are but vain words).—Literally, thou hast said—a mere lip-word if so, i.e., insincere language, an utterance which thou knowest to be false. (Comp. our expression, “lip-service.”)

I have counsel. . .—The margin is wrong. (21) The staff of this bruised reed.—Cracked or flawed would be better than bruised; because, as is clear from the following words, the idea is that of a reed splitting and piercing the hand that rests upon it. (Comp. Isa. xlii. 3.) As to the Jewish expectations from Egypt, comp. Isa. xx. 1-5, xxx. 1-8, xxxi. 1-4, passages in which such expectations are denounced as implying want of faith in Jehovah.

(22) But if ye say.—The address seems to turn abruptly from Hezekiah to his ministers, and to the garrison of Jerusalem in general. But the LXX., Syriac, Arabic, and Isaiah xxxvi. 7 have the singular, “But if thou say,” which is probably original. (Hezekiah is presently mentioned in the third person, to avoid ambiguity.)

In the Lord our God.—The emphatic words of the clause.

Whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away.—This is just the construction which a heathen would naturally put on Hezekiah's abolition of the local sanctuaries. (Verse 4; 2 Chron. xxxi. 1.) The Assyrians would appear to have heard of Hezekiah's reformation. As he was a vassal of the great king, no doubt his proceedings were watched with jealous interest.

Ye shall worship . . . in Jerusalem?—Literally, Before this altar shall ye worship, at Jerusalem. The great altar of burnt offering was to be the one altar, and Jerusalem the one city, where Jehovah might be worshipped. (22) Give pledges to.—Rather, make a compact with . . . So the Syriac; literally, mingle with. . . have dealings with (Ps. cxi. 35). Gesenius explains: join battle with; literally, mingle yourselves with: LXX., ἔχοντες ὀλίγος. Mr. Cheyne prefers, lay a wager with . . . The rab-sak sneers at Hezekiah's want of cavalry, an arm in which the Assyrians were pre-eminently strong; and further hints that even if horses were supplied him in numbers sufficient to constitute an ordinary troop, he would not be able to master an equivalent number of trained riders.

How then.—Literally, And how. The connection of thought is: (But thou canst not); and how . . . Turn away the face of . . .—i.e., repulse, reject the demand of . . . (1 Kings ii. 16.)

One captain of the least of my master's servants.—Rather, a pasha who is one of the smallest of my lord's servants. He means himself. The word we render “pasha” is, in the Hebrew, pa'hath, a word which used to be derived from the Persian, but which is now known to be Semitic, from the corresponding Assyrian words pahat, “prefect,” provincial governor,” and pihat, “prefecture.”

And put thy trust.—Rather, but thou hast put thy trust; assigning a ground for Hezekiah's folly. There should be a stop at “servants.” (Comp. Isa. xxxi. 1: “Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots.”)

(23) The Lord said to me.—Michaelis supposed that Sennacherib had consulted some of the captive priests of the Northern kingdom. Others think some report of the menaces of the Hebrew prophets may have reached Assyrian ears. Thenius makes Rab-shakeh's words a mere inference from the success which had hitherto attended the expedition; but the language is too definite for this. In the annals of Nabunaid, the last king of Babylon, a remarkable parallel occurs. The Persian Cyrus there represents himself as enjoy-
Then Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and Shebna, and Joah, unto Rab-shakeh, Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the Syrian language; for we understand it: and talk not with us in the Jews' language in the ears of the people that are on the wall. (27) But Rab-shakeh said unto them, Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words? hath he not sent me to the men which sit on the wall, that they may eat their own dung, and drink 1 their own piss with you? (28) Then Rab-shakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language, and spake, saying, Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria: (29) thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you out of his hand: (30) neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord, saying, The Lord will surely deliver us, and this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria. (31) Hearken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, Make an agreement with me by a present, and come out to me, and then eat ye every man of his own vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the Babylon; Merodach foretells his march upon the city, and accompanies him thither. Cyrus even declares that he has daily offered prayers to Bel and Nebo, that they may intercede with Merodach on his own behalf. From all this it would appear to have been customary with invaders to seek to win the gods of hostile countries to the furtherance of their schemes of conquest. (Comp. the account of the taking of Veii in Livy, v. 21, especially the sentences beginning “Veleantes ignari se jam ab suis vatinus, jam ab externis oraculis proditos;” and Macrobi. Sat. iii. 9.) It is not impossible that there was some renegade prophet of Jehovah in the Assyrian camp. At all events, the form of the oracle, “Go up against this land, and destroy it,” is thoroughly authentic. Comp. the oracle of Chemosh to Mesha: “And Chemosh said unto me, Go thou, seize Nebo against Israel” (Moabite Stone, l. 14). Meanwhile, Isaiah x. 5 seq. shows how true was the boast of the arrogant invader, in a sense which lay far above his heathenish apprehension. (32) Speak, I pray thee . . . in the Syrian language.—Hezekiah’s ministers naturally dread the effect of Rab-shakeh’s arguments and assertions upon the garrison of the city. The people, many of whom had always been accustomed to worship at the high places, might very well doubt whether there were not some truth in the allegation that Jehovah was incensed at their removal. In the Syrian language.—In Aramaic; which was at that time the language of diplomacy and commerce in the countries of Western Asia, as is proved by the bilingual contract-tablets (in Aramaic and Assyrian) discovered at Nineveh. In the Jews’ language.—In Jewish; an expression only found in Nehemiah xii. 24 besides the present narrative. The word “Jew” (Yehâdi), from which it is derived, itself occurs only in the later Biblical books; but contemporary Assyrian usage (mût Ya-u-di or Ya-u-du, “Juda;” Ya-u-do-a-a, “the Jews”) is in favour of the supposition that the people of the Southern kingdom were even then called Yehâdim, and their language “Jewish” (Yehâdi̇th). The spoken dialect probably differed considerably from other varieties of Hebrew, though not enough to make it unintelligible to other Hebrew-speaking peoples, such as the northern Israelites and the Moabites and Edomites. (37) Hath my master . . . Rather, Is it to thy lord and to thee that my lord hath sent me to speak these words?
waters of his 1 cistern: (32) until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil olive and of honey, that ye may live, and not die: and hearken not unto Hezekiah, when he persuadeth you, saying, The Lord will deliver us. (33) Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? (34) Where are the gods of Hamath, and of Arpad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah? have they delivered Samaria out of mine hand? (35) Who are they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of mine hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand?

(36) But the people held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king’s commandment was, saying, Answer him not.

(37) Then came Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, to Hezekiah with their clothes rent, and told him the words of Rab-shakeh.

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Arpad.—Tell-Erfed, about ten miles north of Aleppo. The question, “Where are the gods?” &c., may imply that they had been annihilated along with their temples and statues. (Comp. Job xiv. 18.) Sometimes, indeed, the Assyrians carried off the idols of conquered nations, but this need not have been an invariable practice, and Isa. x. 11 seems to imply that they were sometimes destroyed, as was likely to be the case when a city was taken by storm, and committed to the flames.

Sepharvaim.—See on chap. xvi. 24. This city revolted with Babylon against Sargon at the beginning of his reign. No account of its fall has been preserved.

Hena, and Ivah.—These names do not occur in Isaiah, and are wholly unknown. The words look like two Hebrew verbs (“He hath caused to wander, and overturned”), as at present vocalised; and the Targum translates them as a question: “Have they not made them wander, and carried them away?” Hoffmann thinks the two words are really one (the niphal particle of ‘awar), and should be rendered as an epithet of Sepharvaim, “the utterly perverted,”’ a nickname given it by the Assyrians, because of its folly in revolting again after its former subjugation. But the mention of Ava and the Ariots (chap. xvii. 24, 31) is in favour of the same proper name here, and the LXX., Syriac, Arabic, and Vulg. agree with this. (The Syriac reads √ ara, as in chap. vii. 24.)

Have they delivered Samaria ...?—Rather, How much less have they (i.e., its gods) delivered Samaria out of mine hand? So Ewald, Gram., § 256. The Syriac, Vulg., and Arabic render as the Authorised Version. Perhaps the original reading was not √, but ḫāṭ: “Is it the case that they have delivered?” &c. (Job vi. 22).

Out of mine hand?—Sennacherib speaks as if he were one with his father, a circumstance which lends some support to the suggestion of Schrader, that the successive Assyrian invasions were not kept quite distinct in the Hebrew tradition. If so, the year 714 B.C., assigned as the date of the present expedition (verse 13), may really be that of an earlier expedition under Sargon, who, in fact, invaded the West in 720, 715, and 711 (or 709) B.C.

(38) The countries.—Which I have myself conquered. That the Lord should deliver ...—Ewald explains here, as in the last verse, much less will Jehovah deliver, &c., taking √, “that,” as equivalent to √.
CHAPTER XIX. — (1) And it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord.  
(2) And he sent Eliakim, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz.  
(3) And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and blasphemy: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth.  
(4) It may be the Lord thy God will hear all the words of Rab-shakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God; and will remove the words which the Lord thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that are left.  
(5) So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.  
(6) And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.  
(7) Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.  
(8) So Rab-shakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish.  
(9) And when he heard say of Tirhakah king of Ethiopia — the servant — "Behold, I am about to put a spirit within him." "A spirit" is probably not to be understood personally (comp. 1 Sam. xvii. 10; 1 Kings xxii. 21 seq.), but in the weaker sense of impulsion, inclination.

XIX.

(1) Went into the house of the Lord. — To humble himself before Jehovah and pray for help. (Comp. 2 Chron. xxxii. 20.)

(2) And he sent Eliakim ... See the Note on chap. iii. 12; and comp. chap. xiii. 14, xiv. 14; Jer. xxxvii. 3. Knobel (on Isaiah) remarks that this distinguished embassy speaks for the high estimation in which the prophet stood.

The elders of the priests — i.e., the heads of the several local caste (procerus, not sacerdos).

(3) Rebuke. — Rather, chastisement (Hosea v. 9). The verb means to give judgment, punish, &c. It occurs in the next verse, "will reprove the words," or rather, punish for the words.

Blasphemy. — Comp. Isa. i. 4, v. 24, where the cognate verb is used; and Neh. ix. 18, 28, where the noun "provocation" is almost identical.

The children are come ... With this proverb, expressive of the utter collapse of all human resources, comp. the similar language of Hosea (xiii. 13).

(4) It may be. — The old commentator Clericus well remarks: "Non est dubitantis sed sperantis." News. The "rumour" or report intended is presently connected (verse 9); "for though Sennacherib made one attempt to bring about the surrender of Jerusalem, his courage must have left him when it failed, and the thought of retreat must have suggested itself, the execution of which was only accelerated by the blow which fell upon his army" (Keil and Thenius).

(5) And he shall hear ... return. — To be closely connected with the preceding words. In consequence of the spirit of despondency or fear with which Jehovah will inspire him, he will hastily retire upon hearing ill news. The "rumour" or report intended is presently specified (verse 9); "for though Sennacherib made one more attempt to bring about the surrender of Jerusalem, his courage must have left him when it failed, and the thought of retreat must have suggested itself, the execution of which was only accelerated by the blow which fell upon his army" (Keil and Thenius).

(6) So Rab-shakeh returned. — This takes up the narrative from chap. xviii. 37. It is not said, but is probably to be understood, that Tartan and Rabsaris and the "great host" (chap. xviii. 17) departed with him, having been foiled of their purpose.

Libnah. — See Note on chap. viii. 22. The great King had taken Lachish. (See Note on 2 Chron. xxxii. 9.) Its position is not yet determined. Schrader thinks it may be Tell-es-Safieh, west of Lachish, and north north-west of Eleuthropolis; in which case Sennacherib had already begun his retreat.

(7) Heard say of Tirhakah. — For the construction, comp. Ps. ii. 7, iii. 2.

Tirhakah. — Called in Egyptian inscriptions Ta-harka, in Assyrian Targú; the Topeedes of Manetho, and
The King of Assyria's

II. KINGS, XIX.

Letter to Hezekiah.

Behold, he is come out to fight against thee: he sent messengers again unto Hezekiah, saying, (10) Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria. (11) Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, by destroying them utterly: and shalt thou be delivered? (12) Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed; as Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden which were in Thelasar? (13) Where is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Se- pharvaim, of Hena, and Ivah? (14) And Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up into the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord. (15) And Hezekiah prayed before the Lord, and said, 0 Lord God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth.

LoRD, bow down thine ear, and hear: open, Lord, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib, which is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivah?

Thelasar.—Hob., Télasseer, the Assyrian Tu- l-Assurri ("Mound of Assur"). More than one place bore the name.

The king.—Comp. chap. xviii. 34, from which, as well as from the sequence of thought in verses 12,13 here, it is clear that "king" is here used as a synonym of local god. (Comp. Amos v. 26; Ps. v. 2: "My King, and my God.")

The letter.—The Hebrew word is plural, like the Latin litterae. The first "it" is plural, the second singular. Verses 10-13 may be regarded as embodying the substance of the letter, which the envoys first delivered orally, and then presented the letter to authenticate it. But perhaps the contents of the letter were not preserved in the Hebrew annals.

Spread it before the Lord.—Commentators have taken offence at this act, as if it betokened some heathenish conception of Jehovah. "Très-naïvement, pour que Dieu la lit aussi" (Roux). But one who could think of his God as having "made heaven and earth," and as the only God, would not be likely to imagine Him ignorant of the contents of a letter until it had been laid before Him in His sanctuary. Hezekiah's act was a solemn and perfectly natural indication to his ministers and people that he had put the matter into the hands of Jehovah.

Which dwellest between the cherubims.—Rather, which sitteth above the cherubim, or, the cherub-throne. (Comp. Exod. xxv. 22; 1 Sam. iv. 4; Ps. xviii. 10; Ezek. i. 26.)

Thou art the God.—With emphasis on Thou. Thou art the true God, thou alone, unto all the kingdoms, &c.

Thou hast made.—Thou it was that madest. The thought is, And therefore Thou art—the only God for all the kingdoms (comp. Isa. xi. 18 seq.), and "the only ruler of princes." (16) Bow down thine ear, and hear.—Not so much my prayer as the words of Sennacherib.

Open, Lord, thine eyes, and see.—Referring, as Thenius says, to Sennacherib's letter; not, however, as if Jehovah's eyes were closed before this prayer. To treat the figurative language of the Old Testament in such a manner does violence to common sense. "Bow thine ear," "Open thine eyes," in Hezekiah's mouth simply meant "Intervene actively between me and my enemy;" although, no doubt, such expressions orig-
Such boasts are corn. The virgin the daughter of Zion hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee, (22) Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel. (23) By thy messengers thou hast reproached the Lord, and hast said, With the multitude of my chariots I am come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon, and will cut down the tall cedar trees thereof, and the choice fir trees thereof: and I will enter

Hezekiah's Prayer. II. KINGS, XIX. Isaiah's Message.

Hath sent him to reproach the living God. (17) Of a truth, Lord, the kings of Assyria have destroyed the nations and their lands, and have cast their gods into the fire; for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them. (19) Now therefore, O Lord our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the Lord God, even thou only.

Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, That which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard. (21) This is the word that the Lord hath spoken concerning him;

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In conclusion, however, that the utterance of Hezekiah on this occasion was necessarily recorded in writing at the time. The prayer may well be a free composition put into the king's mouth by the author of this narrative.

Then Isaiah . . . —The prophet, as Hezekiah's trusted adviser, may have counselled the king to "go up into the house of the Lord," or, at least, would be cognisant of his intention in the matter.

Against . . . Hebrew text, in regard to . . . touching.

I have heard. —The verb has fallen out in Isaiah xxvii. 21.

This is the word . . . —The prophecy which follows is well characterised by Cheyne as one "of striking interest, and both in form and matter stamped with the mark of Isaiah."

Concerning him. —Or, against him.

The virgin the daughter of Zion. —A poetical personification of place. Zion here, as Jerusalem in the next line, is regarded as mother of the people dwelling there. (Comp. 2 Sam. xx. 19.) The term Virgin naturally denotes the inviolable security of the citadel of Jehovah.

Hath shaken her head at thee. —Or, hath nodded behind thee. (Comp. Ps. xxi. 8.) The people of Jerusalem nod in scorn at the retiring envoys of Sennacherib.

On high —i.e., towards heaven (Isa. xl. 26). (Comp. Isa. xiv. 13, 14.)

The Holy One of Israel. —A favourite expression of Isaiah's, in whose book it occurs twenty-seven times, and only five times elsewhere in the Old Testament (Pss. lxxi. 22, lxxviii. 41, lxxix. 19; Jer. l. 29, li. 5).

The multitude. —The reading of the Hebrew margin, of many MSS., Isaiah, and all the versions. The Hebrew text has "with the chariotry of my chariots" —obviously a scribe's error.

I am come up . . . mountains. —(Emphatic) have ascended lofty mountains. Such boasts are common in the Assyrian inscriptions.

To the sides of Lebanon. —Thenius explains, "the spurs of the Lebanon—i.e., the strongholds of Judaea, which Sennacherib had already captured." Lebanon, as the northern bulwark of the land of Israel, is used as a representative or symbol for the whole country (Zech. xil. 1)" (Cheyne). The language is similar in Isa. xiv. 13.
Into the lodgings of his borders, and into the forest of his Carmel. (24) I have digged and drunk strange waters, and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of besieged places.

(25) Hast thou not heard long ago how I have done it, and of ancient times that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste fenced cities into ruinous heaps.

Therefore their inhabitants were of small power, they were dismayed and confounded; they were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the grass on the house tops, and as corn blasted before it be grown up. (27) But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me.

(28) Because thy rage against me and thy tumult is come up into mine ears, therefore I will put my hook in thy throat, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.

(29) And this shall be a sign unto thee, Ye shall eat this year such things as grow of themselves, and in the second year that which springeth of the same; and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruits thereof.

And will cut down . . . -Or, and I will fell the tallest cedars thereof, the choicest fir thereof. Cedars and firs in Isaiah's language symbolise "kings, princes, and nobles, all that is highest and most stately" (Birks), or "the most puissant defenders" (Thenius). (See Isa. ii. 13, x. 33, 34.)

The lodgings of his borders.-Or, the furthest lodging thereof i.e., Mount Zion or Jerusalem. Isaiah has height for lodging, either a scribe's error or an editor's correction.

Carmel-i.e., pleasure-garden or park (Isa. x. 18). The royal palace and grounds appear to be meant. Thenius compares "the house of the Forest of Lebanon" (1 Kings vii. 2).

I have digged and drunk strange waters.

-Scarcity of water has hitherto been no bar to my plans. In (2 Chron. xxxii. 3), I have digged new wells.

And with the sole . . . places.-Rather, and I will dry up with the sole of my feet all the Nile arms of Ma'azer-i.e., Lower Egypt. (Comp. Isa. xix. 5 seq.) Neither mountains nor rivers avail to stop my progress. As the style is poetical, perhaps it would be correct to take the perfects, which in verses 23, 24 alternate with imperfects, in a future sense: "I-I will ascend lofty mountains . . . I will dig and drink strange waters" the latter in the arid desert that lies between Egypt and Palestine (the El-Tibh). Otherwise, both perfects and imperfects may mark what is habitual: "I ascend . . . I dig."

Hast thou not heard . . . ?-Hast thou not heard? In the far past it I made; in the days of yore did I fashion it; now have I brought it to pass. The "it"-the thing long since foreordained by Jehovah-is defined by the words: "that thou shouldest be to lay waste." &c. (Comp. Isa. xxii. 11, xvi. 10, 11, x. 5 -15.)

Of small power.-Literally, short-handed.

-Keil compares the well-known title of Artaxerxes I., Longimanus, the "long-handed," as if that epithet meant far-reaching in power. Thenius says that a frightened man draws in his arms (?) as the grass . . . -The as may better be omitted. They were field growth and green herbage; grass of the roofs and blasting before stalk. The sense seems imperfect, unless we supply the idea of withering away, as in Pss. xxxvii. 2, xc. 5, 6, cxxix. 6; Isa. xi. 6, 7. Instead of the word blasting the parallel text (Isa. x. 27) has field—a difference of one letter. The

And this shall be a sign unto thee, The prophet now addresses Hezekiah.

A sign.-Rather, the sign; namely, of the truth of this prophetic word. "The sign consists in the foretelling of natural and nearer events, which serve to accredit the proper prediction. The purport of it is that this and the next year the country will be still occupied by the enemy, so that men cannot sow and reap as usual, but must live on that which grows without sowing. In the third year, they will again be able to cultivate their fields and vineyards, and reap the fruits of them" (Keil). The prophecy was probably uttered in the autumn, so that only one full year from that time would be lost to husbandry.
the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord. (34) For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

(35) And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.

The Assyrins are Slain.


(35) And it came to pass (in) that night,—This definition of time is wanting in the parallel text; but it is implied by the phrase “in that night,” and understood to mean simply “in that memorable night which was the occasion of this catastrophe.” (Theusius sees in this clause an indication that the present section was derived from another source, probably from the one used by the chronicler in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 20-23. Reuss thinks this confirmed by the fact that neither the prediction in verse 7, nor that of verses 21-34, speaks of so great and so immense a catastrophe.” (Thenius sees in this clause an indication that the present section was derived from another source, probably from the one used by the chronicler in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 20-23. Reuss thinks this confirmed by the fact that neither the prediction in verse 7, nor that of verses 21-34, speaks of so great and so immediate an overthrow.)

The angel of the Lord went out.—The destroying angel, who smote the firstborn of the Egyptians (Exod. xii. 12, 13, 23), and smote Israel after David's census (2 Sam. xiv. 15-17). These passages undoubtedly favour the view that the Assyrian army was devastated by pestilence, as Josephus asserts. Others have supposed the agency of a simoom, a storm with lightning, an earthquake, &c. In any case a supernatural causation is involved not only in the immense number slain, and that in one night (Ps. xci. 6), but in the coincidence of the event with the predictions of Isaiah, and with the crisis in the history of the true religion:

"Vuolci così colto, dove si puote Ciò che si vuole; e più non dimandare."

In the camp of the Assyrians.—Where this was is not said. That it was not before Jerusalem appears from verses 32, 33; and the well-known narrative of Herodotus (ii. 141) fixes Egypt, the land of plagues, as the scene of the catastrophe. "Of the details of the catastrophe, which the Bible narrative is content to characterise as the act of God, the Assyrian monuments contain no record, because the issue of the campaign gave them nothing to boast of; but an Egyptian account, preserved by Herodotus, though full of fabulous circumstances, shows that in Egypt, as well as in Judaea, it was recognised as a direct intervention of Divine power. The disaster did not break the power of the great king, who continued to reign for twenty years, and waged many other victorious wars. But none the less it must have been a very grave blow, the effects of which were felt throughout the empire, and permanently modified the imperial policy; for in the following year Chaldea was again in revolt, and to the end of his
Hezekiah being Sick

II. KINGS, XX.

(36) So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. (37) And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Armenia. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XX.—(1) In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, 2Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.

regain Sennacherib never renewed his attack upon Judah” (Robertson Smith).

And when they arose early.—The few who were sick and dying, but corpses, all around them. (Comp. Exod. xii. 33: “They said, we be all dead men.”)

(36) Departed, and went.—Broke up camp, and marched. There should be a stop at returned.

And dwelt at Nineveh.—Or, and he abode in Nineveh, implying that he did not again invade the west. Sennacherib records five subsequent expeditions to the east, north, and south of his dominions, but these obviously were nothing to the peoples of Palestine. (See Notes on chap. xx. 12.)

Nineveh.—The capital of Assyria, now marked by large mounds on the east bank of the Tigris, opposite Mosul. (The Arabic version has “the king of Mosul” instead of “the king of Assyria.”) It is usually called Ninua in the inscriptions; sometimes Ninâ, seldom Ninâ (Greek, Ninos).

(37) And it came to pass.—Twenty years afterwards.

Nisroch.—This name appears to be corrupt. The LXX. gives Ναραχας and Μεραχας; Josephus, ιη Αραχας, “in Araskê,” as if the name were that of the temple rather than the god. The Hebrew version of Tobit (1:21) gives Dagon as the god. Dagon (Do-kân, Da-gan-nî) was worshipped at an early date in Babylonia, and later in Assyria; but no stress can be laid on the evidence of a late version of an Apocryphon. Wellhausen thinks the original reading of the LXX. must have been Αραχας, which seems to involve the name of Asshur, the supreme god of the Assyrians.

Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him.—The Assyrian monuments are silent on the subject of the death of Sennacherib. For Adrammelech, see the Note on chap. xvii. 31. Sharezer, in Assyrian, Sar-wṣur, “protect the king,” is only part of a name. The other half is found in Abydenus (apud Eusebius), who records that Sennacherib was slain by his son Adramelos, and succeeded by Neriglisar (i.e., Nergal), who was slain by Azurdi (Esarhaddon). From this it appears that the full name was Nerigal-sor-wṣur, “Nergal protect the king!” (the Greek Neriglisar). (See Jer. xxxix. 13, 15.)

And they escaped into the land of Armenia.—Ararat, the Assyrian Urartu, was the name of the great plain through which the Araxes flowed. The battle in which Esarhaddon defeated his brothers was fought somewhere in Little Armenia, near the Euphrates, according to Schrader, who gives a fragment of an inscription apparently relating thereto.

Esarhaddon.—The Assyrian Assur-aha-iddina, “Assur gave a brother,” who reigned 681-668 B.C.

XX.

HEZEKIAH’S SICKNESS AND RECOVERY. THE BABYLONIAN EMBASSY. CONCLUSION.

Parallel accounts may be read in Isa. xxxviii., xxxix.

1 Chronicles xxxii. 24-33.

(1) In those days—i.e., in the time of the Assyrian invasion. The illness may have been caused, or at least aggravated, by the intense anxiety which this grave peril created. Hezekiah reigned 29 years (chap. xviii. 2), and the invasion began in his 14th year (chap. xviii. 13). In verse 6 he is promised 15 years of life, and deliverance from the king of Assyria. That Hezekiah recovered before the catastrophe recorded at the end of the last chapter, is evident from the fact that no allusion to the destruction of his enemies is contained in his hymn of thanksgiving (Isa. xxxviii. 10-20).

Set thine house in order.—The margin is right. (Comp. 2 Sam. xvii. 33.)

(2) Then he turned his face.—And he turned his face round (1 Kings xxii. 4). Hezekiah did so to avoid being disturbed in his prayer; and perhaps because grief instinctively seeks a hiding-place.

(3) Remember now how I have walked . . .—Hezekiah deprecates an untimely death—the punishment of the wicked (Prov. x. 27)—on account of his zeal for Jehovah and against the idols. As Thenius remarks, there is nothing surprising in his apparent self-praise because grief instinctively seeks a hiding-place.

(4) Into the middle court.—This is the reading of some Heb. MSS., and of all the versions. The Hebrew text (city: see margin) is wrong. Before Isaiah had left the precincts of the palace, he was bidden to return. (Keil says that here, as in chap. x. 25, the word rendered “city” denotes “castle,” i.e., the royal residence.)

(5) The captain of my people.—Or, ruler (nāgīd); a designation of honour (1 Kings i. 35;
Hezekiah is Healed,

II. KINGS, XX.

And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for me mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. (And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered.) And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, What shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the Lord the third day? And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of the Lord, that the Lord will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees? And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees. And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the Lord: and he brought the shadow shall have travelled ten degrees; or shall it return ten steps? (Comp. the LXX. τοποδεστα). The Targum has: “shall the shadow march ten hours or return ten hours?” The Vulgate also makes it a double question. The Syriac is: “the shadow shall march ten steps, or return ten steps.”

It is very probable that the Hebrew text is corrupt. We might read the first word as an infinitive instead of a perfect, after the analogy of chap. xix. 29 (“ye shall eat”). Or we might read “shall it march?” as a question (הָיַּלֵּךְ); or better still, “shall it go up” (הָיַּעַלְךָ), after the hint afforded by the Vulgate: Vis ut ascendat umbra. . . . Et ait Ezechias, Facile est umbra crescere. . . . It is obvious that a kind of sun-dial is meant, though what kind is not so clear. The word “degrees” (מַעַלְלוֹת) means “steps” or “stairs” wherever it occurs. (See Exod. xx. 36; Ezek. xl. 1, 22, 26, 31, &c.; 1 Kings x. 20; Neh. iii. 15.) There is probability, therefore, in Knobel’s conjecture that “the dial of Ahaz” consisted of a column rising from a circular flight of steps, so as to throw the shadow of its top on the top step at noon, and morning and evening on the bottom step. This, or some similar device, was set up in the palace court, and was probably visible to Hezekiah lying on his sick bed and facing the window. Herodotus (ii. 9) ascribes the invention of the gnomon to the Babylonians. From the inscriptions we know that they divided time into periods of two hours, each called in Sumerian kasbūmi, and in Assyrian adī. Each kasbu or adī was subdivided into sixty equal parts.

(10) It is a light thing for the shadow to go down. —Because that was the ordinary course of things. As a natural phenomenon, of course, the sudden extension of the shadow would have been as wonderful as its retrogression; but what is in any way a familiar occurrence must needs seem easier than what has never fallen under observation.

To go down. —Rather, to spread. The LXX. has σπέρα, another use of the Hebrew verb. The Targum, Syriac, and Arabic render “to go forward” (march).

(11) And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the Lord. —Thus the sign is evidentely regarded by the historian as something directly involving the Divine agency, i.e., as a miracle.

He brought. . . . Ahaz. —Literally, and he (i.e., Jehovah) made the shadow return on the steps, which it had descended in the steps of Ahaz, backward ten steps. On the question of how it was done, a good many opinions have been expressed, e.g., by means of a mock sun, a cloud of vapour, an earthquake, a contrivance applied by Isaiah (!) to the sun-dial, &c.

Ephrem Syrus, and other church fathers, believed that the sun receded in his celestial path; but it is not said that the sun went back, but the shadow. (Isaiah
ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the 1 dial of Ahaz.

(12) At that time Berodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. (13) And Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and shewed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not. (14) Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country, even from Babylon. (15) And he said, What have they seen in thine house? And

The precious ointment. — The fine oil (Cheyne). Perfumed oil used for anointing.

All that was found in his treasures. — See 2 Chron. xxxii. 27, 28. Storehouses beyond the precincts of the palace, and beyond Jerusalem. (Comp. the phrase “in all his dominion,” which alludes to the resources of Hezekiah in the country, statistics of which he might show to the envoys.)
Hezekiah answered, All the things that are in mine house have they seen; there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them. (16) And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the Lord. (17) Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the Lord. (18) And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. (19) Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken. And he said, Is it not good, if peace and truth be in my days? (20) And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? (21) And Hezekiah slept with his fathers: and Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XXI.—(1) Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hephzi-bah. (2) And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, after
The heathen ... cast.—The nations ... dispossessed—i.e., the peoples of Canaan (ch. xvii. 8).
(2) For he built up again the high places—i.e., Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and he reared up altars for Baal, and made a grove, as did Ahab king of Israel; and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them. (4) And he built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD said, 'In Jerusalem will I put my name. (5) And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD. (6) And he made his son pass through the fire, and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger. (7) And he set a graven image of the grove that he had made in the house, of which the LORD said to David, and to Solomon his son, 'In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever; (8) neither will I make the feet of Israel move any more out of the land which I gave their fathers; only if they will observe to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my servant Moses commanded them. (9) But they hearkened not: and Manasseh seduced them to do more evil than did the nations whom the LORD destroyed before the children of Israel.
(10) And the LORD spake by his servants the prophets, saying, 'Because Manasseh king of Judah hath done these abominations, and hath done wickedly above all that the Amorites did, which of Manasseh's impiety. (Comp. xxiii. 4; Ezck. xliii. 7; Jer. vii. 30 seq.)
(9) Neither will I make the foot (foot) of Israel move (wander) ...—Comp. the promise in 2 Sam. vii. 10. The reference is to the migration to Egypt; and the thought is that the permanent possession of the Promised Land depends on the permanent adherence of the nation to Jehovah only.
Only if.—If only.
According to all.—Chronicles rightly has simply (to do) all; and so LXX., Syria, Vulg., Arabic here. And according to all the law.—Omit and, with Chronicles and the Vatican LXX.
(9) Seduced them.—Led them astray. Chronicles renders the same verb made them to err.
To do more evil.—To do the evil more ... The LXX. adds: "in the eyes of Jehovah. The idolatry of Judah was worse than that of the Canaanites, because they worshipped only their national gods, whereas Judah forsook its own God and was ready to adopt almost any foreign cultus with which it was brought into contact (Jer. ii. 11).
(10) By his servants the prophets ...—This general expression is used because the historian found no name assigned in his source. It is possible that Isaiah was still living under Manasseh, and protested in the manner here described against his apostacy. More probably, however, the protests in question were those of that great prophet's disciples: the style is not Isaiah's. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 18 refers to the history of the kings of Israel for "the words of the seers who spake to Manasseh;" and the originality of the language in verse 13 might be held to favour the view that we have in verses 11—15, an extract from that work embodying the authentic oracle of a contemporary prophet. (So Ewald.) But it appears much more likely that the passage before us is a sort of résumé of the substance of many such prophetic addresses.
(11) And hath done.—The and is not in the Hebrew, though the Syriac and Arabic supply it. It is not wanted, for the sense is, namely, because he hath done wickedly, &c.

The Amorites.—A general designation of the native races of Canaan, just as in Homer Achaean,
were before him, and hath made Judah also to sin with his idols: (12) therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Behold, I am bringing such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle. (13) And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab: and I will wipe Jerusalem as it were a man wipeth a dish, (14) and turning it upside down. (15) And I will forsake the remnant of mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hand of their enemies; and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies: (16) Because they have done that which was evil in my sight, and have provoked me to anger, since the day their fathers came forth out of Egypt, even unto this day.

Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another; beside his sin wherewith he made Judah to sin, in doing that which was evil in the sight of the Lord.

(17) Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and all that he did, and his sin that he sinned, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

(18) And Manasseh slept with his fathers, and was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza: and Amon his son reigned in his stead.

(19) Amon was twenty and two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Meshullemeth, the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. (20) And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, as his father Manasseh did.

(21) And he walked in all the way that his father walked in, and served the idols that his father served; and wor-
CHAPTER XXII. — (1) Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah of Boscath. (2) And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.

(3) And it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, that the king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, the scribe, to the house of the Lord, saying, (4) Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may sum the

on the assumption that idolatry was extirpated throughout the country in the twelfth year of this king, would be quite reconcilable even with that assumption, which, however, it is not necessary to make, as is shown in the Notes on Chronicles. Josiah did not succeed, any more than Hezekiah, in rooting out the spirit of apostasy. (See Jer. ii. 1, iv. 2). The young king was, no doubt influenced for good by the discourses of Jeremiah and Zephaniah; but it is not easy to account for his heeding the prophetic teachings, considering that, as the grandson of a Manasseh and the son of an Amon he must have been brought up under precisely opposite influences (Thenius).

The king sent Shaphan ... the scribe.—Chronicles mentions beside Maaseiah, the governor of the city, and Joash the recorder. Thenius pronounces these personages fictitious, because (1) only the scribe is mentioned in chap. xii. 10 (?); (2) Joshua was the then governor of the city (but this is not quite clear: the Joshua of chap. xxiii. 5 may have been a former governor; or, as Maaseiah and Joshua are very much alike in Hebrew, one name may be a corruption of the other); (3) Maaseiah seems to have been manufactured out of the Ashiah of verse 12 (but Ashiah is mentioned as a distinct person in 2 Chron. xxxiv. 20); and (4) Joash the recorder seems to have been borrowed from 2 Kings xviii. 18 (as if anything could be inferred from a recurrence of the same name; and that probably in the same family!). Upon such a basis of mere conjecture, the inference is raised that the chronicler invented these names, in order to give a colour of genuine history to his narrative.” It is obvious to reply that Shaphan only is mentioned here, as the chief man in the business. (Comp. also chap. xviii. 17, xix. 8).

Go up to Hilkiah the priest.—The account of the repair of the Temple under Josiah naturally resembles that of the same proceeding under Joash (chap. xii. 10, seq.) More than 200 years had since elapsed, so that the fabric might well stand in need of repair, apart from the defacements which it had undergone at the hands of heathenish princes (2 Chron. xxxiv. 11). The text does not say that the repair of the Temple had been “longtemps négligée par l’incurie des prêtres” (Reuss).

Hilkiah.—See 1 Chron. vi. 13 for this high priest. He is a different person from Hilkiah, the father of Jeremiah, who was a priest, but not high priest (Jer. i. 1).
silver which is brought into the house of the Lord, which the keepers of the door have gathered of the people: (5) and let them deliver it into the hand of the doers of the work, that have the oversight of the house of the Lord: and let them give it to the doers of the work which is in the house of the Lord, to repair the breaches of the house, (6) unto carpenters, and builders, and masons, and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house. (7) Howbeit there was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand, because they dealt faithfully.

(8) And Hilkiah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord. And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. (9) And Shaphan the scribe came to the king, and brought the king the book again, and said, Thy servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of them that do the work, and have the oversight of the house of the Lord. (10) And Shaphan the scribe shewed the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath delivered me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king. (11) And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes.

(12) And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Michaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asahiah a servant of the king’s, saying, (13) Go ye, enquire of the Lord for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the Lord that iskindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us.

That he may sum—i.e., make up, ascertain the amount of. . . The LXX. reads, συνάζησιν, which implies a Hebrew verb, of which that in the present Hebrew text might be a corruption.

Which the keepers of the door.—See the Notes on chap. xii. 9, 11, 12, as to the contents of this and the next verse.

(7) Howbeit there was.—Only let there be. The words of verses 6, 7 are part of the royal mandate.

That was delivered . . . they dealt.—That is given . . . they deal. In chap. xii. 14, 16 the same construction is used in a different sense. (See the Notes there.)

(9) I have found.—Literally, the book of the Torah have I found. The definite form of the expression proves that what the high priest found was something already known; it was not a book, but the book of the Law. How little the critics are agreed as to the precise character and contents of the ‘book in question is well shown by Thenius: “Neither the entire text, then, of the Law, nor the ordered collection of Mosaic laws contained in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers (Bertheau), nor the book of Exodus (Gramberg), nor the book of Deuteronomy (Reuss, Ewald, Hitzig) is to be understood by this expression. All these must have been brought into their present shape at a later time. What is meant is a collection of the statutes and ordinances of Moses, which has been worked up (verarbeitet) in the Pentateuch, and especially in Deuteronomy. This work is referred to by Jeremiah (Jer. xi. 1–17), and was called ‘The Book of the Covenant’ (chap. xxvii. 2). According to 2 Chron. xvii. 9 it already existed in the time of Jehoshaphat (comp. 2 Kings xii. 12, ‘the Testimony’); was probably preserved in the Ark (Deut. xxxi. 26), along with which in the reign of Manasseh it was put on one side. When after half a century of disuse it was found again by the high priest in going through the chambers of the Temple with a view to the intended repairs, in the Ark which, though cast aside, was still kept in the Temple, it appeared like something new, because it had been wholly forgotten (for a time), so that Shaphan could say: ‘Hilkiah has given me a book’ (verse 10).” (See also the Notes on 2 Chron. xxxiv. 14.)

And he read it.—Thenius thinks that this indicates that the book was of no great size, as Shaphan made his report to the king immediately after the execution of his commission (verse 9). But neither does verse 9 say immediately, nor does this phrase necessarily mean that Shaphan read the book through.

(9) Thy servants.—Hilkiah and I.

Have gathered.—Rather, have poured out—i.e., from the alms-chest into the bags.

In the house.—In the wider sense of the word, as including the outer court (chap. xii. 9). Chronicles reads “in the house of the Lord,” which is probably right. So LXX., Vulg., Arable here.

(10) Read it before the king.—Keil suggests such passages as Deut. xviii. and Lev. xxvi. If we were meant that Shaphan read the whole of the book, as Thenius alleges, we should expect “all the words of the book” in verse 11.

(12) And the king commanded . . .—Comp. the similar embassy to Isaiah (chap. xix. 2).

As to Ahikam see Jer. xxvi. 24, xl. 5; and for Achbor, Jer. xxvi. 22, xxxvi. 12.

Asahiah a servant of the king’s.—Probably the same officer as “the knight” or aide-de-camp who attended on the king (chap. vii. 2, ix. 25.)

(13) Enquire of the Lord.—Or, seek ye Jehovah. Josiah wished to know whether any hope remained for himself and his people, or whether the vengeance must fall speedily.

For the people.—Of Jerusalem.

Written concerning us.—Thenius conjectures written therein, a slight change in the Hebrew. But Josiah identifies the people and their fathers as one nation. (Comp. also Exod. xx. 5.) However,
Hilkiah sends to Huldah.

II. KINGS, XXIII.

Huldah's Prophecy.

(14) So Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asahiah, went unto Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the 1 wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem 2 in the college) and they communed with her. (15) And she said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Tell the man that sent you to me, (16) Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read: (17) because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched. (18) But to the king of Judah which sent you to enquire of the Lord, thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, As touching the words which thou hast heard; (19) because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the Lord, when thou hearest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard thee, saith the Lord. (20) Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place. And they brought the king word again.

CHAPTER XXIII.—(1) And the king sent, and they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem. (2) And the king went up into the house of the Lord, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, 3 both small

Chronicles has “in this book,” and the Arabic here “in it.”

(4) Went unto Huldah the prophetess.—Why not to Jeremiah or Zephaniah? Apparently because Hilkiah “dwelt in Jerusalem,” and they did not, at least at this time. Anathoth in Benjamin was Jeremiah’s town. Huldah, however, must have enjoyed a high reputation, as prophets are mentioned in chap. xxiii. 2.

Keeper of the wardrobe.—Either the royal wardrobe or that of the priests in the Temple. (Comp. chap. x. 22.) In either case Shallum was a person of consideration, as is further shown by the careful specification of his descent.

In the college.—This is the rendering of the Targum, as if mishneh (“second”) were equivalent to the later Mishna. The word really means the second part of the city—a different city. (See Neh. xi. 9; Zeph. i. 10.)

(6) I will bring evil upon ...—Literally, I am about to bring evil unto ... Instead of unto, the LXX., Vulg., and Chronicles rightly read upon, which follows in the next phrase.

Which the king of Judah hath read.—The book had been read to him as the chronicler explains. The freedom of expression here warns us against pressing the words of verses 8, 10 (“he read it.”) (17) With all the works (work) of their hands.—With the idols they have made. See 1 Kings xvi. 7, where the same phrase occurs. (Comp. also Isa. xlv. 9—17; Ps. cxv. 4 seq.)

Shall not be quenched.—Comp. Jer. iv. 4; Amos v. 6; Isa. i. 31.

(19) Tender.—See 1 Chron. xxix. 1, xiii. 7; Deut. xx. 8.

Hast humbled thyself.—Comp. the behaviour of Ahab (1 Kings xxii. 27 seq.).

Become a desolation and a curse. See Jer. xlv. 22. “A curse” is not so much an instance of causa pro effectu (Themius), as a specification of the type such as would be made in blessing and cursing. (Comp. Jer. xxix. 22; Gen. lxxvii. 20; Ruth iv. 11, 12.)

Thy grave.—So some MSS. and the old versions. But the ordinary Hebrew text, thy graves, may be right, as referring to the burial-place formed by Manasseh, which would contain a number of chambers and niches (chap. xxi. 18).

In peace.—These words are limited by those which follow: “thine eyes shall not see all the evil,” &c. Josiah was slain in battle, as the next chapter relates (vers 29); but he was spared the greater calamity of witnessing the ruin of his people.

XXIII.

Josiah renews the Covenant, Roots out Idolatry, and holds a Solemn Passover. His End.

(1) They gathered.—The right reading is probably that of the Syriac and Vulg., there gathered. Chron., LXX., and Arabic have he gathered.

All the elders.—The representatives of the nation.

(2) And the prophets.—That is, the numerous members of the prophetic order, who at this time formed a distinct class, repeatedly mentioned in the writings of Jeremiah (e.g., Jer. ii. 8, v. 31, vi. 13), as well as of older prophets. The Targum has the scribes, the epanagwrtis of the New Testament, a class which hardly existed so early. Chron. and some MSS. reads the Levites. (See Note on 2 Chron. xxxiv. 30.)

All the men of Judah ... inhabitants of Jerusalem ... the people.—A natural hyperbole. Of course the Temple court would not contain the entire population.

And he read.—Perhaps the king himself; but not necessarily. (Comp., e.g., chap. xxiii. 10, 16.) Qui facit per alium facit per se. The priests were charged to read the Law to the people (Deut. xxxi. 9, seq.) at the end of every seven years.
and great: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the LORD. (3) And the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all their heart and all their soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood to the covenant.

(4) And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring forth out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the grove, and for all the host of heaven: and he burned them without Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them unto Beth-el. (5) And he put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the 3 planets, and to all the host of heaven. (6) And he brought out the grove from the house of the LORD, without Jerusalem, unto the brook Kidron, and burned it at the brook Kidron, and cast the powder thereof upon the graves of the children of the people. (7) And he brake down the houses of the sodomites, that were by the house of the LORD, where the women wove hangings for the grove.

Small and great—i.e., high and low. (Comp. Ps. lix. 2.)

By a pillar.—On the stand or dais (chap. xi. 14).

A covenant.—The covenant, which had so often been broken. Josiah pledged himself “to walk after the LORD,” and imposed a similar pledge on the people.

Stood to the covenant—i.e., entered it; took the same pledge as the king. (Comp. chap. xviii. 28.)

The priests of the second order.—Thunus is probably right in reading the singular, the priest of the second rank, i.e., the high priest’s deputy, after the Targum, unless the heads of the twenty-four classes be intended (“the chief priests” of the New Testament). (See also chap. xxv. 18.)

The keepers of the door (threshold).—The three chief warders (chap. xxv. 18.)

Out of the temple—i.e., out of the principal chamber or holy place.

For the grove.—For the Baal Asherah (so in verses 6, 7, 15 also).

Burned them.—According to the law of Deut. vii. 25; xii. 3. (Comp. 1 Chron. xiv. 12.)

Without Jerusalem.—As unclean.

In the fields of Kidron.—North-east of the city, where the ravine expands considerably. (Comp. Jer. xxxi. 42; also 1 Kings xv. 13.)

Carried the ashes of them unto Beth-el.—This is undoubtedly strange, and Chronicles says nothing about it. If the ashes of the vessels were sent to Beth-el, why not also those of the idols themselves, and the fragments of the altars (verses 6–12)? The text appears to be corrupt.

He put down.—Syria and Arabic, he slew.

The idolatrous priests.—The hêmârim, or black-robed priests (Hos. x. 5, of the priests of the calf-worship at Beth-el). Only occurring besides in Zeph. i. 4. Here, as in the passage of Hosea, the word denotes the unlawful priests of Jehovah, as contrasted with those of the Baal, mentioned in the next place. Whether the term really means black-robed, as Kimchi explains, is questionable. Priests used to wear white throughout the ancient world, except on certain special occasions. Gesenius derives it from a root meaning black, but explains, one clad in black, i.e., a mourner, an acetic, and so a priest. Perhaps the true derivation is from another root, meaning to weave; weaver of spells or charms; as magic was an invariable concomitant of false worship. (Comp. chap. xvii. 17, xxi. 6.) It is a regular word for priest in Syriac (chîmâra; Ps. xx. 4; and the Ep. to the Heb., passim.)

To burn incense.—So Syriac, Vulg., and Arabic. The Hebrew has, and he burnt incense. Probably it should be plural, as in the Vatican LXX. and Targum.

In the places round about.—1 Kings vi. 29.

Unto the sun. Unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the 3 planets, and to all the host of heaven. (7) And he brake down the houses of the sodomites, that were by the house of the LORD, where the women wove hangings for the grove.
II. KINGS, XXIII.

Hilkiah Destroys the High Places.

(9) And he brought all the priests out of the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from Geba to Beer-sheba, and brake down the high places of the gates that were in the entering in of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which were on a man's left hand at the gate of the city. (9) Nevertheless the priests of the high places came not up to the altar of the Lord in Jerusalem,

but they did eat of the unleavened bread among their brethren.

10 And he defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech. (11) And he took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun, at the entering in of the house of the Lord, by the chamber of Nathan-melech the chamberlain,

last infamy of Canaanite nature-worship had been established in the very sanctuary of Jehovah. The revolt of Judah could go no farther.

Where the women wove hangings for the grove.—Wherein the women used to weave tents for the Asherah. The word we have rendered cabibis and tents is b̄bbim, "houses." What is meant in the latter case is not clear. Perhaps the female harlots attached to the Temple wove portable tabernacles or sanctuaries of the dead for sale to the worshippers; or tents (screens) for their own foul rites may be meant.

(8) And he brought all the priests ... Josiah caused all the priests of the local sanctuaries of Jehovah to migrate to Jerusalem, and polluted the high places to which they had been attached, in order to get rid of the illegitimate worship once for all.

From Geba.—The present Jeba, near the ancient Ramah (1 Kings xv. 22).

To Beer-sheba.—Where was a specially frequented high place (Amos v. 5, viii. 15; and Note on 1 Chron. xxxiv. 6).

The high places of the gates.—Altars erected within the gates, that persons entering or leaving the city might make an offering to ensure success in their business.

That were in the entering in ...—Thenius renders, (the high place) which was at the entry of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, (as well as) that which was on the left in the city gate. But this assumption of two localities is very precarious. The Authorised Version appears to be correct (a similar repetition of the relative referring to the same antecedent occurs in verse 13). Joshua is an unknown personage, and it is not clear whether "the gate of Joshua" was a gate of the city named after him, or the great gate of his residence; nor is it certain that "the gate of the city" was that now called the Jaffa Gate. It is possible that the governor's residence lay near the principal gate of the city, on the left as one entered. Several "high places" stood in the open space in front of it, between it and the city gate. These would naturally be called "the high places of the gates."

(9) Nevertheless ... came not up to the altar.—Only the priests of the high places used not to offer at the altar. They were not permitted to do so, being considered to be incapacitated for that office by their &c.

Eat of the unleavened bread.—Omit of the. The phrase is a technical one, meaning to live upon offerings. (See Lev. ii. 1—11, vi. 16—18, x. 12.) These irregular priests were probably employed in the inferior duties of the Temple.

(10) Topheth.—Heb. the Topheth; i.e., the burning place, or hearth, if the word be rightly derived from the Persian toften, "to burn." The Hebrew word, however, has been so modified as to suggest a derivation from topoh, "to spit;" so that the epithet would mean "the abomination." (Comp. verse 13.) (Comp. also Job xvii. 6; Isa. xxx. 33; and the Coptic таф, "spittle.")

The valley of the children of Hinnom.—Elsewhere called "the valley of the son of Hinnom," and "the valley of Hinnom" (Josh. xv. 5; Jer. vii. 31, 32). Simonis plausibly explained the word Hinnom as meaning shrieking or moaning (from the Arabic hanna, arguta voce gemituit, fleuit). "The valley of the sons of shrieking" would be a good name for the accursed spot. (Thenius suggests Wimmer-Kinds-Thatal.)

That no man ...—See Note on chap. xvi. 3.

To Molech.—Heb. to the Molech (Molech is another form of melech, "king"). In 1 Kings xi. 7, the god of the Ammonites is called Molech, but elsewhere, as in verse 13, Milcom, another variation of the same word. The feminine molecheth, "queen," occurs as a proper name in 1 Chron. vii. 18.

(11) He took away.—The same word as "put down" (verses 5). Here, as there, the Syriac and Arabic render, "he killed," which is possibly a correct gloss.

The horses ... the sun.—These horses drew "the chariots of the sun" in solemn processions held in honour of that deity. (See Herod. i. 189; Xenoph. Anab. iv. 5, 34, seq.; Quint. Curt. iii. 3, 11.) Horses were also sacrificed to the sun. The sun's apparent course through the heavens, poetically conceived as the progress of a fiery chariot and steeds, explains these usages.

Had given—i.e., had dedicated.

At the entering in of the house of the Lord.—This appears right. Along with the next clause it states where the sacred horses were kept; viz., in the outer court of the Temple, near the entrance. (So the LXX. and Vulgate. This rendering involves a different pointing of the Hebrew text—mēbō for mibbō. The latter, which is the ordinary reading, gives the sense, "so that they should not come into the house, &c.

By the chamber.—Rather, towards the cell; further defining the position of the stalls. As to the cells in the outer court, see the Note on 1 Chron. ix. 26; Ezek. xlv. 45 seq.

Nathan-melech the chamberlain, or, eunuch, is otherwise unknown. He may have been charged with the care of the sacred horses and chariots. Melech was a title of the sun-god in one of his aspects (verse 10.)
The Defilement of the

II. KINGS, XXIII.

High Places and Groves.

which was in the suburbs, and burned the chariots of the sun with fire. (12) And the altars that were on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which 4 Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the Lord, did the king beat down, and brake them down from thence, and cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron. (13) And the high places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of 2 the mount of corruption, which Solomon the king of Israel had builded for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, and for Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon did the king defile. (14) And he brake in pieces the 3 images, and cut down the groves, and filled their places with the bones of men.

(15) Moreover the altar that was at Beth-el, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he brake down, and burned the high place, and stamped it small to powder, and burned the grove. (16) And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones of the out of the sepulchres, and burned them upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the Lord which the man of God proclaimed, who pro-

Which was in the suburbs.—Rather, which was in the cloisters or portico. Perēshōrm is a Persian word explained in the Note on 1 Chron. xxvi. 18.

Burned the chariots . . . —Literally, and the chariots of the sun he burnt. The treatment of the chariots is thus contrasted with that of the horses. If the whole had been, as some expositors have thought, a work of art in bronze or other material, placed over the gateway, no such difference would have been made.

And the altars that were on the top (roof) of the upper chamber of Ahaz.—The roof of an upper chamber in one of the Temple courts, perhaps built over one of the gateways (comp. Jer. xxxv. 4), appears to be meant. The altars were for star-worship, which was especially practised on housetops. (Comp. Jer. xix. 13, xxxii. 29; Zeph. i. 5.)

Brake them down from thence.—The Targum has removed from thence; the LXX. pulled them down from thence (εψανασε). The Hebrew probably means ran from thence; marking the haste with which the work was done. The clause thus adds a vivid touch to the narrative. It is hardly necessary to alter the points with Kimchi and Thenius, so as to read, he caused to run from thence; i.e., hurried them away.

Cast the dust of them.—Over the wall of the Temple enclosure, into the ravine beneath.

The high places that were before the city . . . —See 1 Kings xi. 5—8. "Before" means "to the east of," because to determine the cardinal points, one faced the sunrise. The right hand was then the east of, because to determine the cardinal points, one faced the sunrise. The right hand was then the east of the mount, and sent, and took the bones of the out of the sepulchres, and burned them upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the Lord which the man of God proclaimed, who pro-

The mount of corruption.—The southern summit of the Mount of Olives was so-called, because of the idolatry there practised. It still bears the name of the "Hill of Offence," derived from the Vulg., "moens offensionis." (The word rendered "corruption," mash­hith, may originally have meant "anointing," from māšāh "to anoint," and have simply referred to the olive oil there produced. The name would thus be equivalent to the German Cölberg. In later times the term was so modified as to express detestation of idol-worship.)

Did the king defile.—As it is not said that they were pulled down, these high places may have been merely sacred sites on the mountain, consisting of a levelled surface of rock, with holes scooped in them for receiving libations, &c. Such sites have been found in Palestine; and it is hardly conceivable that chapels erected by Solomon for the worship of Ashtoreth, Chemosh, and Milcom, would have been spared by such a king as Hezekiah, who even did away with the high places dedicated to Jehovah (chap. xviii. 3).

The images . . . the groves.—The pillars . . . the asherahs. These pillars and sacred trees may have been set up at the high places mentioned in the last verse; but the Hebrew construction does not prove this, for comp. verse 10. The reference is probably general.

Their places.—Their place or station; a technical term for the position of an idol (the Heb. maqôm, equivalent to Sabean maqêmum, and Arabic mîqān), which is still the common designation of holy sites in Palestine.

The altar . . . and the high place.—The and is wanting in the Hebrew, LXX., and Targum. It is supplied in the Syriac, Vulgate, and Arabic, correctly as regards the sense; see below. Grammatically, "the high place" may be in apposition to "the altar," and may include it, as being a more general term.

Which Jeroboam the son of Nebat . . . — See 1 Kings xii. 28 seq.

Burned the high place.—Was it, then, a wooden structure, as Thenius supposes? Perhaps it resembled a dolmen (many hundred such have been found in Palestine); and fire may have been kindled under it, by way of cracking the huge slabs of stone of which it was built. The fragments might then be more easily crushed.

Burned the grove.—The present text is, burned an asherah. Perhaps the article has fallen out; especially as this is not the only indication that the text has suffered in this place. Thenius understands the word in the general sense of an idol-image, comparing chap. xvii. 29 seq. But it is doubtful whether the word Asherah is so used. It is noteworthy that the present passage indirectly agrees with Hosea x. 6, for no mention is made of what used to be the chief object of worship at Beth-el; viz., the golden bullock. It had been carried away to Assyria, as the prophet foretold.

(16—18) These verses are supposed by Stahelin to be a fictitious addition of the compiler's. Thenius does not go so far as this, but assumes that the proper sequel
A Solemn Passover.

The Bones of the Prophet of Judah. II. KINGS, XXXIII.

claimed these words. Then he said, What title is that that I see? And the men of the city told him, It is the sepulchre of the man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed these things that thou hast done against the altar of Beth-el.

(19) And all the houses also of the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the Lord to anger, Josiah took away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had done in Beth-el.

(20) And he slew all the priests of the high places that were there upon the altars, and burned men's bones upon them, and returned to Jerusalem.

(21) And the king commanded all the people, saying, Keep the passover unto the Lord your God, as it is written in the book of this covenant. Surely there was not holden such a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah; but in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, wherein this passover was holden to the Lord in Jerusalem.

of 1 Kings xiii. 1—32, has been transferred to this place. He argues that it must be an interpolation here, because (1) the "moreover" of verse 15 (ウェガム) corresponds to the "and...also" (ウェガム) of verse 19, which does not prove much; and because (2) Josiah could not pollute the altar (verse 16) after he had already shattered it in pieces (verse 15). This reasoning is not conclusive, because it is obvious that, as is so often the case, the writer has first told in brief what was done to the altar and high place at Bethel, and then related at length an interesting incident that occurred at the time. In short, the statement of verse 15 is anticipatory.

(19) Turned himself. So that he caught sight of the tombs on the hill-side opposite—not on the hill where the high place was.

The man of God proclaimed. Some words appear to have fallen out of the Hebrew text here, for the LXX. adds, "when Jeroboam stood in the feast at the altar. And he returned and lifted up his eyes upon the grave of the man of God." (A transcriber's eye wandered from one "man of God" to the other.) Josiah returned, when on the point of going away.

(17) What title is this? What is yonder monument, or memorial stone? Ezek. xxxix. 15, "sign." Jeremiah uses the same term of a sign-post (Jer. xxi. 21, "waymarks"). (See 1 Kings xiii. 29 seq.)

Let him alone. Or, Let him rest.

So they let his bones alone. A different verb, And they suffered his bones to escape, sell, disturbance.

With the bones of the prophet. See 1 Kings xiii. 31, 32.

That came out of Samaria. This simply designates the old prophet who deceived the Judean man of God, as a citizen of the Northern kingdom, which was called Samaria, after its capital.

(19) The houses also of the high places—i.e., temples or chapels attached to the high places.

Josiah took away. Comp. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 6, from which it appears that the king's zeal carried him as far as Naphtali. The question has been asked, how it was that Josiah was able to proceed thus beyond the limits of his own territory. It is possible that, as a vassal of Assyria, he enjoyed a certain amount of authority over the old domains of the ten tribes. We have no record of either fact, but his opposition to Necho favours the idea that he recognised the Assyrian sovereign as his suzerain. Moreover, it is in itself likely that the remnant of Israel would be drawn towards Judah and its king as the surviving representatives of the past glories of their race, and would sympathise in his reformation, just as the Samaritans, in the times of the return, were eager to participate in the rebuilding of the Temple. (Comp. 2 Chron. xxiv. 9.) Another supposition is that, as the fall of the Assyrian empire was imminent, no notice was taken of Josiah's proceedings in the west.

(20) He slew. He slaughtered. A contrast to his mild treatment of the priests of the Judaean high places (verses 8, 9). They were Levites, and these heathenish priests. (Comp. Deut. xvii. 2—5.) Thus was fulfilled the prophecy of 1 Kings xiii. 2. (Thenius considers the event historical, because that prophecy is undoubtedly modelled upon it.)

(21) Keep the passover. Hold a passover (verse 22). (Comp. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 1—19 for a more detailed account of this unique celebration.) Josiah had the precedent of Hezekiah for signallising his religious revolution by a solemn passover (2 Chron. xxx. 1).

In the book of this covenant. Rather, in this book of the covenant (verse 2). The book was that of Hilkiah had found in the Temple, and which gave the impulse to the whole reforming movement. (The LXX. and Vulg. read, in the book of this covenant—a mere mistake.)

(22) Surely there was not holden. For there was not holden (a passover) like this passover. This and the next verse constitute a parenthetic remark, in which the historian emphasises the phrase, "As it is written in this book of the covenant," No passover, from the time of the Judges onward had been celebrated in such strict conformity to the prescriptions of the Law. The LXX. omits the particle of comparison: ἕως ὅτι ἤκρατη τὰ ναῦρα τῶν. On the ground of this difference, and the one mentioned in the Note on verse 21, Thenius thinks it not improbable that the text of Kings has been altered to bring into harmony with the account in Chronicles about the restoration of the feast of the passover by Hezekiah—a weighty inference from such slight data. The chronicler repeats this very verse at the close of his narrative of Josiah's passover (2 Chron. xxxv. 18).

(23) Wherein. Omit this word. As Ewald says, the meaning of these two verses is, that the passover was never so celebrated before, especially as regards (1) the offerings over and above the paschal lamb (Deut. xvi. 2), and (2) the strict unity of the place of this
Moreover the workers with familiar spirits, and the wizards, and the images, and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord. (25) And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him. (26) Notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the 2 provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal. (27) And the Lord said, I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there. (28) Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? (29) In his days Pharaoh-nechoh king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates: and king Josiah went against him; and he

Because of all the provocations that Manasseh... —Comp. the predictions of Jeremiah (Jer. xv. 4, xxv. 2 seq.) and Zephaniah; and see the Note on 2 Chron. xxxiv. 33.

(25-30) Josiah’s end. The historical abstract broken off at chap. xxii. 2 is now continued. (Comp. the more detailed account in 2 Chron. xxxv. 20 seq.)

Pharaoh-nechoh.—Necho II, the successor of Psammetichus, and the sixth king of the 26th or Saitic dynasty, called Neb-kh by Herodotus (ii. 158, 159; iv. 42); he reigned circ. 611–605 B.C., but is not mentioned in the Assyrian records, so far as they are at present known to us.

The king of Assyria. —It is sometimes assumed that Necho’s expedition was directed against “the then ruler of what had been the Assyrian empire” (Thomius and others), and that the king in question was Nabopolassar, the conqueror of Nineveh, who became king of Babylon in 626–625 B.C. If the fall of Nineveh preceded or coincided with this last event, then Nabopolassar must be intended by the historian here. But if, as the chronology of Eusebius and Jerome represents, Cyraxes the Mede took Nineveh in 609–608 B.C., or, according to the Armenian chronicle, opud Eusebios, in 608–607 B.C., then Necho’s expedition (circ. 609 B.C.) was really directed against a king of Assyria in the strict sense. After the death of Assurbanipal (626 B.C.) it appears that two or three kings reigned at Nineveh, namely, Assur-idil-ilani-ukinni, Bel-sum-iskun and Esar-haddon II. (the Saracen of Abydenus and Syncellus). Nineveh must have fallen before 606 B.C., as Assyria does not occur in the list of countries mentioned by Jeremiah (Jer. xxv. 19–26) in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, i.e., 606 B.C. The probable date of its fall is 607 B.C. A year or so later Necho made a second expedition, this time against the king of Babylon, but was utterly defeated at Carchemish. (See Schrader, K. A. T., pp. 357–361.) Josephus says that Necho went to wage war with the Medes and Babylonians, who had just put an end to the Assyrian empire, and that his object was to win the dominion of Asia.

King Josiah went against him. —Probably as a vassal of Assyria, and as resenting Necho’s trespass on territory which he regarded as his own. The Syrac

festival (Deut. xvi. 5). The assumption that no pass-over had ever been held before (De Wette), is obsolete, even among “advanced critics,” and does not merit serious discussion.

Moreover the workers... —After abolishing public idolatry, Josiah attacked the various forms of private superstition. The workers with familiar spirits. —The necromancers (46th; 1 Sam. xxviii. 3 seq.). (See chap. xxvi. 6.)

Images.—See margin; and Gen. xxxi. 19; Judges xvii. 5; 1 Sam. xix. 13; Zech. x. 2.

The idols. The dunglings. Gesenius prefers to render, idol-blocks; Ewald, doll-images. (See chap. xvii. 12.) That were spied (seen). —A significant expression. Many idols were, doubtless, concealed by their worshippers.

Put away.—Or, put out, did away with (Deut. xiii. 6, xvii. 7); strictly, consumed. (See the law in Lev. xx. 27; Deut. xviii. 9, 10.)

And like unto him was there no king before him. —Comp. chap. xviii. 5, 6, where a similar eulogy is passed upon Hezekiah. It is not, perhaps, necessary to insist upon any formal contradiction which may appear to result from a comparison of the two passages. A writer would not be careful to measure his words by the rule of strict proportion in such cases. Still, as the preceding account indicates, the Mosaic law does not appear to have been so rigorously carried out by any preceding king as by Josiah. (See Note on 2 Chron. xxx. 26.)

With all his heart. —An echo of Deut. vi. 5. That Josiah’s merits did not merely consist in a strict observance of the legitimate worship and ritual, is evident from Jer. xxii. 15, 16, where he is praised for his righteousness as a judge.

The historian naturally adds these remarks to prepare the way for what he has soon to relate—the final ruin of the kingdom; and probably also to suggest an explanation of what must have seemed to him and his contemporaries a very mysterious stroke of providence, the untimely end of the good king Josiah.

The fierceness of his great wrath... kindled. —The great heat of his wrath, wherewith his wrath burnt.
slew him at Megiddo, where he had been seen
him. (30) And his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo, and
brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.

(31) Jehoahaz was twenty and three years when he began to reign; and he reigned three months in Judah.

And his mother's name was Hamutal,

adds: "to fight against him: and Pharaoh said to him, Not against thee have I come; return from me. And he hearkened not to Pharaoh, and Pharaoh smote him." This may once have formed part of the Hebrew text, but is more likely a gloss from Chronicles.

At Megiddo.—In the plain of Jezreel (1 Kings iv. 12). (Comp. Zech. xii. 11.) Herodotus calls it Magdolus (ii. 159). The fact that this was the place of battle shows that Necho had not marched through the interior of Palestine, but had taken the shortest route over sea, and landed at Accho (Acre). Otherwise, Josiah would not have had to go so far north to meet him.

When he had seen him.—At the outset of the encounter, as we might say, "the moment he got sight of him." According to the account in Chronicles, which is derived from a different source, Josiah was wounded by the Egyptian archers, and carried in a dying state to Jerusalem (2 Chron. xxxv. 22 seq.). Theophrastus thinks that Jer. xv. 7—9 was spoken on occasion of Josiah's departure with his army from the north, and that the prophet's metaphor, "her sun went down while it was yet day," refers to the eclipse of Thales, which had recently happened, 610 B.C. (Herod. i. 74, 103).

(30) And his servants carried him...—See Notes 2 Chron. xxxv. 24.

The people of the land.—Thenius says they were the soldiery who had fled to Jerusalem; but this is doubtful.

Took Jehoahaz.—He was not the eldest son (see verse 36), but he may have been thought a more capable prince amid the emergencies of the time, although Jer. xxii. 10 seq. shows that this estimate was fallacious.

The Reign of Jehoahaz (31-34).

(31) Jehoahaz.—Called Shalum (Jer. xxii. 11; 1 Chron. iii. 15), which may have been his name before his accession. (Comp. verse 34, xxiv. 17.) Hitzig suggests that he was so called by Jeremiah in allusion to his brief reign, as if he were a second Shalum (chap. xv. 13). It is against this that Shallum was not a Judean prince, but an obscure adventurer who usurped the throne of Samaria a hundred and fifty years previously, so that the allusion would not be very clear.

Hamutal.—"Akin to dew." (Comp. Abital. "father of dew," or perhaps, "the father is dew.") Tal, however, may be a divine name; the meaning then is, "Tal is a kinsman." (Comp. Manuel, "El is a kinsman.")

(32) And he did that which was evil...—Comp. Ezekiel's lamentation for the princes of Judah, where Jehoahaz is called a young lion that "devoureth men," alluding to his oppressive capacity and shameless abuse of power (Ezek. xix. 1—4).

(33) And Pharaoh-nechoh put him in bands...—See Note on 2 Chron. xxxvi. 3. The LXX. here has "removed him," but the other versions "bound him."

That he might not reign.—This is the reading of the Hebrew margin, some MSS., and the LXX., Vulg., and Targum. The Syriac and Arabic have, "when he reigned," which is the ordinary Hebrew text. The original text of the whole was perhaps this: "and Pharaoh-nechoh bound him at Riblah...and removed him from reigning in Jerusalem;" i.e., he threw him into bonds, and pronounced his deposition.

(Comp. the construction in 1 Kings xv. 13.) Riblah (now Riblah) lay in a strong position on the Orontes, commanding the caravan route from Palestine to the Euphrates. Necho had advanced so far, after the battle of Megiddo, and taken up his quarters there, as Nebuchadnezzar did afterwards (chap. xxv. 6; 20, 21). Josephus relates that Necho summoned Jehoahaz to his camp at Riblah. The passage, Ezek. xix. 4, suggests that he got the king of Judah into his power by fraud: "he was taken in their pit." It used to be supposed, on the strength of Herod. ii. 159, that Necho captured Jerusalem. What Herodotus says is this: "And engaging the Syrians on foot at Magdolus, he came to Egypt, and died there.­The Hebrew word means "fine. The Vulg.

Tribute.—The Hebrew word means "fine. The Vulg.

A talent of gold.—So Chronicles. The LXX. here reads, "an hundred talents of gold (a transcriber's error). The Syriac and Arabic, ten talents, which may be right. (Comp. chap. xviii. 14, where the proportion of silver to gold is ten to one.)

Turned his name to Jehoiakim.—A slight change. Eliakim is "El seteth up;" Jehoiakim, "Jah seteth up." Necho meant to signify that the new king was his creature. Eliakim, the elder son, may have paid court to Necho; or the Egyptian may have deposed Jehoahaz, as elected without his consent, and perhaps as likely to prove a stronger king than his brother. Necho may have fancied a resemblance between the name Yahâ (i.e., Jah, so it was then pronounced) and Ash, the name of the Egyptian moon-god. (See Note on 1 Chron. iv. 18.)

And he came to Egypt, and died there.—LXX. and Vulg. as Chronicles: and he brought him to Egypt (by a slight change of the pointing in the Hebrew.) Jeremiah had foretold the fact (Jer. xxiii. 10—12).
akim, and took Jehoahaz away: and he came to Egypt, and died there. (33) And Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh; but he taxed the land to give the money according to the commandment of Pharaoh: he exacted the silver and the gold of the people of the land, of every one according to his taxation, to give it unto Pharaoh-nechoh.  

(36) Jehoiakim was twenty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother’s name was Zebudah, the daughter of Pedaiah of Runah. (37) And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his fathers had done.

**THE REIGN OF JEOHIAKIM** (verse 35—chap. xxiv. 7.)

(35) And Jehoiakim gave. —And the silver and the gold did Jehoiakim give . . . He had to pay for his elevation. The raising of the fine of verse 33 is declared home by the news of the elevation. The raising of the fine of verse 33 is declared home by the news of the elevation.

But he taxed . . . The king kept his pledge to Pharaoh, but not out of his own means. (Comp. Jer. xxv. 1 with chap. xxv. 8.)

His mother’s name was Zebudah. —So the Hebrew margin and Targum. Hebrew text, Syriac, Vulg., Arabic Zebidah. Zebidah may have been the real name. The mother of Jehoiakim was Hamutal (verse 31). Thus Josiah had at least two wives, and probably more. (Comp. chap. xxiv. 15.) He could not have been over fourteen when he begot Jehoiakim.

Runah.—Perhaps Aramah, near Shechem (Judg. ix. 41), as Josephus has Abunah. This is interesting as a slight indication that Josiah’s power extended over the territory of the former kingdom of Samaria.

(37) He did that which was evil . . . Jeremiah represents him as luxurious, covetous, and violent (Jer. xxii. 13 seq.). He murdered Urijah a prophet (Jer. xxvi. 20 seq.). Ewald thinks that he introduced Egyptian animal-worship (Ezek. viii. 7 seq.), which is rendered highly probable by his relation of dependence on Neco. (Comp. the introduction of Assyrian star-worship under Ahaz.)

**XXIV.**

(1) In his days.—In his fifth or sixth year. In Jehoiakim’s fourth year Nebuchadnezzar defeated Neco at Carchemish (Jer. xlv. 2), and was suddenly called home by the news of the death of Nabopolassar his father, whom he succeeded on the throne of Babylon in the same year (Jer. xxv. 1). From Jer. xxxvi. 9 we learn that towards the end of Jehoiakim’s fifth year the king of Babylon was expected to invade the land. When this took place, Nebuchadnezzar humbled Jehoiakim, who had probably made his submission, by putting him in chains, and carrying off some of the Temple treasures (2 Chron. xxxvi. 6, 7). Left in the possession of his throne as a vassal of Babylon, Jehoiakim paid tribute three years, and then tried to throw off the yoke.

(2) And the Lord sent against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by his servants the prophets. (3) Surely at the commandment of the Lord came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did; (4) and also for the innocent blood that he shed: for he...
Death of Jehoiakim.

II. KINGS, XXIV.

Jehoiachin Succeeds Him.

filled Jerusalem with innocent blood; which the Lord would not pardon.

(5) Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim ...—Assuming with Hitzig that the passage Hab. ii. 9—14 refers to him, we gather that he severely oppressed his people by his exactions of forced labour upon the defences of Jerusalem. Thenius concludes from the words, "that he may set his nest on high," &c., that Jehoiakim strengthened and enlarged the fortress on Ophel erected by Manasseh. (Comp. also Jer. xxii. 13; 17.)

Are they not written ...—The last reference to this authority. Baird concludes that the work did not extend beyond the reign of Jehoiakim.

(6) So Jehoiakim slept with his fathers.—The usual notice of the king's burial is omitted, and the omission is significant, considered in the light of Jeremiah's prophecy: "Thus saith the Lord concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah: they shall not lament for him ... He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem" (Jer. xxii. 18, 19; comp. chap. xxxvi. 30). Jehoiakim appears to have been slain in an encounter with the bands of freebooters mentioned in verse 2, so that his body was left the dead where it fell, all his followers having perished with him. Ewald supposes that he was lured out of Jerusalem to a pretended conference with the Chaldeans, and then treacherously seized, and, as he proved a refractory prisoner, slain, and his body denied the last honours, his family craving its restoration in vain. (The words of the text do not necessarily imply a natural and peaceable death, as Thenius alleges, but simply death without further qualification.)

(7) And the king of Egypt came not again any more ...—The verse indicates the posture of political affairs at the time when Jehoiachin succeeded his father. Necho had been deprived by Nebuchadnezzar of all his conquests, and so crippled that he durst not venture again beyond his own borders. Thus Judah was left, denuded of all external help, to face the consequences of its revolt from Babylon, which speedily overtook it (verse 10).

From the river (torrent) of Egypt—i.e., the Wady-el-Arish. The details of this campaign of Nebuchadnezzar are not recorded. It is clear, from the statement before us, that before the battle of Carchemish Necho had made himself master of the whole of Syria and the country east of the Jordan.


(8) Jehoiachin.—"Jah will confirm." Four or five different forms of this name occur in the documents. Ezek. i. 2 gives the contraction Josiachin. In Jeremiah we find a popular transposition of the two elements, thus: Jehonjahu (once, viz., Jer. xxiv. 1, Heb.), and usually the shorter form, Jechoniah (Jer. xxvii. 20; Esther ii. 6); which is further abridged into Coniah (Heb., Chonjahu) in Jer. xxii. 24, 25. Ewald thinks this last the original name; but Hengstenberg supposes that the prophet altered the name, so as to make of it a "Jah will confirm" without the "will," in order to foreshadow the fate which awaited this king.

Nehushta.—Referring, perhaps, to her complexion (as we say "bronzed").

Elnathan.—See Jer. xxvi. 22, xxvi. 12, 25; one of Jehoiakim's princes.

(9) And he did that which was evil ...—Ezek. xix. 5—9 refers to him, according to Keil and Ewald; but Thenius asks how, in his position, and during his brief reign of ninety (? days, a considerable number of which must probably be allowed for the siege, he could possibly do what is there described. Hitzig refers the passage to Zedekiah; and so Thenius. Josephus calls Jehoiachin "naturally good and just;" probably misunderstanding the words of Jer. xxii. 24, 28.

(10) At that time.—In the spring of the year (2 Chron. xxxvi. 16). Thenius infers from Jer. xiii. 19 ("the cities of the south land are shut up"), that Nebuchadnezzar drew a cordon across that part of the country, to cut off any succours from Egypt.

The servants—i.e., generals. (Comp. chap. xix. 6.)

Was besieged.—See margin; and chap. xxv. 2; Jer. iii. 5.

(11) Did besiege.—Were besieging. The king arrived after the siege had begun.
his servants did besiege it. (12) And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers; and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign. (13) And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king’s house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the Lord, as the Lord had said. (14) And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land. (15) And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king’s mother, and the king’s wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, those carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. (16) And all the men of might, even seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand, all that were strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.

Came against.—Came unto.

(15) And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out of the city, when he was taken in the king of the defence, he threw himself upon the clemency of Nebuchadnezzar. The queen-mother (Jer. xxii. 2) and all his grandees and courtiers accompanied the king, who probably hoped to be allowed to keep his throne as a vassal of Babylon. Took him—i.e., as a prisoner.

In the eighth year of his (i.e., Nebuchadnezzar’s) reign.—This exactly tallies with the data of Jer. xxiv. 1, xvi. 2.

(16) And he carried out thence . . . It is not said, but implied, that Nebuchadnezzar entered the city. He may have done so at the time of his invasion under Jehoiakim (verse 11). On that occasion he had carried off some of the sacred vessels (2 Chron xxxvi. 7; Dan. i. 2, v. 2, 3; comp. Ezra i. 7 seq.). It is certainly surprising to find that anything was left in the Temple treasury after the repeated spoliations which it had undergone. The form of the verb is different from that in verse 14. We might render: “Yea, he carried away;” for verses 15, 16 simply give the particulars of what was stated generally in verse 14. In the present verse the “princes” are defined.

He carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king’s mother.—Fulfillment of Jer. xxii. 24—27.

The mighty of the land.—So the Targum, “the magnates of the land.” All who could do so, must have taken refuge in Jerusalem at the approach of the Chaldean army.

(16) And all the men of might.—“The mighty men of valour” of verse 14. (The words depend on the verb, “he carried away,” in verse 14.) As there were 7,000 of these, and 1,000 “craftsmen and smiths,” and the total number of the exiles was 10,000, there were 2,000 belonging to the aristocratic classes. Jer. li. 28 gives a total of 3,023.

Even them the king of Babylon brought. —Literally, the whole, warriors and doers of battle. This clause refers to both those which precede, and it states that the 8,000 were all men in their prime, and trained for war. Literally, the whole, warriors and doers of battle. This clause refers to both those which precede, and it states that the 8,000 were all men in their prime, and trained for war. All that were strong and apt for war.—Literally, the whole, warriors and doers of battle. This clause refers to both those which precede, and it states that the 8,000 were all men in their prime, and trained in the use of weapons (Thenius). But may not the term “strong” (gibborim, “heroes,” “warriors”) refer to the 7,000 as actual fighting men; and the phrase “makers of war” denote the craftsmen as employed in forging weapons and constructing defences? (The Syriac reads, and all the men that made war.)

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All that were strong and apt for war.—Literally, the whole, warriors and doers of battle. This clause refers to both those which precede, and it states that the 8,000 were all men in their prime, and trained in the use of weapons (Thenius). But may not the term “strong” (gibborim, “heroes,” “warriors”) refer to the 7,000 as actual fighting men; and the phrase “makers of war” denote the craftsmen as employed in forging weapons and constructing defences? (The Syriac reads, and all the men that made war.)
Zedekiah rebelled.

II. KINGS, XXV.

CHAPTER XXV.—(1) And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it; and they built forts against it round about. (2) And the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. (3) And on the ninth day of the fourth month the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people.

And his mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. (19) And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. (20) For through the anger of the Lord it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

And it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it; and they built forts against it round about. (2) And the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. (3) And on the ninth day of the fourth month the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people who were inspired by the negotiations may be inferred from the prophecy of Hananiah (Jer. xxviii.). Jeremiah opposed the project instigated by Zedekiah, who was coming to the help of Judah, as Sennacherib had done (Jer. xxxiv. 7; comp. 2 Kings xviii. 13, xix. 8). Zedekiah must have prepared for the siege, as it lasted a year and a half.

And in the eleventh year...tenth day.—Comp. the similarly exact dates in verses 3 and 8. Ezek. iv. 2, xvii. 27; xxi. 4, xxvi. 8. Its meaning is some kind of siege work, as appears from the context in each case; but what precisely is not clear. The LXX. here has "wall" (τεῖχος); Syriac, "palisade" (qâlgănîm, i.e., ἕχοντα), "forts."—The Hebrew word (דַּיָּק) occurs in Ezek. iv. 2, xvii. 27; xxi. 4, xxvi. 8. Its meaning is some kind of siege work, as appears from the context in each case; but what precisely is not clear. The LXX. here has "wall" (τεῖχος); Syriac, "palisade" (qâlgănîm, i.e., ἕχοντα).

Unto the eleventh year.—The siege lasted altogether one year, five months, and twenty-seven days (verse 1 compared with verse 9). The Chaldeans raised the siege for a time, and marched against Pharaoh-Hophra, who was coming to the help of the Jews (Jer. xxv. 5 seq.; comp. Ezek. xvi. 17, xxi. 20 seq.)

On the ninth day of the fourth month.—The text is supplemented from Jer. xxxix. 2, iii. 6. The Syriac, however, has, "And in the eleventh year of King Zedekiah, in the fifth month, on the ninth day of the month, the famine prevailed," &c.; which may be original. (Comp. verse 1.)

The famine prevailed.—Not that the scarcity was first felt on that day, but that it then had reached a climax, so that defence was no longer possible. The horrors of the siege are referred to in Lam. ii. 11 seq., ix. 3-10; Ezek. x. 10; Baruch ii. 3. As in the famine of Samaria and the last siege of Jerusalem, parents ate their own offspring. (Comp. the prophetic threats of Lev. xxvi. 29; Deut. xxviii. 53 seq.; Jer. xxv. 2 seq.; xxvi. 13; Ezek. iv. 16 seq.)

The people of the land.—The population of the city, especially the families which had crowded into it from the country. Thenius, as usual, insists that the
of the land. (6) And the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the gate between two walls, which is by the king’s garden: (now the Chaldeans were against the city round about:) and the king went the way toward the plain. (5) And the army of the Chaldees pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho; and all his army were scattered from him. (6) So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they 1 gave judgment upon him. (7) And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and 2 put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon.

(8) And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which is the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan, 3 captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem:

militia are meant. But these are the “men of war” (verse 4).

(6) Broken up.—Comp. 2 Chron. xxxii. 1. A breach was made in the wall with battering-rams, such as are depicted in the Assyrian sculptures. The Chaldeans forced their entry on the north side of the city, i.e., they took the Lower City (chap. xxii. 14). This is clear from Jer. xxxix. 3, where it is said that, after effecting an entrance, their generals proceeded to assault “the middle gate,” i.e., the gate in the north wall of Zion, which separated the upper from the lower city. (See also chap. xiv. 13.)

All the men of war fled.—The Hebrew here is defective, for it wants a verb, and mention of the king is implied by what follows. (See Jer. xxxix. 4; lii. 7.) A comparison of these parallels suggests the reading: “And Zedekiah king of Judah and all the men of war fled, and went out of the city by night,” &c.

By the way of the gate between the two walls which is (was) by the king’s garden.—This gate lay at the south end of the Tyropoion, i.e., the glen between Ophel and Zion; and is the same as “the Gate of the Fountain” (Neh. iii. 15). The two walls were necessary for the protection of the Pool of Siloam and the water supply; besides which the point was naturally weak for purposes of defence. Whether “the king’s garden” was within or without the double wall is not clear, probably the latter, as Thenius supposes.

Now the Chaldees . . . round about.—An indication that even by this route the king and his warriors had to break through the enemy’s lines, as the city was completely invested. (Comp. Ezek. xii. 12.)

And the king went.—Some MSS. and the Syriac, and they went. (So Jer. lii. 7; a correction, after the mention of the king had fallen out of the text.)

The way toward the plain.—The Arabah, or valley of the Jordan (Josh. xi. 2; 2 Sam. ii. 29). (5) In the plains of Jericho.—In the neighborhood of Jericho, the Arabah expands to the breadth of eleven or twelve miles. The part west of Jordan was called the “plains” (Arbûth plural of Arabah) of Jericho; and that which lay east of the river was known as the plains of Moab (Josh. iv. 13; Num. xxii. 1). The depression between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Akaba still bears the old name of the Arabah; between the Dead Sea and the Lake of Tiberias it is called the Ghor.

So to the king of Babylon, to Riblah.—Chap. xxiii. 33. Nebuchadnezzar was not present at the storm of Jerusalem (Jer. xxxix. 3). He awaited the result in his headquarters.

And they gave judgment upon him.—Or, brought him to trial. (Comp. Jer. i. 16, iv. 12.) Nebuchadnezzar with the grandees of his court, perhaps including some dependent princes of the country, held a solemn trial of Zedekiah, as a rebel against his liege lord, in which, no doubt, his breach of oath was made prominent (2 Chron. xxxvi. 13; Ezek. xvii. 15, 18). The verb is singular in Jeremiah, and the versions. (See next Note.)

(7) And they slew . . .—The verbs are all singular in Jer. xxxix. 6, and lii. 10, 11; so that the acts in question are attributed directly to Nebuchadnezzar, to whose orders they were due. (So the versions, except that the Targum has “they slew.”) The blinding of Zedekiah need not have been done by the conqueror himself, although in the Assyrian sculptures kings are actually represented as blinding and otherwise torturing their captives. It is no argument against the singular, “he carried him to Babylon,” to say with Thenius that Zedekiah was sent to Babylon at once, while Nebuchadnezzar remained at Riblah. “Qui facet per alium, facit per se.”

The sons.—Who fled with him (Comp. Jer. xli. 10). In Jeremiah it is added that all the nobles or princes of Judah were slain also.

Put out the eyes.—A Babylonian punishment (Herod. vii. 18). This was the meaning of Ezekiel’s prediction: “I will bring him to Babylon . . . yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there” (Ezek. xii. 13).

With fetters of brass.—Literally, with the double brass (2 Chron. xxxiii. 12); i.e., with manacles and fetters, as represented on the Assyrian monuments.

Carried him to Babylon.—Jer. lii. 11; “and put him in prison till the day of his death.” So the Arabic of Kings.

(8) On the seventh day . . .—An error for the tenth day (Jer. lii. 12), one numeral letter having been mistaken for another. The Syriac and Arabic read ninth (perhaps, because, as Thenius suggests, the memorial fasts began on the evening of the ninth day).

According to Josephus the second Temple also was burnt on the tenth of the fifth month (Bell. Jud. vi. 4. 5).

The nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar.—This agrees with Jer. xxxxi. 1, according to which the tenth of Zedekiah was the eighteenth of Nebuchadnezzar.

Nebuzaradan.—A Hebrew transcript of the Babylonian name Nabi-sîr-iddina, “Nebo gave seed.”

Captain of the guard.—Strictly, chief of executioners. (See Gen. xxvii. 36.) This means commander of the Royal Bodyguard, the “Preternorians” of the time; a corps of picked warriors, answering to the “Cherethites and Pelethites,” and the “Carians and Runners” among the Hebrews (chap. xi. 4). Nebuzaradan is not
(9) and he burnt the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's house burnt he with fire. (10) And all the army of the Chaldees, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about.

(11) Now the rest of the people that were left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carry away. (12) But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen.

(13) And a the pillars of brass that were in the house of the LORD, and the bases, and the brazen sea that was in the house of the LORD, did the Chaldees break in pieces, and carried the brass of them to Babylon. (14) And the pots, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away. (15) And the firepans, and the bowls, and such things as were of gold, in gold, and of silver, in silver, the captain of the guard took away. (16) The two pillars, a sea, and the bases which Solomon had made for the house of the LORD; the brass of all these vessels was without weight. (17) The height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits, and the chapter upon it was brass: and the height of the chapter three cubits; and the wreatheon work, and pomegranates upon the chapter round about, all of brass: and like unto these had the second pillar with wreatheon work.

(18) And the captain of the guard took mentioned among the other generals in Jer. xxxix. 3. On this ground, and because his coming is expressly mentioned here, and because a month elapsed between the taking of the city (verse 4) and its destruction (verses 9, 10), Thenius infers that the city of David and the Temple did not at once fall into the hands of the Chaldeans; but were so well defended under the lead of some soldier like Ishmael (verse 23), that Nebuchadnezzar was compelled to despatch a specially distinguished commander to bring the matter to a conclusion. Verses 18-21 certainly appear to favour this view.

A servant.—In Jer. lii., "who stood before the king," probably the original phrase. (Comp. chap. iii. 14, v. 16).

He burnt the house ... king's house. —Which were in the upper city. (There should be a semicolon after "king's house.")

And every great man's house.—Omit man's. The phrase limits the preceding one, "all the houses of Jerusalem," that is to say, "every great house" (2 Chron. xxxvi. 19, "all her palaces"). The common houses were spared for the poor who were left (verse 12).

With the captain.—The proposition, though wanting in the common Hebrew text, is found in many MSS. and the old versions, as well as Jer. lii.

The fugitives that fell away—i.e., the deserters. (See Jer. xxvii. 12, xxvii. 13 seq., xxviii. 3, 17, 19.)

The multitude.—Probably the rank and file of the fighting men (Judges iv. 7). The word is hâmôn, strictly a shouting throng. (The Syrac has "the rest of the army.") Jer. lii. 15, spells the word with the light breathing (âmôn—either a dialectic use, or a mistake, not a distinct word).

Of the poor of the land.—Chap. xxiv. 14 (Comp. Jer. xxxix. 10.)

Husbandmen.—Or, plowmen. The word (Hebrew text, gadîôn) occurs here only. Jer. lii. 16 has a cognate form (yqîḇîm) also unique.

And the pillars of brass.—From this point Jer. xxxix. ceases to be parallel with the present narrative. (See the Notes on 1 Kings vii. 15 seq., for the objects enumerated in this and the following verses.) Instead of "brass" we should probably understand copper throughout.

The snuffers.—J er. lii. 18 adds: and the sprinkling-bowls. The account there is in general more detailed than the present. (See 1 Kings vii. 40, 50.)

Ministered.—Used to minister. Things belonging to the service of the brazen altar are enumerated in this verse.

Firepans.—See 1 Kings vii. 50. Besides "firepans" and "bowls" five other sorts of vessel are given in Jer. lii. 19.

Such things as were ... silver.—A general expression intended to include all other objects of the same material as the two kinds mentioned. The verse treats of the utensils of the holy place. Many such had doubtless been carefully concealed by the priests on the occasion of the first plundering of the Temple (chap. xxvii. 13). (Comp. Jer. xxvii. 19 seq.)

The two pillars, (the) sea ... —A nominative absolute.

All these vessels ... —Those just mentioned, the two pillars, &c.

Without weight.—A natural hyperbole closely resembling one which we often meet with in Assyrian accounts of the plunder carried off from conquered towns: "spoils without number I carried off."

Three cubits.—An error of transcription for five. Five cubits was the height of the capital according to 1 Kings vii. 18; Jer. li. 22; 2 Chron. iii. 15.

The wreatheon work.—Lattice-work (1 Kings vii. 17).

With wreatheon work.—Upon the lattice-work. Thenius says this is the residuum of a sentence preserved in Jeremiah—namely, "And the pomegranates were a hundred upon the lattice-work round about." (Jer. lii. 23). Our text is, at any rate, much abridged.

(18, 19) List of the chief personages taken by Nebuzaradan in the Temple and the city of David. This notice may be regarded as an indirect proof that the upper city was not captured before.
The Nobles are... Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the second priest, and the three keepers of the 1 door: (19) And out of the city he took an officer that was set over the men of war, and five men of them that were in the king's presence, which were found in the city, and the principal scribe of the host, which mustered the people of the land, and threekeepers of the people of the land that were found in the city: (20) and Nebuzar-adan captain of the guard took these, and brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah: (21) and the king of Babylon smote them, and slew them at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was carried away out of their land.

(22) "And as for the people that remained in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left, even over them he made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, ruler. (23) And when all the captains of the armies, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor, there came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan the son of Careah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah

So Judah was carried away... This sentence evidently concludes the whole account of the destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation of the people (comp. chap. xvi. 23; Jer. lii. 27); and not merely that of the proceedings of Nebuzaradan. The prophecy of Obadiah refers to the heartless behaviour of the Edomites on occasion of the ruin of Judah. (Comp. Ps. cxxxvii.; Lam. iv. 21, 22.)

(22-26) An extract from Jer. xi.-xiii., relating to the people left in the land.

(29) Gedaliah the son of Ahikam.—Ahikam was one of Josiah's princes (chap. xxii. 12). In the reign of Jehoiakim he saved the prophet Jeremiah from the popular fury (Jer. xxvi. 24). Nebuzaradan committed the prophet to the care of Gedaliah, who probably, like his father, sympathised with Jeremiah's views (Jer. xxxix. 13, 14). After hesitating whether to accompany Nebuzaradan to Babylon or not, the prophet finally decided upon repairing to Gedaliah at Mizpah (Jer. xi. 1-6). Gedaliah's magnanimous behaviour in regard to Ishmael (Jer. xi. 16 seq.) shows that he was not a traitor and deserter as some have misnamed him. Rather he was a disciple of Jeremiah, and did his utmost to induce the remnant over which he was appointed governor to submit with patience to their divinely-ordered lot, as the prophet urged them to do.

(23) The captains of the armies.—Rather, the army captains; or, the captains of the forces. They and their men had fled with the king, and dispersed themselves over the country (Jer. xli. 7). Now they came out of hiding.

Their men... The Hebrew text has the men, but all the versions, and Jer. xli. 7, read rightly, their men.

Mizpah.—See 1 Kings xv. 22. It was well suited to be the governor's residence, as it lay high, and was a naturally strong position. Moreover, it was the seat of an ancient sanctuary (Judg. xx. 1), which might serve in some sort as a substitute for the destroyed Temple of Jerusalem (Jer. xi. 5).

Ishmael.—Grandson of Elishama the royal secretary (verse 25; Jer. xxvi. 12, 20), and of royal blood (Jer. xli. 1).

Johanan the son of Careah.—Jer. xi. 8, “and Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Careah.”

The Netophathite.—The words, “and the sons of Ophai,” have fallen out before this epistle (Jer. xi. 8), and probably the names of these sons of Ophai in both passages. Netophath is mentioned in Ezra ii. 22; Neh.
the son of a Maachathite, they and their men. (24) And Gedaliah swore to them, and to their men, and said unto them, Fear not to be the servants of the Chaldees: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon; and it shall be well with you.

(25) But it came to pass in the seventh month, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the seed 1 royal, came, and ten men with him, and smote Gedaliah, that he died, and the Jews and the Chaldees that were with him at Mizpah. (26) And all the people, both small and great, and the captains of the armies, arose, and came to Egypt: for they were afraid of the Chaldees.

(27) And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Babylon in the year that he began to reign did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison; (28) and he spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon; (29) and changed his prison garments: and he did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life. (30) And his allowance was a continual allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life.

*Death of Gedaliah.*

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<th>II. KINGS, XXV.</th>
<th>Jehoiachin advanced.</th>
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<td>(1) Heil, of the kingdom.</td>
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<td>(2) Heil, good things with him.</td>
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<td>(4) Jer. lii. 31-34.</td>
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vii. 26. It may be Beit Nettif south-west of Jerusalem.

The son of a (the) Maachathite. — His father was an alien, and belonged to the Syrian state of Maachah (2 Sam. x. 6, 8).

(24) Fear not to be the servants. — Rather, Be not afraid of the servants. By “the servants of the Chaldees” Gedaliah probably means those who recognized the Chaldeans as their masters—that is to say, himself and those who adhered to him. He promises immunity for the past if only the captains and their men will settle down quietly as subjects of the conqueror.

(25) In the seventh month. — Only two months after the fall of Jerusalem (verse 8).

Smote Gedaliah. — At a friendly meal in the governor’s own house (Jer. xlii. 1, 2). Perhaps, as Josephus says, when he and his followers were overcome with wine.

Of the seed royal. — Perhaps this reveals Ishmael’s motive. He thought his claim to the government of the community was greater than Gedaliah’s. Baalis king of the Ammonites had invited him to the crime (Jer. xl. 14).

The Chaldees that were with him. — They were soldiers left to support his authority (Jer. xii. 3).

That he died. — The Jews afterwards observed the day of Gedaliah’s death as a day of mourning.

Arose and came to Egypt. — They took Jeremiah with them (Jer. xliii. 6). This verse only gives the end of the story as it is told in Jeremiah.

(27–30) The captivity of Jehoiachin ameliorated by the new king of Babylon. (See Jer. lii. 31–34.)

(27) In the seven and thirtieth year. — Jehoiachin was now fifty-five years old (chap. xxiv. 8, 12).

On the seven and twentieth day. — Jer. lii. 31: five and twentieth, which is probably right. (See Note on verse 19.)

Evil-merodach. — In Babylonian Amil-marduk, “man of Marduk.” (Comp. the Hebrew Eabbaal, “man of Baal.”) There are in the British Museum some contract tablets dated from his regnal years (562, 561, 560, B.C.). He came to the throne 562 B.C., upon the death of Nebuchadnezzar, who had reigned forty-three years. According to the canon of Ptolemy, Evil-merodach reigned two years. He was murdered by his brother-in-law Nergilissar—i.e., Nergal-sharezer.

Did lift up the head of Jehoiachin . . . out of prison—i.e., brought him out of prison (Gen. xli. 15, 20). The LXX., Syriac, and Arabic add, “and brought him forth” before the words “out of prison.” So Jer. lii. 31.

(28) Set his throne above the throne of the kings . . . — Gave him precedence of the other captive kings who were kept at the Babylonian court by way of enhancing its glory (comp. Judg. i. 7), and probably marked this precedence by allowing him a higher chair of state in the royal hall. So Cyrus kept Croesus king of Lydia at his court (Herod. i. 88). We may remember also the chivalrous behaviour of our own Black Prince towards his royal captive John of France.

(29) And changed. — Rather, and he (i.e., Jehoiachin) changed his prison garments—that is to say, he discarded them for others more suitable to his new condition. Joseph did the same when taken from prison to the Egyptian court (Gen. xli. 14).

He did eat bread continually before him . . . — Jehoiachin became a perpetual guest at the royal table. (Comp. 2 Sam. ix. 10–13.)

(30) His allowance. — For the maintenance of his little court. Literally, And (as for) his allowance a continual allowance was given him from the king, a day’s portion in its day.

All the days of his (Jehoiachin’s) life. — He may have died before Evil-merodach was murdered. There would be nothing strange in this, considering his age and his thirty-seven years of imprisonment.

The writer evidently dwells with pleasure on this faint gleam of light amid the darkness of the exile. It was a kind of foreshadowing of the pity which afterwards was to be extended to the captive people, when the divine purpose had been achieved, and the exile had done its work of chastisement and purification. (Comp. Ps. cvi. 46; Ezra ix. 9; Neh. ii. 2)
THE FIRST BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES.
INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOKS OF THE CHRONICLES.

§ 1. Title.—In the Hebrew MSS., the Books of Chronicles form a continuous work, bearing the general name of Dibre hayyamim ("Events of the Days," or "History of the Times"), which is no doubt an abridgment of Sepher dibre hayyamim—i.e., "The Book of the Events or History of the Times." (Comp. 2 Kings xiv. 19; 1 Chron. xxvii. 24; Esther vi. 1, x. 2.) This designation is not given in the text of the work itself, but was prefixed by some unknown editor. Accordingly we find a different title in the LXX., which divides the work into two books, called Παραλιπομένων τότες and Μικρά ("First and Second [Book] of Things omitted"); or, Παραλιπομένων Βασιλείων or, in some MSS., τῶν Βασιλείων Ἰουδά, a 8 and 8 ("First and Second Book of omitted Notices of the Kings or the Kingdoms of Judah"). This title indicates that, in the opinion of the Greek translators, the work was intended as a kind of supplement to the older historical books. In that case, however, great part of Chronicles could only be considered redundant and superfluous, consisting, as it does, in the mere repetition of narratives already incorporated in Samuel and Kings. (See § 5. infra.) The name by which we know the work, and which fairly represents the Hebrew designation, is derived from St. Jerome, who says—"Dibre hayyamim, id est, Verba dierum, quod significat Chronicon totius divinae historiæ possennse appellare, qui liber apud nos Paralipomenon primus et secundus inscribitur" (Prolog. galeat.). The work, however, is not a mere chronicle or book of annals, although somewhat resembling one in its external form, and deriving its facts from annalistic sources (§ 7. infra). In the Vulgate we find the heading, "The First Book of Paralipomena, in Hebrew Dibre Hayyim." In the Peshito-Syriac, "Next the Book of the Rule of Days (Dibhor yammutthi) of the Kings of Judah, which is called Sephar debar yamin." In the Arabic, "In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate, The First Book of the Kitâb 'abkhâri l'ayyâdîmi—the Book of the Histories of the Days; which is called in the Hebrew, Dibrâ hayyâmîn."

That Chronicles was originally a single, undivided work, is evident from the Masoretic note at the end of the Hebrew text, which states that 1 Chron. xxvii. 25 is the middle verse of the whole book. Moreover, Josephus, Origen (ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. vi. 25), Jerome, and the Talmud reckon but one book of Chronicles. The Peshito-Syriac ends with the remark: "Finished is the book of Debar yamin, in which are 5,693 verses"—implying the unity of the work. The present division into two books, which certainly occurs in the most suitable place, was first made by the LXX. translators, from whom it was adopted by St. Jerome in the Vulgate, and so passed into the other versions and the modern printed editions of the Hebrew Bible.

§ 2. Relation to the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah.—An attentive examination of the Hebrew text of the Books of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, soon reveals the important fact that the three apparently separate works resemble each other very closely, not only in style and language, which is that of the latest age of Hebrew writing, but also in the general point of view, in the manner in which the original authorities are handled and the sacred Law expressly cited, and, above all, in the marked preference for certain topics, such as genealogical and statistical registers, descriptions of religious rites and festivals, detailed accounts of the sacerdotal classes and their various functions, notices of the music of the Temple, and similar matters connected with the organisation of public worship. These resemblances in manner, method, and matter, raise a strong presumption of unity of authorship, which is accordingly asserted by most modern scholars. As regards Chronicles and Ezra, this result is further indicated by the strange termination of the Chronicles in the middle of an unfinished sentence, which finds its due completion in the opening verses of Ezra. (Comp. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23 with Ezra i. 1—4.) Had Chronicles been an independent work, it might have ended less abruptly at 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21. But there is no real break in the narrative between 2 Chron. xxxvi. and Ezra i.; and the awkwardness of the existing division simply points to the perplexity of some editor or transcriber, who did not know where to leave off. It is absurd to lay any stress on the two trivial variants between the two passages. They are not marks of an editorial hand, but merely errors of transcription. (See Notes on 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23.)

There are other facts which combine with the above considerations to prove that Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah originally constituted a single great history, composed upon a uniform plan by one author. Thus there is actually extant part of a Greek version of the three books which ignores their division. The Third Book of Esdras is, with certain important omissions and additions, an independent translation of the history from 2 Chron. xxxv. to Neh. viii. 12. In this work the edict of Cyrus occurs but once; and it is evident that the author's Hebrew text did not divide the history into three distinct books.

Further, the ancients did not separate Ezra and Nehemiah in the modern fashion. The Talmudic treatise Baba bathra (fol. 15. A), the Masorah, and the Christian fathers Origen and Jerome, regard Ezra-Neemiah as a single work; and it appears in the
Vulgate as 1st and 2nd of Esdras, a non-fundamental division like that of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, into two books each. Indeed, the Book of Ezra as it stands is an unfinished fragment, which finds its natural continuation in Neh. vii. seq., where the history of Ezra’s part in the restoration is further pursued. There was a limit of time in Chronicles and Nehemiah coinciding (see § 3 infra); and the genealogies of the high priests from Eleazar to Jehozadak in 1 Chron. vi. 4—16, and from Joshua to Jaddua in Neh. xii. 10, 11, are given in the same form, and are obviously complementary, covering, as they do, when taken together, the whole period from Moses to Alexander the Great.

The LXX. translators found Chronicles already severed from Ezra-Nehemiah. This division is explicative in connection with the formation of the Hebrew Canon. In the Hebrew text the Book of Ezra-Nehemiah precedes Chronicles, apparently because the value of this, the newer and more interesting portion of the whole work, was recognised first. Chronicles may well have been regarded as of less importance, because to a great extent it merely repeats the familiar narratives of Samuel and Kings. In no long time, however, it was perceived that the new relation of the ancient history was animated by the spirit of the age, and its catalogue of family descent, and its detailed treatment of religious matters, won for it first, perhaps, general use as a manual of instruction, and then the last place in the sacred Canon.

§ 3. Date.—The orthography and language of the Chronicles, its Levitical tendency, and its position at the end of the Hagiographa, conspire to suggest a comparatively late origin. Other internal evidence of a more definite character enables us to settle the question of date with approximate precision. The partially confused passage, 1 Chron. iii. 19—24, carries the line of David’s posterity down to at least the sixth generation from Zerubbabel, who along with the High Priest Joshua conducted the first return, b.c. 536. According to R. Benjamin in the Meor ‘enesayim (fol. 153. A, quoted by Zunz), as many as nine generations must be reckoned from Jeshua to Johanan in this genealogy. In like manner, the LXX. makes eleven generations from Zerubbabel to the last. This brings the date of the author down to about b.c. 200, if we count thirty years to the generation. This was the opinion of Zunz, whom Noldeke follows. Kuenen also favours a late epoch, asserting that “the author must have lived about b.c. 520.” These views, however, are not accepted by the majority of modern scholars; and they rest upon a highly questionable interpretation of the passage under consideration. (See Notes on 1 Chron. iii. 19, seq.)

What is certain is, that in both genealogy of the house of David, and in that of the high priests, the writer descends several generations below the age of Ezra and Nehemiah, who flourished about b.c. 445. Thus in Neh. xii. 10, 11 the line of the high priests is traced as far as Jaddua, who was the fifth successor of Joshua the contemporary of Zerubbabel. Josephus informs us that Jaddua came into personal contact with Alexander the Great (Antiq. i. 7, 8). This points to a date of time in Neh. xii. 10—11, at the time of the return. But we are no more bound to accept this as fact than the preceding statements which connect Moses with the Book of Job, and—more wonderful still—Adam with the Psalms. The grain of truth embodied in the tradition is simply this, that the compiler of the last great book of history has drawn largely upon the authentic memoirs of Ezra and Nehemiah, incorporating whole sections of their journals in his work. But, as every Hebrew scholar knows, a single hand can be traced throughout the three books now called Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah; and the original documents stand out in sharp contrast to their modern setting, wherever the compiler has been contented to transcribe verbally. From the entire tone and spirit of the work, it is reasonably inferred by most critics that it was the production of a Levite attached to the Temple at Jerusalem in the latter half of the fourth century B.C. Ewald further supposes the author to have belonged to one of the guilds of Levitical musicians: a conjecture which is highly probable, considering how much the writer has to tell us about the Temple choirs and their music. Keil objects that the porters are mentioned as often as the musicians, and that therefore we might just as well assume the chronicler to have been a porter or Temple-warder. But an acquaintance with musical technicalities such as the writer displays almost certainly proves him to have been a member of one of the musical guilds. Similarly, it is no reply to allege that priests are made quite as prominent in the work as Levitical warders and musicians. The priests are naturally mentioned on all religious occasions as being the principal functionaries. The fact that the inferior ministers are so persistently brought forward in their company—which is not the case in the older history—proves the peculiar interest of the author in these latter.

§ 4. Author.—“Ezra wrote his own book, and the genealogy of the Chronicles down to himself.” Such is the assertion of the Talmud (Baba bathra, fol. 15. A). But we are no more bound to accept this as fact than the preceding statements which connect Moses with the Book of Job, and—more wonderful still—Adam with the Psalms. The grain of truth embodied in the tradition is simply this, that the compiler of the last great book of history has drawn largely upon the authentic memoirs of Ezra and Nehemiah, incorporating whole sections of their journals in his work. But, as every Hebrew scholar knows, a single hand can be traced throughout the three books now called Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah; and the original documents stand out in sharp contrast to their modern setting, wherever the compiler has been contented to transcribe verbally. From the entire tone and spirit of the work, it is reasonably inferred by most critics that it was the production of a Levite attached to the Temple at Jerusalem in the latter half of the fourth century B.C. Ewald further supposes the author to have belonged to one of the guilds of Levitical musicians: a conjecture which is highly probable, considering how much the writer has to tell us about the Temple choirs and their music. Keil objects that the porters are mentioned as often as the musicians, and that therefore we might just as well assume the chronicler to have been a porter or Temple-warder. But an acquaintance with musical technicalities such as the writer displays almost certainly proves him to have been a member of one of the musical guilds. Similarly, it is no reply to allege that priests are made quite as prominent in the work as Levitical warders and musicians. The priests are naturally mentioned on all religious occasions as being the principal functionaries. The fact that the inferior ministers are so persistently brought forward in their company—which is not the case in the older history—proves the peculiar interest of the author in these latter.

§ 5. Contents.—Character and Scope of the Work. The Chronicle opens with an outline of primeval history from Adam to David, and from Adam to David, and the Pentecostal narratives, however, are not repeated, because the five books were already recognised as canonical, and the writer had nothing to add to them. In like manner, the times of the Judges and the reign of Saul are passed over. The chronicler had no special sources for that period,
and it did not appear to lend itself easily to the illustration of the particular lesson which he wished to enforce upon his readers. Accordingly the first section of his work takes the driest and most succinct form imaginable, that of a series of genealogies interspersed with brief historical notices (1 Chron. i.—ix.).

The writer's extraordinary fondness for genealogical and statistical tables is apparent also in other parts of his history, and is to be explained by reference to the special requirements of the post-exilic age. (Comp. Ezra ii. 59, seq.) Here, after tracing the generations from Adam to Jacob, the writer gives a flying survey of the twelve tribes, lingering longest over Judah, the tribe of David, and Levi, the tribe of the priests; after which (in chaps. vii., ix.) his horizon narrows at once from all Israel to the southern kingdom only (Benjamin, Judah, Jerusalem). Chap. x.—the death of Saul—is transitional to the reign of David, which follows at length (1 Chron. xi.—xxix.).

The second and main portion of the work (1 Chron. xi.—2 Chron. xxxvi.) relates the history of the kings who reigned in Jerusalem from David to Zedekiah, thus covering a period of between four and five centuries (B.C. 1055—588). The third part contains the history of the restored community under Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah (B.C. 536—432); and is now known as the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah. (See the Introduction to those books.)

When we consider the second part of this great compilation, we are immediately struck by the large space occupied by the reign of David. To the chronicler, as to the prophetic historians before him, that reign, it would seem, was the golden age of his people's history. The greater distance at which he stood from the old heroic times of the monarchy only intensified the spell which they wrought upon his imagination. He does not, however, repeat the familiar tale of David's romantic adventures, of his reign at Hebron, of his sin against Uriah, of the revolt of Absalom, and similar matters. His point of view and the needs of his contemporaries are different from those of the older historians; and it is as the true founder of Jerusalem and the Temple, with its beautiful service of music and song, and as the prime author of the priestly organisation, that the heroic figure of David engages his highest interest. Accordingly, all that refers to the activity of the king in these directions is described with intentional fulness and emphasis. (See 1 Chron. xiii.—xviii., xxii.—xxix.)

The reign of Solomon is treated much more briefly, though at considerably greater length than any subsequent one (2 Chron. i.—ix.). Here again we observe a fuller description of whatever relates to religion and its ministers. In fact, the account of the building and dedication of the Temple occupies by far the largest part of the narrative (chaps. ii.—vii.).

The rest of the history is told from the same standpoint. After the division of the kingdom, the writer follows the fortunes of the Davidic monarchy, which was the more important from a religious, if not from a political, point of view. The northern kingdom had fallen away from the Levitical, as well as from the orthodox worship, as alien to their hereditary rank as the religious centre of the nation. And thus "traditions about the Temple and its worship, the sacerdotal orders and their functions, the merits of the kings and others in the matter of the cultus, are presented with great fulness, and the author expatiates with evident delight on the sacred festivals of the olden time. Reigns of which little of the sort could be told are briefly treated" (Dillmann).

From all this we may gather the aim of the work. The writer has produced not so much a supplement of the older histories, as an independent work, in which the history of the chosen people is related afresh in a new manner, and from a new point of view. That point of view has been characterised as the priestly-Levitical, in contradistinction to the prophetic spirit of the ancient writers. To understand this, we must remember that in the chronicler's day the political independence of Israel was a thing of the past; and that the religion of the Law was the most precious survival from the great catastrophe which had finally shattered the nation, and the principle of cohesion and the basis of all order, public and private, in the new community. The writer's main object, therefore, is to urge upon his contemporaries a faithful observance of the Mosaic Law; and he seeks to impress his lesson by presenting a picture of times and occasions when, with the Temple as its centre, and the priests and Levites as its organs, the legitimate worship flourished and brought blessing upon the land.

§ 6. Documental Authorities. Relation to the Books of Samuel and Kings. Besides a number of narratives running parallel to those of Samuel and Kings, the Books of Chronicles contain other important accounts which are without parallel in the older histories. Such are many of the genealogical and statistical tables, as well as certain supplementary details and stories inserted in different reigns. The former, which possessed a very special interest for the chronicler's contemporaries, were ultimately derived from those ancient taxation rolls or assessment lists, which were so highly valued by the Jews in the times immediately preceding and subsequent to the captivity (Ezra ii. 59, 62). These catalogues may in some cases have been preserved independently, but it is probable that the chronicler found most of them already incorporated in the historical compilations which constituted his principal authorities. (Comp. 1 Chron. v. 17, vii. 2, ix. 1, xxiii. 3, 27, xxvii. 31, xxvii. 24; Neh. xii. 23, vii. 5.) The censuses, for instance, to which reference is made in 1 Chron. v. 17, vii. 2, were doubtless entered in the state annals.

The second, and to us more important, historical element peculiar to Chronicles is equally based upon trustworthy records of an earlier period. The writer refers from time to time to documents which he presumes to be well known to his readers, for further details upon subjects too minute to be included in the foregoing pursue. At first sight the number of these documents appears to be so considerable as to excite surprise, especially when we remember that the compiler of Kings mentions only two or three such primary documents. For almost every reign a different source appears to be cited; which is the more remarkable, inasmuch as the titles indicate that more than one of the histories referred to must have contained the entire history of
The references to prophetic "words" (דיבר), or rather histories, are by some supposed to imply the existence of a number of historical monographs written by the prophets with whose names they are connected. But "the history of Jehu the son of Hanani" (10) is expressly cited, not as an independent work, but as a section of the great Book of the Kings; and "the history of Isaiah the prophet" (14) is another section of the same work. Moreover, when the chronicler does not refer to the history he generally mentions a prophetic account, but never both for the same reign (unless 2 Chron. xxxiii. 18, 19 be an exception). It is likely, therefore, that the other prophetic histories (numbers 1—7) were integral parts of the same great compilation, and are merely cited in briefer form, perhaps as the chronicler found them already cited in that his principal source. We do not know what were the grounds which determined the selection of a work by the unknown collectors of the Canon, but it seems certain that they had a number of separate writings of such prophets as Samuel, Nathan, Gad, and Isaiah been extant in the chronicler's age, they would have been included in the Canon.

The "history of Uzziah, which Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz wrote" (12; see 2 Chron. xxvi. 22), does not appear to be an exception to the above general inference. Whether, as Prof. Dillmann thinks, the chronicler himself supposed Isaiah to have been the author of the history of Uzziah as embodied in the great Book of the Kings (comp. Isa. vi. 1), or whether, as is more likely, he merely copies the reference from that source, makes no difference. On the other hand, it is, of course, quite possible that an independent monograph of Isaiah's did exist and was known to the chronicler, although no trace of it is to be recognised in the canonical Books of Kings or Isaiah.

Similar considerations would apply to "the history of Hozai" (16; see 2 Chron. xxxiii. 19), which is apparently contradicted in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 19 with "the history of the kings of Israel," were it not likely that the text of that passage is unsound.

Lastly, the chronicler refers besides to a "Midrash of the prophet Iddo" (8), and a "Midrash of the book of the Kings" (11). The former may have been a section of the latter work. In this, as in the preceding cases, it was natural to us to believe the bulk of a large book of history, by mentioning the name of the prophet with whose activity it was chiefly concerned; because the division of the canonical books into sections and chapters was unknown to antiquity (comp. our Lord's reference in Mark xii. 26, "in the bush," i.e., in the section relating to the burning bush; and St. Paul's "in Elias," Rom. xi. 2.)

The term "Midrash" occurs nowhere else in the Old Testament. It means "search," "investigation," "study," and is the neo-Hebraic term for the Rabbinical exegesis of the sacred books. A Beth-midrash is a school in which the Law and other scriptures are studied under the lead of a rabbi, called talmidim, a word first occurring in 1 Chron. xxv. 8. "The Midrash of the book of the Kings" was probably a kind of commentary or expository amplification of the great "history of the Kings of Judah and Israel," and the chronicler may have derived other narratives from this source, besides the two for which he cites it. But it is improper to say, with Reuss, that "his work from one end to the other is drawn from a Midrash; and it is this Midrash that is responsible for all that provokes our doubts, including the history of Uzziah written by Isaiah." The Midrash
which the chronicler consulted may really have been an early predecessor of that series of works so well known to students of Rabbinical Hebrew as the Midrashim (Bereithith rabba, Shemoth rabba, &c. &c.); but its intrinsic superiority to all these later works is evident from the extracts preserved in the Chronicles.

We have now characterised the two principal sources of the accounts peculiar to the Books of Chronicles. The compiler may, of course, have had at his command other documents besides those to which he refers by name; but probably they were few in number, and certainly of subordinate importance.

It remains to ask what is the precise relation between the forty or more passages of Chronicles which are more or less exact duplicates of parallel passages in Samuel and Kings?

This question can hardly be answered with certainty. The negative criticism which flourished in Germany at the beginning of the present century found an easy off-hand reply in the theory that the chronicler transcribed his parallel accounts directly from the canonical Books of Samuel and Kings. All deviations and peculiarities were results of misunderstanding, fictitious embellishment, and wilful perversion of the older history. It would hardly be worth while to revive the memory of this unhistorical and obsolete criticism, were it not still salutary to signalise the former errors of scholars whose theories for a time enjoyed unbounded influence, by way of suggesting caution to such persons as are inclined to accord a too hasty acceptance to similarly destructive hypotheses advocated by men of acknowledged ability at the present day. What is certain is, (1) that the chronicler must have known the great history now divided into the Books of Samuel and Kings; (2) that many of his narratives at different points verbally coincide with these books, and so far might have been transcribed from them; but (3) these coincidences may be accounted for by the supposition advanced above, viz., that the same ancient state annals were the principal source from which both the compiler of the older canonical history, and the compiler of that "book of the kings of Judah and Israel" which supplied the chronicler with so much of his narrative, derived the staple of their history; and further, that the "book of the kings of Judah and Israel" may have been in part constructed after the model of the already existing Books of Samuel and Kings. At the same time we may safely admit that the form into which the history was already cast in the older work would naturally exert some, and perhaps a considerable, influence upon the mind and work of the latest historian of Israel.

§ 7. The Historical Value of Chronicles.—

This question has in part been already decided by the results at which we arrived in discussing the prior question of the sources. All that remains to be determined is, whether and how far the chronicler was faithful to his authorities. Whatever charges of distortion, misinterpretation, falsification, fictitious embellishment, &c. &c., of the ancient history have been levelled against him by earlier critics, have been amply disproven by their successors. Such charges depended for the most part upon the assumption that he had no other documents than the canonical books of the Old Testament. But upon this supposition the question of partial examination of internal evidence. Comparing the parallel sections with their duplicates in Samuel and Kings, we find in general an assiduous and faithful reproduction of the sources, which warrants us in supposing that the important passages of the narrative which are peculiar to Chronicles were likewise extracted with substantial accuracy from other historical records no longer extant. Often, indeed, in such passages the style is so much purer than that which we identify as the chronicler's own, as to suggest at once that he is simply transcribing from an ancient document, though in some instances the figures of Chronicles are lower than the older history, for the most part upon the assumption that the important passages of the narrative which are peculiar to Chronicles were likewise extracted from the extracts preserved in the Chronicles.

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and intrinsically more probable than those of the older history. (Comp. 2 Chron. ix. 25 with 1 Kings v. 6.) After making every allowance upon these and similar grounds, the impartial critic will still acquiesce in the conclusion of Ewald, that “we should deprive ourselves of one of the richest and oldest sources of the Davidical history, if we failed to do justice to the very remarkable remains of the state annals fortunately preserved to us in the Book of Chronicles;” and that “this work, when rightly understood and applied, not only yields very valuable supplements to the history of the (Davidic) monarchy, the foundation of which undoubtedly rested on the original state annals, but also tells us of many prophets, of whose very names we should have otherwise been wholly ignorant” (Hist. of Israel, Martinieu’s Translation, p. 185).

§ 8. Literature of the Subject.—A list of the older commentators may be read in Carpzov and in Lange’s Bibelwerk. The principal modern works known to the present writer are Bertheau’s (English Trans. in Clarke’s Foreign Library, 2nd ed. 1860); Keil’s, also translated in Clarke’s series (ed. 1872); Zöckler’s, in Lange (English trans., 1876); and that of Reuss (ed. Paris, 1878). He has also had before him L’Abbé Martin’s Commentary (ed. Paris, 1880), a recent work by a Roman Catholic priest, which closely follows Keil and Zöckler. The criticisms of Thenius in his Die Bücher der Könige (Leipzig, 1873) have always been considered, and specially noticed whenever it seemed advisable.

The following have been consulted upon introductory questions:—Gramberg (Die Chronik nach ihrem geschichtlichen Charakter, &c. Halle, 1823). His reasonings are interesting from a historical point of view, but his conclusions are thoroughly unfair, and no longer require refutation. Graf (Die gesch. Bücher des alt. Test. Leipzig, 1866). Also a hostile criticism. De Wette’s Einleitung, as re-edited by Schrader, who modifies the more extreme dicta of the original author. Movers (Kritische Untersuchungen über die bibl. Chronik. Born, 1834); a reply to Gramberg and De Wette. Keil’s Einleitung (Frankfurt, 1853). Zöckler’s Handbuch der theolog. Wissenschaften (Nördlingen, 1882). Ewald’s History of Israel (Martinieu’s English Transl., Longmans, 1876). Kuenen’s History of Israel (English Transl., 1875) follows Graf in exaggerating the subjective and unhistorical tendency of the chronicler. Wellhausen’s tract, De gentibus et familia-Judaeis quae 1 Chron. ii.—iv. enumerantur (Göttingen, 1870), is very important for the right under-standing of the genealogies. The article Chronik, by Prof. Dillmann, in Herzog’s Real-Encyclopädie is a specially fair estimate of the work; and the same may be said of Prof. Robertson Smith’s Chronicles in the Encyclopædia Britannica. The writer has also to acknowledge considerable obligations to the same author’s Old Testament in the Jewish Church, and The Prophets of Israel, and to Schrader’s Keill-schriften und das Aile Testament (Giessen, 1883). For several important suggestions he is indebted to his friend Prof. Sayce, who kindly looked through the Notes on the greater part of the first book.

§ 9. Ancient Versions. State of the Hebrew Text.—The translation of Chronicles in the LXX. is carefully and skilfully done, is strictly literal, and one of the best works of those translators, far surpassing the Books of Samuel and Kings, which proceed from another hand. In many passages it still preserves an unquestionably better reading than that of the Masoretic Recension. In too many instances, however, it has had its readings altered into conformity with later Greek versions of the textus receptus, and thus its originality has in part been obliterated by the hands of injudicious editors. (See Movers’ Untersuch., p. 93.) In the Greek of 2 Chron. xxxv. there are a few interpolations corresponding to passages in 2 Kings xxiii., xxiv.

The old Latin versions, upon which the Vulgate is based, followed the LXX.

The Peshittâ (Peshito) Syriac version presents many surprising peculiarities of omission, interpolation, transposition, and paraphrase, insomuch that it resembles a Jewish Targum rather than a literal version. This phenomenon suggests that Chronicles was perhaps not received with the original collection of sacred books in the Peshito (Dillmann).

The Arabic version is a daughter of the Syriac, and possesses little independent value for the criticism of the text.

The Targum is late (seventh century?) and is not printed in the Rabbinical Bibles. Lagarde has recently edited another, which I have not been able to procure. The four versions have been consulted in Walton’s Polyglot; and for the LXX. Tischendorf’s edition has also been used. The unsatisfactory condition of the Hebrew text, due perhaps to the fact that Chronicles was never so highly valued as other portions of the Canon, may in part be remedied by careful comparison of the data of the versions, as well as of the other books of the Old Testament.
THE FIRST BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES.


(5) The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras. (6) And the sons of Gomer; Ashchenaz, and

The abrupt opening of the narrative with a series of proper names presupposes that the reader is already acquainted with their historic import. The chronicler intends to give a synopsis of the archaeology of man, as recorded in the book of Genesis, by way of fixing the place of Israel in the great human family. Arabian and monkish annalists of the middle ages have followed his precedent, at least so far as regards the external form of their histories. William of Malmesbury, for instance, does not hesitate to trace the line of the Saxon kings to Adam; and the chroniclers of Spain have derived their monarchs from Tubal, a grandson of Noah. Such inventions, of course, bear only an artificial resemblance to the Biblical records, which are undoubtedly survivals of a remote antiquity, a fact which should suggest caution in theorising upon their interpretation.

Chapter i. falls naturally into three sections. (1) The ten generations of the first age of humanity, with a table of races and countries, given in genealogical form according to ancient conceptions (verses 1-23). (2) The ten generations after the Flood, from Shem to Abraham, the second age of man, with a list of the races claiming descent from Abraham (verses 24-42). (3) A catalogue of the kings of Edom anterior to the Israelite monarchy and of the tribal chieftains of that country (verses 43-54).

Verses 1-4 are an abstract of the fifth chapter of Genesis. (See the Notes there.) The arrangement of the names, in three triads and a quartette, is perhaps mnemonic. In our translation the Hebrew spelling is followed more closely here than in Genesis v. Sheth, Enosh, Kenan, Jared, Henoch are nearer the original than Seth, Enos, Cainan, Jared, Enoch (the spelling of the LXX).

(1) Adam (man) is here treated as a proper name; i.e. Gen. v. 1-5 it is an appellative.

The Chaldeans also had a tradition of ten antediluvian patriarchs or kings, beginning with Alorus and ending with Xisuthrus (Hasis-Adra), the hero of the Flood. They made the duration of this first period of human history 432,000 years. Remembering that Abraham, the Hebrew, was from “Ur (Uru, the city) of the Chaldees,” we can hardly suppose the two accounts to be independent of each other. The comparative simplicity and, above all, the decided monothemism of the Hebrew relation, give a high probability to the assumption that it represents a more original form of the tradition.
The sons of Ham, the dark-skinned or swarthy (verses 8–16).

1. Ripphath, and Togarmah. (7) And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.

6. The sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. (8) And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabta, and Raamah, and Sabtechah. And the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan. (9) And Cush begat Nimrod; he began to be mighty upon the earth. (10) And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim, (11) and Pathrusim, and Casluhim, (of whom came the Philistines,) and Caphtorim.


Javan.—The Assyrian Yaavan, i.e., Cyprus, mentioned in the Behistun Inscription, as here, along with Media, Armenia, and Cappadocia. (Comp. Joel iv. 6; Isa. lxvi. 19.)

Tubal and Meshech, the Tibareni and Moschi of classical writers; and the Muski and Tabali of Assyrian records.

Tiras has been compared with the Tyrs or Dniester. Perhaps we may compare Tros and the Trojans.

Ashchenaz.—Jer. li. 27, near or in Armenia. Apparently the Asgna mentioned by Esharaddon in the account of his campaign against the Cimmerians and Cilicians. The Arabic has Slavonia.

Ripphath.—The reading of Gen. x. 3, some Heb. MSS., the LXX., and Vulg. The common Hebrew text (Van der Hooft’s) wrongly reads Diphraph (Syriac, Diphar). Topprahm seems to be the Talgarimme on the border of Tabali, which Sennacherib reduced in his expedition against Cilicia (Smith, Sennach., p. 88).

Elishah.—Usually identified with Hellas, or the Hellenes. Perhaps, however, Carthage is meant: comp. the name Elias, as a by-name of Dido, Virg. Aes. iv. 335.

Tarshish.—Usually identified with the Phoenician colony of Tartessus, in Spain. (Comp. Ps. lxxvi. 10.)

Dodanim.—So many Heb. MSS., the Syriac, Vulg., and Gen. x. 3. The LXX. has “Rhodians,” which implies a reading, Rodanim, which we find in the common Hebrew text. Dodanim might be the Dar- danians of the Troad, or the Dodoneans (Dodona, the seat of an ancient oracle, the fame of which might have reached Phoenician ears).

Thus far the list appears to deal with Asia Minor and adjacent lands; and Japheth, whose name is etymologically like the Greek Iapetus, seems to include the western races so far as known to the Hebrews.

The Sons of Ham, the Dark-skinned or Swarthy (verses 8–16).

9. Cush.—The Greek Meros, Assyrian Miluhah, or Kasm, south of Egypt, in our Bibles often called Ethiopia (Isa. xix. 1). The Arabic gives Habsch, i.e., Ethiopia.

Mizraim.—The common Hebrew name of Egypt: strictly, “the two Mires”—i.e., Upper and Lower Egypt. For the name should rather be spelt Mizrim, the Egyptians: the form Mizraim being probably a mere fanciful of the Jewish punctuators. The Assyrians wrote Muqur, Muqur, Muqur. The Inscription of Darius has Miqir. Micro was the name of the wall which protected Egypt on the north-east. Hence it gave its name to the whole of Lower Egypt. Cush and Meshech coupled together in the inscriptions of Esarhaddon and his son Assurbanipal.

Put.—Perhaps the Egyptian Pent, on the east coast of Africa. King Darius mentioned Puta and Kush as subject to him (Behist. Inscr.). Comp. Nah. iii. 9; Jer. xlv. 9; Ez. xxx. 5. The Arabic has Kidub, i.e., Copeland.

Canaan.—There are many proofs of an early connection between Egypt and Canaan. The Philistines were colonists from the Delta (verse 12), and Ramases II. (cir. 1350 or 1450 B.C.) had wars and made alliance with the Hittites.

Seba.—Capital of Meroë. The other names represent Arabian tribes and their districts.

Saba.—The famous Sabeans, whose language, the Himyarite, has quite recently been deciphered from inscriptions.

Cush begat Nimrod.—Micah (v. 6) speaks of the “land of Nimrod” in connection with the “land of Asshur.” The land of Nimrod is plainly Babylon; and some have supposed the primitive inhabitants of Babylonia—to be the black-headed race (salbat qaggadi) as they styled themselves—to have been akin to the peoples of Muçur and Cush. At all events, Cush in this table of races appears as father of a series of mixed populations, ramifying from the north-west of the Persian Gulf in a southernly direction to the coast of Arabia. The Asiatic Cush represents that primitive Elamite Sumerian race which occupied the north-west and north coast of the Persian Gulf; or rather that portion of it which attained to empire in Babylonia.

The name Nimrod appears to be identical with Merodach, the Accadian Amur-atu, or Amur-utuki, Assyrian Maruduk. Merodach was the tutelary deity of Babylonia—“the black-headed race” (salmat qaggadi) as they styled themselves—to have been akin to the peoples of Muçur and Cush. At all events, Cush in this table of races appears as father of a series of mixed populations, ramifying from the north-west of the Persian Gulf in a southernly direction to the coast of Arabia. Traditionally made Nimrod the first founder of a great Oriental empire. The statement about his four cities (Gen. x. 10), the first of which was Babel (Babylon), is omitted here.

Mighty.—Literally, a hero, warrior (gibbor); a title of Merodach.

(11, 12) The names in these verses are all in the masculine plural, and obviously designate nations. Mizraim, the two Egyptians, is said to have begotten the chief races inhabiting those regions—a common Oriental metaphor. The Ludim are the Ludi, or Rodu, of the hieroglyphs (Prof. Sayce thinks, the Lydian mercenaries of the Egyptian sovereigns): the Anamim are the men of An (On, Gen. xli. 50), the Hebrew mercenaries of the Egyptian sovereigns: the Anamim are the men of An (On, Gen. xli. 50), the Hebrew mercenaries of the Egyptian sovereigns: the Anamim are the men of An (On, Gen. xli. 50), the Hebrew mercenaries of the Egyptian sovereigns: the Anamim are the men of An (On, Gen. xli. 50), the Hebrew mercenaries of the Egyptian sovereigns: the Anamim are the men of An (On, Gen. xli. 50), the Hebrew mercenaries of the Egyptian sovereigns: the Anamim are the men of An (On, Gen. xli. 50), the Hebrew mercenaries of the Egyptian sovereigns.
And Canaan begat Zidon his first-born, and Heth, (14) the Jebusite also, and the Amorite, and the Girgasite, (15) and the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite, (16) and the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite. (17) The sons of Shem; Elam, and Asshur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and

Casshunim may have been a leading division of the Caphthorim.

The City Zidon and the Ten Races of Canaan (verses 13-16).

And Canaan begat Zidon his first-born.—Or, in modern phrase, Zidon is the oldest city of Canaan. It is usually mentioned along with Tyre, the ruling city in later times. Sennacherib speaks of the flight of Luli, “king of Zidon,” from Tyre. Esarhaddon mentions Baal of Tyre as a tributary. Of the eleven “sons of Canaan” all but three or four have been identified in the cuneiform inscriptions of Assyria.

And Heth—that is, the Hittite race, called Heta by the Egyptians, and Haffi by the Assyrians. (See verse 8, Note.) The Hittites were once the dominant race of Syria and Palestine. Carechemish, on the Euphrates, and Kadesh, as well as Hamath, appear to have been Hittite cities. Their kings had commercial relations with Solomon (1 Kings x. 29). Inscriptions, in a kind of mixed hieroglyph, have been found at Hamath and Carechemish, but they still await decipherment.

The Jebusite.—The men of Jebus, or Jerusalem (chap. xi. 4).

Amorite.—The hill-men of the trans-Jordan.

Girgasite.—Perhaps of Gergesa (Matt. iii. 28).

Hivite.—On the slopes of Lebanon (Josh. xi. 3), “under Hermon,” but also in Gibson and Shechem (Josh. ix. 7; Gen. xxxiv. 2). Delitzsch suggests that the name is connected with Hamath (Assyrian, Hamath = Havvath).

Arkite, and the Sinite.—Tribe living to the west of northern Lebanon. A fragment of the annals of Tiglath-pileser mentions along with Simyra the towns of Arqa and Sianu “on the sea-coast” (B.C., 739). Josephus mentions a town Arka, which is otherwise known as the birthplace of the emperor Alexander Severus (Ruins: Tell ‘Arqa).

Arvadite.—Arvad, or Arudus, now Rood, an island off Phoenicia. Assurnaïcupal (B.C. 885) calls it “Arvada in the mid-sea.” Its king submitted to Sennacherib.

Zemarite.—The people of Simgra, on the coast of Phoenicia, south-east of Arvad. Simyra (Assyrian, Cirerera) was a fortified town commanding the road from the coast to the upper valley of the Orontes (Ruins: Sumarra).

Hamathite.—The people of Hamath (Hamak) on the Orontes, a Hittite state which made alliance with David (cire. 1040 B.C.).

On a review of verses 8-16 we see that the “sons of Ham” include Ethiopia, Egypt, and the neighbouring shores of Arabia, and perhaps the founders of Babylon (verses 8-10). The tribes of Egypt and Canaan are enumerated in verses 11-16.

The Sons of Shem, or the Semites (verses 17-23).

Elam.—The Elamites of the Assyrian inscription, the classic Susiana, a mountainous land eastward of Babylonia, to which it was subject in the days of Abraham (Gen. xiv.). The names Assur, Elam, Kassu, and Accad occur together in an old Assyrian list of nations. Elama, from which the Assyrian and Hebrew names are derived, is Accadian. The native designation was Assanu. The Sargonide kings of Assyria had frequent wars with Elam.

Assur.—Assyria proper, i.e., a district on the Tigris, about twenty-five miles long, between the thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh parallels of latitude. Assur was the name of its older capital and tutelar god. The Semitic Assyrians appear to have been settled at Asshur as early as the nineteenth century B.C. They were emigrants from Babylonia (Gen. x. 11). The original name was An-nus “water-meadow.”

Arphaxad apparently means Babylonia, or, at least, includes it. Babylonian monarchs styled themselves “King of the Four Quarters” (of heaven); and Arphaxad may perhaps mean land of the four quarters or sides, and be derived from the Assyrian arba-rides, “four sides” (Friedrich Delitzsch). More probably it is arph chosen, “boundary of Cush.”

Lud, usually identified with the Lydians (Assyrian Luddi), perhaps their original home in Armenia. The name has also been compared with R大全, the Egyptian name of the Syrians (S and being confused in Egyptian). But comp. Ezek. xxvii. 16, xxx. 5.

Aram.—The high land—that is, eastern and western Syria, extending from the Tigris to the Great Sea. The name is constantly used for the Arameans, or Syrians.

Uz.—An Arab tribe, called Hāsu by Esarhaddon, who reduced them. Perhaps, however, Us (Heb., Ḫp), is the Assyrian Ḫppa, a district on the Orontes, mentioned by Assurbaner (B.C. 786-782). Job lived in the “land of Uz.” The remaining names appear to be also those of Arab tribes, who must have lived northward in the direction of Aram; these are called sons of Aram in Gen. x.

Hul is the Assyrian Hul’sar, which formed a part of the mountain land of Kasir or Mash (inscription of Assurnaïcupal, B.C. 885-860). For Mashhech Gen. x. has Mash, which is compared with Mount Masius, near Nisibin. (So the Syriac and some Heb. MSS.)

Eber.—The land on the other side (Gr., Ἐβραίοι) of Peræa. Here the land beyond the Euphrates is meant, from which “Abraham, the Hebrew” (i.e., Eberite), migrated.

Two sons.—This indicates the ancient consciousness that the Hebrew and Arabian peoples were akin.

The earth was divided.—Or, divided itself. (Comp. Deut. xxxii. 7-9.) The words probably refer to a split in the population of Mesopotamia.

Joktan begat Almodad.—The Joktanite tribes lived along the coast of Hadrumaut (Hazar-maveth) and Yemen, in southern Arabia. The tribes of Yemen call their ancestor Qahtan (= Joktan). The names in verses 20, 21, are all explicable from Arabic sources.
and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah, (23) Hadarham also, and Uzal, and Diklah, (22) and Ebal, and Abimael, and Sheba, (23) and Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab. All these were the sons of Joktan.


(28) The sons of Abraham; d Isaac, and

(29) Ishmael.

(30) These are their generations: The firstborn of Ishmael, Nebaioth; then Kedar, and Abdeel, and Mibsam, (30) Mishma, and Dumass, Massa, (31) Hadad, and Tema, (31) Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These are the sons of Ishmael.

(32) Now the sons of Keturah, Abraham’s concubine; she bare Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. And the sons of Jokshan; Sheba, and Dedan. (33) And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher, and Henoch, and Abida, and e Eldaah. All these are the sons of Keturah.
The tribes of Esau

I. CHRONICLES, I.

And Abraham begat Isaac. The sons of Isaac: Esau and Israel.

The sons of Esau: Eliphaz, Reuel, and Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah.

The sons of Eliphaz: Teman, Omar, Zeph, and Katam, and Timna, and Amalek.

The sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, and Shimah, and Mizzah.

And the sons of Seir: Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibea, and Anah, and Dishon, and Ezar, and Dishan.

And the sons of Lotan: Hori, and Homam.

Abraham begat Isaac.—From Gen. xxvi. 19.

And Isaac begat Jacob and Esau.

Israel.—Esau is named first, not as the elder, but because the tribes of Esau are to be first enumerated. (Comp. Note above on verses 28-42.)

The tribes of Esau and Seir, extracted from Gen. xxxvi.

The sons of Esau: Eliphaz, and Reuel, and Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah.

The sons of Eliphaz: Teman, and Omar, and Zeph, and Katam, and Timna, and Amalek.

The sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, and Shimah, and Mizzah.

And the sons of Seir: Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibea, and Anah, and Dishon, and Ezar, and Dishan.

And the sons of Lotan: Hori, and Homam.

Abraham begat Isaac.—From Gen. xxxvi. 19.

Esau and Israel.—Esau is named first, not as the elder, but because the tribes of Esau are to be first enumerated. (Comp. Note above on verses 28-42.)

Israel.—The more honourable appellation (Gen. xxxix. 29) almost wholly supplanted Jacob as the name of the chosen people, except in poetry and prophecy. Some moderns have seen in such double names a trace of an ancient fusion or amalgamation of distinct races.

The ancient kings and chiliarchs of Edom, the sons of Esau, but only their entire subjugation. The differences of spelling noticed in themargin are unimportant as regards the names Zebhi (verse 36), Homam (verse 39), and Aliah and Sheph (verse 40); the note on Ebah-Obal (verse 32) explains them. The written w and y in Hebrew are so similar as to be perpetually confounded with each other by careless copyists. The same fact accounts for the missing conjunction and in verse 42, which is expressed in Hebrew by simply prefixing the letter w to a word. The w in this case having been misread, and transcribed as y, the name Jakin (Yakin) resulted. The Aqan (not Achan) of Gen. xxxvi. 2 is correct. (So in some MSS, the LXX. and Arabic.) Amram, in verse 41, is a mistake of the Authorised version. The Hebrew has Hamram, which differs only by one consonant from the Hemdan of Gen. xxxvi. 26; a difference due to the common confusion of the Hebrew letters d and r, already exemplified in verses 6 and 7 (Riphath — Diphath, Dodanim — Rodanim). Many MSS. and the Arabic read Hemdan here.

Timna was Lotan's sister. The sons of Shobal; (3) Alian, and Manahath, and Ebal; (4) Shephi, and Onam. And the sons of Zibeon; Aiah, and Anah. (The sons of Anah; (4) Dishon. And the sons of Dishon; (5) Amram, and Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran. (The sons of Ezor; Bilhan, and Zavan, and (6) Jakan. The sons of Dishan; Uz, and Aran.

Now these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the children of Israel; Bela the son of Beor: and the name of
his city was Dinhabah. (44) And when Bela was dead, Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead. (45) And when Jobab was dead, Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his stead. (46) And when Husham was dead, Hadad the son of Bedad, which smote Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Avith. (47) And when Hadad was dead, Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead. (48) And when Samlah was dead, Shaul of Rehoboth by the river reigned in his stead. (49) And when Shaul was dead, Baal-hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead. (50) And when Baal-hanan was dead, 1Hadad reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was 2Pai; and his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab. (51) Hadad died also. And the 4dukes of Edom were; duke Timnah, duke Aliah, duke Jetheth, (52) duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon, (53) duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar, (54) duke Magdiel, duke Iram. These are the dukes of Edom.

for Israel through his domains. As the older people, and as having been earlier established in its permanent home, Edom was naturally a stage beyond Israel in political development. Unhappily brief as it is, this notice is very appropriately inserted here in an introduction to the history of the kings of the house of David.

Bela the son of Beor.—Curiously like “Balaam the son of Beor,” Num. xxii. 5. In Hebrew, Bela and Balaam are essentially similar words, the terminal m of the latter being possibly a mere formative. (Perhaps, however, Balaam—Heb. Bil'am = “Bel is a kinsman”) comp. Eliam. The prophet whose strange story is read in Num. xxii.—xxiv. may, like Isaiah, have been of royal extraction.

Dinhabah.—Doom-giving, that is, the place where the king gave judgment (1 Sam. viii. 5).

(44, 45) Bozrah.—“Fortress” (the Byrsa of Carthage) was one of the capitals of Edom, perhaps identical with Mibzar (fortress, verse 53). Eusebius mentions Mabsara as a large town in Gebalene. It is now represented by the ruins of Al-Bussireh, Jebal. See Amos i. 12, “I will send a fire upon Teman, which shall devour the palaces of Bozrah;” and Isa. xxxiv. 6.

(46) Hadad.—The name of a Syrian deity, a form of the sun-god. (Comp. the royal titles, Ben-hadad and Hadad in chap. xviii. 3, and the Note on 2 Kings v. 18.) Hadad is the same as Dadi, a Syrian title of the sun-god. (Comp. the royal titles, Ben-hadad and Hadad, chap. xviii. 3, and the Note on 2 Kings v. 18.) Hadad is the same as Dadi, a Syrian title of Rimmon. Perhaps the classical Attis is equivalent to Hadad, like Bacchus, was regarded as the giver of the grapes (Isa. xvi. 9, 10).

Which smote Midian.—A glimpse of the restless flocks which prevailed from time immemorial between these tribes and peoples of kindred origin. Like the judges of Israel, the kings of Edom seem to have been raised to their position owing to special emergencies.

The field of Moab.—That is, the open country. Avith.—Like Dinhabah, and Pii, and Masrekah, unknown beyond this passage. In the Hebrew of Chiron it is spelt, Ayith; in Gen. xxxvi. Avith. The letters w and y have been transposed in our text.

(48) Shaul.—Saul, the name of the first king of Israel.

Rehoboth by the river.—Probably the same as Rehoboth Ir in Gen. xi. 11, i.e., the suburbs of Nineveh. The river is Euphrates.

(49) Baal-hanan.—Baal bestowed. (Comp. “Joahan,” Jahweh bestowed; and “Hananiah,” and “Hannibal!”) This name and that of Hadad indicate the polytheism of ancient Edom.

(50) Baal-hanan.—Some MSS. have “ben Achbor,” as in Gen. xxxvi. 39; so in verse 51. “Alvah,” of Genesis, is more correct than our “Aliah.” The Hebrew margin reads “Alvah.” (Alwah).

Pinay.—Many MSS. have “Pau,” the reading of Gen., which is right. Hadar (Gen. xxxvi. 39), on the other hand, is probably a mistake for Hadad.

Mebetabel.—El beneficent. Perhaps Mehetabel was an Israelite, as no other queen of Edom is mentioned. But her name is Aramean.

(51) Hadad died also.—Rather, And Hadad died, and there were (or arose) chilicheres of Edom, the chiliarch of Timnah, the chiliarch of Aliah, &c. This appears to state that Hadad was the last king of Edom, and that after his death the country was governed by the heads of the various clans or tribes, without any central authority. In Gen. xxxvi. 40, the sentence, “And Hadad died,” is wanting, and the transition from the kings to the chilicheres is thus effected: “And these are the names of the chilicheres of Esau, after their clans, after their places, by their names: the chiliarch of Timnah, &c.” The chilicheres (chiliarch), from ‘eleph, a thousand) were the heads of the thousands or clans (Gen. xxxvi. 40) of Edom (Gen. xxxvi. 40). (See Note on chap. xiv. 1.) The names in these verses are not personal, but tribal and local, as the conclusion of the account in Gen. xxxvi. 43 indicates: “These are the chilicheres of Edom, after their seats, in the land of their domain.” Comp. the names of the sons of Esau and Seir (verses 35—42). This makes it clear that Timnah and Aholibamah were towns. The king of Edom is often mentioned elsewhere in the Old Testament. (See Num. xx. 14; Amos ii. 1—8th cent. B.C.; 2 Kings, iii. 9—9th cent.) According to Ewald (Hist. p. 46), the chieftains of Edom follow the list of kings, “as if David had already vanquished the last king of Edom, and put it under” merely tribal government, in subordination to himself. “The Hadad who fled very young to Egypt—David’s conquest of Edom’s conquest (1 Kings xi. 14—22) may have been grandson of Hadad, the last king.”

(54) These are the dukes (chilicheres) of Edom.

—Eleven names only are given, whereas there were twelve (or thirteen) chilicheres of Edom (Gen. xxxvi. 15—19; see Note on verses 35—37). A name may have fallen out of the ancient text from which the chronicler derived the list.
The sons of Israel.—The list is apparently taken from Gen. xxxv. 23—26, where the heading is, "Now the sons of Jacob were twelve." The chronicler omits the mothers, and puts Dan before instead of after Joseph and Benjamin, as the fragmentary materials at the writer's disposal permitted.

(1, 2) The sons of Israel.—The list is apparently taken from Gen. xxxv. 23—26, where the heading is, "Now the sons of Jacob were twelve." The chronicler omits the mothers, and puts Dan before instead of after Joseph and Benjamin, as the fragmentary materials at the writer's disposal permitted.

The five sons of Judah, from Gen. xxxviii.

(3) The daughter of Shua the Canaanitess.—Shua was the father of Judah's wife. Er, the firstborn of Judah, was (became, proved) evil. Word for word from Gen. xxxviii. 7.

(4) Tamar.—Wife of Er. The story of her incest with Judah, which was the twins Pharez (Gen. xxxviii. 18), and Zerah (called Zarah, Gen. xxxviii. 30); and Zara, Matt. i. 3), is told in Gen. xxxviii. 29—30.

(5) The sons of Pharez.—From Gen. xxvi. 12, which also names the five sons of Judah. Num. xxvi. 21 mentions the clans (mishpatath) of the Hezronites and Hamulites, as registered in a census held by Moses.

(6–9) The sons of Zerah.—From this point our narrative ceases to depend entirely upon the data of Genesis.

(9) Zimri.—This name is probably a merely accidental variant of Zabdi. Both are genuine Hebrew names occurring elsewhere. But the fact that Zimri here, and Zabdi at Josh. vii. 1, are both called sons of Zerah, seems to prove their identity; especially as m is often confused with b, and d with r.

Ethan, and Heman, and Calcol, and Dara.

—It is stated (1 Kings iv. 31) that Solomon was "wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Calcol, and Dara, the sons of Mahol." It will be seen that the first three names coincide with those of our text, and that Dara is only one letter different from Zabdi. Further, many MSS. of Chronicles, as well as the Syriac and Arabic versions and the Targum, actually have Darda. The Vatic. LXX. reads Darda. There is thus a virtual repetition of these four names in the passage of Kings, and it is difficult to suppose that the persons intended are not the same there and here. Ethan is called an Ezrahite in Judges, but Zerah and Zabdi are equivalent forms in Hebrew; and the Vatic. LXX. actually calls Ethan a Zarithite—i.e., a descendant of Zerah (Num. xxvi. 13). The designation of the four as "sons of Mahol" presents no difficulty. Mahol is a usual word for the sacred dance (Ps. cxlix. 3, cl. 4), and the four Zarithites are thus described as "sons of dancing"—that is, sacred musicians. It is likely, therefore, that these famous minstrels of Judah were adopted into the Levitical class in which sacred music was the hereditary profession. (See Ps. lxxxviii. and lxxxix., titles.) Whether Ethan and Heman are the persons mentioned in chaps. vi. 33, 44, and xv. 17, 19 as the recognised heads of two of the great guilds of temple musicians is not clear. The Levitical ancestry ascribed to them in chap. vi. would not be opposed to this assumption, as adoption would involve it.

(7) The sons of Carmi.—See Note on chap. i. 41. Achar, the trouble of Israel.—See Josh. vii. 1, where the man is called "Achan, son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah." The family of Carmi, therefore, were Zarhites. Josh. vii. 27 calls him "Achan, the son of Zerah," an expression which shows, if other proof were wanting, that we must be cautious of interpreting such phrases literally in all instances.

Achar, the trouble of Israel.—There is a play on the man's name in the Hebrew, which is, "Achar, 'other Israel.'" So in Josh. vii. 25 Joshua asks, "Why hast thou troubled us?" (Rachel). And in verse 26 the place of Achar's doom is called "the valley of Achor" (trouble). Probably Achan is an old error for Achar.

(8) The sons of Ethan.—Nothing is known of this Ezrahite Azariah. It seems plain that the writer wished to name only the historically famous members of the Zarthite branch of Judah—in verse 6, the four proverbial sages; in verse 7, Achar who brought woe upon Israel by taking of the devoted spoils of Jericho.

(9–41) The Hezronites, who were sons of Pharez (verse 5), and their three lines of descent, Jerahmeel, Ram, and Cherubai.

(9) Jerahmeel.—God pitieth.

Ram.—Called Aram in our Lord's genealogy (Matt. i.) The two names are synonyms, both meaning
The descent of David.

I. CHRONICLES, II.

The sons of Caleb.

1. Or, Aram, Matt. 1. 2.
2. Or, Caleb, ver. 18.
4. 1 Sam. 16. 4.
5. Or, Shammah, 1 Sam. 18. 9.
6. Ex. 31. 2.
7. Heb., took.

born unto him; Jerahmeel, and 1 Ram, and 2 Chelubai. (10) And Ram a beget Amminadab; and Amminadab begat Nahshon, prince of the children of Judah; (11) and Nahshon begat Salma, and Salma begat Boaz, (15) and Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jesse, (15) and Jesse begat his firstborn Eliab, and Abinadab the second, and 1 Shimea the third, (14) and Jesse begat the fourth, Raddai the fifth, (15) and Ozem the sixth, David the seventh: (16) whose sisters were Zeruiah, and Abigail. And the sons of Zeruiah; Abishai, and Joab, and Asahel, and Sh寺h (see chap. xi. 6-8); and for Joab and Abishai, Machir.—The firstborn of Manasseh (Gen. 1. 23), immediate kin, just as Abner was to Saul. Comp. Num. xxvi. 28, which mentions 20, 26), comp. chaps. xviii. 12, 15, xix. 10 seq., xxi. 2 et seq., xxvii. 24. David’s champions were thus his immediate kin, just as Abner was to Saul.

(17) And Abigail bare Amasa; and the father of Amasa was Jether the Ishmeelite.

(18) And Caleb the son of Hezron begat children of Azubah his wife, and of Jerioth: her sons are these; Jesher, and Shobab, and Ardon. (19) And when Azubah was dead, Caleb took unto him Ephrath, which bare him Hur. (20) And Hur begat Uri, and Uri begat Bezaleel.

(21) And afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir the father of Gilgal, whom he married when he was three-score years old; and she bare him three.

(17) Jether the Ishmeelite.—Incorrectly called “Ithran an Israelite” in 2 Sam. xvi. 25. The later abhorrence of alien marriages seems to have been known in the age of David. The name of Zeruiah’s husband is unknown.

II.—The Calebite stock (verses 18—24).

(18) And Caleb the son of Hezron begat children of Azubah his wife.—The Heb. text, as it stands, does not say this. The primâ facie rendering is, “And Caleb son of Hezron begat Azubah a woman, and Jerioth: and these (are) her sons; Jesher, and Shobab, and Ardon.” But verse 19 continues: “And Azubah died, and Caleb took to himself (as wife) Ephrath,” which of course suggests that Azubah was not daughter but a former wife of Caleb. Verse 18 has also been translated, “And Caleb son of Hezron caused Azubah a wife and Jerioth to bear children,” (Comp. Isa. lxvi. 9.) It seems best to read, “his wife, daughter of Jerioth” (“isht6-bath. Ierioth”), instead of the text (isht6-bath. Ierioth); and to render: “And Caleb son of Hezron begat sons with Azubah daughter of Jerioth” (eth, the particle before Azubah, is ambiguous, and might be either the mere sign of the accusative, or the prep. *with,” cum, ker). The Syriac partly supports this version, for it reads: “And Caleb begat of Azubah, his wife, Jerioth,” making Jerioth Azubah’s daughter. The LXX. has, “And Caleb took Azubah a wife and Jerioth,” which only shows that the corruption of the text is ancient.

(19) Ephrath.—In verse 50 Ephrathah; so also iv. 4. The town of Bethlehem was so called (Micah v. 1).

(20) Hur begat Uri . . . Bezaleel.—See Exod. xxxi. 2, which states that: “Bezaleel, son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah,” was divinely qualified for building the Tent of Meeting. Bezaleel is no doubt a person, but Hur is probably a Calebite clan, established at “Ephrath, which is Beth-lehem” (Gen. xxxv. 19).

(21) And afterward Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir.—This appears to mean, after the birth of the three sons mentioned in verse 9.

Machir.—The firstborn of Manasseh (Gen. 1. 23), to whom Moses gave the land of Gilad (Num. xxiii. 40; Deut. iii. 15). This explains the term “father of Gilad.” The great clan of Machir was the ruling clan in Gilad. Comp. Num. xxvi. 28, which mentions high, and are used interchangeably in Job xxxii. 2 (Ram) and Gen. xxxii. 21 (Aram).

Chelubai.—Strictly, the Chelubite or Calebite, a gentilic term formed from Caleb (verse 18). This seems to show that we are concerned here not so much with individual sons of Hezron as with families or clans of Hezronites.

I.—(10—17) The descent of David from Amminadab, of the house of Ram. The royal line naturally takes precedence of the other two. Ruth iv. 18—22 gives this line from Phares to David. (Compare the genealogies of Christ, Matt. i. and Luke iii.) Nahshon is called chief of Judah in Num. ii. 3 (comp. chaps. i. 7, vii. 12), at the time of the Exodus.

(10) Salma.—So in Ruth iv. 20; but in verse 21, Matt. i. 4, and Luke iii. 32, Salmon.

(13—17) The family of Jesse (Heb., Yishai in verse 12, but Tahai in verse 13).

Seven sons are here named. 1 Sam. xvii. 12, 13 states that Jesse had eight sons; and from 1 Sam. xvi. 6—10 (Heb.) it appears that he had that number. In both passages, Eliab, Abinadab, and Shimea (Heb., Shim‘â, here and at chap. xx. 7) occur, the last under the form Shammal. He is called Shime (2 Sam. xxi. 21); but Shime (2 Sam. xiii. 3, 22); and this appears to have been his real name.

(14, 15) Nethaneel . . . Raddai . . . Ozem.—Not named elsewhere in the Scriptures. The son of Jesse, omitted in our present Heb. text, is called Elihu in the Syriac version, which makes him seventh and David the eighth. The name Elihu occurs in chap. xxvii. 18 for Eliab.

(16) Whose sisters were Zeruiah, and Abigail. —Literally, And their sisters, &c. If the reading in 2 Sam. xvi. 25 be correct, these two women were daughters of Nahash, who must therefore have been a wife of Jesse. Abigail (there called Abigail) was mother of the warrior Amasa, who became Absalom’s general (2 Sam. xix. 13), and was afterwards assassinated by Joab (2 Sam. xx. 10).

Abishai.—Abishai, here and elsewhere in the chronicles. Joab, the famous commander-in-chief of David’s forces (see chap. xi. 6—8); and for Joab and Abishai, who, like Asahel, was one of David’s heroes (chap. xi. 20, 26), comp. chaps. xviii. 12, 15, xix. 10 seq., xxi. 2 et seq., xxvii. 24. David’s champions were thus his immediate kin, just as Abner was to Saul.

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families or clans, settled in the twenty-three cities.

And to all the region of Argob unto the bounds of the Geshurites, the sons of Machir, chief of Gilead.

The sons of Machir, the clan of the Machirites, and adds that “Machir begat Gilead,” which perhaps means to say that the Israelite settlers in Gilead were of the clan Machir.

Whom he married when he was threescore.

—It is possible to see here a metaphorical statement of the fact that a branch of Hezronites amalgamated with the Machirites of Gilead. The “daughter of Machir” would then mean the clan so named. Comp. the expressions, “daughter of Zion” (Isa. xxxvii. 22), “daughter of Judah” (Lam. i. 15), “daughter of Babylon” (Isa. xvii. 1).

(22) And Segub begat Jair . . . The Havoth-jair (tent-villages of Jair) are several times mentioned in the Pentateuch. In the passage Num. xxxii. 39—42 it is related—(1) That the Manassite clan of the sons of Machir took Gilead from the Amorites; (2) That Moses then formally assigned Gilead “to Machir son of Manasseh;” and the clan accordingly settled there; (3) That Jair son of Manasseh had taken their (i.e., the Amorite) tent-villages, and called them Havoth-jair. Comp. Deut. iii. 14, 15: “Jair son of Manasseh had taken all the region of Argob unto the bounds of the Geshurite and the Maachathite; and he called them (that is, Bashan) after his own name, Havoth-jair, unto this day. And to Machir I gave Gilead.”

Verses 21—23 show a connection between Jair and the two tribes of Judah and Manasseh thus:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Judah</th>
<th>Manasseh</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pharez</td>
<td>Hezron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jair</td>
<td>Married daughter of Machir, chief of Gilead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segub</td>
<td>Of course the name of a group of kindred families or clans, settled in the twenty-three cities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(23) And he took . . . of Gilead.—Rather, And Geshur and Aram took the Havoth-jair from them—Kenath and her daughters, sixty cities: all these (were) sons of Machir, chief of Gilead.

Geshur, and Aram.—That is, the Aramean state of Geshur, north-west of Bashan, near Hermon and the Jordan, which was an independent kingdom in the age of David (2 Sam. iii. 3). The Geshurites “took the tent-villages of Jair from them”—i.e., from the sons of Jair, or the Jairites, at what date is unknown. Comp. Deut. iii. 14, 15, above cited.

With Kenath.—The Hebrew article before “Kenath” may be either the sign of the object of the verb, or the preposition “with.” In the latter case, the statement of the verse will be that the twenty-three villages of Jair, together with the (thirty-seven) places called Kenath and her daughters, amounting in all to sixty towns, were taken by the Geshurites. See Num. xxxii. 41, 42, where it is said that Jair occupied the Havoth-jair, and “Nobah went and took Kenath and her daughters, and called it Nobah after his own name.” Kenath is the modern Kauvat, on the western slope of Jebel Hawraman.

It is difficult to reconcile all the different statements about the Havoth-jair. Judges x. 3, 4, for example, speaks of Jair the Gileadite, who judged Israel twenty-two years, and “had thirty sons that rode on thirty ass colts;” and, moreover, possessed “thirty cities, which are called Havoth-jair unto this day.” Josh. xiii. 30 seems to make the Havoth-jair sixty towns. Comp. 1 Kings iv. 13; also verse 21, where Hezron is sixty when he marries the Gileadite daughter of Machir.

Of course the number of places included in the “camps of Jair” may have varied at different epochs.

All these belonged to the sons of Machir.—Or, all these were sons of Machir—i.e., the clans and families that came of the union of Hezron with the daughter of Machir. (See Note on verse 21; and Josh. xix. 34.)

(24) And after that Hezron was dead . . . Or, “And after the death of Hezron in Caleb-ephrahah—and the wife of Hezron was Abiah—and she bare him Ashur . . . ” The text is evidently corrupt. The best suggestion is based on the reading of the LXX.: καὶ μετὰ τῆς ἀποθεωσίας Ἰσαής ἀπέβαλεν καλέσας ἤπειραν. “And after Hezron’s death Caleb went in to Ephratha.” Some very slight changes in the Hebrew, affecting only three letters of the entire sentence, will give the sense, “And after Hezron’s death Caleb went in to Ephratha, the wife of his father Hezron (verse 19); and she bare him Ashur, father (founder, or chief) of Tekoa.” (Comp. Gen. xxxv. 22.)

Ashur (Heb., Ash-hur) means “man of Hur”—that is, the chief of the clan of the Hurites, settled at Ephrath or Bethlehem (verse 19). Comp. Ashbel “man of Bel.” (Ash is the elder form of Isr “man”; as appears from the Phenician inscriptions.)

That “Caleb” in this verse means the house of Caleb is evident if we consider that the genealogy makes him great grandson of Judah, whereas the individual Caleb son of Jephunneh took part in the conquest of Canaan, more than four centuries after Judah went down to Egypt.

III.—The Jerahmeelites (verses 25—41). Comp. 1 Sam. xxvii. 10, “the south (land) of the Jerahmeelites,” in the territory of Judah.

(25) Ram the firstborn.—Not the same as the Ram, brother of Jerahmeel, of verse 9. (See Note at end of section.)

And Ahijah.—This is probably a mistake, as the conjunction is wanting in the Hebrew. The LXX. has, “his brother” the Hebrew for which might easily be misread Abijah. So the Syriac and Arabic read, “and Ozem their sister.” But the statement of verse 26, “And the sons of Jerahmeel the first-born of Hezron were, Ram the firstborn, and Bunah, and Oren, and Ozem, and Azarel . . . ” is probably a mistake, as the conjunction is wanting in the Hebrew. The LXX. has, “his brother” the Hebrew for which might easily be misread Ahijah. So the Syriac and Arabic read, “and Ozem their sister.” But the statement of verse 26, “And the sons of Jerahmeel the first-born of Hezron were, Ram the firstborn, and Bunah, and Oren, and Ozem, and
Ahijah. (26) Jerahmeel had also another wife, whose name was Atarah; she was the mother of Onam. (27) And the sons of Ram the firstborn of Jerahmeel were, Maaz, and Jamin, and Eker. (28) And the sons of Onam were, Shammai, and Jada. And the sons of Shammai; Na­
dab, and Abishur. (29) And the name of the wife of Abishur was Abihail, and she bare him Ahban, and Abihol. (30) And the sons of Nadab; Seled, and Appaim; but Seled died without children. (31) And the sons of Appaim; Ishi. And the sons of Ishi; Sheshan. And the children of Sheshan; Ahlai. (32) And the sons of Jada the brother of Shammai; Jether, and Jonathan: and Jether died without children. (33) And the sons of Jonathan; and that the right reading is “from Ahijah,” which requires merely the restoration of the prefix μ (me­
Ahīyah), which has fallen out, as in other instances, after the μ of Ozean immediately preceding. (26) Atarah.—The word means corona, here and in verse 54; probably, the ring, fence or fortifications round a city. So στε­
φάρων was used in Greek (Pindar, Olypm. viii. 42, of the wall of Troy). The plural Ataroth occurs as the name of a town in Num. xxxii. 5; Josh. xvi. 5.

The mother of Onam.—See verses 28—34 for the ramifications of this clan.

(30) Seled died without children.—That is, the clan Seled did not multiply, and subdivide into new groups. (Comp. verse 32.)

The children of Sheshan; Ahlai.—See Note on chap. i. 41, “Dishon.” Ahlai is the name of a clan, not of an individual. Others would explain such phrases by assuming that “sons of so-and-so” is a conventional expression, used even where only one person has to be registered; or that the chronicler has in such cases abbreviated the contents of his source, by omitting all the names but one. Both assumptions are antiquated.

(33) These were the sons of Jerahmeel.—Sub­
scription of the list contained in verses 25—33. It is noteworthy that the total of the names from Judah to Zaza again amounts to about seventy. (Comp. chap. i.; see also Gen. xvi. 27.)

(34) Now Sheshan had no sons, but daugh­
ters.—Comp. verse 31 above, “And the children of Sheshan; Ahlai.” Those who insist upon a literal understanding of these lists reconcile the two statements by making Ahlai a daughter; others suppose that the chronicler has preserved for us in the present section fragments of at least two independent accounts.

(35—41) The line of Sheshan-Jarha is pursued for thirteen generations of direct descent, but nothing is known of any of its members from any other source. Elishama, the last name (verse 41), is the twenty-fourth generation specified from Judah. The list thus extends over a period of at least 720 years; and if we reckon from the Exodus (circa 1330 B.C.), we get B.C. 610 as an approximate date for Elishama. Now an Elishama was living about that time, who is mentioned (Jerem. xxxvi. 12) as one of the princes of Jehoiakim, king of Judah; Jerem. xli. I perhaps mentions the same person again, calling him “of the seed of the kingdom.” It is at least a coincidence that several of the names recur in the house of David: Nathan (verse 36) in chap. iii. 5; Obad, as David’s grandfather in verse 12; Azariah, as a by­name of King Uzziah, in chap. iii. 12; Shallum, as a son of Josiah, in chap. iii. 15; Jekamiah, as a brother of Salathiel (Shealtiel), in chap. iii. 18; and Elisahama, as a son of David, in chap. iii. 8—a coincidence of six out of thirteen names. The passage Deut. xxiii. 7, 8 rules that in the third generation persons of Egyptian blood are to be treated as full Israelites. This whole section proves that an Egyptian element was recognised in Judah. (Compare Exod. xii. 38; Num. xi. 4.) Even the name Jarha has an Egyptian cast (comp. Jar ó, the Memphitic name of the Nile, with the Vulg. spelling of the word Jeraa); perhaps it is Jar aa, great river, (i.e., the Nile).

(42—55) These verses revert to the Calebite stocks. Interpreted as a mere bearing upon the extraction of individ­uals about whom, for the most part, nothing whatever is known beyond what these brief notices reveal, the section presents great difficulties. The key to it appears to be the assumption that it is an ancient record of the relations between certain great branches of the tribe of Judah, and their various settlements; in other words, these lists are tribal and topographical, rather than genealogical.

1.—Verses 42—45: Caleb brother of Jerahmeel = Caleb son of Hezron (verse 18) = Chelubai (verse 9).

(46) Mesha.—The name of a king of Moab (2 Kings iii. 4), whose monument of victory, the famous Moabite stone, was found in 1868 at Dibon. Here the name is probably that of a principal Calebite clan, settled at Ziph, near Hebron (Josh. xv. 54, 55; 1 Sam. xxiiii. 14).

Father of Ziph.—Comp. verses 21, “father of Gilead,” and 24.

And the sons of Maresah the father of Hebr­on.—The statement of the verse is, “the sons of Maresah were sons of Caleb,” that is, the Maresha­thites, or people of Maresah (Josh. xv. 44), a town in the Shephelah, were a Calebite clan. This branch of
which was the father of Ziph; and the sons of Maresah the father of Hebron.

(43) And the sons of Hebron; Korah, and Tappuah, and Rekem, and Shema.

(44) And Shema begat Raham, the father of Jorkaam: and Rekem begat Shammai.

(45) And the son of Shammai was Maon: and Maon was the father of Beth-zur.

(46) And Ephah, Caleb’s concubine, bare Haran, and Moza, and Gazez: and Haran begat Gazez. (47) And

Caleb is called “father of Hebron,” because it had the chief part in colonising that old Canaanite city.

In chap. i. 35 it was a tribe of Edomites.

In this place, therefore, it may be a clan of Hebronites.

Tappuah.—A town in the Shephelah (Josh. xv. 34, xxv. 5).

Rekem.—A Benjamite city (Josh. xvi. 27); in chap. vii. 16, a Machirite chiefman or clan.

Shema.—Occurs several times in the chronicle. In chaps. v. 8 and viii. 13 it appears to be the name of a clan; in chap. xi. 44 and Neh. viii. 4 a person is meant.

Jorkaam.—Occurs nowhere else in the Old Testament. The LXX. (Alex.) has Ἵεκάνα, Jeklan. Probably, therefore, the correct reading is Jokdeam.

(For the change of Hebrew d to Greek l see 1 Kings v. 11, where Hebrew Darda is represented by Ἰάχαρα.) Jokdeam was a town in the hill-country of Judah (Josh. xv. 56). The chief or clan Raham is here called its father or founder.

Rekem.—The LXX. (Alex.) again has Jeklan (Jokdeam), which is as likely to be right as Rekem.

Shammai.—See verse 28.

Maon . . . Beth-zur. — Towns in the hill-country of Judah (Josh. xv. 55, 58). Maon, now Main, south of Hebron. Beth-zur (2 Chron. xi. 7), now Beth-sir. In Judges x. 12 Midianites, not Maonites, is the better reading.

II.—Verses 46—49: The sons of Ephah and Maachah, two concubines of Caleb.

(46) Ephah, Caleb’s concubine . . . — These sons of concubines appear to represent mixed populations or tribal groups considered to be of less pure descent than the chief houses of Caleb. The same title of inferiority might cover a relation of dependence, something like that of the clients of the great Roman houses. The name Ephah, occurring in chap. vi. 33 as a tribe of the Midianites, is likely, therefore, that we have before us a record of the admixture of a Midianite element with the southern Judaeans.

Haran.—Abraham’s brother (Gen. iii. 26); a place in Mesopotamia where Abraham settled (Gen. xi. 31). It is the Assyrian ḫarrānu (high-road). The Midianites claimed descent from Abraham (chap. i. 31), this name therefore might well be borne by a semi-Midianite clan.

Moza.—Occurs in Josh. xviii. 26 as a town in Benjamin.

Haran begat Gazzez.—Comp. verse 24. Note. Gazzez was probably a branch of the clan Haran. The LXX. (Alex.) omits the clause.

(47) The sons of Jahdai.—Heb., Yohda, or Yehudai. The connection of these tribal groups with the foregoing is not clear; but from verse 46 it appears that they were Calebites with a foreign admixture. It is curious to find the Midianite name Ephah recurring among them.

(48) Maachah, Caleb’s concubine, bare . . . — The Heb. is peculiar, “Caleb’s concubine Maachah—he bare Sheber,” &c. There is another reading, “she bare.” Maachah was a well-known Syrian state (Deut. iii. 14).

(Komp. 2 Sam. iii. 3; chaps. xvi. 8, xix. 15, “Aram hath fled” = the Syrians have fled; 16, “Aram saw,” &c.)

(49) Madmannah.—A town of southern Judah, mentioned along with Ziklag in Josh. xv. 31. The Shaaf who settled here are different from those mentioned in verse 47.

Machbenah, an unknown place in Judah, and Gibeah in the hill-country (Josh. xv. 57) were settlements of the mixed Calebites called Sheva.

The daughter of Caleb was Achsa.—In Josh. xv. 13—19 the father of Achsa is called Caleb son of Jephunneh. This Caleb son of Jephunneh is associated with Joshua in the Pentateuch (Numb. xii. 6, 8), and took a prominent part in the conquest of Canaan.

As he represents Judah (Numb. xii. 6; comp. Judg. i. 10—12), it is reasonable to see in Caleb son of Jephunneh the chief of the tribal division of Hebron-Caleb in the time of Joshua.

Already in these curious lists we have met with special memorials of remarkable members of clans (comp. verses 4—12, and 20), and we may see in the brief clause “and Achsa, daughter of Caleb” a similar notice that this famous person was a Calebite.


(50) The sons of Caleb the son of Hur, the firstborn of Ephraim.—See verses 19, 20 and Notes. The statement “These were the sons of Caleb” should be connected with verse 49, as a subscription or concluding remark to the list, verses 42—49. (Comp. verse 32.) A fresh start is then made with “the sons of the LXX.” of Hur, firstborn of Ephraim,” reverting to the Caleb of verse 19 seq., just as verse 34 returns to Jerahmeel in the Sheshanite branch.

Shobal the father of Kirjath-jearim.—Shobal is named at chap. iv. 1 as a chief clan or sub-tribe of Judah, along with Hur.

Kirjath-jearim.—“City of woods,” one of the four cities of the Gibeonites (Josh. ix. 17), also called Kirjath-Baal and Baalath (Josh. x. 6, 9), in the hill-country of Judah.
The Postesty of

I. CHRONICLES, III.

Caleb the Son of Hur.

(53) Salma the father of Beth-lehem, Har-ethep the father of Beth-gader. (52) And Shobal the father of Kirjath-jearim had sons: 1Haroech, and 2half of the Manahathites. (53) And the families of Kirjath-jearim: the Ithrites, and the Puthites, and the Shumathites, and the Mishraites; of them came the Zareathites, and the Eshtaulites. (54) The sons of Salma: Beth-lehem, and the Netophathites, 3Arathoth, the house of 4Or, Reinech, ch. iv. 19.

Joab, and half of the Manahathites, the Zorites. (55) And the families of the scribes which dwelt at Jabez; the Tirathites, the Shimeathites, and Suchathites. These are the "Kenites that came of Hemath, the father of the house of 6Rechab.

CHAPTER III.—(1) Now these were the sons of David, which were born unto him in Hebron; the firstborn 7Amon, and the other half sons of Shobal (verse 52).

The families (mishpēḥōth—clans) of the scribes which dwelt at Jabez.—Among the clans calling themselves sons of Salma were three groups of Sopherim (Authorised version, "scribes") settled at Jabez (Heb., 1aḇîq'), a town of northern Judah, near to Zorah. (See chap. iv. 9, Note.) The three clans were known as those of Tir'āh, Shimeah, and Suchah. The Vulg. treats these names as appellatives, and renders canentes a gente resoundantes et in tabernaculis commorantes, that is, "singing and resounding, and dwelling in tents." This translation is assumed to be due to Jerome's Rabbinical teachers, and is justified by reference to the words teri'āh, "trumpet-blare;" shīn'āh, "report;" or the Aramaic Shenatā "legal tradition" and sukāh (= sukkah), "a booth." Hence the conclusion has been drawn that the Sopherim of Jabez were, in fact, ministers of religion, discharging functions precisely like those of the Levites. So Wellhausen, who refers to Jer. xxxv. 19, and the title of Ps. lxx. in the LXX., and to one or two late fragmentary notices of the Rechabites. On the face of it the supposition is unlikely; nor does it derive any real support from the Kenite origin of these Sopherim, for it is a mere fancy that the house of Jethro, the Kenite priest of Midian, became temple-ministers in Israel. Besides, the etymologies of the names are hardly cogent; and if we try to extract history from etymology here, we might as well do so in the case of the clans of Kirjath-jearim (verse 53), and make the Ithrites a guild of ropers (gathar, "cord, bowstring"), the Puthites hinge-makers (pōthoth—1 Kings i. 50—"hinges"), and the Shumathithes garlic-eaters (šūmāh, "garlic," Num. xi. 5). The Vulg. often makes the blunder of translating proper names. (See verses 52, 54).

(54) These are the Kenites that came of Hamath (Heb., Ḥammatḥ), the father of the house of (Beth-) Rechab.—The three clans of Sopherim were originally Kenites, and traced their descent from Hamath, the traditional founder of the Rechabite stock. When, or under what circumstances these Rechabite Kenites amalgamated with the Calebite clan of Salma is unknown; but comp. Judges i. 11—16.

III.

Chap. iii. resumes the genealogy of the Hezonite house of Ram, suspended at chap. ii. 17. (1) The nine sons of David (verses 1—9). (2) The Davideic dynasty from Solomon to Zedekiah (10—16). (3) The line of Jehoniah-Jelioaichin, continued apparently to the ninth generation (17—24).

1.—The sons of David.—This section is parallel to 2 Sam. iii. 2—5 (comp. verses 1—4) and 2 Sam. v. 14—16 (verses 5—9), with which comp. 1 Chron. xiv. 3—7.
of Ahinoam the "Jezreelitess; the second 
1 Daniel, of Abigail the Carmelitess: 
(2) the third, Absalom the son of Maachah 
the daughter of Talma king of Gesur: 
the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith: 
(3) the fifth, Shephatiah of Abital: 
the sixth, Ithream by Eglah his wife. 
(4) These six were born unto him in 
Hebron; and there he reigned seven 
years and six months: and in Jerusalem 
he reigned thirty and three years. (5) And 
these were born unto him in Jerusalem; 
2 Shimea, and Shobah, and Nathan, and 
Solomon, four, of Bath-shua the daugh­
ter of Ammiel: (6) Ibhar also, and 
Elshama, and Eliphelet, and Nobah, 
and Nepheg, and Japhia, (7) and Eli­sha­ma, and Eliada, and Eliphelet, nine. 
(8) These were all the sons of David, 
beside the sons of the concubines, and 
Tamar their sister.

(1—4) The six sons born in Hebron. The sons and 
mothers agree with those of the parallel passage in Sam., 
with the one exception of the second son, who is here 
called Daniel, but in Samuel, Chileab. The LXX. (2 Sam. 
ix. iii. 3) has Δαλεα, which may represent Heb. דלעא (Iah hath freed), though in our verse 24 that name 
is spelt Δαλα, or Δαλα. In the present passage the 
Vatican LXX. has Δαλεα, the Alex. Δαλουια. Per­ 
haps Daniel is a corruption of Delaiah, as this name 
occurs in the line of David. Chileab may have had 
a second name (comp. Uzziah-Azariah, Mattanniah­ 
Zedekiah), especially as Chileab appears to be a nick­ 
name, meaning "dog." (Comp. the Latin Caninitius, 
Caninus, as a family name.)

(1) Amnon.—For his story see 2 Sam. xiii. 
Of Ahinoam.—Literally, to Ahin. (1 Sam xxv. 43). 
The second Daniel of Abigail the Carmelitess.—Better, A second, Daniel, to Abigail, &c. Sam. adds, " wife of Nabal the Carmelitess." (See 1 Sam. 
xxv. for her story.)

(2) Absalom.—David's favourite and rebellious son 
(2 Sam. xv—xix.). The common Heb. text has "to Ab­ 
salom," but a number of MSS. and all the old versions read Absalom. Rabbi D. Kimchi gives the characteristic 
explanation that L-ABSHAUL alludes to L0-ABSHAUL, "not Absalom"—that is, not a "father of peace," but 
a rebel.

Maachah . . . Gesur.—See chap. ii. 23. 
Adonijah the son of Haggith.—Who would 
have succeeded his father, and was put to death by Solo­ 
m. (1 Kings i., ii. 19—25).

(3) Eglah (heifer) his wife.—Eglah is not marked 
out as principal wife of David. The expression "his 
wife" is added simply to balance the clause, to make up 
for the absence of details respecting her connections, 
such as are given in the case of some of the other wives. 
Jewish expositors have groundless identified Eglah with Michal, daughter of Saul (1 Sam. xviii. 20).

(4) These six were born unto him in He­ 
bron.—Literally, Six were born. 2 Sam. iii. 5: "These 
were born."

And there he reigned seven years.—This 
notice of the time David reigned first in Hebron, the 
Judean capital, and then in Jerusalem over all Israel, 
is not read in the parallel section of Samuel; but see 2 
Sam. ii. 11, v. 5 for the same statements.

(5—8) The thirteen sons born in Jerusalem. See 
2 Sam. v. 14—16, and chap. xiv. 4—7, where this 
list is repeated with some variations (verse 5). The 
four sons of Bath-shua, called here Bath-sheba, a 
weakened form, if not a copyist's error. By a similar 
change the Elishama of verse 6 appears in Samuel as 
Elisshua.
The Sons of Solomon

I. CHRONICLES, III.

(10) And Solomon's son was Rehoobam, Abia his son, Asa his son, Jehoshaphat his son, (11) Joram his son, Ahaziah his son, Azariah his son, Jotham his son, (12) Ahaz his son, Hezekiah his son, Manasseh his son, (14) Amon his son, Josiah his son. (15) And the sons of Josiah were, the firstborn Johanan, the second Jehoikiam, the third Zedekiah, the fourth Shallum. (16) And the sons of Jehoiakim: Jeconiah his son, Zedekiah his son.

(17) And the sons of Jeconiah; Assir, Salathiel his son, Malchiram also, and Pedaiah, and Shenazzar, Jecamiah, Jeconiah the son of Jeconiah, which is the son of Shealtiel, of the order of the house of David.

to "Bathsua the daughter of Ammiel," and arranging the latter in three triads. Verse 9 also is wanting in Samuel.

II.—The kings of the house of David, as otherwise known from the books of Kings (verses 10—16).

(10) Rehoobam.—So LXX., Pesh., Heb., Rēḥoḇām ("the Kinsman," i.e., God hath enlarged). Abia.—LXX., Aḇāh; Heb., Abīyāh (Iah is father), of which Abijam (Abīyāhū) is a mummified form.

(11) Joram.—Jehoram. Iah is comforteth.

(14) Amon.—Perhaps of Egyptian origin.

(15) The sons of Josiah were, the firstborn Johanan, the second Jehoikiam, the third Zedekiah, the fourth Shallum. (16) And the sons of Jehoiakim: Jeconiah his son, Zedekiah his son.

(17) Assir.—This word means prisoner, captive; literally, bondman. It so occurs in Isa. x. 2, xxiv. 22. Accordingly the verse may be rendered, "And the sons of Jeconiah when captive—Shealtiel (was) his son." This translation (1) accords with the Masoretic punctuation, which connects the term assir with Jeconiah; and (2) accounts for the double reference to the offspring of Jeconiah, first in verse 16, "Zedekiah his son," and then again here. Zedekiah is thus separated from the sons born to Jeconiah in captivity. The strongest apparent objection against such a rendering is that the expression "the sons of Jeconiah" would require the definite article to be prefixed to the word assir. No doubt it would; but then "the sons of Jeconiah the captive" is not what the chronicler intended to say. He has said what he meant—viz., "the sons of Jeconiah when in captivity," or "as a captive."

The Talmudic treatise, Sanhedrin, gives "Assir his son;" but another, the Seder Olam, does not mention Assir, who is likewise wanting in the genealogy of our Lord (Matt. i. 12; see the Notes there).

(18) Malchiram also, and Pedaiah.—According to our present Hebrew text these six persons, arranged as two trios, are sons of Jeconiah, and brothers of Shealtiel.

Shenazzar.—Heb., Shenāzār; LXX., Ἀξιώδος—is a compound Babylonian name, like Belteshazzar (Dan. i. 7), of which the last part means "protect," and the first is, perhaps, "Sin" (comp. סְעַרְאָבָן), the moun-
Hoshama, and Nedabiah. (19) And the sons of Pedaiah were, Zerubbabel, and Shimei: and the sons of Zerubbabel; Meshullam, and Hananiah, and Shelmith their sister: (20) and Hashubiah, and Ohel, and Berechiah, and Hasadiah, Jushab-hesed, five. (21) And the sons of Hananiah; Pelatiah, and Jesaiah: the sons of Rephaiah, the sons of Arnan, the sons of Obadiah, the sons of Shecaniah. (22) And the sons of Shecaniah; Shemaiah, and Hananiah, and Shelo­­mith, and Jachin, and Zadok, and Jechimon. (23) And the sons of Hananiah; Pelatiah, and Hananiah, and Shelomith, six. (24) And the sons of Hananiah; Pelatiah, and Hananiah, and Shelomith, six. (25) And the sons of Hashubah, the sons of Zerubbabel, the sons of Shecaniah, the sons of Jeshua, the sons of Johanan, the sons of Seraiah, twelve.

Jeshua, the son of Jeshui, the son of Hroadsiah, the son of Benjamin, the son of Beduliah was a man of understanding, and had skill in indifference. He was a scribe, and he was proficient in the matters of the Law. He was well respected, and he was held in high esteem by all who knew him. His knowledge of the Law was unparalleled, and he was sought after for his wisdom and counsel. He was a man of integrity, and his reputation preceded him wherever he went. He was a true friend to all who sought his counsel, and he was always ready to offer his help and support.

The sons of Rephaiah—The ancient versions represent here an important various reading. The LXX. have rendered the whole verse thus: "And sons of Anania; Phaleitia, and Jesus his son, Raphael his son, Omus his son, Obadiah his son (Sechena his son)." The Syriac reads: "Sons of Hananiah; Pelatiah and Ushaiah. Raphael his son, Arun his son, Obia his son—viz., Ushaiah's; and his son, viz., Shechaniah's Shemaniah. See Note on verse 20. The difference between "sons" and "his son" in Hebrew writing is simply that between y and w. (See Note on chap. i.) This various reading presents a form of genealogy like that which prevails in verses 10-16, and occurs also in verse 17, at the beginning of the present section. But it is probable that this reading is really an ancient correction of the Hebrew text, which, as it stands, appears to leave undefined the relation between Hananiah and the four families mentioned in this verse. The truth, however, would seem to be that the expression "the sons of Hananiah" includes not only Pelatiah and Jesus, but also the four families named after Rephaiah, Arun, Obadiah, and Shechaniah (comp. chap. i. 42, and Note). The four founders of these families were perhaps brothers of Pelatiah and Jesus, though not necessarily so; for these families may have been subdivisions of those of Pelatiah and Jesus.

Rephaiah—Jeh useal (Isa. xxx. 26; Exod. xv. 26). See Note on verse 20. (22) The sons of Shechaniah; Shemaiah.—See Note on chap. i. 41.

Hattush—Probably the Hattush "of the sons of David, of the sons of Shechaniah," mentioned by Ezra as one of those who went up with him from Babylon in the second return, 457 B.C. (Ezra viii. 2, 3). If we have rightly understood verse 21, Hattush is of the fourth generation after Zerubbabel (Hananiah, Shechaniah, Shechaniah, Hattush), and so might well have been a youthful companion of Ezra.

Six.—As the text gives only five names, one must have been omitted by an oversight. (23) Elioenai—unto Iah (are) mine eyes, Ps. cxxiii. 1, 2—is an expansion of the same idea. (Comp. also Ps. xv. 15.) An Elioenai went up with Ezra (Ezra vii. 4).

(24) The sons of Elioenai...Hodaiah.—These sons of Elioenai are the sixth generation from...
CHAPTER IV.—(1) The sons of Judah; +Pharez, Hezron, and 1Carmi, and Hur, and Shobal. (2) And 2Reiah the son of Shobal begat Jahath; and Jahath begat Ahumai, and Lahad. These are the families of the Zorathites. (3) And these were the father of Etam; Jehozaph, and Ishma, and Idibash: and the name of their sister was Hazelipponi; (4) and Penuel the father of Gedor, and Ezer the father of Hushah. These are

Zerubbabel (536-515 B.C.), that is to say, they were living about 345 B.C., under Artaxerxes Ochus. If the reading of the LXX. in verse 21 be correct, their date is four generations later, or about 225 B.C. The result is to bring down the date of the chronicle a century lower than the best critics approve. (See Introduction.)

IV.

Chap. iv. comprises (1) a compilation of fragmentary notices relating to the clans of Judah, their settlements and handicrafts, at an epoch which is not determined: this section serves at once as a supplement to the account of Judah already given in chaps. ii. and iii., and as a first instalment of the similar survey of the other tribes which follows (chap. iv. 24-27); (2) similar notices relating to the tribe of Simeon (24-38).

(1) The sons of Judah.—Phares only of these five was literally a son of Judah, chap. ii. 3, 4. We have, however, seen that all these names, with the possible exception of Carmi, represent great tribal divisions or clans; and as such they are called sons of Judah. For Carmi it is proposed to read the more famous name of Chelubai (chap. ii. 9). This would give a line of direct descendants from Judah to the fifth generation, according to the genealogical presentation of chap. ii. 4, 9, 18, 19. But the result thus obtained is of no special value. It has no bearing on the remainder of the section. Moreover, Carmi is mentioned (chap. ii. 7) among the great Judcan houses, and might have been prominent in numbers and influence at the unknown period when the original of the present list was drafted.

(2-4) Branches and settlements of the Hurites.

(2) Reiah (or Jeriah) the son of Shobal . . .—See chap. ii. 52, which also calls Shobal "father of Kirjath-jearim." Chap. ii. 53 adds that the Zorathites (Authorised Version, Zareathites) came of the clans of Kirjath-jearim. The present verse supplements the data of chap. ii., by putting the clans of Zerah in immediate genealogical connection with Shobal. Their names—Ahumai and Lahad—occur nowhere else.

(3) And these were of the father of Etam.—Heb. And these (were) the father of Etam. Some MSS., the LXX., and the Vulg. read "and these (were) the sons of Etam:" other MSS., with the Syriac and Arabic translations, have "the sons of the father of Etam." Both variants look like evasions of a difficulty. The unusual expression "and these—Abi­Etam" may be a brief way of stating that the clans whose names are given were the dominant houses of Etam (or Abi-etam; compare Abiezer, Judg. vii. 11, viii. 2). Etam is known from the history of Samson (Judg. xv. 8, and 2 Chron. xi. 6); Jezreel—not Ahab's capital—from Josh. xv. 56, and as the city of Ahiqam, wife of David, from chap. iii. 1. Both places were in the hill-country of Judah. The other three names are unknown.

Their sister.—Their sister-town (see chap. i. 39, 52, and Notes).

Hazelepone.—Means "make shadow, O thou that regardest me!"

And Penuel the father of Gedor.—Penuel occurs as a trans-Jordan town in Judg. viii. 8, and elsewhere. Here a Judean town or clan is meant.

Gedor.—See chap. ii. 51, and Note; Josh. xv. 58. Now the ruin called Jedur.

Ezer the father of Hushah.—Ezer occurs as a name of clans and localities, as well as of persons. (Comp. Judg. vii. 24, Abi-ezer; chap. viii. 2, Abi-ezer; and 1 Sam. iv. 1, Beene-ezer.) In chap. xii. 9 and Neh. iii. 19 it is a man's name.

Hushah.—The place is unknown, but several celebrated persons are called Hushathites—e.g., Sibbechai, one of David's heroes, chap. xi. 29.

These are the sons of Hur.—A subscription to the short list of verses 2-4. Both the Shobalite clans of Zorah (verse 2) and those enumerated in verses 3-4 were sons of Hur.

The firstborn of Ephratah.—See chap. ii. 19 and 50.

The father of Beth-lehem.—At chap. ii. 51, Salma, son of Hur, is called father of Bethlehem.

Families that came of AsH-Hur (verses 5-7).

(5) And Ashur the father of Tekoa.—See chap. ii. 24, and Notes. If Ashur means the Hurites, the two wives, Helah and Naarah, may designate two settlements of this great clan.

(6) Hophor.—A district of southern Judah, near Tappuach (Josh. xii. 17; 1 Kings iv. 10). Temeni is a Gentile name, formed from the word Teman, "the south." This clan was called "the Southrons," and doubtless lived with the others in the south of Judah.

Haahashtari is another nomen gentilicium, meaning the Ahashtarites ("muleteers;" comp. Esth. viii. 10). (7) The sons of Helah are unknown from other sources.

Jezer should be Zohar, according to the Hebrew margin. The Heb. text has Izhar.

Ethanam.—Hosel's hire (Hos. iv. 1). There may have been a foreign element in this clan or township.

(8) Coz begat Anub.—Coz (thorn) is unknown.

Anub.—LXX., Ebas. Comp. Anah, (Josh. xii. 21, xv. 50), a town in the hill-country near Debir (Kirjath-sepher). The word appears to mean "grape-town."
I. CHRONICLES, IV.

(9) And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow. (10) And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested.

(11) And Chelub the brother of Shuah begat Mehir, which was the father of Eshton. (12) And Eshton begat Beth-rapha, and Paseah, and Tehinnah the father of Irnahash. These are the men of Rechah. (13) And the sons of Kenaz; Othniel, and Seriah; and the sons of

so that “Coz begat Anah” reminds us of Matt. vii. 16, Comp. Isa. v. 6, vii. 23.

The word Aharhel signifies “behind the rampart;” Harum, “the elevated.” Perhaps Harum (יוֹמָא הָרְעָה) was the citadel of the clans of Aharhel. Notice the expression, “Coz begat the clans of Aharhel, Harum, and Coz.” The form and Ir-nahash (serpent city) are towns. Is used so as to denote the possession of Nahash.

(9-10) And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren. Jabez (יהֵזֶב) was a town of Judah (chap. ii. 55), inhabited by certain clans of Sopherim, of the lineage of Salma son of Hur (chap. ii. 50, 54, 55). This is important, as giving a clue to the connection here, which is by no means clear upon the surface. It seems to prove that verses 5-10 are to be regarded as part of the list which begins at verse 5: we may thus fairly assume, although the Chronicler does not express it, that verse 8 also concerns some clans of the Hurites (or Ash-hurites). Coz is not put into genealogical connection with the other Hurites; but it is reasonable to suppose that at the date of the present list the name was well known among the Hurites. “And Coz” may have fallen out of the Heb. text, as the same expression follows immediately (verse 8).

(9) More honourable than his brethren. Comp. what is said of Hamor son of Shechem in Gen. xxxiv. 19.

His brethren. Perhaps the sons of Coz. The form of the Hebrew verb implies connection with verse 8.

His mother called his name . . . Comp. Gen. xxix. 32-35, and especially Gen. xxxv. 18.

With sorrow. Rather, pain.

Jabez called on the God of Israel. Comp. Jacob’s vow at Bethel, Gen. xxviii. 20-22, and his altar, El’elohe Israel, “El is the God of Israel,” chap. xxxiii. 20. Some have supposed that the peculiar phrase, “God of Israel,” indicates that the original Canaanite population of Jabez proselytised.

Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed. Literally, “if indeed thou wilt bless me.” My coast. My border or domain (גֶּזֶר).

And that thine hand. Rather, and if thine hand will be with me, and thou wilt deal without dread, that I suffer not! —The prayer is expressed in the form of a condition, with the consequence (“then will I serve thee,” comp. Gen. xxviii. 22) suppressed.

The name Jabez is twice explained; in verse 10 Jabez prays to be saved from pain. Comp. the frequent allusions in the book of Gen. to the meaning of the name Isaac (יִשָּׁע, “he laugheth!”); Gen. xvii. 17, Abraham’s laughter; chap. xviii. 12, Sarah’s incredulous laughter; chap. xxi. 6, Sarah’s joy at the birth; chap. xxvi. 8, Isaac’s own mirth. These features of likeness to the language and thought of Genesis, prove the originality and antiquity of the section.

And God granted. Literally, and God brought (caused to come). Hence Jabez was “honoured above his brethren,” verse 9. If the Sopherim of Jabez (chap. ii. 55) were, as their name implies, writers or men of letters, we can understand that Jabez, like Kirjath-sheker, was a place of books, and was honoured accordingly. The art of writing among the peoples of Babylonia ascends to an unknown antiquity. The oldest inscription we possess in the Phcenician character is of the ninth century B.C., and the development of that character from its Egyptian prototype must have occupied some centuries. Perhaps this very tradition concerning their founder originally emanated from the “families of the scribes which dwelt at Jabez.”

(11-12) A fragment relating to the “men of Rechah,” a name which occurs nowhere else, and for which Rechab appears a plausible correction. So the Vat., LXX. Papyrus. Compare chap. ii. 55, where the Sopherim of Jabez are called Rechabites, and see Notes on the passage. These Rechabites united with the Salmite branch of Hurites; and Hur was a son of Caleb, chap. ii. 19. Hence it is likely that the Chelub of verse 11 is identical with the Caleb-Chelubai of chap. ii., who represents a main division of the Hezronites. Others suppose that the epithet, “brother of Shuah” (Shuah), is meant to obviate this identification. The other names in this short section are wholly unknown. But their form shows at once that Beth-rapha and Ir-nahash (serpent city) are towns.

Paseah (lame); comp. Latin Claudius as a family name. It recurs Neh. iii. 6; and as the name of a clan of the Sopherim, of the lineage of Salma son of Hur (chap. ii. 55), where the Sopherim of Jabez are called Rechabites, and see Notes on the passage. These Rechabites united with the Salmite branch of Hurites; and Hur was a son of Caleb, chap. ii. 19. Hence it is likely that the Chelub of verse 11 is identical with the Caleb-Chelubai of chap. ii., who represents a main division of the Hezronites. Others suppose that the epithet, “brother of Shuah” (Shuah), is meant to obviate this identification. The other names in this short section are wholly unknown. But their form shows at once that Beth-rapha and Ir-nahash (serpent city) are towns.

The sons of Kenaz —i.e., the Kenizzite element in Judah. Kenaz was the name of an Edomite clan, chap. ii. 55, and of an old Canaanite race.

Othniel. Judg. i. 13, one of the heroes of the conquest; Judg. iii. 9, he vanquishes Chushan-rishathaim, king of Aram-naharaim. In both passages he is called “son of Kenaz, Caleb’s younger brother.” The Kenizzites, who cast in their lot with the Calebites of Judah, were naturally called “younger brothers” of their new kindred.

Seraiah is unknown.

The sons of Othniel, Hathath. Hathath means dread, Job vi. 21. Comp. the name Hittites, from the same root. The sons of Othniel (lion of God) would be a terror to their foes.

“And Meonothai” has perhaps been accidentally omitted at the end of this verse, before the same phrase in verse 14. Or the genealogist may have purposely omitted it, as implied by what follows verse 14. Meonothai is apparently a gentile name, i.e., Meon-
Othniel; 1Hathath. (14) And Meconcath begat Ophrah: and Serahiah begat Joab, the father of the valley of Charashim; for they were craftsmen. (15) And the sons of Caleb the son of Jephunneh; Iru, Elah, and Naam: and the sons of Elah, even Kenaz.

(16) And the sons of Jehaleleel; Ziph, and Zipah, Tiria, and Asareel. (17) And the sons of Ezra were Jether, and Mered, and Ephr, and Asareel. Jether is perhaps a dialectic form of Israel. (See chap. xxv. 2 and 14.) A foreign clan might take the name of its adopted people.

And the sons of Ezra.—Heb., sons, but some MSS. have sons (see Note on chap. iii. 19, 21). Ezra means help = Ezera, verse 4.

Jether, Mered, and Kerioth.—The latter may be meant here, as the boundaries of the tribes varied at different epochs. Kerioth is perhaps an Egyptian name.

Asareel is perhaps a dialectic form of Israel. (See chap. xxv. 2 and 14.) A foreign clan might take the name of its adopted people.

And the sons of Ezra.—Heb., sons, but some MSS. have sons (see Note on chap. iii. 19, 21). Ezra means help = Ezera, verse 4.

Jether occurred chap. ii. 32, as a Jerahmeelite. Ephr recurs chap. v. 21, as a Manassite name. Kerioth and Mered occur nowhere else.

And his wife Jehudijah.—Margin is right, the Jewesses bare Jered.—It is obvious that a contrast with the sons of non-Jewish wife is intended, and these latter ought already to have been mentioned. Clearly, therefore, the sentence “And these are the sons of Bithiah, the daughter of Pharaoh, whom Mered took”—a sentence which is meaningless in its present position—must be restored to its original place after the first statement of verse 17. We thus get the sense: “And the sons of Ezra were Jepher and Mered, and Ephr and Jalon. And these [the following] are the sons of Bithiah, daughter of Pharaoh, whom Mered took” —a sentence which is meaningless in its present position—must be restored to its original place after the first statement of verse 17. We thus get the sense: “And the sons of Ezra were Jepher and Mered, and Ephr and Jalon. And these [the following] are the sons of Bithiah, daughter of Pharaoh, whom Mered took [to wife]; she conceived Miriam and Shammai and Ishbah the father of Eshtemoa. And his [Mered’s] wife the Jewess bare Jered . . . Zanoah.” Thus the house of Mered son of Ezra bifurcates into a purely Judaean and a mixed Egyptian group of families. Eshtemoa (verse 17) lay south of Hebron, in the hill country (Josh. xv. 34, 50).

Gedor.—See verse 4, where Peniel is called father of Gedor. The two lists may, and probably do, refer to different epochs.

Socho.—Josh. xv. 35; in the Shephelah, south-west of Jerusalem.

Zanoah.—Two Judaean towns were so named, one in the Shephelah, the other in the highlands (Josh. xv. 34, 56).

Jokuthiel occurs here only; but comp. Jokthed (Josh. xv. 38), a town in the Shephelah.

Bithiah the daughter of Pharaoh.—Bithiah is apparently Hebrew, “daughter of Lail,” that is, a convert to the religion of Israel. It may be a Hebrewized form of Bent-Asl, daughter of the Moon, or some like native name. Daughter of Pharaoh, if the nomenclature be tribal, need only mean an Egyptian clan which amalgamated with that of Mered. On the other hand, comp. 2 Chron. viii. 11 and 1 Kings ix. 24, where the phrase is used in its literal sense.

(18) And the sons of his wife Hodiath.—The existing Hebrew text says, And the sons of Hodiath’s
temah the Maachathite. (30) And the sons of Shimon were, Amnon, and Rinnah, Ben-hanan, and Tilon. And the sons of Ishi were, Zoheth, and Ben-zoeth. (22) The sons of Shelah the son of Judah were, Er the father of Lecah, and Laadah the father of Mareshah, and the families of the house of them that wrought fine linen, of the house of Ashbea, (23) and Jokim, and the men of Chozeba, and Joash, and Saraph, who had the dominion in Moab, and Jashubi-lehem. And these are ancient things. (22) These were the potters, and those that dwelt among plants and hedges: there they dwelt with the king for his work. (24) The sons of Simeon were, 1Nemuel,

wife. Hodiah recurs as a man's name in Neh. viii. 7, ix. 5; but a very slight change—the addition of three letters—in the Hebrew would give the sense: "And sons of his Jewish wife, the sister of Naham, were the father of Keilah the Garmite, and Esthemao, &c.

Naham is unknown. Keilah is a town in the Shephelah (Josh. xv. 44), well known as the scene of David's prowess and peril (1 Sam. xxxii.).

Eshmael occurred in verse 17, in connexion with Ishbab, son of Ezra by Bithiah. (See Note there.) The Garmites and Maachathites are unknown clans. The former founded or were set led at Keilah. It appears that abi ("father of") has dropped out of the text before Eshtemoa: the sense being that the Maachathites were settled at Esthemao; which, of course, they may have been, side by side with the half-Egyptian clan Ishbab. Maachah is mentioned, chap. ii. 45, as a con­cubine of Caleb. The list is still dealing with the Caleb­ite division of Hezron.

(20) The Sons of Shimon.—Nothing is said elsewhere of them, or of the sons of Ishi. Ishi (chap. ii. 31) is a Jerahmeelite name; but as throughout the section (verses 2—19) we have found indications that the ramifications of the house of Caleb are the principal subject, and as verse 20 is appended to the rest, without any opposing remark, it is highly probable that it also refers to some Calebite clans and towns.

II.—Sons of Shelah, Third Son of Judah, verses 21—23 (omitted by Syriac version).

The Shelanites were not noticed in chap. ii. (See Gen. xxxvi. 5 and chap. ii. 3.)

(22) Er.—This Er who founded Lecah is, of course, distinct from Er "the firstborn of Judah." Lecah is unknown. Mareshah, a town in the lowlands of Judah, is connected with Caleb (chap. ii. 42). Such statements are not contradictory. At different periods different tribal divisions might have been settled in the same city. The present statement need only mean that Mareshah was a Shelanite foundation.

The families of the house of them that wrought fine linen.—"The clans of the house of Byssus work at Beth-Ashbea." Beth-Ashbea is an unknown place. It was one of several Shelanite houses engaged in growing flax and weaving linen. Such industries in ancient times were confined to hereditary guilds, which jealously guarded their methods and trade secrets.

(23) Jokim.—Comp. Jakim (chap. viii. 9). Both are probably equivalent to Joakim (Jehoakim).

Chozeba.—Perhaps Chezib (Gen. xxxviii. 5), called Achzib (Josh. xv. 44), the birthplace of Shelah; now the ruins of Kezib. It was a town of the Shephelah. And Joash, and Saraph, who had the dominion in Moab.—The passage is obscure, because we know nothing further of Joash and Saraph. The LXX. render the whole verse: "And Joakim, and men of Chozeba, and Joas, and Saraph, who settled in Moab; adding the meaningless words, καὶ άντιστρέψας ἀναστάσεις ἰδεῖσθαι αὐτοὺς. The word rendered "had the dominion" occurs sixteen times, and in twelve cases at least means "to marry." Probably Isa. xxvi. 13, Jer. iii. 14 and xxxi. 32 are not exceptions. The right translation here, therefore, would seem to be "who married Moab," a metaphor expressing settlement in that country (LXX., ερευσαόμενοι).

And Jashubi-lehem.—We have here a vestige of some form of the verb šāb ("to return"), as the LXX. (ἀντιστρέψας) indicates; and "lehem" (Heb., lahem) may either signify "to them," or represent the second half of the name Bethlehem. Reading (with one MS.) wayyāshēbū, we might translate, and they returned to themselves, i.e., to their Judæan home. (Comp. the story of the sojourn of Elisha and his family in Moab, and the return of Naomi to Judah.) But Beth might easily have fallen out before lahem, and if so, the statement is, and they returned to Bethlehem, a metaphor expressing settlement in that country (LXX., ερευσαόμενοι).

And these are ancient things.—And the events are ancient, that is, those just recounted.

(23) These were the potters.—Viz., the clans enumerated in verse 22.

And those that dwelt among plants and hedges.—Rather, and inhabitants of Netaim and Gederah. Netaim means "plantations" (Isa. xviii. 10). Solomon had pleasure-gardens near Bethlehem. See also the notice of Uzziah’s farms and vineyards (2 Chron. xxvi. 10). Gederah (Josh. xv. 36), a town in the Shephelah.

There they dwelt with the king.—Literally, with the king in his work they dwelt there. This seems to say that the potteries of Netaim and Gederah were a royal establishment, as those of Sēvēres used to be. Perhaps the linen-weaving of Beth-Ashbea (verse 21) should be included.


(24) The sons of Simeon.—The Pentateuch contains three lists of sons of Simeon, viz., Gen. xlvi. 10, Exod. vi. 15, and Num. xxxvi. 12. Genesis and Exodus name six sons; Numbers agrees with the Chronicles in
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and Jamin, Jarib, Zerah, and Shaul:
(23) Shallum his son, Mibsam his son, Mishma his son. 
(24) And the sons of Mishma; Hanuel his son, Zacchur his son, Shimeih his son. 
(25) And Shimeih had sixteen sons and six daughters; but his brethren had not many children, neither did all their family multiply, 
1like to the children of Judah. 
(26) And they dwelt at Beer-sheba, and Moladah, and Hazar-shual, and at Beth-lebaoth, and at Ezem, and at Tolad, and at Bethuel, and at Hormah, and at Ziklag, 
(27) Their sites are unknown.


This list is parallel to Josh. xix. 2—8. There are some variations, partly accidental. 

(28) Beer-sheba, and Moladah, and Hazarsusim, 
Baalathbeer, and Ezem, and Ain, Rimmon ••• 
(32) And Eltolad, and Beth-marcaboth, and Beth-geber, and at Beth-lebaoth, and at Hazarsusim, and at Beth-bireth, and at Sharuhen: thirteen towns, and their villages.

The verb should be cancelled.

(29) Bethuel.—Called Chesil in Josh. xv. 30; Josh. xix. 8 Baalathbeer—(lady of the well). The same passage adds what appears to be the name of this group of villages, viz., Ramath-negeb, or Ramah of the southland. 

(30) Unto Baal.—Called in Josh. xix. 6 Baalathbeer 

Five cities.—Josh. xix. 7: “Ain, Rimmon, and Ether, and Asah; four cities and their villages.”

Beersheba is Bir-esseba; Moladah, Tel-Milh, south of Hebron; Hazar-shual (fox-village) is unknown.

(31) Many of the places assigned to Simeon in this list are reckoned among the towns of the extreme south of Judah in Josh. xv. 26, et seq. Bilhah, or Balah, is, perhaps, Baalah (Josh. xv. 29); Ezem (Authorised Version, Asem) and Etolad are also mentioned there. Their sites are unknown.

(32) Bethuel.—Called Chesil in Josh. xv. 30; Josh. xix. 8 Bethul; a contraction like Hamul for Hamuel (verse 26; comp. chap. ii. 5). 

Hormah.—The ancient Zephath (Judges i. 17), now Sephata. 

Ziklag.—Now Kasluj, east of Sephata (Josh. xv. 30, 31; 1 Sam. xxvii. 6).

(33) Beth-marcaboth = “house of chariots.”

Hazar-susim = “village of horses;” for which Hazarsusim is an equivalent (susah being used as a collective word).

Beth-bireth.—Probably a corrupt writing of Beth-lebaoth, “house of lionesses” (Josh. xix. 6), for which Josh. xv. 32 has the contraction Lebaoth. There were

at Beth-marcabeth, and Hazarsusim, and at Beth-bireth, and at Shaaraim. These were their cities unto the reign of David. 
(33) And their villages were, Etham, and Ain, Rimmon, and Tochen, and Ashan, five cities; 
(34) And Meshobab, and Jamlech, and Josah the son of Amaziah.

(35) And Joel, and Jehu the son of Josibiah, the son of Seraiah, the son of Asiel, 
(36) And Eliezer, and Shishak, and Jeuel, 
(37) And Azriel, and Shenalleth, and Shemiramoth, 
(38) And Shiah, and Shanesha, and Obadiah, 
(39) And mibsam, and Peroziah, and Jashobeam, 
(40) And Elioenai, and Jaakobah, 

III.—EMIGRATION OF THE SIMONITES: THEIR CONQUESTS (verses 41—44).

(41) The thirteen princes (emirs) of Simeon who headed the expedition of their tribe in the age of Hezekiah (2 Kings 18. 17). None of them are otherwise known.

(42) Jaakobah.—Literally, to Jacob; a patronymic derived from Jacob, like the English Jacobs.
name came in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and smote their tents, and the habitations that were found there, and destroyed them utterly unto this day, and dwelt in their rooms: because there was pasture there for their flocks. (42) And some of them, even of the sons of Simeon, five hundred men, went to mount Seir, having for their captains Pelatiah, and Neariah, and Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi. (43) And they smote the rest of the Amalekites that were escaped, and dwelt there unto this day.

CHAPTER V.—(1) Now the sons of

(38) These mentioned by their names.—Literally, these who have come (forward) with names, that is, have been advanced by name.

Were princes in their families.—Amalek or chieftains in their clans.

And the house of their fathers increased.

And their father-houses had spread greatly. Finding their territory too strait for them under these conditions, and probably also because of the encroachments of their powerful neighbours, the Judaeans and Philistines, the Simeonite chieftains went forth at the head of their clans to seek new settlements.

And (so) they went to the entrance of Gedor, even unto the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks. (40) And they found fat pasture and good, and the land was wide, and quiet, and peaceable; for they of Ham had dwelt there of old. (41) And these written by

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of Simeon.

nai, and Jaakovah, and Jeshoahiah, and Asaiah, (37) and Ziza the son of Shiph, the son of Allon, the son of Jedahiah, the son of Shimri, the son of Shemaiah; (38) these mentioned by their names were princes in their families; and the house of their fathers increased greatly. (39) And they went to the entrance of Gedor, even unto the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks. (40) And they found fat pasture and good, and the land was wide, and quiet, and peaceable; for they of Ham had dwelt there of old. (41) And these written by
Reuben the firstborn of Israel, (for he was the firstborn; but, forasmuch as he *defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel: and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright. 

(2) For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the *chief ruler; but the birthright was Joseph's:) (3) the sons, I say, of 2Reuben the firstborn of Israel were, Hanoch, and Palu, Hezron, and Carmi. (4) The sons of Joel; Shemaiah his son, Gog his son, Shimeul his son, (5) Micah his son, Reaia his son, Baal his son, Beerah his son, whom *Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria carried away captive: he was prince of the Reubenites. (7) And his brethren by their families, when the genealogy of their generations was reckoned, were the chief, Jeiel, and Zerahiah, (8) and Bala the son of Azaz, the son of 3Shema, the

For he was the firstborn.—The parenthesis is an assertion of the legitimacy of the Davidic monarchy, as against the fact that both Reuben and Joseph had claims prior to those of Judah.

He defiled his father's bed.—Gen. xlix. 4, Jacob's curse: "Bubbling like the waters, excel thou not! For thou wastest up thy father's couches. Then thou defiledst them," (See Gen. xxv. 22).

His birthright was given to the sons of Joseph.—The reading of some MSS., and the Syriac and Arabic, "to Joseph," is probably original. This transfer of the rights of primogeniture is not elsewhere noticed. It is, however, a fair inference from Jacob's curse, and from the special blessing of Joseph (Gen. xlix. 22–28) and of his two sons (Gen. xlvii. 15–20), considered in the light of historical fulfilment.

Ephraim was always a leading tribe (Judges ii. 3, iv. 5, v. 14, vii. 1, 2, xii. 15).

And the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright.—Rather, though he was not to be registered as firstborn (literally, according to the primogeniture). The subject is Joseph or the sons of Joseph, who received the forfeited rights of Reuben, but not the first place in lists of the tribes. What those rights were is defined by Deut. xxxi. 15–17, which rules that the son of a hasted wife—_if he be firstborn_ (the case of Reuben, son of Leah), shall inherit a double portion, "for he is the firstfruit of his strength, the right of the firstborn is his," words obviously referring to Gen. xlix. 4, 5.

(8) For Judah prevailed above his brethren.—Literally, _was mighty among his brethren_. Comp. Jacob's blessing (Gen. xlix. 9–10): "Judah, thou art the _firstborn_; thy brethren shall praise thee, Thy hand shall be on a Reubenite clan, as some will have it. The Hebrew expression is evidently a transcript, is _kuti-pal-Esarra_, "the servant of the son of Esarra." (The "Son of Esarra" is a title of the god Ninip.)

Tilgath-pilneser.—The Assyrian monarch known as Tilgath Pileser II. See 2 Kings xxv. 29, for his deportation of the people of the northern and trans-Jordanic districts of Israel, in the reign of Pekah. Some MSS., with LXX. and Syriac, read Tiglath, which is more correct than Tilgath. (Vat., LXX., Θελγαθ-φαλνας, Syr., Tilgath-Palsar. The Assyrian name, of which these forms are transcripts, is _Tukulti-pal-Esarra_, "the servant of the son of Esarra." The "Son of Esarra" is a title of the god Ninip.)

He was prince of the Reubenites.—Beerah was tribal prince of Reuben, and not merely chief of a Reubenite clan, as some will have it. The Hebrew construction is parallel to that of Num. xvi. 24, 30 seq., with which comp. Num. vii. 18.

(7) And his brethren by their families.—"And his fellow-tribesmen, each after his clan (Num. ii. 34), in the registration after their pedigrees, were the chief, Jeiel, and Zerahiah. Jeiel was the chief of the second Reubenite clan, as Beerah of the first. Zerahiah and Bala were heads of the other chief houses. It appears that these four chieftains correspond to the four divisions of Reuben mentioned in verse 3. Num. xxvi. 7 says expressly that the "Hanochite, the Palluite, the Hezionite, and the Carmite" were "the clans of the Reubenites.""

(9) Bala.—His descent is traced, like that of Beerah, but through fewer names. This does not necessarily imply that Bala and Beerah were not contemporaries. Intermediate names are often omitted in genealogies. (See Josh. vii. 18: "Achan son of Carmi son of Zabdi son of Zerah." and verse 24: "Son of Zerah," and the different lengths of the pedigrees of Heman, Asaph, and Ethan in chap. vi. 33–47.) It is not

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son of Joel, who dwelt in Aroer, even unto Nebo and Baal-meeon; (9) and eastward he inhabited unto the entering into of the wilderness from the river Euphrates; because their cattle were multiplied in the land of Gilead. (10) And in the days of Saul they made war with the Hagarites, who fell by their hand: and they dwelt in their tents throughout all the east land of Gilead.

(11) And the children of Gad dwelt over against them, in the land of Bashan unto Salcah; (12) Joel the chief, and Shapham the next, and Jaanai, and

In the land of Bashan unto Salcah.—(Josh. xiii. 11.) Bashan, the ancient dominion of the giant Og (Num. xxxi. 33–35; Deut. iii. 1–12). Salcah, now Salkhad, on the north-east slope of Jebel Hauran in the extreme east of Gilead.

(13) And their brethren of the house of their fathers were, Michael, and Meshullam, and Sheba, and Jorai, and Jachan, and Zia, and Heber, seven. (14) These are the children of Abihail the son of Hur, the son of Jarah, the son of Gilead, the son of Michael, the son of Jeteshai, the son of Jahdo, the son of Buz; (15) Abi the son of Abdiel, the son of Guni, chief of the house of their fathers. (16) And they dwelt in Gilead in Bashan, and in her towns, and in all the suburbs of Sharon, upon their borders. (17) All these

likely that the Joel of verse 8 is the same as the Joel of verse 4, in spite of the further coincidence of 'hema-Shemiah.

Who dwelt.—He was dwelling, that is, he and his kindred.

Aroer.—Now Ar'fur, on the north bank of the Arnon (Josh. xii. 2).

Nobo, a place on the famous mount Noba, in the region east of the Dead Sea (now Jebel Neba, Deut. xxxiv. 1), over against Jericho (Num. xxxii. 38).

Baal-meeon.—Or, Beth-baal-meeon, now Mar'in, about two miles south-east of Heshbon. Aroer gives the region east of the Dead Sea (now Gulf of Elbe, the name 'heb.' in the old Testament usage, means all Israelite territory east of the Jordan.

And in the days of Saul they made war with the Hagarites.—The great extension of the tribe in an easterly direction took place in the reign of Saul, the first king of Israel. Bela and his clan victoriously fought with the Hagarites (Heb., Hagh'rî'îm) or Hagaranes (see Ps. lxxxiii. 7, Hagrîm), that is, the sons of Haggar, for possession of the pasture-grounds east of Gilead. This Arab nation is mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions. (The LXX. has των οπισθων, i.e., ὧγγαριῶν, "sojourners," "nomads").

They dwelt in their tents.—This phrase first occurs in Gen. ix. 27. The Beleites occupied the territory of the Hagarites.

Throughout all the east land of Gilead.—Rather, on the whole eastern side or border of Gilead. This includes the new settlements of Bela beyond the border.

(11—17) The sons of Gad, their clans, territory, and registration.

(11) And the children of Gad dwelt over against them.—That is, adjoining them on the east of Jordan,
were reckoned by genealogies in the days of Jotham king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam king of Israel.

(18) The sons of Reuben, and the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, of valiant men, men able to bear buckler and sword, and to shoot with bow, and skilful in war, were four and forty thousand seven hundred and threescore, that went out to the war. (19) And they made war with the Hagarites, with Jetur, and Nephish, and Nonab. (20) And they were helped against them, and the Hagarites delivered into their hand, and all the Chronicler names the king of Judah first

that were with them: for they cried to God in the battle, and he was intreated of them; because they put their trust in him. (21) And they took away their cattle; of their camels fifty thousand, and of sheep two hundred and fifty thousand, and of asses two thousand, and of men an hundred thousand. (22) For there fell down many slain, because the war was of God. And they dwelt in their steads until the captivity.

(23) And the children of the half tribe of Manasseh dwelt in the land: they increased from Bashan unto Baal-hermon of the verse looks like a reason added to the narrative by the chronicler himself.

(24) The sons of half-Manasseh “in the land” east of Jordan. The translation should be: “And the children... dwelt in the land, from Bashan unto Baal-hermon and Senir and mount Hermon. These were many.” Their territory extended from “Bashan,” the domain of God, in the south, to the mountains of Hermon, or Antilabans, in the north.

(25) Baal-hermon.—Perhaps the same as Baal-gad (Josh. xii. 7, xiii. 5), the modern town of Baniyas. Senir.—The Amorite name of the range of Hermon (Deut. iii. 9). The principal summit is now called Jebel esh-Sheikh, “hill of the chief,” and Jebel eth-Thelly, “Snow Hill.”
Chiefs of the Hafit Tribe.

I. CHRONICLES, V.

Their Captivity.

and Senir, and unto mount Hermon. (24) And these were the heads of the house of their fathers, even Ephber, and Ishi, and Eliel, and Azriel, and Jeremia, and Hodariah, and Jahdil, mighty men of valour, famous men, and heads of the house of their fathers. (25) And they transgressed against the God of their fathers, and went a whoring after the gods of the people of the land, whom God destroyed before them. (26) And the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, and the spirit of Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and he carried them away, even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, and brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and to the river Gozan, unto this day.

(24) And these were the heads . . . (name lost) Ephber, and Ishi . . . Of these seven "valiant warriors, men of renown, heads for their clans" nothing further is recorded. The meagre memorial of their names has at least this value: it proves that abundant materials for the history of Israel once existed, of which our canonical books have preserved authentic fragments.

(25, 26) The captivity of the three eastern tribes. A fuller account may be read in 2 Kings xvii. 6—18.

(26) They transgressed against the God of their fathers.—Rather, were faithless or untrue to Him (Josh. vii. 1, "committed a trespass").

Went a whoring after the gods of the people (peoples).—Jehovah was the true Lord (Ba'al) and Husband (Ish) of Israel. Apostasy from Him is, in the prophetic language, whoredom. (See Hos. chaps. i. and ii., especially ii. 16, and chap. iii.) According to Kings l.c. the fatal sin of Israel evinced itself: (1) in the worship of the high places; (2) in adoration of the heavenly bodies, and the productive powers of nature; (3) in the practice of magic and divination.

The people of the land, whom God had destroyed before them.—Comp. Num. xxi. 21—35, and Josh. xii. 6; Ps. cxxxv. 15. The reduction of the Canaanites was, to the mind of the chronicler, a Divine work. He is not thinking only of such extraordinary events as were told of the battle of Beth-horon (Josh. x. 11—14). All the incidents of the conquest were the Lord's doing, whether He acted through the agency of sun and moon, or storm and tempest, or the good swords of Joshua and his warriors. From the same standpoint, he ascribes the Assyrian invasions to a direct impulse from the God of Israel (verse 26). The Assyrian kings themselves were wont to regard their campaigns as a fulfilment of the bidding of their Divine protectors, Istar, Bel, and other imaginary beings. It was not given to them to attain to the higher vision of the Hebrew prophets and priests, who saw but one guiding and controlling power at the summit of the world. (Comp. Isa. x. 5—13.)

In 2 Kings xv. 19 we read that: "Pul king of Assyria came against the land," in the reign of Menahem, who recognised the Assyrian monarch as his suzerain, and paid a tribute of 1,000 talents of silver. Now Tiglath-pileser II. actually claims to have received tribute of Menahem (Menahimm). Pul appears to have been the original name of Tiglath-pileser, which, upon his accession to the throne of Assyria (745 B.C.), he discarded for that of the great king who had ruled the country four centuries before his time. The name Pulu has been identified by Dr. Schrader with the Porus of Ptolemy's Canon, for being the Persian pronunciation of Pulu. The Syriac here omits "Pul king of Assyria." The LXX. (Vat.) has θαλακ, and the Arabic Balaq. Perhaps the chronicler meant to indicate the identity of Pulu and Tiglath: "The spirit of Pulu and (= that is) the spirit of Tiglath, and he carried them away."

And he carried them away.—Tiglath-pileser is meant. (See 2 Kings xv. 29: "In the days of Pekah king of Israel, came Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maacah . . . and Gilead, and Galilee . . . and carried them captive to Assyria.") From the Assyrian records we learn that (circa 734-732 B.C.) Tiglath-pileser received the homage of Ahaz (Yahu-ha'i, Jeho-ahaz), king of Judah, slew Rezin (Razinni) of Damascus, and reduced Pekah (Paqahii), king of Samaria, to vassalage. This supplements the Biblical account. Gilead, in 2 Kings xv. 29, represents the trans-Jordanic tribes. (See verses 10 and 16 above.) The transportation of entire populations was a common practice with the Assyrian kings. Assurbanipal (Sardanapalus) removed the men of Karbit from the mountains east of Assyria, and settled them in Egypt.

Brought them unto Halah, and Habor, . . . The same localities are mentioned (2 Kings xvii. 6) as those to which Shalmaneser IV., or rather his successor Sargon, transported the other tribes of the northern kingdom (circa 721 B.C.). There is nothing unlikely in the statement of either text. Sargon might have thought fit to strengthen the Israelite settlements in Northern Assyria by sending thither the new bodies of compulsory colonists. It is arbitrary to suppose that two different events have been confounded by the sacred annalists.

Halah.—See Note on 2 Kings xvii. 6.

Habor.—Probably a district of North Assyria, not far from Halah, named after the river Habur which rises near the upper Zab and falls into the Tigris.

Hara.—Kings, l.c., "cities of Media." Hara here is perhaps an Aramaic name for the Median high lands, but more probably the reading is a relic of "the mountains of Media" (hârê Mēdašā); comp. the LXX. at 2 Kings xvii. 6. The Syriac here has "cities of Media," the LXX. omits the word.

The river Gozan.—Rather, the river of Gozan. Shalmaneser mentions the country Guzana in Mesopotamia, the Greek Gauzantia. An Assyrian list connects it with Na'çibina (Nisibis). The "river of Gozan" is the Habur.
CHAPTER VI.—(1) The sons of Levi; (2) Gershom, Kohath, and Merari. (3) And the sons of Kohath; Amram, Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel. (4) And the children of Amram; Aaron, and Moses, and Miriam. The sons also of Aaron; Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. (5) Eleazar begat Phinehas, Phinehas begat Abishua, and Abishua begat Bukki, and Bukki begat Uzzi, and Uzzi begat Zeriahiah, and Zeriahiah begat Merioth, and Merioth begat Amariah, and Amariah begat Ahitub, and Ahitub begat Zadok, and Zadok begat Ahimaaz, and Ahimaaz begat Azariah, and Azariah begat Johanan, and Johanan begat Azariah, (he it is that executed the priest's office in the 4-temp-

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The Line of the Priests.

The Family of Gershon.

The sons of Levi; 1 Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. 2 And these be the names of the sons of Gershon; Libni, and Shimei. 3 And the sons of Kohath were, Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel. 4 The sons of Merari; Mahli, and Mushli.

And these are the families of the Levites according to their fathers.

16 Of Gershon; Libni his son, Jahath his son, (588 B.C.). Nebuchadnezzar caused him to be put to death at Riblah (2 Kings xxi. 18—21; Jer. liii. 24, seq.) From Azariah (verse 10) to Seraiah we find only ten names. In the list of the kings of Judah for about the same interval eighteen names occur (see chap. iii. 10—16). This fact undoubtedly suggests the omission of some generations from the list before us.

The use of the word "begat" throughout the series is not to be pressed to the contrary conclusion. Like the term "son" in Ezra vii. 3 ("Azariah, son of Meraioth," though six intermediate names are given in Chron.), it is a somewhat elastic technical formula in these genealogies.

The genealogical series is in a degree artificial, being based on Levitical and priestly bias, in Leviticus, Numbers, Judges, and 1 Samuel, but was probably constructed in a later period, with the idea of representing the genealogy from a greater or lesser number of chief men, who had been the officers of the priests and Levites before the captivity; the chief men who had been dismissed by the angel from the altar in the time of Jeroboam II. (1 Kings xv. 18). It is difficult to determine where the principal columns of the genealogy were in the work of the scribes and chroniclers from whom the compiler of the book of Chronicles and others drew this material; but that the work was of long duration, the work of a combination of scribes and copyists, and of a somewhat imperfect character, is evident from the number of passages in which the compilers have inserted the phrase "according to the genealogy of" ("levithim," "scribes") or have omitted it, and from the fact that the genealogical series is not always in the same order in different places, and that the names are sometimes given in a different order from that in which they are usually found in Scripture. The compiler of the book of Chronicles divided the genealogical work into columns, as follows:

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From Azariah (verse 10) to Seraiah we find only ten names. In the list of the kings of Judah for about the same interval eighteen names occur (see chap. iii. 10—16). This fact undoubtedly suggests the omission of some generations from the list before us.

The use of the word "begat" throughout the series is not to be pressed to the contrary conclusion. Like the term "son" in Ezra vii. 3 ("Azariah, son of Meraioth," though six intermediate names are given in Chron.), it is a somewhat elastic technical formula in these genealogies.

The genealogical series is in a degree artificial, being based on Levitical and priestly bias, in Leviticus, Numbers, Judges, and 1 Samuel, but was probably constructed in a later period, with the idea of representing the genealogy from a greater or lesser number of chief men, who had been the officers of the priests and Levites before the captivity; the chief men who had been dismissed by the angel from the altar in the time of Jeroboam II. (1 Kings xv. 18). It is difficult to determine where the principal columns of the genealogy were in the work of the scribes and chroniclers from whom the compiler of the book of Chronicles and others drew this material; but that the work was of long duration, the work of a combination of scribes and copyists, and of a somewhat imperfect character, is evident from the number of passages in which the compilers have inserted the phrase "according to the genealogy of" ("levithim," "scribes") or have omitted it, and from the fact that the genealogical series is not always in the same order in different places, and that the names are sometimes given in a different order from that in which they are usually found in Scripture. The compiler of the book of Chronicles divided the genealogical work into columns, as follows:

The three branches of Levi with their main subdivisions. Parallel passages, Exod. vi. 16—19; Num. i. ii. 17—20.
The Family

I. CHRONICLES, VI.

of Kohath

hath his son, Zimmah his son, (21) 1Joah his son, 2Iddo his son, Zerah his son, Jeaterai his son. (22)

The sons of Kohath; 5Amminadab his son, Korah his son, Assir his son, (23) Elkanah his son, and Ebiasaph his son, and Assir his son, (24) Tahath his son.

Libni his son.—See Num. iii. 21, “To Gershon, the clan of the Libnites, and the clan of the Shimeites; these are the clans of the Gershonites.”

The names Jahath, Zimmah, and Zerah recur in the line of Asaph, verses 41—43 below (see the Note there). Jeaterai, in whom the present series culminates, is wholly unknown. At the time when the list was first drawn up, the name may have represented a famous chieflain or family. It has the ending of a patronymic or gentile term, and perhaps should be read with different vocalism, e.g. ‘Itherai, or ‘Itheri. “And the Libnites” (comp. ‘Ishai for Yishai), a clan of which came two of David’s heroes (chap. xi. 40).

(22—24) The sons of Kohath. As the text stands we have here a threefold list, each portion of which is isolated from the rest, and begins afresh with the word *one* (the sons of).

(22) Amminadab his son.—Amminadab is not mentioned as a son of Kohath in the Pentateuch or elsewhere. Korah, here called son of Amminadab, is called son of Izhar, son of Kohath, Exod. vi. 21. (See verse 18, supra, and verse 38, infra.) Some assume that Amminadab is a “by-name” of Izhar (so Margin). It is more likely that the name Izhar has dropped out of the text of verse 22.

(23) Assir his son, Elkanah his son, and Ebiasaph his son.—Comp. Exod. vi. 24: “And the sons of Korah, Assir, and Elkanah, and Abiasaph, these are the sons of Korah.” The connection, then, is as follows:—

Kohath

Izhar

Korah

Assir Elkanah Ebiasaph.

The conjunction *and*, in verse 23, seems to hint that the connection is no longer one of direct descent, but that the three, Assir, Elkanah, and Ebiasaph, are to be regarded as brothers.

(23) And Assir his son.—Comp. verse 37 below, in the line of Heman, which in great part coincides with the present series. There we read, “Assir, son of Ebiasaph, son of Korah.” The present Assir is therefore son of Ebiasaph, and nephew of the former Assir (verse 22). The form of a direct descent is now resumed and continued with Tahath, son of Assir (verse 24).

(24) In the corresponding verse of the genealogy of Heman below (verse 38) the names are Tahath, Zephaniah, Azariah, and Joel. It is easy to suppose that as the two series diverge after Tahath, Uriel and Nahath are two different sons of Tahath. But we notice (1) that Uzziah (verse 24) may = Azariah, verse 36 (comp. King Uzziah—Azariah, 2 Kings xv. 1; 2 Chron. xxvi. 1); (2) that although there is an apparent break between verses 24 and 25, so that a new list begins with the sons of Elkanah (verse 25), yet verses 35 and 36 speak of an “Amasai, son of Elkanah,” in exact agreement with verse 25; and (3) that the correspondence between the two lists (verses 22—30 and 34—38) is so close, that it is difficult not to assume their substantial identity. Uriel may have been also known as Zophaniah, and Shall as Joel.

(25) And the sons of Elkanah; Amasai.—See last Note. It is natural to identify the Elkanah of verse 36 with this one. The posterity of both are so nearly the same; otherwise we might have taken the present Elkanah for the person mentioned in verse 23.

(26) The Hebrew text reads: “Elkanah his son—Elkanah—Zophai his son,” &c. Zophai might mean the Zophite. The LXX. has (verse 25) “And sons of Elkanah, Amessi and Ahimoth;” (verse 26) “Elkanah his son, Souphi his son,” &c. So the Syriac. That this is correct appears from comparison of Heman’s pedigree (verse 35). The second Elkanah in verse 26 is therefore an intrusion, due perhaps to some scribe who remembered 1 Sam. i. 1, where Zophim occurs just before Elkanah. In verse 35 Elkanah is son of Mahath, son of Amassai. Perhaps Mahath is identical with the Amimoth of verse 25; if so, the true reading of verses 25, 26 would be: “And sons of Elkanah; Amasai his son, Ahimoth (Mahath) his son, Elkanah his son, Zophai his son,” &c. Zophai is to Zuph (verse 35) as Chelubai (chap. ii. 9) to Chelub (chap. iv. 11). Nahath looks like a transformation of Toah (verse 34), and Eliab (verse 27)—“El is father”—may be a by-form of Eliel (ibid.). “El is el.” Jeroham and Elkanah go back to Eliel in verse 34, just as they spring from Eliab here. The two series again coincide.

(28) And the sons of Samuel.—Heb., Shemuel. The third break in the Kohathite list.

We see from verses 37, 34 that Samuel (Shemuel, name of God) is son of Elkanah, son of Jeroham; hence we might suppose that the clause “Samuel his son” has been accidentally omitted at the end of verse 27. But it is quite possible that the writer assumed the connection to be too well known to require specification, or that he has here thrown together three independent genealogical fragments. Comp. with verses 27, 28 the pedigree of Elkanah, 1 Sam. i. 1: “Elkanah son of Jeroham son of Elihu son of Tohu son of Zuph.” Here again the names vary, yet not so as to obliterate their identity. Elihu (“El is He”)=Eliah, Eliel, Tohu, a fuller form of Toah=Nahath.

The firstborn Vashni, and Abiah.—Vashni is not a proper name, but a corrupt form of the Hebrew phrase “and the second” (šēnî, se’udw). The sons of the prophet Samuel were Joel, the firstborn, and Abiah, 1 Sam. viii. 2 (see also verse 33 below). Joel has fallen out of the text here; it should run, “Joel the firstborn, and the second Abiah.”

Reviewing the Kohathite list (22—28) we conclude that it represents three distinct genealogical fragments which have been put in juxtaposition by the chronicler or the author whom he has followed, and that in accordance with the real connection between the members, as appears on comparison with the continuous list which
Samuel; the firstborn Vashni, and Abiahan. (29) The sons of Merari: Mahli, Libni his son, Shimei his son, Uzza his son, (30) Shimea his son, Haggiah his son, Asaiah his son. (31) And these are they whom David set over the service of song in the house of the Lord, after that the ark had rest. (32) And they ministered before the dwelling place of the tabernacle of the congregation with singing, until Solomon had built the house of the Lord immediately follows in verses 33–38. The fact that "Samuel his son" is the missing link between verses 27, 28, makes it likely that "Elkanah his son" is the true connection between verses 24 and 25.

From Levi to the sons of Samuel about twenty generations are reckoned. Usher's chronology dates the descent of Jacob and his sons into Egypt at 1706 B.C. Twenty generations are six hundred years. The sons of Samuel would, according to this, be living about 1100 B.C. and later. Ruth iv. 18–22 reckons only ten generations from Judah to Jesse, the father of David. This again shows that in their genealogical tables the Hebrews did not uniformly supply every link, but were often content with a statement of the principal names.

(29, 30) A short list of Merarite names. (Comp. Num. iii. 20, and verse 14, supra, for the two sons of Merari, Mahli and Mushi, after whom the clans of the Merarites were designated. The present list traces the line of Mahli to the seventh generation: all the names are alike unknown. Below, verses 44–47, we have another line going back to Mushi, brother of Mahli. Why has the chronicler preserved the three lists of names of the sons of Samuel? The process from Levi to the worthlessness of Samuel, and the utterly unknown names of Jaterai and Asaiah, reads like an anti-climax. But it is not to be forgotten that these no longer significant fragments are genuine relics of ancient family registers, and as such may have had more than a merely anti-quarian value in the days of the chronicler.

Verses 31, 32 are a prelude to the pedigree of Heman and Asaph, and Ethan, the three great masters of David's choirs (33–48). The nature, time, and place of their special duties are described.

(31) Set over the service of song.—Literally, made stand by the sides (hands) of song, as if to minister to the sacred music. (Comp. chap. xxv. 2, 3, where the same peculiar phrase recurs, and Ps. cxvii. 2, "as the eyes of slaves are unto the hand of their Lord." Comp. also the common heading of the Psalms, "to the conductor or precentor;" Authorized Version, "chief musician.")

In the house of the Lord.—In David's time, a tent, as next verse declares.

After that the ark had rest.—Perhaps locative: at the resting-place of the Ark (comp. Gen. viii. 9). From the time of its capture by the Philistines (2 Sam. vi. 17), the Ark had no certain dwelling till it was lodged in the tent which David spread for it on Mount Zion. (32) And they ministered.—And they continued ministering, before the dwelling of the Tent of Meeting, with the music. The dwelling place of the tabernacle.—A defining genitive, like River of Jordan, or City of Jerusalem. In the court before this sacred dwelling wherein the Lord met His people, the services of sacrifice and song were carried on. The tent of the Ark in the city of David (see chap. xvi. 1) is here called by the old name of the Moses Tabernacle, 'ahel m valeh, "tent of tryst, or meeting," i.e., of God with man. The ancient tent appears to have stood at Shiloh, and at Bethel (Judges xx. 26–28) in the days of the Judges, at Nob in the reign of Saul, and later at Gibeon. (See chap. xvi. 29, and 2 Chron. i. 3.)

Until Solomon had built the house.—The Ark, and the worship of which it was the centre, were then transferred to the more august abode of Solomon's Temple.

And then they waited.—Omit then and read, "and they stood at their service according to their privilege." The place and precedence of the choirs and their leaders were fixed by David (chap. xvi. 37).

Standing was the normal posture for singing. (33) And these are they that waited (stood) with their children.—The main sentence which began at verse 31, and was suspended by the parenthetic verse 32, is now resumed. The persons meant are the three chiefs of the Levitical guilds of musicians, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan; their "children" are the members of those guilds. (Comp. the phrase, "sons of the prophets," i.e., members of prophetical guilds, 2 Kings ix. 1, Amos viii. 14.)

Chap. xxv. 1–7 supplies the names of the principal "sons" of the three masters. Their Levitical descent is shown in the genealogies here traced up from themselves to Levi. First we have the pedigree of Heman (verses 33–38) the Kohathite.

Heman a singer.—Rather, the singer or minstrel. Heman, as representing the chief branch of the Levites, is primus inter pares as regards the other master singers. His choir occupied the centre, having on its right that of the Gershonite Asaph, on its left that of the Merarite Ethan (verses 39, 44), so that Heman would conduct the whole body of musicians, when the three choirs chanted in concert. The word "minstrel" is more appropriate than "singer" because the original term (ham'shorer) implies singing which the singer himself accompanies with an instrument of music. (See chap. xxv. 6; LXX, δ ψαλτὴς.)

Son of Joel, the son of Shemuel.—It is interesting to learn that Heman, the great minstrel, was a grandson of Samuel the great prophet. (For the connection between music and prophecy, see 2 Kings iii. 15; 1 Sam. x. 5, 6; and below, chap. xxv. 1, Note.)
of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, (38) the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, the son of Israel.

(39) And his brother Asaph, who stood on his right hand, even Asaph the son of Berachiah, the son of Shimea, (40) the son of Michael, the son of Basseiah, the son of Malchiah, (41) the son of Ethni, the son of Zerah, the son of Adaiah, (42) the son of Ethan, the son of Zimmah, the son of Shimei, (43) the son of Jahath, the son of Gershom, the son of Levi.

Considering that some have denied that Samuel was a Levite, the point of contact here noted looks like an undesigned coincidence.

(38) Son of Israel.—Asaph and Ethan are traced back to Levi. It was not needful to repeat “son of Israel” in each case. For further remarks on the names in verses 34—33 see above Notes on 22—28, the lines being identical. The numerous variants, however, seem to imply that the author drew from different documents.

(39—43) The pedigree of Asaph the Gershoni, traced back through thirteen names to Levi. That of Heman names twenty ancestors for the same period of time. This is more than illustration of the common usage of overlapping names in these genealogies.

(39) His brother Asaph.—Asaph was Heman’s brother (1) as a Levite; (2) as a choir-master.

The striking agreement of the line of Heman with that of the Kohathites, detailed in verses 22—28 above, has led critics to look for a like coincidence between the line of Asaph as given here, and that of the Gershonites in verses 20, 21. There, however, we have only seven names, here there are thirteen. Still we observe that in the former passage the three names, Jahath, Zimmah, and Zerah appear in the same order of linear descent from Gershon as in the present list; while the Adaiash of verse 41 obviously answers to the Iddo of verse 21, and Ethni (verse 41) is in Hebrew writing not unlike Jecatera; and we are already familiar with the fact that genealogies sometimes recur in abbreviated forms. (Comp. Ezra vii. 1—5, with the line of Aaron in the present chapter.) Upon the whole, therefore, if the suggested identifications be correct, it appears that Asaph’s pedigree has really been partially anticipated in verses 20, 21.

(44—47) The pedigree of Ethan the Merarite, traced back through twelve names to Levi. Ethan is no doubt the same as Jeduthun, chap. xxvi. 1; 2 Chron. xxx. 15.

(44) And their brethren the sons of Merari. —We should say their confrades or kinmen (see Note on verse 39). “Brothers,” or “brothers,” is the natural style for the members of a guild, whether religious like the monastic bodies, or commercial like the city companies of London, or benevolent like the Freemasons. The plural pronoun refers to the two preceding guilds of Heman and Asaph. The Ethanites stood on the left of the Hemanites in the sanctuary, as the Asaphites stood on their right, and this arrangement was hereditary.

Kishi is a contraction of Kushaiah, like Zabdi of Zebadiah.

(44) And their brethren the sons of Merari stood on the left hand; Ethan the son of Kishi, the son of Abdi, the son of Malluch, (45) the son of Hashabiah, the son of Amaziah, the son of Hilkiah, (46) the son of Amzi, the son of Bani, the son of Shamer, (47) the son of Mahli, the son of Musli, the son of Merari, the son of Levi. (48) Their brethren also the Levites were appointed unto all manner of service of the tabernacle of the house of God.

(47) Son of Mahli, the son of Musli.—In verse 19 Mahli and Mushi appear as two sons of Merari; so also at Lev. iii. 20. Mahli son of Mushi here must be nephew of the Mahli of that passage, if the genealogical form is in each case to be understood literally. It is difficult on a first inspection to perceive any connection between the present list and that of the Merarites in verses 29, 30. The series there is:

Mahli, Libni, Shimei, Uzza, Shimea, Haggiah, and Asaiah.

Here we have:
Mushi, Mahli, Shamer, Bani, Amzi, Hilkiah, Amaziah, Hashabiah, Malluch, Abdi, Kishi, and Ethan.

Now it is quite possible that both lines spring from Musiu son of Merari. We have only to suppose that the name of Mushi has either dropped out or been omitted by design in verse 29. In that case, of course, Mahli in each line becomes identical. Next we remark that Libni in Hebrew adds but one letter (1) to Bani; and these two may be variants of the same name. The second line is again more complete than the first, as it supplies Shamer (Shemar) between Mahli and Bani-Libni. Further, Uzzi and Amzi express the same idea—that of strength—and may therefore indicate identity of person. The names Shimea and Shimeah are perhaps inadvertent duplicates of each other; which may also be the case with Amzi and Amaziah in the second series. Haggiah perhaps answers to Hilkiah.

Thus it may be right to regard this pedigree of Ethan as related to the Merarite line of verses 29, 30, in the same way as those of Heman and Asaph are related to the first drafts of the Kohathite and Gershonite lines of descent, although the connection is not so evident in the present instance, owing perhaps to corruption of the text.

Verses 48, 49 constitute the transition from the pedigrees of the three Levitical choir-masters to the line of the sons of Aaron—Eleazar, which is here repeated from Aaron to Ahimaaz. The form of the list is, however, different. Instead of “Eleazar begat Phinehas,” it runs “Phinehas his son,” &c. It is more likely that the chronicler found this list already connected with what follows in the source which he used for this section, than that he merely chose to repeat part of what he had already given under a slightly altered form.

(48) Their brethren also the Levites.—That is, the Levites who were not musicians—the remaining Levites.

Appointed.—Literally, given—that is, to Aaron and his sons as their assistants; Num. iii. 9 (Heb.), “And thou shalt give the Levites to Aaron and to his sons,
(49) But Aaron and his sons offered "upon the altar of the burnt offering, and on the altar of incense, and were appointed for all the work of the place most holy, and to make an atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded.

(50) And these are the sons of Aaron; Eleazar his son, Phinehas his son, Abishua his son. (51) Bukki his son, Uzzi his son, Zerahiah his son, (52) Meraroth his son, Amariah his son, Ahitub his son, (53) Ahimaaz his son. (54) Now these are their dwelling places throughout their castles in their coasts, of the sons of Aaron, of the families of the Kohathites; for their's was the lot. (55) And they gave them Hebron in the land of Judah, and the suburbs thereof round about it. (56) But the fields of the city, and the villages thereof, they gave to Caleb the son of Jephunneh. (57) And to the sons of Aaron they gave the cities of Judah, four cities only, Hebron, the city of refuge, and Libnah with her suburbs, and Jattir, and Eshtemoa, with their suburbs. (58) And Hilcen with her suburbs, Debir with her suburbs, (59) and Asan with her suburbs, and Beth-shemesh with her suburbs: (60) and out of the tribe of Benjamin; Geba with her suburbs, and (61) Alemeth with her suburbs, and Anathoth with her suburbs. All their cities as the heading to all that follows, should be stopped off therefrom. It does not occur in Josh. xxii., and may indicate an intermediate source used by the chronicler. The variant spellings of proper names, many of which are not mere copyists' blunders, point in the same direction.

Of the sons of Aaron.—Rather, "to the sons of Aaron, of the clan of the Kohathites—for to them had fallen the lot—they gave to them Hebron," &c. Josh. xxii. 10 has, "for to them the lot had fallen first."

(55, 56) Closely answering to Josh. xxi. 11, 12.

(57) Hebron.—Josh., "the city of Arba, the father of the Anak, that is, Hebron."

In the land of Judah.—Josh., "hill-country" (hom for ha'are). Suburbs.—The Hebrew migvashim, pastures or commons, as opposed to arable land (Authorised version, "fields"); Heb., sadeh. Num. xxxv. 3—5 defines the extent of the Levitical domain round the cities where they dwelt.

(56) To Caleb the son of Jephunneh.—Josh. adds "as his possession."

(57) They gave the cities of Judah.—Heb. text, the cities of refuge, Hebron and Libnah, and her pastures. Of the cities mentioned only Hebron was an asylum for the manslayer. The other cities of refuge were Kedesh-Naphthali, Shechem, Bezer, Ramoth-Gilead, and Golan. (See Josh. xx. 7, 8.) Here our translators have adopted the Hebrew marginal correction of the text. (Comp. Josh. xxi. 13, which reads, "The manslayer's city of refuge, Hebron.") The same inaccuracy recurs in verse 67, below.

With her suburbs.—With her pastures. The phrase has been omitted after Jattir (Josh. xxi. 13).

(58) Hilon.—Holon, which twice occurs in Josh. xv. 51, xxi. 15, is a more natural form.

Debir.—Oracle, the inmost sanctuary; anciently, Kirjath-sepher (Book Town).

Asan (smoke); in Joshua, Aiu (fountain). The place may have had both names, from a fountain rising like a column of smoke. "Juttah and her pastures" has fallen out here (Josh. xxi. 16). At the end of the verse Joshua adds, "Nine cities out of these two tribes," viz., Judah and Simeon.

(59) "Gibeon and her pastures" is omitted; probably an oversight, due to the similarity of sound and form.

The Sons of Aaron

I. CHRONICLES, VI. and their Dwellings.
The Cities

I. CHRONICLES, VI. of the Levites.

throughout their families were thirteen cities.

(61) And unto the sons of Kohath, which were left of the family of that tribe, were cities given out of the half tribe, namely, out of the half tribe of Manasseh, by lot, ten cities.

(62) And to the sons of Gershom throughout their families out of the tribe of Issachar, and out of the tribe of Asher, and out of the tribe of Naphtali, and out of the tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, thirteen cities.

(63) Unto the sons of Merari were given by lot, throughout their families, out of the tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities.

(64) And the children of Israel gave to the Levites these cities with their suburbs. (65) And they gave by lot out of the tribe of the children of Judah, and out of the tribe of the children of Simeon, and out of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, these cities, which are called by their names.

(66) And the residue of the families of the sons of Kohath had cities of their coasts out of the tribe of Ephraim.

(67) And they gave unto them, of the cities of refuge, Shechem in mount Ephraim with her suburbs; they gave also Gezer with her suburbs, and Jokmeam with her suburbs, and Bethhoron with her suburbs, and Aiialon between Gibeah and Geba. Alemeth and Alamámin are each valid formations, and perhaps represent an older and younger name of the place.

Thirteen cities.—The list in its present shape contains eleven. This proves that Jutlah and Gibron should be restored to the text.

(69-73) These verses correspond to Josh. xxi. 5—7. They supply short statements of the number of cities in the various tribes assigned to the non-Aaronic Kohathites, to the Gershonites, and the Merarites.

(61) And unto the sons of Kohath, which were left of the family of that tribe.—A comparison with Josh. xxi. 5 shows that the text is again mutilated. That passage reads (Heb.), “And unto the sons of Kohath which were left, out of the families [classes] of the tribe of Ephraim, and out of the tribe of Dan, and out of the half of the tribe of Manasseh, by the lot, ten cities.” The curious redundance of the present text of verse 61. “Out of the half of the tribe of the half of Manasseh”—a phrase which occurs nowhere else—suggests bad emendation of a corrupt reading. The passage from Joshua undoubtedly gives the meaning here. (Comp. verses 66 and 67, below.)

(62) Gershom (Josh., Gershon) throughout their families.—Heb., to [i.e., with regard to, after] their clans (so verse 63). In verse 60, “throughout their families” represents Heb. in their clans.

Tribe of Manasseh in Bashan.—Joshua, “half-tribe.”

(65) This verse is word for word the same as Josh. xxi. 7, omitting the one term “by lot.”

(66, 67) “So the sons of Israel gave to the Levites the cities and their pastures. And they gave by the lot, out of the tribe of the sons of Judah, and out of the tribe of the sons of Simeon, and out of the tribe of the sons of Benjamin, those cities which are called by names;” named, that is, in the list of verses 55—60, above. This is clearly a summing up of the whole account so far. The eleven tribes have all been mentioned in verses 61—65. The “cities” of verse 64 are those included in verses 61—63. So the parallel verse (Josh. xxi. 8) refers back to Josh. xxi. 5—7, which is parallel to our verses 61—63. Josh. xxi. 9 (= our verse 65) introduces the names of the cities which fell to the Aaronites. But there is no real divergence between that account and this; because verse 65 also refers back to the list of the same cities in verses 55—60. The chronicler adds Benjamin, with reference to verse 60, to make his tribal list complete.

(69—81) The names of the cities numbered in verses 61—64. (Comp. Josh. xxi. 20—26.)

(69) And the residue of the families.—The Hebrew text can hardly mean this; and Josh. xxi. 20 shows that it is incorrect. The original text must have been, “And to the families of the sons of Kohath: and the cities of their border were of the tribe of Ephraim.” The construction breaks off, and a new start is made by the words “and the cities,” &c. The verse is abridged as compared with Joshua, l.c.

(70) And they gave unto them, of the cities of refuge . . .—The correct version of the Hebrew text is, “And they gave unto them the cities of refuge, Shechem in mount Ephraim; and Gezer and her pastures.” Perhaps both here and in verse 57 above “city” (‘îyr), and not “cities” (‘ârey), is the original reading. We have already noticed many indications of textual corruption in this and the former section. Gezer was not a city of refuge. (See Note on verse 57.) Josh. xxi. 21 has the singular.

(71) Jokmeam.—Joshua has Kibzaim, a name omitted by the LXX. Vatican. Jokmeam is probably right. The other might easily be a misreading of it, owing to confusion of similar letters. The site is unknown. The four cities of verses 67, 68 lay in Ephraim. Bethhoron, Gibron, and Aijalon, the scenes of the great and providentially determined overthrow of the five kings of the Amorites, were appropriately assigned to the sacred tribe of Levi.

(72) Aijalon with her suburbs . . .—Josh. xxi. 23, 24, “And out of the tribe of Dan, Eltekeh and her pastures, Gibbethon and her pastures, Aijalon and her pastures, Gath-rimmon and her pastures; four cities.” Clearly there is a lacuna in our text between verses 68 and 69. It has been supposed that the chronicler omits mention of the tribe of Dan, here and elsewhere, owing to a religious prejudice, because of the illicit form of worship of which the city Dan was the centre. It is more likely that such omissions are not chargeable to the chronicler, but either to the im-
with her suburbs, and Gath-rimmon with her suburbs: (70) and out of the half tribe of Manasseh; Aner with her suburbs, and Bileam with her suburbs, for the family of the remnant of the sons of Kohath.

(71) Unto the sons of Gershom were given out of the family of the half tribe of Manasseh, Golan in Bashan with her suburbs, and Ashtaroth with her suburbs; (72) and out of the tribe of Issachar; Kedesh with her suburbs, Daberath with her suburbs, (73) and Ramoth with her suburbs, and Anem with her suburbs; (74) and out of the tribe of Asher; Mashal with her suburbs, and Abdon with her suburbs, and Hakkon with her suburbs, (75) and Hukok with her suburbs, and Rehob with her suburbs; (76) and out of the tribe of Naphtali; Kedesh in Galilee with her suburbs, and Hammon with her suburbs, and Kirjathaim with her suburbs.

(77) Unto the rest of the children of Merari were given out of the tribe of Zebulun, Rimmon with her suburbs, Tabor with her suburbs; (78) and on the other side Jordan by Jericho, on the east side of Jordan, were given them out of the tribe of Reuben, Bezer in the wilderness with her suburbs, and Jahzah with her suburbs, (79) Kedemoth also with her suburbs, and Mephaath with her suburbs.

perfection of his sources, or to the carelessness, and perhaps malpractice, of his copyists and editors. (See further note on chap. vii. 12.)

(70) Aner . . . Bileam.—Josh. xxi. 25 reads, "Taanaach [see Josh. xvii. 11] and Gath-rimmon." The latter is a mere repetition from the preceding verse. Bileam is a man's name, being the Hebrew spelling of Balaam. It should be Bileam (Josh. xvi. 11). So the LXX. Aner (Gen. xiv. 13) is also a man, one of Abraham's allies. Taanaach is probably right, the last three letters of the Hebrew word closely resembling those of Aner.

For the family.—Better, unto the family of the sons of Kohath who were left. This depends on the idea of giving (verse 67). The phrase is a sort of sub.scription to the whole list of verses 67-70. For "family" the plural should be read, as in Josh. xxi. 26.

THE CITIES OF THE MERARITES. (Comp. Josh. xxi. 34-38.) Verses 77-81.

(77) Unto the rest of the children of Merari.—Rather, Unto the sons of Merari, the remaining Levites, as at Josh. xxi. 34. The cities of the Kohathites and Gershonites having been rehearsed, it was natural to speak of the Merarites as "those who were left."

Were given.—They gave, as before (verse 71).

Rimmon . . . Tabor.—Heb. Rimmonı̂. The reading of Josh. xxi.34, 35 is quite different. We there find mention of Jokneam, Kartah, Dimnah, and Nahalal, "four cities." The first pair of names may be accidentally omitted from our text. Dimnah, in Joshua, should probably be Rimmonah, answering to the present Rimmon or Rimmon (Josh. xxi. 13). Rimmon, the Assyrian Rammın. (See note on 2 Kings v. 18.) Nahalal is mentioned again (Josh. xii. 15) as a city of Zebulun; while Tabor is only known as the name of the mountain which rises north-east of the plain of Esraelon, and is famous as the traditional scene of the Transfiguration ( Judges viii. 18; Ps. lxix. 12). Nahalal means "pasture," or "sheep-walk"—Nahalol (Isa. xvii. 19); and the original reading of our text may have been, Nahalat-labol (pasturage of Tabor)—a compound proper name like Hamm-thodar, and many others.

(78, 79) Bezer in the wilderness.—A city of refuge (Deut. iv. 48). The phrase "on the east of Jordan" fixes the meaning of the indefinite expression "on the other side Jordan."

Jahzah is a form of Jahaz, originally meaning, "to Jahaz." (Comp. the modern names Stamboul = Στάμβολ, Stanehio = Στανεχιο, Jahaz was assigned to Reuben at the partition of Canaan (Josh. xiii. 18), along with Kedemoth and Mephaath. Mesha, king of Moab, recovered it from Israel (see Note on 2 Kin. i. 1). Mephaath belonged to Moab temp. Jeremia (Jer. xxviii. 21). It was, according to Jerome, a garrison town in the Roman age. (See also Josh. xiii. 18, xxi. 37; Deut. ii. 28.)
suburbs; (80) and out of the tribe of Gad; Ramoth in Gilad with her suburbs, and Mahanaim with her suburbs, (81) and Heshbon with her suburbs, and Jazer with her suburbs.

CHAPTER VII.—(1) Now the sons of Issachar were, (2) Tola, and Puah, Jashub, and Shimron, four. (2) And the sons of Tola; Uzzi, and Rephaiah, and Jeriel, and Jahmai, and Jibsam, and Shimuel, heads of their father’s house, to wit, of Tola: they were valiant men of might in their generations; (3) whose number was in the days of David two and twenty thousand and six hundred. (4) And the sons of Uzzi; Izrahiah: and the sons of Izrahiah; Michael, and Obadiah, and Joel, Ishiah, five: all of them chief men. (5) And with them, by their generations, after the house of their fathers, were bands of soldiers for war, six and thirty thousand men: for they had many wives and sons. (6) And their brethren among all the families of Issachar were valiant men of might, reckoned in all by their genealogies fourscore and seven thousand.

(80) Ramoth in Gilad.—A city of refuge (Josh. xxi. 36). Jazer, Heshbon, Mahanaim, were given by Moses to the Gadites (Josh. xiii. 25, 26). Ramoth Gilad (see 1 Kings xxii., 2 Chron. xvii., and 2 Kings viii. 28). Its position is unknown.

(81) Heshbon, now Heebain, on the south border of Gad. (See also Isa. xiv. 4; Jer. xliv. 2.) Jazer belonged to Moab in the eighth century (Isa. xxxv. 1-5.)

VII.

THE GREAT CLANS OF ISSACHAR, BENJAMIN, NAPTHALI, WEST MANASSEH, EPHRAIM, AND ASHER.

(1-5) The tribe of Issachar, its clans and their military strength.

(1) Now the sons of Issachar.—Heb., and to the sons—i.e., “and as for the sons of Issachar; Tola, Puah, &c., four were they.” The Vatican, LXX., has the dative; the Alex. the nominative, which is perhaps a correction. The four names are given Gen. xlix. 13, where the second is Puwah, the third Tōb; and Num. xxvi. 23, where also the second name is Puwah, but the third Iśshib (he returns). The Heb. text here is Iśshib (the makes return); the Hebrew margin, adopted by the Authorised Version, is the same as the text of Num. xxvi.

(2-6) These verses supply names and facts not found elsewhere. We have here some of the results of the census of David (2 Sam. xxiv., and below, chap. xxi.).

(2) Heads of their father’s house.—Rather, chiefs of their father-houses (septs or clans).

Of Tola.—Belonging to Tola, that is, to the great clan or sub-tribe so called.

In their generations.—According to their registers or birth-rolls.

Whose number.—The number of the warriors of all the six groups of the Tolaite branch of Issachar.

In the days of David.—See the census (chap. xxvi.).

(5) Izrahiah . . . —All these names contain a divine element. Izrahiah means “Jah riseth (like the sun)” (comp. Mal. iv. 2); Michael, “who like God?” (Comp. Isa. xi. 18, 25.) Before Ishiah and has fallen out.

Five: all of them chief men.—Heb., five chiefs (heads) altogether (all of them). But perhaps the punctuation should be as in the Authorised Version. verse 7.

(4) By their generations.—Heb., after or according to their birth-rolls or registers. The census of the Uzite warriors was taken “according to their birth-rolls and their father-houses” (septs or clans).

Bands of soldiers.—Heb., troops of the host of war or of the battle-host.

For they had many wives and sons.—They are the clans represented by the hereditary chiefs Izrahiah, Michael, and the rest.

(5) And their brethren.—Fellow-tribesmen.

Families.—Clans (mishpehoth). The verse states the number of warriors for the whole tribe of Issachar in David’s census at 87,000. Render: “And their kinsmen, of all the clans of Issachar, valiant warriors. Eighty-seven thousand was their census for the whole tribe.”

Reckoned in all by their genealogies.—Heb., kibbyhahôn, a difficult word peculiar to the chronicler in the Old Testament, but reappearing in the Rabbinic Hebrew. The present form is a verbal noun with suffix pronoun, and means “their enrolling” or “enrollment,” their census; cp. ἀπογράφων (Luke ii. 1). As the Tolaite were 22,600, and the sons of Izrahiah 36,000, the other son of Issachar must have amounted to 28,400, to make up the total of 87,000 for the tribe. At the first census of Moses (Num. i. 29), the warriors of Issachar were 54,400; at the second (Num. xxvi. 25) they were 64,300. (Comp. Judges v. 15 and x. 1 for the ancient prowess of Issachar.)
The Sons of Benjamin

(6) The sons of Benjamin; Bela, and Becher, and Jediael, three. (7) And the sons of Bela; Ezbon, and Uzzi, and Uziel, and Jeremoth, and Tirzah, five; heads of the house of their fathers, mighty men of valour; and were reckoned by their genealogies twenty and two thousand and thirty and four. (8) And the sons of Becher; Zemira, and Joash, and Eliezer, and Elooenai, and Omri, and Jerimoth, and Abiaab, and Anathoth, and Almeth. All these are the sons of Becher. (9) And the number of them, after their genealogy by their generations, heads of the house of their fathers, mighty men of valour, was twenty thousand and two hundred. (10) And the sons also of Jededia; Bilhan: and the sons of Bilhan; Jeush, and Benjamin, and Ehud, and Chenanaah, and Zethan, and Tharsish, and HIGH.

(11) All these the sons of Jededia, by the heads of their clans.
The Sons of Naphthali

I. CHRONICLES, VII.

and of Manasseh.

fathers, mighty men of valour, were eighteen thousand and two hundred soldiers, fit to go out for war and battle.

(12) Shuppim also, and Huppim, the children of Ir, and Hushim, the sons of Aher.

(13) The sons of Naphthali; Jahziel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shallum, the sons of Bilhah.

(14) The sons of Manasseh; Ashriel, whom she bare: (but his concubine the Aramean bare Machir the father of Gilced:

(15) And Machir took to wife the sister of Huppim and Shuppim, whose three centuries may seem too small. But the tribe

was well-nigh exterminated in the vengeance which seventeen thousand and two hundred soldiers, fit to go out for war and battle.

Israël took for the crime of Giheah (Judges xx. 47).}

Note on verses 6-11 that Gen. xlvii. 28-31 names "Muppim and Huppim" as sons of Benjamin, and that Num. xxvi. has "Shephupham and Hupham" corresponding to the same pair of names. Lastly, chap. viii. 5 mentions "Shephupham and Hupham" among the sons of Bench, son of Benjamin. It is clear that "Muppim" is a mere slip of the pen for "Shuppim," to which the name Shephupham is really equivalent. From Shephupham, according to Num. xxvi. 21, sprang the clan of the "Shuphami" (Shephumite), as from "Hupham" the clan of the Huphami. Shephupham and Hupham are quite natural variants of Shuppim and Huppim. The "Hupham" of chap. viii. 5 is a scribe's error for "Hupham." Shuppim and Huppim, called sons of Benjamin in Genesis and Numbers, and sons of bench in chap. viii., are here called "sons of Ir;" verse 7 above informs us that Ir or Iri (the Irito) was a son of Bela. There is no more contradiction here than there would be in calling the same person a son of David, son of Judah, and son of Abraham.

Hushim, the sons of Aher.—The name Hushim (a plural form) recurs at chap. vii. 8, 11, as a Benjamite clan. Aher looks like a variant of the Ahiram of Numbers, and the Ahiram of chap. vii., and perhaps of the Eli-Rosh of Genesis. From this it would appear that the whole verse is an appendix to the genealogy of Benjamin. The word Aher, however, happens to mean another, and if the reading were certain (comp. the variants Ahiram, Ahrah, &c.), would be very singular as a proper name. The clause has been rendered "Hushim, sons of another;' and this odd expression has been taken to be a veiled reference to the tribe of Dan, whose name is omitted in the present section. Gen. xlvii. 23, "And the sons of Dan, Hushim," a statement occurring like the present clause that of the sons of Benjamin and the sons of Naphtali, is cited in support of this view. This last coincidence is certainly remarkable; but the following considerations are decidedly adverse to the view in question: 1. Num. xxxii. 42 calls the offspring of Dan, Shuham, not Hushim, though there also Dan follows Benjamin. 2. Dan is, indeed, omitted here, but so also is Zebulun, just as Gad and Asher are omitted in chap. xxvii. 16—22; and Naphtali here has only one place. 3. The historian's dislike of the tribe of Dan is probably an unfounded supposition, suggested by some accidental omissions; he has mentioned that tribe by name in chaps. ii. 2, xii. 35, xxvii. 22. If the omission in the present list be neither accidental nor due to imperfect MSS., it may be ascribed to later editors of the book. (Comp. Judges xviii. and Rev. vii. 5-8.)

The Tribe of West Manasseh (verses 14-19).

Verses 14-15 are very obscure.

The sons of Manasseh.—Translate, the sons of Manasseh, Ashriel, whom his Aramean concubine bare. (She bare Machir, father of Gilced.) Num. xxvii. 1, Josh. xviii. 3, give the line Manasseh. Machir. Gilced. Hepher. Zelophehad.

Zelophehad has five daughters, but no sons. Num. xxvi. 29-33 gives the same line with additions thus:—


Zelophehad.

This last passage is important, because it expressly declares that the names all represent clans, with the exception of Zelophehad, who "had no sons, but daughters." It also shows that Aseriel was great-grandson of Manasseh. The parenthesis of verse 14, therefore, appears to be intended to warn the reader that Aseriel was the "son" of the Aramean concubine of Manasseh, mediately through descent from Machir.

And Machir took to wife.—The Hebrew cannot mean this. Translate, now Machir took a wife of Huppim and of Shuppim (the two Benjamite clans of verse 12); and the name of the first (read ahath) was Maachah, and the name of the second (read sheni) was . . . . . . (the name is omitted). It is tempting to make Zelophehad the other wife, who had only daughters, whereas Maachah bore a son (verse 16); but Numbers, i.e., and Josh., i.e., make Zelophehad a man. We must, therefore, suppose a lacuna of some few words, which gave the name of Machir's second wife, and the descent of Zelophehad from her. The expression "of Huppim and of Shuppim" is literally "to Huppim and to Shuppim," that is, belonging to. So "of Tola." (verse 2).

We have no means of further elucidating the import of this curious tribal record. That it relates to West Manasseh is inferred from its position here, as well
The Sons of Ephraim.

As from the fact that chap. v. 23, 24 treated of East Manasseh. (See also Josh. xvii. 1—5.) The name of Gilead, however, points to the transjordanic half of the tribe. The whole passage seems to assert an Aramean and a Bejanite element in the population of Western Manasseh.

(16) Bedan (i.e., ben Dan "the Danite") in 1 Sam. xii. 11 is a judge between Jerubbaal and Jephthah. Here a clan is meant, not a person.

(17) Ulam and Rakem (Bekem) were probably sons of the elder, Peresh, whose line would naturally be continued, as usual.

(18) Bedan, Shemidah, and Bered occur nowhere else.

(19) Shemidah is a local name, a clan name, as the Vulg. renders it, may be conceived of here as a half-sister and cousin of Gilead.

(20) Shemidah—or, the queen, as the Vulg. renders it, may be conceived of here as a half-sister and cousin of Gilead.

(21) Shechem.—See Josh. xvi. 2. The name points to West Manasseh.

(22) Aniam, Likhi, and Aniam, are not mentioned elsewhere.

THE TRIBE OF EPHRAIM (verses 20—29).

Shuthelah (Num. 26, 35) was head of the first of the four Ephraimite clans (mishpehoth). The names of six successive chieftains of his line appear to be given in verses 20 and 21, ending with his namesake Shuthelah. It is likely, however, that these names really represent clans, as in other similar cases. (Comp. Num. xxvi. 29—33.) "Bered" (Gen. xvi. 14) is a local name, a place in the desert of Shur. But Bered may be a mistake for Beker. So "Tahath" (Num. xxxiii. 26) was a desert station of Israel. But Tahath may well be a corruption of Tahan, son of Ephraim (verse 25, and Num. xxi. 35).

(23) Because it went evil.—Beriah is derived from a root, bara', and apparently means gift. Heb., because in evil it (i.e., the birth of Beriah) happened in his house. There is an allusive play on the words Beriah ("gift") and berut'ah ("in evil") such as we often meet with in Genesis (see Gen. v. 29, xi. 9). To call such plays on words derivations would be a tasteless anachronism. Their purpose is to point a moral, not to teach etymology.

(24) His daughter—i.e., Ephraim's.

Built may mean rebuilt, or restored, or fortified (Josh. vi. 26; Ps. cii. 16; 2 Chron. xi. 6).

Beth-horon the nether, and the upper.

The two Beth-horons (Josh. x. 10) were apparently a

Whom the men of Gath . . . . —Literally, and the men of Gath who were born in the land slew them; for they had come down to take their cattle.

Born in the land—That is, aborigines of Canaan as contrasted with the Ephraimites, who were foreign invaders. Others think the real aborigines of Philistia, the Avim of Deut. ii. 25, are meant. In verses 21, 22 we have a brief memorial of an ancient raid of two Ephraimites upon the territory of Gath, for the purpose of lifting cattle, much as the Highland free-booters used to drive off the herds of their Lowland neighbours.

They came down.—The reference of the pronoun is not quite clear. Conceivably the Gittites were the aggressors. The expression "came down" is often used of going from Canaan to Egypt, but not vice versa. It can hardly, therefore, apply to an invasion of Gath by Ephraimites from Egypt. And the phrase "born in the land" excludes an expedition of Gittites to Goshen. It seems, then, that the descent was made upon Philistia from the hill country of Ephraim, in the early days of the settlement of the tribe in Canaan.
Uzzen-scherah.) (25) And Rephah was his
son, also Resheph, and Telah his son,
and Tahan his son, (26) Laadan his son,
Ammihud his son, Elishama his son,
(27) Non his son, Jehoshua his son.
(28) And their possessions and habita-
tions were, Beth-el and the towns there-
off, and eastward *Naaran, and westward
Gezer, with the *t towns thereof; Shechem
also and the towns thereof, unto Gaza
and the towns thereof: (29) and by the
borders of the children of Manasseh,
Beth-shean and her towns, Taanach and
her towns, Megiddo and her towns, Dor
and her towns. In these dwelt the
children of Joseph the son of Israel.
(30) The sons of Asher; Innah, and
Isuah, and Ishuah, and Beriah, and Serah
their sister. (31) And the sons of Beriah;
Heber, and Malchiel, who is the father
of Birzavith. (32) And Heber begat Japh-
let, and Shomer, and Hotham, and Shua
their sister. (33) And the sons of Japhlet;
Pasach, and Bimhal, and Ashvath.
These are the children of Japhlet.
(34) And the sons of Shamer; Ali, and

Canaanite foundation. They are now Beit ur el-Tahta
and Beit ur el-Pariaga—i.e., Lower and Upper Beitur.
Uzzen-scherah.—Sherah’s ear, or peak, only men-
tioned here. The relation of Sherah to Beth-horon may
be compared with that of Achshah to the Negeb of Judah
(Josh. xv. 19. Cf. also Josh. xxiv. 14).
(29) And Rephah was his son; and Resheph and
Telah his son. (Heb. text.) This seems to mean
that Rephah was son of Beriah. But perhaps a son of
Ephraim is intended. Rephah does not occur among
the sons of Ephraim (Num. xxvi. 35, 36). The word
“his son” (beni) may have fallen out after Resheph.
Otherwise Resheph is brother and Telah son of Rephah
(the elder). Resheph, which means “arrow,” “light-
ing,” “fever,” was a title of the Phoenician Baal.
“Tahan,” a son of Ephraim (Num. xxvi. 35: “the clan
of the Tanaites”).
Elishama son of Ammihud was tribal prince
or Emir of Ephraim in the time of Moses (Num. vii. 47).
(27) Non.—Everywhere else Non, the father
of Joshua the servant and successor of Moses. Verses 25
—27 trace his ancestry, as it would seem, through seven
or eight generations to Rephah, son of Beriah or
Ephraim. At chap. vi. 1—3 only two names are given
between Levi, uncle of Ephraim, and Moses, Joshua’s
elder contemporary. But abundant reason has already
been shown for not interpreting these genealogies in a
slavishly literal spirit, and without regard to their own
contrary indications. It is obvious to common sense
that when it is said that Moses was “son of Amram,
son of Kohath, son of Levi,” the meaning cannot be
that only two generations intervened between the tribal
patrician and the age of Moses. Moreover, it is, to say
the least, doubtful that the names in verse 25 represent
a lineal descent of individuals, and not a group of
variously connected clans. “Telah” looks like a frag-
ment of Shuthelah (verse 20); and perhaps the true
reading of verse 25 is, “And Rephah his son, and Shu-
thelah his son, and Tahan his son,” we-Reshef, we-The-
loah being a possible distortion of we-Shuthelah.
The Bounds of Ephraim and West Manasseh
(verses 28—29).
Comp. chap. vi. 54, sqq., where a list of the cities of
the Levites is similarly added to their tribal registers.
(28) And their possessions.—Heb., and their
domain and their seats were Bethel and her daughters;
“their domain,” that is, the domain of both divisions
of the tribe of Joseph.
Bethel—originally assigned to Benjamin (Josh.
xviii. 22), belonged later to the northern kingdom. The
present list appears therefore to be younger than the
disruption of Solomon’s empire.
Naaran, or Naarah (Naaph) (Josh. xvi. 7) was a
town north-east of Jericho. Gozer lay on the south-
west border of Ephraim (Josh. xvi. 3). Shechem
(Nabul, Nebi Samwil) on the north. Gaza; so the LXX.,
Vulg. (Aza which represents the Hebrew ‘Azazh, i.e.,
Gaza), and Targum; but a great number of MSS. and
seventeen editions read Ayyah, a place not mentioned
elsewhere, but doubtless lying on the north-west
border of Ephraim.
(30) The sons of Japhlet; Pasach, and Bimhal, and
Ashvath. These are the children of Japhlet.
(31) And the sons of Shamer; Ali, and

The Tribe of Asher (verses 30—40).
(30) 31 The sons of Asher; Innah . . .
Malchiel.—This is a literal transcript of Gen.
xvi. 17. Comp. also Num. xxvi. 44—46, where the
clan (mishpahath) of each eponym is assigned; but
the name of Issach (Heb. ‘Yishwah) does not appear.
Beriah.—Also the name of an Ephraimitic stock
(vor. 29). Malchiel is called the “father (chief or
founder) of Birzavith” only here. The Heb. margin
has Birzavith, perhaps “well of olive” (be-er zayith);
the text, Berzóth or Barzóth. It is probably the name
of a place.
(32—34) The race of Heber (spelt differently from
Heber, Abraham’s ancestor). Nothing is known of
any of these families. The name Japhlet (the Japhlet-
ite) occurs as a clan (Josh. xvi. 3), but far away from
the bounds of Asher.
(34) Shamer (pausal form of Shemer) probably
identical with Shomer, the second son of Heber (verse
32).
Jehubbah.—Heb. margin has we-Hubbah, “and
Hubbah,” which is correct according to the prevailing
form of this list (and before each name).
Aram is the ordinary name of the Syrians east and
west of the Ephrates. It may here designate a clan
of half-Aramean extraction.
Rohgah, Jehubbah, and Aram. (35) And the sons of his brother Helem; Zophah, and Immna, and Shelesh, and Amal. (36) The sons of Zophah; Suah, and Harnepher, and Shual, and Beri, and Imrah, Bezer, and Hod, and Shamma, and Shilshah, and Ish-tran, and Beera. (37) And the sons of Jether; Jephunneh, and Pispah, and Ara. (38) And the sons of Ulla; Arah, and Haniel, and Rezia. (39) All these were the children of Asher, heads of their father’s house, choice and mighty men of valour, chief of the princes. And the number throughout the genealogy of them that were apt to the war and to battle was twenty and six thousand men.

CHAPTER VIII.—(1) Now Benjamin begat (2) Bela his first-born, Ashbel the second, and Aharah the third, (3) Noahah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth. (4) And the sons of Bela were, (5) Addar, and Gera, and Abihud, (6) and Abishua, and Naa-

(35—39) And the sons of his brother Helem.—Apparently the offshoots of Helem, “brother” of Shemer-Shomer. If we construe brother in the strict sense, we must assume that Helam is the same as Hotham (verse 32), and that one or the other name is corrupt. But Helem may be the name of another chief house of Asher not directly connected with that of Helam. The brotherhood then would be that of the tribe, not of the clan or family. (36) The branches of Helam through Zophah the elder house. Eleven names of the sons of Zophah. The second, “Harnepher,” has a name which looks like pure Egyptian: Har nefer, “the beauteous Horus,” or morning sun. Comp. the case of the Egyptian slave Jarba (chap. ii. 34), and the marriage of Mered with “Pharaoh’s daughter” (chap. iv. 18). (See also the Notes on verse 10.) (38) The sons of Jether.—Jether and Ish-tran (verse 37) are virtually the same name, and perhaps to be identified here. This will connect verse 38 with the preceding line of the sons of Zophah. Jephunneh.—The name of the father of Caleb the Kenizzite. (39) The sons of Ulla.—Apparently Ulla is not connected with the foregoing genealogy. But he seems to be the same as Ara (verse 38). Ara is a very common name and may be due to a copyist’s eye having wandered to Be-era at the end of last verse; ‘Ulla’ is intelligible, and probably correct. If the identification be allowed, we get a complete concatenation from verses 30 to 39. Arah is in Hebrew quite different from Ara. (40) The summing up of the list. “All these were sons of Asher, picked chiefs of the father-houses, valiant warriors, chiefs of the princes.” This declares that the names in the foregoing series are those of the chiefs of the different Asherite clans. They are called “choice,” picked men, eximii, and chiefs of the princes or emirs. The clans appear to be identified with their chieftains.

And the number throughout the genealogy.

—Better, and their census, in the host, in the battle—their number in men was 26,000. Perhaps we should render in the case of service in war. The census here given has reference only to the number of males qualified for military service. In the Mosaic census (Num. i. 41) the total of males of the tribe of Asher was 41,500; and a generation later, the fighting men were 53,000 (Num. xxvi. 47). The date of the present census is not assigned. If it be that of David, which appears likely, the tribe may have declined in numbers and importance by his day. (Comp. Judg. x. 17. “Asher continued at the sea-shore, and abode on his creeks;” i.e., did not bestir himself for the war).

VIII.

The narrative returns to the tribe of Benjamin. The present register is quite different from that preserved in chap. vii. 6—12, which, as we have seen, is an extract from a document drawn up for military purposes. Apparently based on a topographical register, this new list agrees better than the other with the data of the Pentateuch (Gen. xlv.; Num. xxvi.), allowance being made for the mistakes of generations of copyists. The chronicle may well have thought the short section of chap. vii. too meagre as an account of a tribe which had furnished the first royal house, and had afterwards inapparently linked its fortunes with those of the legitimate dynasty. Here, therefore, he supplements his former notice. Perhaps also, he returns to Benjamin by way of introduction to the royal genealogy with which the section concludes. In short, he begins, as his manner is, at the beginning; and having to tell of Saul, starts from the tribal patriarchy to whom the house of Saul traced back its long descent.

The Sons of Benjamin and Bela (verses 1—5). (See Notes on chap. vii. 6, 7.)

Bela his first-born.—The Hebrew word for “first-born” in Gen. xlv. 21 may have been turned into the proper name Becher, by an ancient mistake of the scribes. (See Note on chap. vii. 6.)

Ashbel.—Probably the same as Jedidah.

Aharah the same as Ahiram and Ehiros.

(2) Noahah and Rapha.—These names do not occur in either of the other lists. The present series agrees with Num. xxvi. 38 in assigning five sons to Benjamin, of whom Bela is the first, and Ashbel the second. Further, there is enough likeness between the name Aharah here and Ahiram there to warrant our assumption of their original identity. But we cannot hence conclude that the Noahah and Rapha of our list answer to the Shephuphah-Shephum and Hopham of the other. It is more likely that Noahah and Rapha represent different clans, which were prominent at the time when the present list was drafted. Rapha reminds us of the valley of Rephaim, south-west of Jerusalem, chap. xi. 15.

(6—5) The sons of Bela here are nine, like the sons of the suspected Becher, chap. vii. 8. But none of the names correspond.

(3) Addar the same as Ard, who in Num. xxvi. is eldest son of Bela, but in Gen. xlv. apparently his youngest brother.

Gera appears as brother of Bela in Gen. xlv. 21. The name is repeated in verse 5, probably by a scribe’s
I. CHRONICLES, VIII.

of Shaharaim.

man, and Ahoah, (6) and Gera, and Shephuphan, and Huram. (9) And these are the sons of Ehud: these are the heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Geba, and they removed them to "Manahath: (7) and Naaman, and Ahiah, and Gera, he removed them, and beget Uzza, and Ahihud. (8) And Shaharaim begat children in the country of Moab, after he had sent them away; Hushim and Baara were his wives. (9) And he begat of Hodesh his wife, Jobab, and Zibia, and Mesha, and Malcham, (10) and Jeuz, and Shachia, and Mirna. These were his sons, heads of the fathers. (11) And of Hushim he begat Abitub, and Elpaal. (12) The sons of Elpaal; Eber, and Misham, and Shemed, who built Ono, and Lod, with the towns thereof: (13) Beriah also, and Shema, who were heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Aijalon, who drove away the inhabitants of Gath: two chiefs of clans settled at Geba (chap vi. 45), were forcibly removed by three other Benjamite clans to Manahath (see chap. ii. 52, 54). "Al manahath might perhaps be rendered "for the sake of peace," referring to feud between the clans of Geba.

(8) And Shaharaim begat children in the country of Moab.—Shaharaim is apparently out of all connection with the other Benjamite houses. He has been identified with Ahí-Shahar, chap. vii. 10, because his name has a similar meaning, and even with the mysterious Aher (hypothetically Shaher) of chap. vii. 12. It is simpler to suppose that we'eth-Shaharaim, "and Shaharaim," has dropped out at the end of verse 7 (see Note on verse 31). Expelled from Geba, Shaharaim found a refuge in Moab. (Comp. Ruth i.; 1 Sam. xxii. 3, 4.)

After he had sent them away; Hushim and Baara were his wives.—The Heb. is certainly corrupt. The easiest correction is to read eth-Hushim instead of 'otham Hushim: "and Shaharaim begat in the country of Moab, after divorcing Hushim and Baara his wives, he begat (verse 9) of Hodesh his wife, Jobab," i.e. This is supported by the LXX. The emigration of the clan Shaharaim, from its old home in Geba of Benjamin is called a divorce, in the figurative style of these genealogies; just as the amalgamation of clans is marriage. Hushim, in chap. vii. 12, is a Benjamite clan. In Moab, Shaharaim branched off into seven clans, whose names are given in verses 9—10.

(9) And Hodesh his wife.—The new Moabite wife or settlement of Shaharaim. The names of two of the sons begotten in Moab have a Moabite cast—viz., Mesha', comp. Mesha' king of Moab, 2 Kings iii. 4; and Malcham, comp. Malcam (Milecom) as a title of the god of Moab and Ammon, Jer. xlix. 1 (Heb.).

(10) Heads of the fathers.—See Note on verse 6.

(11) And of Hushim he begat . . . . The offspring of Shaharaim by Hushim before her divorce; in other words, two offshoots of the clan Shaharaim settled in the vicinity of Lod or Lydda (verse 12), which took no part in the emigration to Moab.

(12) Shamer, or Shemar; occurred in chap. vii. 34 as a clan of Asher.

Who built Ono and Lod . . . . Literally, he built Ono and Lod and her daughters. The clause is a parenthesis referring to Shemar.

Ono, now Kefr Auna, recurs in Ezra ii. 33, Neh. vii. 37, and xii. 35, but is not found elsewhere in the Old Testament. It is always coupled with Lod, and must have been near it.

Lod, the Lydda of Acts ix. 32, is now the village of Lod, north of Ramleh, between Jaffa and Jerusalem.

(13) Beriah also, and Shema.—After these two names the Masoretic punctuators have put a stop. Thus verses 12—13 give five sons of Elpaal. Or verse 13
1Zacher. (32) And Mikloth begat Shimeah. And these also dwelt with their brethren in Jerusalem, over against them. (33) And Ner begat Kish, and Kish begat Saul, and Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchi-shua, and Abinadab, and
3Esh-baal. (34) And the son of Jonathan was Merib-baal; and Merib-baal begat Micah. (35) And the sons of Micah were, Pithon, and Melech, and Tarea, and Ahaz. (36) And Ahaz begat Jehoaddah; and Jehoaddah begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, and Zirim; and Zirim begat Moza, (37) and Moza begat Binea: Rapha was his son, Eleasah his son, Azel his son: (38) and Azel had six sons, whose names are these, Azrikam, Bocheru, and Ishmael, and Sheariah, and Obadiah, and Hanan. All these were the sons of Azel. (39) And the sons of Eshek his brother were, Ulam his first-born, Jehush the second, and Eliphelet the third. (40) And the sons of Ulam were mighty men of valour, archers, and had many sons, and sons' sons, an hundred and fifty. All these are of the sons of Benjamin.

chap. v. 26, Note.) After Zecher, the phrase and Mikloth has dropped out of the text, because verse 32 begins with the same words. (See chap. ix. 33.)

(32) Shimeah is essentially the same word as Skimna (chap. ix. 35). The latter is a misspelled form (in a more ancient form of the noun, with the original ending m).

And these also dwelt with their brethren in Jerusalem, over against them.—Literally, And they also, before their brethren, dwelt in Jerusalem with their brethren. The verse seems to tell us that of all the stock of Gibon only the branch of Mikloth-Shimeah dwelt in Jerusalem. When, we are not informed. Some think the reference is to the repopulating of Jerusalem after the Restoration (Neh. xi. 1). “Before their brethren.”—Before in Heb. means east, as behind means west. The clans in question dwelt in Jerusalem, to the east of their fellow-tribesmen in Gibon.

With their brethren—that is, with the other Benjamite clans settled in Jerusalem (verses 16-28).

(33) The house of Saul. It is not said here that Saul’s immediate family was settled at Gibon. From 1 Sam. ix. 26, xx. 34, and 2 Sam. xi. 6, we learn that Gibon, or “Gibeah of Saul,” was the seat of the king. It is gratuitous to suppose that the chronicler has confounded two different places.

And Ner begat Kish.—1 Sam. ix. 1 gives the following pedigree of Kish: Kish son of Abiel, son of Zeror, son of Bechorath, son of Aphish; and 1 Sam. xiv. 51 states that Kish the father of Saul, and Ner the father of Abner, were sons of Abiel. The omission of intermediate names is not uncommon in these lists. We may, therefore, suppose that some members of the genealogical series are here omitted between Ner and Kish. The father of Abner was, of course, only a namesake of the present Ner, which is perhaps a clan, not an individual.

Saul begat Jonathan.—So 1 Sam. xiv. 49, and xxxi. 2; save that the former passage has Ishi for Abinadab. This seems to be a case of double naming. Others identify Ishi with Ishbosheth.

Abinadab.—Comp. Nadab, verse 30. Both are probably Divine titles, meaning “the father (i.e., Jehovah) is noble.” Comp. Rom. ix. 6, “Chemosh is my prince,” the name of a Moabitish king, mentioned by Sennacherib. Ner and Kish also both occurred in verse 30 as Gibonite clans. Here they (or at least Kish) may be said to be personal names.

Esh-baal.—2 Sam. ii. 8, Ish-bosheth, David’s rival king. Esh-baal (“man of Baal”) is the true name.

Ish-bosheth (“man of shame”) is a sort of euphemism, avoiding the very mention of an idol. So the Merib-baal (“Baal strives;” rather, perhaps, Meri-Baal, “man of Baal”) of verse 34 appears in 2 Sam. iv. 4, ix. 6, i.e., as Mebosheth, where probably the right reading is Meribbosheth. In like manner, idols are styled “abominations.” 1 Kings xi. 5: “Milcom the abomination (i.e., god) of the sons of Ammon, and elsewhere. Both, the sanctuary of the golden calf, or rather bullcalf, is called Beth-aven. The “house of God” is a “house of wickedness” (Hos. iv. 15, v. 8; Josh. vii. 2.) (See Note on verse 30.)

Tarea.—Ta’rea. Tahrea (chap. xxix. 41) is a more ancient form of the noun, with the probable pronunciation Tuhrea, or Shimeam (verse 32) appears to be a similar softening of the name Shime’ah (2 Sam. xiii. 3).

Jehoaddah.—Heb., Jeho’addah. Chap. ix. 42 gives Jaran (Heb., Ja’rah), a mistake arising from the common confusion of the Heb. d and r. The name there should be read, “Jo’addah,” a contraction of the present form.

Alemeth.—In chap. vii. 8 a son of Becher; in chap. vii. 60 a Levitical town. The name is apparently personal here.

(38) Bocheru.—Some MSS. read “his first-born,” with which, with different points, the LXX. and the Syriac agree. This seems right, as the conjunctive particle is wanting between Azrikam and the doubtful word, and Bocheru would be anomalous as a proper name. (See Note on verse 40.)

Azel.—A place near Jerusalem was so called (Zech. xiv. 5; Mic. i. 11).

(39) Eshek his brother—that is, the brother of Azel, and son of Eleasah (verse 37). The elder line is first developed.

(40) And the sons of Ulam were mighty men of valour, archers. The ancient prowess of the Benjamites is recorded in Judg. xx. Their left-handed slingers were famous. (See also Judg. iii. 15 seq.)

Archers.—Literally, tœders of the bow (chap. v. 18). The meaning is that they drew their bows by resting the foot against them, the bows being large.

Had many sons, and sons’ sons, an hundred and fifty.—What was their date? If we may assume that no names have been omitted, we are concerned with the fourteenth generation from Jonathan, the friend of David. The era of David has been fixed at about 1055-1045 B.C.: so that the great-grandsons of Ulam may have flourished about 685-625 B.C. (1055 minus 420), in the reign of Josiah. The omission
CHAPTER IX.—(1) So all Israel were reckoned by genealogies; and, behold, they were written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah, who were carried away to Babylon for their transgression.

(2) Now the first inhabitants that dwelt in their possessions in the cities were, the Israelites, the priests, Levites, and the Nethinims.

(3) And in “Jerusalem dwelt of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin, and of the children of Ephraim, and Manasseh;” (4) Uthai the son of Ammihuud, the son of Omri, the son of Imri, the son of Bani, of the children of Pharez the son of Judah.

(5) And of the Shilonites; Asaiah the firstborn, and his sons.

(6) And of the sons of Zerah; Jeuel, and their brethren, six hundred and ninety.

(7) And of the sons of Benjamin; Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Hodaviah, the son of Hasenuah, (8) and Ibneiah the son of}

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Post-exilic times to the age of the tribal patriarchs. We may therefore conclude that the compiler has chosen to select different names in each case from a longer list, which comprised both series.

(9) And of the sons of Zerah.—The Zarhites are omitted in the parallel passage of Nehemiah, where we read, instead of the present statement, that “as the sons of Perez that dwelt at Jerusalem were four hundred three-score and eight valiant men.” The common source of both the narratives must have contained information about the Zarhites, as well as their brother clansmen, the Parzites and Shelanites. We see from the verse before us that the Zarhites were more numerous in Jerusalem than the Parzites. The chronicler has again exercised his own discretion in the choice and rejection of details.

Jeuel, and their brethren.—The plural pronoun clearly hints that Jeuel is a Zarhite father-house or clan. The passage of Nehemiah just cited shows that six hundred and ninety is the total of the Zarhites only. The number of the Parzites and Shelanites is not here specified.

(10) And of the sons of Benjamin.—The parallel passage (Neh. xi. 7) starts with “Sallu the son of Meshullam,” but continues, “the son of Joel, the son of Pedahiah,” and carries the ancestry four generations further back.

The son of Hodaviah, the son of Hasenuah.—Perhaps we should read “and Hodaviah,” instead of “son of Hodaviah.” (See Note on verses 9, 10.) The name Hodaviah, which occurred chap. v. 24, is a peculiar Aramaizing form of Hoduijah (“Thank the Lord”). Perhaps here the true reading is wihudah, “and Judah.” Comp. Neh. xi. 9, “Judah the son of Senuah” (Heb. ha-Senauah).}

Three other Benjamite houses. Ibneiah is much the same name as “Itunib” at the end of the verse. Both mean “Jah buildeth,” i.e., maketh offspring. (Comp. Assyrian Ea-Ibni, “Ea made,” i.e., a son.)
of Jeroham, and Elah the son of Uzzi, 
the son of Michri, and Meshullam the 
son of Shephathiah, the son of Reuel, 
the son of Ibnijah; (9) and their brethren, 
according to their generations, nine 
hundred and fifty and six. All these men were chief of the fathers in the 
house of their fathers.

(10) And of the priests; Jedaiah, and 
Jehoiarib, and Jachin, (11) and Azariah 

Son of Jeroham.—The sons of Jeroham dwelt in 
Jerusalem before the exile as well as after it (chap. viii. 
27).

Michri should perhaps be Zichri. (Comp. chap. vii. 
19, 23, and 27.)

The other names correspond to Neh. xi. 7—9; but after tracing the ascending line of Sallu son of Meshullam (verse 7) through six degrees, the latter account continues (Neh. xi. 8): “And after him Gabbaiah, Sallai, nine hundred twenty and eight.” This apparently is quite a different statement from that of our verse 8. Gabbaiah, Sallai, however, note the absence of a conjunction), may be corrupt. Gabbaiah perhaps conceals Bani or Ibnai, a contracted form of Ibaniah; and Sallai might have originated out of Shallum or Meshullam, under the influence of the preceding Sallu (verse 7). Neh. xi. 9 continues, “And Joel son of Zakir was their overseer, and Judah son of Hasenuah was over the second part of the city.” “Joel son of Zakir” may be our “Elah son of Uzzi son of Michri” (verse 8); for Joel (“Jah is El”) may be compared with Elah, which is perhaps there exactly corresponds with the present passage, and Amasai is perhaps another name of the same person. The names have been transposed (see chap. vii. 28). The number of names given here is brought into strict harmony with its parallel in the list here is brought into strict harmony with its parallel—five Benjamite clans being named in each, viz., Sallu, Hodaviah (Judah), Ibaneiah (Bani), Joel (Elah), and Meshullam.

And their brethren, according to their 
generations.—The members of the five Benjamite 
clans amounted to nine hundred and twenty-eight. This is perhaps there exactly corresponds with the present passage, and Amasai is perhaps another name of the same person. The names have been transposed (see chap. vii. 28). The number of names given here is brought into strict harmony with its parallel in the list here is brought into strict harmony with its parallel—five Benjamite clans being named in each, viz., Sallu, Hodaviah (Judah), Ibaneiah (Bani), Joel (Elah), and Meshullam.

(10) And of the priests; Jedaiah, and Jehoiarib, and Jachin, (11) and Azariah

of the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshulam, the son of Zadok, the son of Me- 
raitho, the son of Ahitub, the ruler of the 
house of God; (12) and Adaiah the son 
of Jeroham, the son of Paschur, the 
son of Malchijah, and Maasai the son 
of Adiel, the son of Jahzerah, the son of 
Meshullam, the son of Meshillemith, the son of 
Immer; (13) and their brethren, heads of the house of their fathers, a
thousand and seven hundred and three-score; very able men for the work of the service of the house of God.

(14) And of the Levites; Shemaiah the son of Hashub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, of the sons of Merari; and Bakbakkar, Heresh, and Galal, and Mattaniah the son of Micah, the son of Zichri, the son of Asaph; and Obadiah the son of Shemaiah, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun, and Berechiah the son of Asa, the son of Elkanah, that dwelt in the villages of the Netophathites. (17) And the porters were, Shallum, and Akkub, and Talmon, and Ahiman, and their brethren: Shallum was the chief; (19) and hitherto waited in the king's gate eastward: they were porters in the companies of the children of Levi. (18) And Shallum the son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his brethren, of the house of his father, the Korahites, were over the work of the service, keepers of the gates of the tabernacle: and their fathers, being over the host of the Lord,
were keepers of the entry. (20) And Phinehas the son of Eleazar was the ruler over them in time past, and the Lord was with him. (21) And Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah was porter of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. (22) All these which were chosen to be porters in the gates were two hundred and twelve. These were reckoned by their genealogy in their villages, whom David and Samuel the seer did ordain in their set office. (23) So they and their children had the oversight of the gates of the house of the Lord, namely, their registrcion.

Shallum stood guard. 2 Chron. xxxi. 2 applies the same archaic nomenclature to the Temple in Hezekiah's reign, speaking of “the gates of the camps of Yahweh.” (29) And Phinehas the son of Eleazar was the ruler over them in time past.—Or, of yore. Phinehas may have held this office of president (nagid, verse 11) of the warders before he became high priest, just as Eleazar had held a similar position during the lifetime of Aaron (Num. iii. 32). Nothing is said of it elsewhere. And the Lord was with him.—Rather, The Lord be with him! a pious ejaculation, such as the Jews of later times were wont to use in speaking of a departed worthy; and of interest to us as indicating a belief in continued existence after death. (Comp. chap. xxii. 11, 16.) (21) And.—Omit. The verse returns abruptly from the Mosaic to the Davidic age. Zechariah the son of Meshelemiah had charge of the north gate under David (chap. xxvi. 12). Was porter of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.—Was a doorkeeper of the tent of meeting. The verse seems to refer the functions of Zechariah to Mosaic antiquity; but comp. Note on verse 13. The relation of this company to those mentioned in verse 17 is indeterminate. (22) All these which were chosen to be porters in the gates (Heb., thresholds) were two hundred and twelve.—This seems to assign the number of warders at the epoch of which the chronicler, or, rather, his source, is writing. Neh. x. 19 makes the total of the porters one hundred and seventy-two. According to Ezra ii. 42, one hundred and thirty-nine returned with Zerubbabel. Under David, the number of warders was ninety-three (chap. xxvi. 8—11). These were reckoned by their genealogy in their villages.—Rather, these— in their villages was their registration. These.—That is, their ancestors. Guilds and corporations do not dis. Whom David and Samuel the seer did ordain in their set office.—These David and Samuel had ordained in their office of trust, or, in permanence. No mention is made elsewhere of Samuel's part in arranging the Levitical service. He died before David's accession (1 Sam. xxv. 1). Tradition doubtless associated him with David in the work of religious reform, and from what is known of his relation to the sovereigns of his day, the statement of the text may be held true in spirit, if not in the letter. (23) Namely, the house of the tabernacle,—For the Temple was not built in David's day.

By wards.—For Watches. (24) In four quarters were the porters.—To the four winds used the warders to stand " (to be), viz., on the four sides of the tent of meeting, and from the age of Solomon on the four sides of the square enclosure of the Temple. And their brethren, which were in their villages.—The families of the Temple warders, like those of the singers, lived on their farms in the villages round Jerusalem, and came up for their duties in weekly rotation (verse 16; Neh. xii. 29). After seven days.—Every seventh day; that is, on the Sabbath, when each class entered on its duties. (25) For these Levites, the four chief porters, were in their set office. The Heb. says, or seems to say, “For in fixed position (or trust) were they, viz., the four heroes of the warders” (See verse 17, which apparently names four chief “porters.”) The temporary chiefs of the warder guilds abode in the Temple; the mass of their members was settled in the neighbouring villages, and occupied with pastoral pursuits, and were over the chambers and treasuries of the house of God.—This statement belongs to the following verse. The preceding account of the porters or warders seems to terminate with the words, “For in fixed position are they, the four stalwart warders; they are the Levites; that is, the Levites par excellence. And they were over the cells and over the treasuries of the house of God (viz., the warders); and they used to pass the night (verse 27) in the places round the house of God, for upon them was the ward, and they were over the opening (key) every morning—a brief recapitulation of the main duty of the Levitical warders. Some have proposed to alter the text of verse 26b, and to read, “And some of the Levites were over the cells,” &c., thus constituting a new paragraph, although verse 27 obviously recurs to the warders. Probably the paragraph mark should be transferred to verse 25. From this point to verse 34 we have a review of the other special charges of the Levites. (26) The care of the sacred vessels of gold and silver. These were counted when brought out of the store-rooms, and when replaced, to make sure that none was purloined. (Comp. Ezra viii. 20 et seq.)
vessels, that they should bring them in and out by tale. (39) Some of them also were appointed to oversee the vessels, and all the utensils of the sanctuary, and the fine flour, and the wine, and the oil, and the frankincense, and the spices. (40) And some of the sons of the priests made the ointment of the spices. (41) And Mattithiah, one of the Levites, who was the firstborn of Shallum the Korahite, had the set office over the things that were made in the pans. (42) And other of their brethren, of the sons of the Kohathites, were over the shewbread, to prepare it every sabbath. (43) And these are the singers, chief of the fathers of the Levites, who remain in the chambers were free: for they were employed in that work day and night. (44) These chief fathers of the Levites were chief throughout their generations; these dwelt at Jerusalem. (45) And in Gibeon dwelt the father of Gibeon, Jehiel, whose wife's name was Maachah: (46) and his firstborn son Abdon, then Zur, and Kish, and Baal, and Ner, and Naadab, and Gedor, and Ahio, and Zechariah, and Mikloth. (47) And Mikloth begat Shimeam. And they also dwelt with their brethren at Jerusalem, over against their brethren. (48) And Ner begat Kish; and Kish begat Saul; and Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchi-shua, and Abinadab,
CHAPTER X. — (1) Now the Philistines fought against Israel; and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa. (2) And the Philistines followed hard after Saul, and after his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchi-shua, the sons of Saul. (3) And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him, and he was wounded of the archers. (4) Then said Saul to his armourbearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest

The men of Israel.—Heb., man—a collective expression, which gives a more vivid image of the rout. They fled as one man, or in a body. Samuel has the plural.

Fell down slain in mount Gilboa.—The Jebel Fak' au rises out of the plain of Jezreel to a height of one thousand seven hundred feet. The defeated army of Saul fell back upon this mountain, which had been their first position (1 Sam. xxviii. 4), but were pursued thither. “Slain” is right, as in verse 8.

The Philistines followed hard after Saul.—Literally, close to Saul, that is, hotly pursued him. (Comp. 1 Kings 22, 31.) The destruction of the king and his sons would make their triumph complete.

The sons of Saul.—Omit the. Eshbaal, Saul’s fourth son, was not in the battle (2 Sam. ii. 8. Comp. chap. viii. 33). Like Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, Saul may have witnessed the death of his sons (2 Kings xxv. 7). Jonathan, at least, would not be far from him in the last struggle. “In their deaths they were not divided.”

The battle went sore against Saul.—Literally, was heavy upon (Samuel, “unto”) him, like a burden weighing him to the earth.

And the archers hit him.—Literally, And they that shoot with the bow came upon him; and he shuddered (Sam., “greatly”) before the shooters. “He shuddered or trembled” (Deut. ii. 25). The verb is properly to writhe, travail (Isa. xxiii, 4). Saul’s deadly terror was natural. He believed himself forsaken of God, and stood now, after a lost battle, beset by murderous foes, whom he could not reach. There was no chance of a fair hand to hand encounter. The Heb. word for “archers” is the same in both places in Sam. (mērim;) here a rarer form (yōrim, 2 Chron. xxxv. 23) fills the second place. The Philistines were from Egypt, and the bow was a favourite Egyptian arm. The hieroglyph for “soldier” (menfat) is a man with bow and quiver.

(4) And Saul said.—So Abimelech (Judges ix. 54).

Lest these uncircumcised come.—Sam. adds “and thrust me through.” An inadvertent repetition there, or omission here, is possible. Or, we might say, Saul preferred death by a friendly stroke to the thrusts of insulting foes.

And abuse me.—The Hebrew means, strictly, “to make a toy of,” “sport with,” “How I have made a toy of Egypt” (Exod. x. 2); and is used (Jer. xxxviii. 19) of insulting a fallen foe, as here.

Took a sword.—Literally, the sword — i.e., his sword.
Death of Saul.

I. CHRONICLES, X. The Philistine's Triumph.

these uncircumcised come and abuse me. But his armourbearer would not; for he was sore afraid. So Saul took a sword, and fell upon it. (5) And when his armourbearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon the sword, and died. (6) So Saul died, and his three sons, and all his house died together.

(7) And when all the men of Israel that were in the valley saw that they died, and that Saul and his sons were dead, then they forsook their cities, and fled: and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

(8) And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his sons fallen in mount Gilboa. (9) And when they had stripped him, they took his head, and his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to carry tidings unto their idols, and to the people. (10) And they put his armour in the house of their gods, and fastened his head in the temple of Dagon.

(11) And when all Jabesh-gilead heard all that the Philistines had done to Saul, (12) they arose, all the valiant men, and took away the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons, and brought them to

when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his sons fallen in mount Gilboa. (9) And when they had stripped him, they took his head, and his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to carry tidings unto their idols, and to the people. (10) And they put his armour in the house of their gods, and fastened his head in the temple of Dagon.

(11) And when all Jabesh-gilead heard all that the Philistines had done to Saul, (12) they arose, all the valiant men, and took away the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons, and brought them to

neither see nor hear beyond their own temples. (Comp. 1 Kings xx. 23, 28; Ps. xiv. 9.)

(10) In the house of their gods.—Or god, as LXX. Samuel, "house of Ashtaroth," which the chronicler or his source paraphrases, perhaps from repugnance to mentioning the idol's name. Ashtaroth had a great temple at Ascalon, as "Heavenly Aphrodite" (Herod., Hist. i. 108). The "Queen of Heaven" (Jer. vii. 18) was worshipped by the Semitic races generally. Under the name of Ishtar, she was a chief goddess of the Assyrians, and had famous temples at Nineveh and Arbela. The Sabæans worshipped her as Aštu'râ; and the name Aštu'râ is combined with Chemosh on the Moabite Stone.

Fastened his head in the temple of Dagon.—Literally, and his skull (gulgoleth—comp. Golgotha, Matt. xxvii. 33) they fastened in the house of Dagon. Instead of this, we read in Samuel, "and his corpse they fastened to the wall of Beth-shan." It is hardly likely that the one reading is a corruption of the other. The chronicler has omitted the statement about Saul's corpse, which is not mentioned in verse 9, and supplied one respecting his head, which has been already spoken of in that verse. He found the fact in his additional source, if the clause in question has not been copied by mistake from verse 10. Note the strictly local conception of deities implied in this act of the Philistines; as if their idols could neither see nor hear beyond their own temples. (Comp. 1 Kings xx. 23, 28; Ps. xiv. 9.)

(10) In the house of their gods.—Or god, as LXX. Samuel, "house of Ashtaroth," which the chronicler or his source paraphrases, perhaps from repugnance to mentioning the idol's name. Ashtaroth had a great temple at Ascalon, as "Heavenly Aphrodite" (Herod., Hist. i. 108). The "Queen of Heaven" (Jer. vii. 18) was worshipped by the Semitic races generally. Under the name of Ishtar, she was a chief goddess of the Assyrians, and had famous temples at Nineveh and Arbela. The Sabæans worshipped her as Aštu'râ; and the name Aštu'râ is combined with Chemosh on the Moabite Stone.

The Accadians worshipped Dagon, as we learn from the cuneiform inscriptions: comp. the name Ismi-Dagan (Dagon hears).

(12) All the valiant men.—Literally, every man of valour. Samuel adds, "and marched all the night," Took away.—Carried off. Samuel has "took" (sopher). The body.—A common Aramaic word, gūfāh, only read here in the Old Testament, for which Samuel has the pure Hebrew synonym g'wiyah. Samuel adds, "from the wall of Beth-shan." And brought them.—Samuel, "and came to Jabesh, and burnt them there." To burn a corpse was a further degradation of executional criminals (Josh. vii. 25; Lev. xx. 14, xxi. 9), and as the Jews did not ordinarily practise cremation, it is supposed that the phrase "brought them," in 1 Sam. xxxi. means "made a burning for them" of costly spices, as was done at the funerals of kings (Jer. xxxiv. 5; 2 Chron. xvi. 14, xxi. 19). But perhaps the bodies were burnt in this exceptional case because they had been mutilated by the enemy.

Buried their bones.—Samuel, "took and buried." The phrase "their bones," contrasted with their
Jabesh, and buried their bones under the oak in Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

13 So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it; and enquired not of the Lord: therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.

“corpses,” certainly seems to imply that the latter had been buried.

The oak.—Hb., terebinth, or turpentine tree. Samuel, “tamarisk.” The difference points to another source used by Chronicles.

And fasted seven days. —In token of mourning. (Comp. the friends of Job, Job ii. 11—13; and Ezekiel among the exiles at Tel-abib, Ezek. iii. 15.) For the behaviour of the men of Jabesh, comp. 1 Sam. xi.

(13, 14) A concluding reflection from the mind of the chronicler himself. He sums up his extract concerning the ruin of Saul by assigning the moral ground of it, viz., Saul’s “unfaithfulness whereby he showed himself unfaithful to Jehovah.” The same charge was made against the Transjordan tribes in chap. v. 23, and against the people of Judah in chap. ix. 1.

(12) Even against the word of the Lord.—Saul’s unfaithfulness was twofold: (1) he did not observe the prophetic word of Jehovah (comp. 1 Sam. xiii. 19, xv. 11); and (2) he consulted a necromancer, to the neglect of consulting Jehovah (1 Sam. xxviii.).

And also for asking counsel.—And also by consulting the necromancer in order to get a response. “Turn ye not to the necromancers” (Lev. xix. 31). (See also Isa. viii. 19.) Saul broke the general law of his people, as well as special commands addressed to himself. No allusion is made to his cruel slaughter of the priests (1 Sam. xxii. 18), nor to his inexecutable hatred of David.

(14) And enquired not of the Lord.—Saul had, in fact, enquired of Jehovah before resorting to the witch of En-dor, “but the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by the Urim, nor by the prophets.” (1 Sam. xxviii. 6). “We shall not be reading a meaning of our own into the text if we say that Saul’s natural impatience (1 Sam. xiii. 15) on this occasion betrayed him again; he at once despaired of help from his God, instead of seeking it with self-humiliation and penitence. His character is consistently drawn throughout the history. The sin that ruined the first king was essentially that which led to the final ruin of the nation, viz., unfaithfulness to the covenant-God. The same word characterises both. (Comp. verse 13 with chapas. v. 25, ix. 1.)

Therefore he slew him.—God acts through the instrumentality of His creatures. In this case He employed the Philistines, and the suicidal hand of Saul himself; just as He employed the Assyrian conquerors of a later age to be the scourge of guilty peoples (Isa. x. 5—15), and raised up Cyrus to be His servant, who should fulfil all His pleasure (Isa. xlv. 28, xlv. 1—13).

Turned the kingdom unto David.—By means of the warriors of Israel (chap. xii. 25). This sentence shows that chap. x. is transitional to the history of David as king.

The chapter contains (1) the election of David in Hebron, and his conquest of Jerusalem (verses 1—9); (2) a list of David’s chief warriors, with short notices of their famous deeds (verses 10—47).

(1) Then all Israel gathered themselves.—Literally, and. “Then” is too definite a mark of time. The chronicler passes over the subsequent history of the house of Saul, and its decline under the feeble Ish-boseth, who reigned at Mahanaim as a puppet-king in the hands of Abner his powerful kinsman and general (2 Sam. ii.—iv.).

All Israel.—This proves that the allusion is not to David’s election by Judah (2 Sam. ii. 4). Hebron, the burial-place of the patriarchs, was the capital of Judah, the tribe of David.

Thy bone and thy flesh.—A proverb first of physical, then of moral unity (Gen. ii. 23; Judges ix. 2). It was not as if David were some valiant foreigner, like certain of his own heroes. Moreover, the affection and sympathy of the tribes were with him, whose life of struggle and success had marked him out as their divinely chosen leader.

(2) In time past.—Yesterday, or three days since. A very indefinite phrase, used in Gen. xxxi. 3 of a time fourteen years since, and 2 Kings xiii. 5 of more than forty years ago.

Leedest out.—To battle.

Broughtest in.—Of the homeward march. David had thus already discharged kingly functions. (Comp. 1 Sam. vii. 20, xviii. 6, 13, 27; 2 Sam. iii. 18.)

The Lord thy God said unto thee.—1 Sam. xvi. 13.

Thou shalt feed my people.—Literally, shepherd or tend them. The same term is used of the Lord Himself (Isa. xl. 11; Ps. lxxx. 1). The king then is God’s representative, and as such his right is really Divine (Rom. xii. 1). The cuneiform documents reveal the interesting fact that the term “shepherd,” as applied to sovereigns, is as old as the pre-Semitic stage of Babylonian civilisation (the second millennium B.C.).

(3) Therefore came all the elders of Israel.—The assembly of elders, the Senate of Israel, make a contract with David concerning his prerogative and the rights of his people, thus formally determining “the manner of the kingdom.” (Comp. 1 Sam. vii. 9 seq., x. 25.) Representative institutions appear to have been
followed another and clearer account, which made Joab xcv. 3, xcvii. 7). That the hosts in question are of Kirjath-sepher (Judges i. 12, 13). v. 20.

play at the storm of Jebus the part of Othniel at that stars appears from Ps. xxxiii. 6; evidently original record. The chronicler appears the hated of David's soul! Therefore they say, Blind Babylonian Nebo and Merodach. The Hebrew phrase passage. 2 Sam. v. 8, reads, "And David said in that deity of the Assyrian Pantheon, is called in the inscrip.

Such is the simplest rendering of an obscure, but evi- tion of the statement,

But in Hebrew the name has been so modified

In Greek the name became Hierosolyma, "Sacred Solyma." and the use of the term

"And David and his men went to Jerusalem, to the simply,

-And he built the city round about, even from Millo round about: and Joab repaired the rest of the city. (9) So David waxed greater and greater: for the Lord of hosts was with him.

And David said, Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites first shall be 2 chief and captain. So Joab the son of Zeruiah went first up, and was chief. (7) And David dwelt in the castle; therefore they called it the city of David. (8) And he built the city round about, even from Millo round about: and Joab repaired the rest of the city. (9) So David waxed greater and greater: for the Lord of hosts was with him.

Joab the son of Zeruiah is not mentioned at all in the parallel passage. Joab already appears as Israel's general, while Joshua is yet fighting at Mahanaim (2 Sam. ii. 13, iii. 23). Perhaps the phrase here used means head and governor of Jerusalem. (Comp. verse 8.)

Went up.—Scaled the rampart, "and became a head.

Chief and captain.—Literally, shall become a head and a captain.

And David waxed greater and greater: for the Lord of hosts was with him.

(4) And David made Chief.

Chief and captain.—Literally, shall become a head and a captain.

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(9) Castle.—Stronghold, fastness. (Comp. 2 Sam. v. 7.) In verse 5 the form is μεσαδή, here it is the rare masculine form, μεσάδ: comp. Ar. maṣād, cae- men montis.

They called it.—Samuel (Hebrew), "one called it;" both in a general sense.

City.—Comp. Greek, polis = aeropolis.

(9) And he built the city round about.—Literally, and he built (or rebuilt or fortified) the city all round, from the Millo even unto the (complete) round. The Millo was probably a tower or citadel, like the Arx Antonia of later times. According to the chronicler David started from that point, and brought his line of defences round to it again. Samuel has simply, "And David built around, from the Millo, and inward." This seems to mean that he carried his buildings from the fortress towards the interior of the city. Both statements may, of course, be true.

(9) This verse corresponds word for word with Samuel, only omitting "God" after "Lord." Literally, and David walked on, a walking and growing great—a common Hebrew metaphor of gradual and progressive increase or decrease. (Comp. Gen. viii. 5, and the use of the term andante, "walking," in music.)

Lord of hosts was with him.—The Lord of Hosts is doubtless a contracted form of the fuller expression, Lord God of Hosts, as it appears in Samuel. The Lord (or God) of Hosts is a title derived from God's supremacy over the host of heaven, i.e., the stars, worshipped as deities by the races environing Israel, insomuch that the very word for God in the old Babylonian is represented by a star (*); and in the later Assyrian character star was represented by the symbol for God thrice repeated. Assur, the supreme deity of the Assyrian Pantheon, is called in the inscriptions "king of the legions of heaven and earth," or "of the great gods." Similar titles were given to the Babylonian Nabo and Merodach. The Hebrew phrase is therefore, in one sense, equivalent to a concise assertion of the statement, "Jehovah your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords." (Deut. x. 17; comp. also Ps. xev. 3, xvii. 7.) That the hosts in question are the stars appears from Ps. xxxiii. 6; Isa. xl. 26; Judges v. 20.
Very anciently the stars were conceived of as the army of heaven, marshalled in orderly array. (Comp. Isa. xi. 26, xxiv. 21, xiv. 12, 13.) The Lord of the hosts of heaven is a fortiori Lord of all earthly hosts; hence the fitness of the phrase in passages like the present. Lastly, we may observe that it is a grand idea of revealed religion that He who guides the stars in their courses guides also the destinies of individual men, elevating one and abasing another, according to the eternal principles of goodness and truth (Isa. lvi. 15).

(10-44) A list of the warriors who helped David to win and maintain his kingdom. This catalogue answers to that of 2 Sam. xxiii. 8-39, which, however, breaks off with Uriah the Hittite; whereas our text communicates sixteen additional names. This fact proves that the chronicler had either a fuller source, or a different recension of Samuel. The numerous variant spellings are in general mistakes of transcription.

(10) These also are the chief of the mighty men. — Rather, And these were the heads of the warriors (i.e., the chief warriors, other warriors of lower rank being enumerated in chap. xii.) who showed themselves strong in his support (with him, Dan. x. 21; Ps. xii. 4), in the matter of his kingdom, in common with all Israel, in order to make him king (and maintain him as such: comp., their exploits, noticed below). This description of the heroes is not given in Samuel, the connection there being different.

According to the word of the Lord concerning Israel. — Comp. Note on verse 3. David was made king (1) for his own sake. It was work for which he was best fitted, and a reward of his faithfulness. (2) For Israel’s sake: — with all Israel, in order to make him king, and maintain him as such; comp., their exploits, noticed below.

(11) And this is the number of the mighty men. — The heading of the catalogue in Samuel is merely, “These are the names of the warriors whom David had.” The chronicler resumes, after the parenthetical explanation of the last verse, with “These are the number of the warriors.” The word “number” (mispar) seems to refer to the fact that the corps was he stood his ground, and smote the Philistines until the last verse, with

The Ahohite — i.e., the clan Ahoah; perhaps the Benjamite house of this name (chap. viii. 4).

Who was one of the three mighty men. — “He was among the three heroes,” i.e., one of the first or leading trio of warriors, whose names were Jashobeam (Eshbaal), Eleazar, and Shammas (2 Sam. xxiii. 11).

He was with David at Pas-dammim. — Or Ephes-dammim, between Shochoh and Azekah in the Mountains of Judah, where David encountered Goliath. The name does not now appear in 2 Sam. xxiii. 5, being misprinted “Pas-dammim.” In his hand was benumbed, and clave to the sword. And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodo, the Ahohite, who was one of the three mighty men. (12) Eleazar the son of Dodo. — For Dodo the LXX. has Dodai; so chap. xxvii. 4, and the Hebrew Vulgate “his uncle,” a translation of dodo.

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And there the Philistines were gathered together to battle. After these several lines have been lost, as may be seen by comparison of 2 Sam. xxiii. 9, 10. The text may be restored thus: “He was with David at Pas-dammim, and there the Philistines had gathered to the battle; and the men of Israel went up (perhaps, up the mountain side, in retreat). And he stood his ground, and smote the Philistines until his hand was benumbed, and clave to the sword. And Jehovah wrought a great victory on that day. And the people began returning (from flight) behind him, only to spoil (the slain). And after him (was) Shammas ben Aqé, an Hararite. And the Philistines gathered together unto Lehi (Judges xiv. 9). And there there was a parcel, etc., verse 13. The cause of this serious omission was perhaps the double occurrence of the phrase “the Philistines gathered together.” The eye of some copist wandered from one to the other. What was originally told of Eleazar the second hero, was that his prowess turned the flight at Pas-dammim into a rout.

Where was a parcel of ground full of barley. — The scene of the exploit of the third hero,
before the Philistines. (14) And they set themselves in the midst of that parcel, and delivered it, and slew the Philistines; and the Lord saved them by a great deliverance.

(15) Now three of the thirty captains went down to the rock to David, into the cave of Adullam; and the host of the Philistines encamped in the valley of Rephaim. (16) And David was then in the hold, and the Philistines' garrison was then at Bethlehem. (17) And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Beth-lehem, that is at the gate! (18) And the three brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Beth-lehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David; but David would not drink of it, but poured it out to the Lord. (19) And said, My God forbid it me, that I should do this thing; shall I drink the blood of these men that have put their lives in jeopardy? for with the jeopardy of their lives they brought it. Therefore he would not drink it. These things did these three mightiest.

(20) And Abishai the brother of Joab, he was chief of the three: for lifting up his spear against three hundred, he slew them, and had a name among the three. (21) Of the three, he was more honourable than the two; for he was heroes before Agamemnon, and there was chivalry before the Crusades.

By the gate.—Heb., in.

Poured it out.—As a libation or drink-offering. The technical term is used, as in Gen. xxxv. 14. An act of free sacrifice, done under a sudden impulse of thankfulness, and not according to any formal prescription of the Law.

Shall I drink the blood of these men?—Literally, the blood of these men should I drink in their lives (souls)?

Their lives appears to be spurious here, as it occurs again immediately, and is read only once in Samuel. David regards the water as blood; it had been obtained at the hazard of life, and “the life is the blood” (Gen. ix. 4). The question in Samuel runs: “The blood of the men who went in (=at the risk of) their lives?” The verb seems to have fallen out by accident.

For with the jeopardy of their lives they brought it.—Literally, in their lives. This remark is not found in Samuel, and looks like an explanation of the words, “shall I drink the blood of these men?”

These things did these three mightiest.—Rather, these things did the three mighty men (or, warriors). The Hebrew text of this narrative presents only a few verbal differences from 2 Sam. xxiii. 13—17.

Feats of Abishai and Benaiah. (Comp. 2 Sam. xxiii. 18—23, of which the present passage is little more than a duplicate.)

Abishai the brother of Joab.—Heb., Ab-shai, but in Samuel, Abishai. (Comp. Abram and Abiram.) Samuel adds “son of Zeruiah” after Joab. (Comp. chap. ii. 16 and chap. xviii. 12, xix. 11 ff. for other deeds of Abishai.)

He was chief of the three.—Apparently the second triad, one of whose famous exploits has just been related (verses 15—19). The Hebrew text of Samuel seems to read “knights,” but some MSS., the Hebrew margin, and all the versions, agree with Chronicles.

For lifting up...—Literally, and he had bran­dished his spear over three hundred slain. The exploit of Jashobeam (verse 11).

And had a name among the three.—That is, among the second triad, of which he was captain.

Of the three, he was more honourable than the two.—The Hebrew text here varies from

Shammah, son of Age. Perhaps the Philistines were intent on carrying off the crop (1 Sam. xxii. 1). Samuel reads lentils. The Hebrew words for barley and lentils are very similar. We cannot tell which text is right.

And they set themselves...—These verbs should act of free sacrifice, done under a sudden impulse of thankfulness, and not according to any formal prescription of the Law.

Saved them.—Samuel, “made a great deliverance”; transpose one letter, and the Hebrew words are identical. LXX, and Syriac agree with Samuel.

Three unnamed heroes who fetched water for David from the well at Bethlehem.

Now three of the thirty captains.—Literally, and a three out of the thirty chiefs went down; a mode of description which appears to distinguish this trio from the former (verses 11—14). The form of the verb, however, connects this exploit with the war.

To the rock.—“Al had-qripper (later use of ‘al,” “out”). Samuel has “at (or towards) harvest,” "et qipir. In Hebrew writing the phrases are very similar. Our phrase looks like a correction of that in Samuel. At any rate, the Syriac, Targum, Arabic, and probably the LXX., read qipir in the MSS. of Samuel. Here the LXX. has “to the rock;” Syriac omits the phrase.

Cave of Adullam.—See 1 Sam. xxiii. 1.

Encamped.—Were camping.

Valley of Rephaim.—See Josh. xv. 8, Note. It lay south-west of Jerusalem, in the direction of Bethlehem. It may have got its name from the aboriginal Rephaim, Deut. iii. 11 (Authorised Version, giants), Josh. xvii. 15. It was a rich corn land (Isa. xiii. 5). (Comp. verse 13.)

The hold.—The stronghold or rock-fortress of Adullam (2 Sam. v. 17, xxiii. 14).

The Philistines’ garrison.—An outpost; for their army was camping near Jerusalem.

That is at (in) the gate!—No such well is now known. The so-called “David’s well” is half a mile north-east of the town.

Brake through the host.—Not the main army, but the outpost in front of Bethlehem. There were
David's

I. CHRONICLES, XI.

Mighty Men.

their captain: howbeit he attained not to the first three.

(22) Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man of Kabzeel, who had done many acts; he slew two lionlike men of Moab: also he went down and slew a lion in a pit in a snowy day.

(23) And he slew an Egyptian, a man of great stature, five cubits high; and in the Egyptian's hand was a spear like a weaver's beam; and he went down to

him with a staff, and plucked the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew him with his own spear.

(24) These things did Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and had the name among the three mighty.

(23) Behold, he was honourable among the thirty, but attained not to the first three: and David set him over his guard.

(25) Also the valiant men of the armies were, Asahel the brother of Joab, Elhanan, the son of Jachin, the son of Meshual, the son ofHM. new of measure.

Samuel, which has "Above (or out of) the three, was he not honoured?" The reading of Chronicles seems to be an exegetical alteration of this, and should probably be rendered, "He who was above (or out of) the three was not honoured," i.e., he was the most honourable member of the second triad. So the Vulg., et inter tres secundos inclitus. The LXX. has ἀνάμεσαν τῆς τριάδος ἄνδρας τούτου ("Of the three, renowned above the two"). But the Hebrew expression, which means literally, "in the weight of the two," is a common way to indicate a second group of three. Otherwise, we might translate: "Of the three he was honourable among the two," that is, above the other two members of his triad. Both here and in verse 20 the Syriac reads thirty instead of three: "Above the thirty he was honourable, and he became chief over them and warlike; the thirty he used to make" (verse 21). The Arabic is more correct: "And he was mightier than the two, and chief over them twain, and he came not to the three."

Howbeit he attained not . . .—Literally, but to the three he came not, i.e., the first triad of warriors (verses 11—14).

(22—25) Benaiah the son of Jehoiada.—Captain of the royal guard (chap. xviii. 17) and third "captain of the host" (chap. xxvii. 5, 6).

Son of a valiant man.—"Son" is probably a spurious addition here, as elsewhere. The Syriac has "Benaiah son of Jolid, a strong warrior." The LXX., however, reads, "son of a mighty man.

Kabzeel.—A town of southern Judah, site unknown (Josh. xv. 21) Neh. xi. 25 (Jekabzeel).

Who had done many acts.—The margin is correct. This poetic phrase only occurs in this and the parallel passage.

He slew two lionlike men of Moab.—See chap. xviii. 2. So the Syriac: "He slew two giants of Moab." The Hebrew has, "He smote the two Ariel of Moab," Ariel, "lion of God"—a title of heroes with the Arabs and Persians—appears to be used as an appellative (Isa. xxxiii. 7): "Lo, the heroes (arōlim) cry without." The LXX. reads, "The two sons of Ariel of Moab;" whence some think that Ariel denotes here the king of Moab; but the former sense is better.

Also he went down and slew a lion.—Literally, And he (it was who) went down and smote the lion in the middle of the cistern in the day of snow. The article pointedly refers to some well-known feat of Benaiah's.

(23) And he slew an Egyptian . . .—Literally, and he it was who smote the Egyptian, a man of measure, five in the cubit. Samuel has only "who (was) a sight," or "a man to look at" (Heb. margin). The chronicle says why.

Like a weaver's beam.—Not in Samuel. Perhap due to a recollection of the combat of David and Goliath. (Comp. also 2 Sam. xxi. 19.) Yet the LXX. of 2 Sam. xxii. 21 has "like the beam of a ship's ladder" (φόντων ἄσσας); and this may be original.

Went down.—To the combat. (Comp. Latin: descendere in aem, &c.) The staff (σχέδιον) of Benaiah differs from David's (maggel, 1 Sam. xvii. 40, 43); and the similarity of the two accounts, so far as it extends, is a similarity not of fiction, but of fact.

With a staff.—Rather, the staff, which he happened to carry.

(24) And had the name.—Literally, and to him (was) a name among the three heroes, viz, the second triad.

(25) Behold, he was honourable among the thirty.—Rather, above the thirty he behold he was honoured.

But attained not to the first three.—For he was a member of the second triad of heroes. The third member is omitted here, as in the case of the first triad. Over his guard.—Literally, over his obedience; an abstract for concrete, as in Isa. xi. 14 (= vassals). The Cherethites and Pelethites, a small corps probably of foreigners, who constituted David's body-guard, and were under his direct orders, appear to be meant here. (See 2 Sam. viii. 18, xx. 23.) The word has this precise sense only in this place and its parallel.

(26—47) A catalogue of forty-eight "doughty warriors." Sixteen names are here added to the list as given in Samuel. The chronicler, therefore, possessed a source more complete than our Book of Samuel. Variations of spelling abound in the names common to the two texts, the transcription of proper names being especially liable to error.

(26) Also the valiant men of the armies.—The Heb. phrase has this meaning (chap. xii. 8); but elsewhere it denotes "valiant heroes" (chap. vii. 5, 7, &c.), and so here. 2 Sam. xxii. 24 has "Asahel brother of Joab was among the thirty." It thus appears that the warriors of this list are none other than the famous band of thirty warriors already spoken of (verses 15, 25). From having been the original number, thirty may have become the conventional name of the corps, even when its limits had been enlarged. It is noticeable that so far as to verse 41 the heroes are arranged in pairs, and that the gentilic or cantonal name is usually added to that of the hero. They mostly belong to Judah and Benjamin; whereas the sixteen additional names, so far as known, belong to the transjordanic tribes, and the northern tribes are not represented at all.

Elhanan.—"Dodo is very much like David. Is this a third alias of the slayer of Goliath? See Note on chap. xx. 5.

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of Gaash, Abiel the Arbathite, (33) Azmaveth the Baharumite, Eliahba the Shaalbonite, (34) the sons of Hashem the Gizonite, Jonathan the son of Shage the Hararite, (35) Abiam the son of Sacar the Hararite, Elisha the son of Ur, (36) Hipher the Mecherathite, Abijah the Pelonite, (37) Hezro the Carmelite,Naarai the son of Ezbi, (38) Joel the brother of Nathan, Mibhar 2 the son of Haggeri.

Jonathan the son of Shage the Hararite.— This appears more correct than the text of Samuel. "Shannah the Hararite," "Shannah son of Age (or Shammah) the Hararite," was the third hero of the first triad (2 Sam. xxiii. 11). Perhaps, therefore, the original reading here was "Jonathan son of Age (or Shammah) the Hararite." The Syriac and Arabic, however, support Shage.

36. Sacar (segges) is probably right, not "Sharar" (Samuel). LXX. Val. has "Achar," but Alex. "Sachar," "Sychar," "Sacham."

Instead of Hararite, Samuel has "Ararite," or "Adrite" (Syr.).

Elisha, the son of Ur.— Instead of this, Samuel reads, "Elipheto son of Abashai son of the Maachathite." Eliphelet (the name of a son of David) seems right.

39. Hipher the Mecherathite.— Wanting in the present text of Samuel. Mecherah is unknown as a place, and a comparison with Samuel (verse 34) suggests "Hipher the Maachathite," i.e., of Abel-beth-Maachah, or perhaps the Syrian state of Maachah (2 Sam. x. 8).

Abijah the Pelonite.— Instead of this, Samuel has "Eliaim son of Ahithophel the Gilonite." For Ahithophel, see 2 Sam. xv. 31.

The Pelonite—i.e., so-and-so, may indicate either that Ahithophel's name had become obscure in the chronicler's MS., or that he was unwilling to mention the traitor. Abijah (Jah is a brother) and Eliaim (God is a kinman) might be names of one person.

37. Hezro.—Syriac, "Hezri," and so perhaps Samuel, margin; but Samuel, text, "Hezro."

Carmelite.— Of Carmel (Kurnu), a town south of Hebron (Josh. xv. 55).

Naarai the son of Ezzai.— Samuel, "Paari the Arbite." Arab was also a town south of Hebron, in the hill country of Judah (Josh. xv. 52).

38. Joel the brother of Nathan.— Samuel. "Jigal (a name found in Num. xiii. 7) son of Nathan of Zobah." This is probably correct. Zobah was a Syrian state.

Mibhar the son of Haggeri.— "Mibhar" (choice) is unlikely as a proper name, and is probably a corruption of Micgobah, "of Zobah," as in Samuel. After this word Samuel adds "Bani the Gadite." The name "Bani" has fallen out of our text. "Haggeri" is an easy corruption of Haggodi, "the Gadite."
David's Mighty Men.

I. CHRONICLES, XII.

The Men that came to Ziklag.

CHAPTER XII.—(1) Now "these are they that came to David to Ziklag, while he yet kept himself close because of Saul the son of Kish: and they were among the mighty men, helpers of the war. (2) They were armed with bows, and could use both the right hand and the left in hurling stones and shooting arrows out of a bow, even of Saul's brethren of Benjamin. (3) The chief was Ahiezer, then Joash, the sons of Shemaah the Gibeathite; and Jeziel, and Pelet, the sons of Azmaveth; and Berachah, and Jehu the Antothite, and Ismaiah the Gibeonite, a mighty man among the thirty, and over the first of these registers sub-divides into three smaller lists, viz., verses 1-7, 8-18, 19-23.

(1-7) Men of Benjamin and Judah who joined David at Ziklag. (Comp. 1 Sam. xxvii.)

(1) To Ziklag.—A place within the territory of Judah allotted to Simeon (Josh. xix. 5; chap. iv. 30). The Philistines seized it, and Achish of Gath gave it to David, whose headquarters it remained sixteen months, until the death of Saul.

While he yet kept himself close.—The Hebrew is concise and obscure, but the Authorised Version fairly renders it. David was still shut up in his stronghold, or restrained within bounds, because of, i.e., from dread of King Saul. Or perhaps the meaning is "banished from the presence of Saul."

Helpers of the war.—The helpers in war, allies, or companions in arms of David. They made forays against Geshur, Gezer, and Amalek (1 Sam. xxvii. 8; comp. also verses 17 and 21 below).

(2) Armed with bows.—Literally, "drawers of the bow" (2 Chron. xvii. 17). And could use.—They were ambidextrous "with stones, and with arrows on the bow." The left-handed slingers of Benjamin were famous from of old. (Comp. Judges xx. 16, and also chap. iii. 15.)

Of Saul's brethren—i.e., his fellow-tribesmen. Of Benjamin is added to make it clear that Saul's immediate kinsmen are not intended. (Comp. verse 28.)

(3) The chief was Ahiezer.—Captain of the band. Heb., head.

Shemaah.—Heb., Hashsh'maah.

The Gibeathite.—Of "Gibeah of Saul," between Ramah and Anathoth (Isa. x. 29); also called "Gibeon of Benjamin" (chap. xi. 31; Judges xx. 4).

Jezziel.—So Hebrew margin; Hebrew text, Jeziel. (Comp. Peniel and Penuel.)

Azmaveth.—Perhaps the warrior of Bahurim (chap. xi. 33).

Jehu the Antothite.—Of Anathoth, now Anata (chap. xi. 28).

(4) Ismaiah the Gibeonite.—Gibeon belonged to Benjamin (chap. ix. 35), and verse 2 proves that Ismaiah was a Benjamite, not a Gibeonite in the strict sense of the term.

A mighty man among the thirty.—The "thirty" must be the famous corps (chap. xi. 25). Ismaiah's name does not occur in the catalogue, perhaps because he died before it was drawn up.

(39) Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Berothite, the armourbearer of Joab the son of Zeruiah, (40) Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, (41) Uriah the Hittite, Zabad the son of Ahlai, (42) Adina the son of Shiza the Reubenite, a captain of the Reubenites, and thirty with him, (43) Hanan the son of Maachah, and Josaphat the Mithnite, (44) Uzzia the Ashterathite, Shama and Jehiel the sons of Hotham the Aroerite, (45) Jedid the 1 son of Shimri, and Joha his brother, the Tizite, (46) Eliel the Mahavite, and Jeribai, and Joshuaiah, the sons of Elnaam, and Ithmah the Moabite, (47) Eliel, and Obed, and Jasar the Mesobaite.

(39) Zelek the Ammonite.—Many of David's warriors were aliens. (Comp. "Uriah the Hittite; ""Ittai the Gittite;" and "Ithmah the Moabite," verse 46.)

Berothite.—Of Beeroth in Benjamin (Josh. xvii. 20). The list of heroes in Chronicles, is told in 2 Sam. xi. The list of heroes in Samuel closes with this name, adding by way of summary, "all, thirty and seven."

The sixteen names which follow may indicate a later revision of the catalogue. They are not given elsewhere.

(40) A captain of the Reubenites (or, chief; Heb., head) and thirty with him (besides him).—Literally, upon him. So LXX. Syriac reads "and he was commanding thirty men," which gives the apparent meaning of the verse. If, as seems likely, the "thirty" were the officers of David's guard of six hundred warriors (1 Sam. xxvii. 8, xx. 10; 2 Sam. xv. 18), called "the mighty men," or heroes (2 Sam. x. 7, xx. 7; I Kings i. 8), each captain would lead about twenty men. Adina's corps is mentioned perhaps as being larger than usual.

(41) Ira the Ithrite.—So Hebrew margin; Hebrew text, Jeziel. (Comp. Peniel and Penuel.)

Jehiel.—Heb., "Daliel." (Comp. verse 29.)

(42) Of Saul's brethren—i.e., his fellow-tribesmen.

(43) Ismaiah the Gibeonite, a mighty man among the thirty, and over the...
The Companies that came to Ziglag.

thirty; and Jeremiah, and Jahaziel, and Johanan, and Josabah the Gederathite, Eluzai, and Jerimoth, and Bealiah, and Shemariah, and Shephatiah the Haruphite, Elkanah, and Jessia, and Azarel, and Jouzer, and Jashobeam, the Korhites, and Joelah, and Zedebiah, the sons of Jeroham of Gedor.

And of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David into the hold to the wilderness men of might; and men of war fit for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains;

Over the thirty may mean that at one time he was captain of the host, or it may simply denote comparison—"a hero above the thirty."

Josabah the Gederathite; of Gedera in the low-land of Judah (Josh. xv. 36). Josabah is perhaps the same as Zabad ben Ahlai (chap. xi. 41), one of the thirty.

Jerimoth.—A Benjamite name (chap. vii. 7, 8).

Bealiah.—Baal is Jah. (Comp. Note on chap. vii. 33.) Such names indicate that "Baal" was once a title of the God of Israel.

The Haruphite.—Neh. vii. 24 mentions the "sons of Hariph" just before the "sons of Gibeon." The Hebrew margin here is "Hariphite."

Five members of the Levitical clan Korah. The name "Elkanah" occurs three in the lineage of Heman, the Korhite musician (chap. vi. 33 ff.), and in that of Samuel (vi. 22 ff.).

Josiah.—Heb., Yishshiyahu; "Jahu is my possession." (Comp. Ps. xvi. 5.)

Azarel is a priestly name. (See Neh. xi. 13.) There must have been Levites about the Tabernacle at Gibeon. But these Korhites may have been members of the Judean clan Korah, mentioned in chap. ii. 43, but otherwise unknown.

Jashobeam occurred as chief of the Three Heroes (chap. xi. 11).

Sons of Jeroham of Gedor.—Jeroham is the name of a Benjamite clan (chap. vii. 27); and two Benjamite chiefs are called "Zedebiah" (chap. viii. 15, 17). On the other hand, "Gedor" was a town of Judah, south-west of Bethlehem (chap. iv. 4). Some account for the appearance of Judah names in a list purporting to relate to Benjaminites, by the assumption that the chronicler has welded two lists into one; but towns did not always continue in the hands of the tribes to whom they were originally intended, and some Judah towns may have contained a partially Benjaminite population.

(8-18) A list of Gadites, and an account of a band of Judeans and Benjaminites who joined David in the stronghold (chap. xi. 14) towards the desert of Judah.

(9) Separated themselves from the royalists of Gad, who clung to Saul.

Into the hold to (towards) the wilderness.

—Perhaps the cave of Adullam (1 Sam. xxii. 1, 4); or one of David's other haunts, the wooded Mount of Hachilah (1 Sam. xxiii. 19); or the crag of Maon, or the rocks of En-gedi (1 Sam. xxvii. 29, 30). "Caves and holds" are mentioned together as refuges (Judg. vi. 2). In the earlier period of his outlawry, David found refuge in the natural fastnesses of Judea.

Men of might.—"Mighty men of valour" (chap. vi. 24); and "valiant men of might" (chap. vii. 2). Heb., "the valiant warriors," whose names follow.

Men of war fit for the battle.—Literally, men of service or training, i.e., veterans, for the war.

That could handle shield and buckler.—Heb., wielding (or presenting) shield and spear. (Comp. Jer. xlv. 3.)

Buckler (māptān) is the reading of some old editions, but against the MSS., which have Ḫōneh (lance).

Whose faces were like the faces of lions.

—Literally,

"And face of the lion, their face; And like gazelles on the mountains they speed."

The poetic style of this betrays its ancient source. The chronicler is clearly borrowing from some contemporary record. (Comp. David's own description of Saul and Jonathan, 2 Sam. i. 23; and the term Ariel, lion of God, i.e., hero or champion, chap. xi. 22; and Isa. xxix. 1.)

Swift as the roes.—Comp. what is said of Asahel (2 Sam. ii. 18).

(9) The first.—The chief, verse 3 (har'osh).

(8-12) Eleven heroes of Gad.

(14) These were.—Subscription.

Captains of the host.—Literally, heads of the host, i.e., chief warriors.

One of the least was over an hundred.—The margin is correct. David's host at this time was about 400 strong. The rendering of the text is that of the Syr. and Vulg. The LXX. closely intimates the Heb. eī ṭōṣ ḫēṣān μεγάλας κηρτομένος. For the true meaning, comp. Deut. xxiii. 30; and Lev. xxvi. 8. The Heb. says: "One to a hundred, the little one; and the great one to a thousand." This, too, is poetical, or, at least, rhetorical in character, and quite unlike the chronicler's usual style.

(15) When it had overflowed.—A proof of their valour. They did not wait till summer had made the Jordan shallow, but crossed it in spring, when perilously swollen with the rains and the melted snows of Lebanon. (Comp. Josh. iii. 15.)

In the first month.—March—April; in Heb., Abib or Nisan.
Had overflown.—Was filling or brimming over. And they put to flight all...the valleys. —Literally, and they made all the valleys flee: that is, their inhabitants, who were hostile to their enterprise, both to the sunrise and the sunset, or on both sides of the river. 

(16–19) Some Benjamite and Judaean accessions. The names are not given, why we cannot tell. 

(19) To the hold.—See Note on verse 8. 

(17) And David went out to meet them.—From his fastness or hiding-place in the hill or wood. Literally, before them, i.e., confronted them. (Comp. same phrase, chap. xiv. 8.) 

And answered and said unto them.—The familiar New Testament phrase, καὶ ἀπόκρυσθης εἰς τὴν ἀφόροἱσιν. David’s speech and the answer of Amasai have all the marks of a genuine survival of antiquity. 

"If for peace ye have come unto me to help me,"—"Peace, peace be unto thee.—David’s past history and the answer of Amasai have all the marks of a genuine survival of antiquity. 

"For peace ye have come unto me to help me,"—"Peace, peace be unto thee.—David’s past history and the answer of Amasai have all the marks of a genuine survival of antiquity. 

"If ye be come for peace”—that is, with friendly intent. Amasai answers, We will be fast friends with thee, and with all who befriend thee, because God has given ample evidence of Divine support. 

(19–22) The seven Manassite chieftains who went over to David on the eve of Saul’s last battle. 

The Companies that came to Ziglag. 

(18) And there came of the children of Benjamin and Judah to the hold unto David. (17) And David went out to meet them, and answered and said unto them. If ye be come peaceably unto me to help me, mine heart shall be knit unto you; but if ye be come to betray me to mine enemies, seeing there is no wrong in mine hands, the God of our fathers look thereon, and rebuke it. (18) Then the spirit came upon Amasai, who was chief of the captains, and he said, Thine are me, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse: peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thine helpers; for thy God helpeth thee. Then David received them, and made them captains of the band. 

(19) And there fell some of Manasseh to David, when he came with the Philistines against Saul to battle: but they helped them not: for the lords of the Philistines upon advisement said away, saying,"He will fall to his master spirit of Jehovah is the source of true courage, as of all other spiritual gifts. 

Amasai.—Perhaps the same as Amasa (chap. ii. 17), son of Abigail, David’s sister, whom Joab murdered out of jealousy (2 Sam. xvii. 25, xx. 4–10). 

Chief of the captains.—The Heb. text reads, "head of the Thirty," with which the LXX., Syr., and Vulg. agree. The Heb. margin (Qri) has "knights," or "chariot-soldiers" (Authorised Version, "captains"), which is less probable. Amasai’s name is not given in the catalogue of the Thirty (chap. xi.), and he is here called "chief of the Thirty" by anticipation. 

Thine are we, David.—The structure of Amasai’s inspired utterance is poetical—"To thee, David! And with thee, son of Israh! Peace, peace to thee, And peace to thine helper; For thy God hath holpen thee!" 

On thy side.—Heb., with thee. (Comp. chap. xi. 10; and our Saviour’s "He that is not with me is against me.") 

Peace, peace be unto thee.—David had said, "If ye be come for peace"—that is, with friendly intent. Amasai answers, We will be fast friends with thee, and with all who befriend thee, because God is on thy side. (Comp. the usual Oriental greeting, Salām ‘alāikum—Peace to you!) David’s past history gave ample evidence of Divine support. 

Then David received them.—A late Heb. word (gibbāî). The chronicler resumes his narrative. 

Made them captains of the band.—Literally, and bestowed them among the heads of the band—made them officers of his little army, which was continually growing by such adhesions. (Comp. 1 Sam. xxi. 2, and xxiii. 13.) 

(19–23) The seven Manassite chieftains who went over to David on the eve of Saul’s last battle. 

(19) There fell.—The regular term for desolation of one cause for another (2 Kings xxv. 11). 

When he came with the Philistines.—(Comp. 1 Sam. xxi. 2–11.) This verse is a summary of the narrative of 1 Sam. xxix. 2—xxx. 1. 

They helped them not.—David and his men helped not the Philistines. Perhaps the right reading is he helped them (’azāram), not they helped them (’azāram). 

Upon advisement.—After deliberation (Prov. xx. 18). 

To the jeopardy of our heads.—At the price of our heads (chap. xi. 19). By betraying us he will make his peace with his old master.
Saul 'to the jeopardy of our heads.

(20) As he went to Ziklag, there fell to him of Manasseh, Adnah, and Jozabad, and Zilthai, captains of the thousands that were of Manasseh.

(21) And they helped David against the band of the rovers: for they were all mighty men of valour, and were captains in the host.

(22) For at that time day by day there came to David to help him, until it was a great host, like the host of God.

(23) And these are the numbers of the bands that were ready armed to the war, and came to David to Hebron, to turn the kingdom of Saul to him, according to the word of the Lord. (24) The children of Judah that bare shield and spear were six thousand and eight hundred, ready armed to the war.

(25) Of the children of Simeon, mighty men of valour for the war, seven thousand and one hundred. Of the children of Levi four thousand and six hundred. (27) And Jehoiada was the leader of the

| (20) As he went to Ziklag.—On his dismissal by the Philistine princes, David returned with his men to Ziklag (1 Sam. xxx. 1). On the way he was joined by the Manassite chiefains, probably before the battle which decided the fate of Saul and his sons (1 Sam. xxix. 11). |
| Jozabad.—The repetition may be a scribe's error. (Comp. verses 10 and 13, where we find the name Jeremiah given twice over.) |
| Captains of the thousands that were of Manasseh.—(Comp. Numb. xxxi.; and chap. xiii. 1, xv. 25, xxvi. 26.) The term “thousand” interchanges with “father-house” ( clan); and perhaps each clan originally furnished 1,000 warriors to the tribal host. |
| (21) And they helped David against the band of the rovers.—So the Vulg. and Syr. The Hebrew text has been called “brief and unintelligible,” and its explanation has been sought in 1 Sam. xxx. 8 (hagg’did, as here) of Amalek, which had captured and burnt Ziklag in David's absence, is spoken of. But why may we not render, “And these helped David over the band,” i.e., in the joint command of his forces. (Comp. verse 18, “made them captains of the band.”) It is pretty clear that the names enumerated (verses 1-20) are those of captains and chiefs, not of ordinary warriors. (Comp. verses 14 and 18.) Consequently verses 21, 22 form a subscription or concluding remark to the cutting list. |
| (22) For at that time day by day . . .—Literally, For at the time of each day (i.e., every day) men used to come to David to help him; amounting to a mighty camp, like a camp of God. The verse explains why David required so many captains as have been enumerated, and why the term “army” was used of his troop in the last verse. |
| A great host, like the host of God.—Literally, camp. The phrase has an antique colouring. Comp. Gen. xxxii. 1, 2: “And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God’s camp (mahaneh Elohim): and the name of that place was called Mahanaim (i.e., two camps). Mahanaim was a place in Manasseh ( Josh. xiii. 30). Ancient Hebrew denotes excellence by reference to the Divine standard, which is the true ideal of all excellence. Comp. Ps. xxxvi. 6: “Thy righteousness is like the hills of God”; and so elsewhere we find the expression, “cedars of God” (Ps. lxxx. 11). The verse appears to include the considerable accessions to David’s forces which followed upon the defeat and death of Saul. |
Aaronites, and with him were three thousand and seven hundred; (28) and Zadok, a young man mighty of valour, and of his father's house twenty and two captains. (29) And of the children of Benjamin, the kindred of Saul, three thousand: for hitherto the greatest part of them had kept the ward of the house of Saul. (30) And of the children of Ephraim twenty thousand and eight hundred, mighty men of valour, famous throughout the house of their fathers. (31) And of the half tribe of Manasseh eighteen thousand, which were expressed by name, to come and make David king. (32) And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their commandment. (33) Of Zebulun, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty thousand, which could keep rank: they were of double heart. (34) And of Naphtali a thousand captains, and with them with shield and spear thirty and seven thousand. (35) And of the Danites expert in war twenty and eight thousand and six hundred. (36) And of Asher, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, forty thousand. (37) And on the other side of Jordan, of the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and of the half tribe of

Of his clan. It is not clear whether the 3,700 are included in the 4,600 of verse 26 or not. Probably not.

Was . . . were.—Omit.

And Zadok, a young man mighty of valour.—And Zadok, a youth, a valiant warrior. Perhaps the successor of Abiathar (1 Kings ii. 26, 27, iv. 4), and his father-house (family), princes twenty and two. The sub-clan or family of Eleazar must have been strong at this time to be able to furnish all these chieftains, and their implied companies of warriors. But the sum total of the Levites is not given.

(29) Kindred.—Fellow-tribesmen.

Hitherto.—Up to that time. (Comp. same phrase, chap. ix. 18.)

Had kept.—Were still keeping guard over the house of Saul. For the phrase comp. Num. iii. 38. The Benjaminites, as a whole, were still zealously guarding the nearest vestige of their own royal house. This remark, as well as the preceding expression, "Saul's fellow-tribesmen," is intended to explain the comparative smallness of the contingent from Benjamin. The tribe's reluctance to recognize David survived the murder of Ish-bosheth.

(30) Famous throughout the house of their fathers.—Rather, men of name (renown, as in Gen. vi. 4), arranged according to their clans. The phrase "men of renown" is a natural addition to "valiant heroes," and need occasion no surprise. Doubtless their renown was collective. The comparative smallness of Ephraim's contingent is noticeable. If this tribe was not already declining within the Mosaic period (comp. Num. i. 33, xxvi. 37), it may have been greatly reduced by the last wars of Saul with the Philistines (comp. 2 Sam. i. 9).

(31) Which were expressed by name.—See the same phrase, chap. xvi. 41; Num. i. 17. Literally it is "pried down, or entered in a list, by names." The men had been leived by the tribal chiefs, and enrolled in lists for this particular service.

(32) And of the children of Issachar . . .—Rather, And of the sons of Issachar (came) men sage in discernment for the times (tempora, critical junctures), so as to know what Israel ought to do; viz., their chiefs two hundred (in number), and all their fellow-clansmen under their orders. The old Jewish expositors concluded, from the former part of this verse, that the tribe of Issachar had skill in astrology, so that they could read in the heavens what seasons were auspicious for action, as the ancient Babylonians professed to do. But all that the text really asserts is that those men of Issachar who went over to David thereby showed political sagacity. No similar phrase occurs elsewhere in the Old Testament.

At their commandment.—Upon their mouth. (Comp. Num. iv. 27.) The clansmen marched with their chieftains. The total number of Issachar's contingent is not assigned.

(33) Expert in war . . .—Marchalling (or ordering) battle with all kinds of weapons of war, and falling into rank (la'da'or, forming in line) without a double heart. The expression "falling into rank" occurs only here and in verse 38. Nine MSS. read instead "helping" (la'az'or), and the LXX. and Vulg. so translate. "The Syriac has "to make war with those who disputed the sovereignty of David." The phrase "falling into rank without a heart and a heart," asserts the unwavering fidelity and resolute courage of these warriors of Zebulun (comp. Ps. xii. 3, "a speech of smooth things with heart and heart they speak"); they think one thing and say another; are double-minded. The number of warriors assigned to Zebulun and Naphtali has been thought surprising, because these tribes "never played an important part in the history of Israel." (Comp. however, Judges v. 18.) The numbers here given are, at all events, not discordant with those of Num. i. 31, 43; xxvi. 27, 56.

(34) Spear (hānuq).—A different word from that in verse 24 (rōmah). Perhaps the former was thrown, the latter thrust.

(35) The Danites.—Literally, the Danite, as in verse 26, the Levite. Comp. Note on chap. vii. 12. Dan is not omitted in the present list.

(36) Expert in war.—Literally, to order or marshal battle (ad aciem strendum). The same phrase occurred in verses 33, 35. The margin (verse 33), "rangers of battle," is good.

(37) On the other side.—Better, from the other side; that is, from Peres.

With all manner of instruments of war for the battle. —With all kinds of weapons of war-like service. The large total of 120,000 for the two and a half Eastern tribes is certainly remarkable. But, admitting the possibility of corruption in the ciphers
The Armies at Hebron.

I. CHRONICLES, XIII.

Preparing to bring the Ark.

Manasseh, with all manner of instruments of war for the battle, an hundred and twenty thousand. (38) All these men of war, that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel: and all the rest also of Israel were of one heart to make David king. (39) And there they were with David three days, eating and drinking: for their brethren had prepared for them. (40) Moreover they that were nigh them, even unto Issachar and Zebulun and Naphthali, brought bread on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen, and 1meat, meal, cakes of figs, and bunches of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and sheep abundantly: for there was joy in Israel.

CHAPTER XIII.—(1) And David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, and with every leader. (2) And David said unto all the congregation of Israel, If it seem good unto you, and that it be of the LORD our God, 3let us send abroad unto our brethren every where, that are left in all the land of Israel, and with them also to the priests and Levites which are 2in their

here and elsewhere, the want of other documents, with which the text might be compared, renders further criticism superfluous.

(38) Conclusion of the list of verses 23—37. All these men of war. — Rather, All the above, being men of war, forming line of battle with whole heart, came to Hebron to make David king. The phrase “forming line of battle,” repeats the verb of verse 33, and supplies its proper object (“שדライ ma'arakhah, aciem struentes”). The Hebrew indicates a stop at “line of battle;” it is better to put it after “with whole heart” (comp. verse 33). “They formed in line with fearless intrepidity;” literally, corde integro.

And all the rest also of Israel, who did not appear personally at Hebron.—“The rest (sherith) is a term used here only. The Hebrew says, “the remainder of Israel (was) one heart,” i.e., was unanimous. (Comp. 2 Chron, xxx. 12.)

Allowing the average for Issachar, the total of the warriors assembled at Hebron was upwards of 300,000. This will not surprise us if we bear in mind that in those days every able-bodied man was, as a matter of course, trained in the use of arms, and liable to be called out for the king’s wars. Thus “man” and “warrior” were almost convertible terms. The present gathering was not a parade of the entire strength of the nation; comp. the 390,000 warriors of the Exodus, and the 1,300,000 of David’s census. The main difficulty—that of the relative proportions of the various tribal contingents—has been considered in the preceding Notes. The suggestions there made are, of course, uncertain, the fact being that we really do not know enough of the condition of the tribes at that epoch to justify us in pronouncing upon the relative probability of the numbers here assigned to them. That being so, it is a hasty and unceremonial exaggeration to say that “it is absolutely inconceivable that the tribes near the place of meeting, notably that of Judah, should have furnished so small a contingent, while the figures are raised in direct proportion to the distance to be traversed” (Reuss).

(39—40) The coronation feast. Comp. 1 Kings i. 9, 19, 25; the usurpation of Adonijah.

Their brethren. — Fellow-tribesmen of Judah; especially those living at and around Hebron.

Had prepared victuals.—2 Chron. xxxiv. 14.

They that were nigh them. — The tribes bordering on Judah (LXX. αὐτῶν ἐπιθέμενοι), and even the northern tribes, contributed provisions.

Chapter XIII.—(1) And David consulted. — This consultation took place some time after the coronation at Hebron (comp. 2 Sam. vi. 1), “And David gathered together again every chosen man in Israel, thirty thousand.” This is all that Samuel has corresponding to our verses 1—5. It is by no means necessary to assume that, “according to the context, we are still at Hebron in the assembly of 350,000 warriors” (Reuss). Samuel implies the contrary.

Captains of thousands.—The tens (comp. chap. xii. 20).

And the hundreds.—Comp. Num. xxxi. 14. The hundreds were the smaller military divisions of the tribe, representing, perhaps, the warlike strength of the houses, as the thousands represented that of the clans or sub-tribes.

And with every leader.—Rather, viz., with every prince (nagid) or chief. These chiefs constituted the Great Council of the nation.

(2) All the congregation of Israel.—As represented by the Council of Chiefs, who, according to the passage in Samuel, were 30,000 in number. And that it be.—Rather, and if it be. The clause is not dependent. David says: “If before you (the thing be) good, and if (the motion come) from Jehovah.” The former phrase recurs in Neh. ii. 5, 7, and is late Hebrew; the latter is illustrated by Gen. xxiv. 50.

Let us send abroad.—Literally, break we forth, send we, i.e., let us send with all despatch.

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cities and suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us: (3) and let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we enquired not at it in the days of Saul. (4) And all the congregation said that they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.

(5) So David gathered all Israel together, from Shihor of Egypt even unto the entering of Hamath, to bring the ark of God from Kirjath-jearim. (6) And David went up, and all Israel, to Baalah, that is, to Kirjath-jearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up thence the ark of God the Lord, that dwelleth between the cherubims, whose name is called on it. (7) And they carried the ark of God in a new cart out of the house of Abinadab; and Uzza and Ahio drave the cart. (8) And David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with
psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets. (9) And when they came unto the threshold-floor of 1Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen 2stumbled.
(10) And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God. (11) And David was displeased, because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzza: wherefore that place is called 2Perez-uzza to this day. (12) And David was afraid of God that day, saying, How shall I bring the ark of God home to me? (13) So David 4brought not the ark home to himself to the city of David, but carried it aside into the house of Obed-edom the Gittite.
(14) And the ark of God remained with the family of Obed-edom in his house three months. And the Lord blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that he had.

CHAPTER XIV. — (1) Now Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and timber of cedars, with masons and
To build him an house.—Samuel, “and they built a house for David.” (2 Sam. v. 11.)

House.—Palace. So the Temple was called “the house” (hab-bayith) as well as “the palace” (hekal; comp. the Accadian e-gal, “great house”). We may think of the numerous records of palace building which the Assyrian and Babylonian sovereigns have left us. The cedar of Lebanon (Labānu) was a favourite material with them.

And David perceived . . . And David knew that Jehovah had appointed him. The willing alliance of the powerful sovereign of Phoenician Tyre was so understood by David. The favour of man is sometimes a sign of the approval of God—always, when it results from well-doing (Gen. xxxix. 21; Luke ii. 52).

For his kingdom was lifted up on high.—Samuel, “and he knew that he had lifted up his kingdom.” Perhaps our text should be rendered, “viz., that his kingdom was lifted up on high.”

Lifted up.—Aramaic form (nisaḥāh). Because of—For the sake of.

Kingdom.—The Hebrew term (malḵūṯāh) is more modern than that in Samuel (mnânlākhāh). This verse helps us to understand how David was “a man after God’s own heart.” His innate humility recognizes at once the ground of his own exaltation as not personal, but national.

And David took more wives.—The verse is considerably abbreviated as compared with Samuel, which reads, “concubines and wives from Jerusalem, after he had come from Hebron.” The concubines are not omitted because of offence, for they are mentioned in chap. iii. 9.

His children.—Literally, the born. Samuel has a different word from the same root, and omits the relative pronoun and its verb. (For the names, comp. chap. iii. 5–9, Notes, and 2 Sam. v. 14–16.) The list is repeated here because it occurred at this point in the document which the historian was copying, and perhaps also as an instance of David’s prosperity, which is the topic of the section.

Nathan.—“And Nathan” (Samuel) must be right. The conjunction occurs throughout the list. Joseph, “the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus,” traced his descent from this son of David (Luke iii. 23–31).

Israel, all the Philistines went up to seek David. And David heard of it, and went out against them. (9) And the Philistines came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim. (10) And David enquired of God, saying, Shall I go up against the Philistines? and wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the LOR D said unto him, Go up; for I will deliver them into thine hand. (11) So they came up to Baal-perazim; and David smote them there. Then David said, God hath broken in upon mine enemies by mine hand like the breaking forth of waters: therefore they called the name of that place II.—David’s Two Victories over the Philistines (verses 8–10; 2 Sam. v. 17–25).

Although placed here after the account of the palace building, this invasion must have occurred earlier in the reign of David, and probably soon after the storming of Jerusalem, a proof of capacity, which would rouse the Philistines to combined action against the new sovereign of Israel. (Comp. 1 Sam. xiii.)

David was anointed.—Samuel, “they had anointed David.” The verb in each case is mashāh, from which is derived Masīḥah = Messiah.

Over all Israel.—The word “all,” omitted in Samuel, contrasts David’s second election with his first as king of Judah only.

To seek David.—With hostile intent. The verb is so used in 1 Sam. xxvi. 2.

Went out against them.—Literally, before them (chap. xii. 17). Samuel has, “went down to the stronghold.” The term “stronghold” (mēṣīḥād) designates the “castle of Zion” (chap. xi. 5, 7), and also David’s old refuge, the rock and cave of Adullam, in the valley of Elah. The latter is probably intended here. As on former occasions, the Philistine forces were likely to choose the route through the valley of Elah (comp. 1 Sam. xvii. 1, 2), and David “went down” from Zion “to meet them.”

And the Philistines came.—Now the Philistines had come. The narrative goes back to verse 5a. The invaders had approached by another road than usual, and encamped in the valley of Rephaim (chap. xi. 15).

Spread themselves.—The chronicler has given an easier term than that used in Samuel.

And David enquired of God.—How? Through the high priest Abinadab, who sought Divine direction by means of the Urim and Thummim, or sacred lots, which he carried in a pouch on his breast, which was fastened to the ephod, or priestly mantle. (See Exod. xxvii. 30, xxxi. 21; Lev. viii. 8; Num. xxvii. 21; 1 Sam. xiv. 18, 19, 37, 41; xxiii. 9, xxviii 7, 8.)

Against.—Samuel, “unto.” There should be a comma, not a query, at “Philistines;” the whole sentence forms but one question in the Hebrew. Samuel gives two distinct questions, disconnected from each other. The rest of the verse is abridged here. (Comp. Samuel.)

So they came up to Baal-perazim.—And they: that is, David and his troops. Samuel, “And
God Helps David

I. CHRONICLES, XIV.

1. Baal-perazim. — And when they had left their gods there, David gave a commandment, and they were burned with fire.

13. And the Philistines yet again spread themselves abroad in the valley.

(14) Therefore David enquired again of God; and God said unto him, Go not up after them; turn away from them, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees. (15) And it shall be, when thou shalt hear a sound of going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt go out to battle: for God is gone forth before thee to smite the host of the Philistines. (16) David therefore did as God commanded him: and they smote the host of the Philistines from Gibeon even to Gazer.

David came into Baal-perazim. — The locality is unknown. The prophet Isaiah (chap. xxviii. 21) refers to these two victories of David: “For Jehovah shall rise up as in Mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act.” Such a reference proves the great moment of the events so briefly mentioned here.

God hath broken in upon mine enemies.— Samuel has “Jehovah” here and in verse 10a, and again in verses 14 and 15. (See Note, chap. xii. 12.) True to his character, David owns the mighty hand of God in the results of his own valour. (Comp. chap. xvi. 16, sqq.) He is conscious of being God’s instrument.

Contrast the haughty self-confidence of the Assyrian conqueror (Isa. x. 5–15).

By mine hand.— Samuel, “before me;” and so the Syriac and Arabic here. The Hebrew phrases are probably synonymous. (Comp. 1 Sam. xxii. 14, “in their hand,” i.e., before them.) In Arabic, “between the hands” means before. Our text seems the more original here.

Like the breaking forth of waters.—David’s forces probably changed down the slopes of Mount Perazim (Isa. xxviii. 21), like a mountain torrent, sweeping all before it.

They called.— An explanation of Samuel, which has “he [i.e., one] called.” The remark indicates the antiquity of the narrative. (Comp. the frequent verbal plays of this kind in the stories of the Book of Genesis.)

Baal-perazim.—Lord, or owner, of breaches, or breakings forth. “Baal” may refer to Jehovah (comp. chap. ix. 33, Note); and perazim may have also meant fissures or gullies on the mountain-side. It is the plural of the word peres (chap. xiii. 11).

13. And when they had left their gods there.— Samuel, “their images.” Our word is explained.

David gave a commandment, and they were burned with fire.— Samuel, “And David and his men carried them off” (Heb.). The two statements are not incompatible, and may both have existed in the same original text. The chronicler is careful to record David’s compliance with the law of Deut. xii. 25.

(15–16) A second Philistine invasion and defeat (2 Sam. v. 22–25).

(13) In the valley — “of Rephaim” (Samuel). Slightly abridged.

(14) Therefore David enquired.—The first half of this verse is fuller and clearer than in Samuel. The second half must be adjusted by comparison with the older text, which reads, “Thou must not go up (LXX., “to meet them”); go round to their rear, and come upon them in front of the baca trees.” Probably the terms rendered “after them” and “from them” should be slightly modified and transposed in our text. This will give, “Go not up against them; go round to their rear,” &c., as in Samuel.

Mulberry trees.—The traditional Jewish rendering of beka‘im, a Hebrew word only occurring here and in the parallel passage of Samuel. Probably the kind of balsam tree called bâkî by the Arabs is meant. It sheds a gum like tears, whence its name. (Heb., bâkî, “to weep.”) (Comp. Ps. lxxxiv. 6.)

(15) A sound of going.—Rather, the sound of marching. The sign may have been a natural one. David was to listen for the wind rustling in the tops of the baca—a sound like that of walking on dead leaves—and then to make his attack. (But comp. 2 Kings vii. 6.) But we are reminded, in connection with this fragment of David’s history, that all ancient people attached a prophetic import to the motion and rustling of leaves. Omens from trees are mentioned in the table of contents of the great Assyrian work on terrestrial omens, compiled by order of Sargon of Agadé or Accad (about 2290 B.C.). Comp. also the speaking oaks of Dodona, the laurel of Delos (Virg. Æn. iii. 91), and that of Delphi (Hymn to Apollo, 383). The “oak of the diviners” (Judg. ix. 37), and perhaps Deborah’s palm-tree, and even the burning bush, must be referred to the same order of ideas. The Arabs believe the thorny bushes of the ghargad capable of uttering prophetic words; and with them the samâ’irâ, or Egyptian thorn, is sacred. These analogies, however, do not militate against the reality or the miraculous character of the Biblical occurrence. The Divine communications with man always assume the form best adapted for striking the mind amidst reigning ideas. Biblical visions, e.g., always have the colour of the seer’s environment: those of Joseph are Egyptian; those of Ezekiel in the Exile, Assyrian. (See, further, Lemm. ön, La DIVINATION en Chaldée).

Then thou shalt go out to battle.—A paraphrase of the term used in Samuel.

For God is gone forth.—“‘Then’ (Samuel, viz., ‘when thou hast heard the signal.’”

David therefore.—And David did. Samuel adds “so.”

And they smote the host (camp).—Samuel, “and he smote the Philistines.” (Comp. verse 11.)

From Gibeon.—The present Hebrew text of Samuel has Geba. The LXX. agrees with Chronicles in reading Gibeon, but the Targum, Syriac, and Arabic read Geba. Gibeon lay about six miles north-west of Jerusalem, between the valley of Replaim and Gezer. (See Josh. xii. 17; 1 Kings ix. 15–17.)
None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites.—See Num. iv. 5—15, where the Kohathite Levites are appointed to carry the Ark and other sacred objects; and the more definite Deut. x. 8: "At that time the Lord separated the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord, and to minister unto him, and to bless in his name, unto this day." David's enunciation of the law is a tacit acknowledgment that on the former occasion (chap. xiii. 7—10) it had not been observed. That the Ark was now duly carried by bearers is expressly stated in the older account (2 Sam. vi. 13), though their being Levites is not noticed.

And David gathered all Israel.—Comp. 2 Sam. vi. 15: "So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark." Samuel does not mention Jerusalem as the meeting-place. Of course, only a full representation of the people is signified. (Comp. chap. xiii. 2, 5.)

Unto his place.—The Ark's. The neutral it's is unknown to the Authorised version.

And David assembled.—He confers separately with the priestly order respecting their part in the procession.

The children of Aaron.—The sons of Aaron, i.e., the high priests, Zadok and Abiathar (verse 11).

The Levites.—i.e., the six chiefains—Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, heads of the clans of Kohath, Merari, and Gershom respectively; and Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab, additional Kohathite chiefs: all the six being at the head of their clansmen ("brethren," verses 5—10). There were four Kohathite houses to one of Merari and Gershom, because the sub-tribe of Kohath was the elder house, and had special charge of the Ark and other most holy vessels of the sanctuary (Num. iv. 8).

Of the sons of Kohath.—Kohath comes first, as the senior clan, to which the priestly house of Aaron itself belonged.

Of the sons of Elizaphan; Shemaiah.—Elizaphan was son of Uziel, the fourth son of Kohath (Exod. vi. 18, 22). Of this Kohathite family, Shemaiah was chief in David's time (chap. xxiv. 6).

Of the sons of Hebron.—Hebron was third son of Kohath (Exod. vi. 18). (Comp. chap. vi. 2, above.)

Of the sons of Uziel.—Uziel was fourth son of Kohath (chap. vi. 2). Exodus vi. 22 names three sons of Uziel—Michaiah, Elizaphan, and Zithri. The
minadab the chief, and his brethren an hundred and twelve.

(11) And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiah, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Elieel, and Amminadab, (12) and said unto them, Ye are the chief of the fathers of the Levites: sanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of the Lord God of Israel unto the place that I have prepared for it. (13) For because ye did it not at the first, the Lord our God

family of Elzaphan has already been represented (verse 8). The term "sons of Uziel," therefore, in this verse represents the two other Uzzielite houses, which may have amalgamated in one. As Elzaphan is mentioned first, the elder line of Michael may have become extinct. At any rate, chaps. xxiii. 20 and xxiv. 24 imply the existence of only two Uzzielite stocks.

(11) David's instructions to the eight spiritual chiefs.

Zadok and Abiathar the priests were of coordinate rank, as representing the two lines of Eleazar and Ithamar. (Comp. Notes on chaps. vi. 4, sqq., and xxiv. 3.) On verse 5 the meanings of three of these names have been suggested. Of the others, Zadok imports just, perhaps equivalent to Zedekiah, Jah is just; Abiathar, the Father (i.e., God) excels; Shemaiah, Jah heareth; Eliel, God (and none else) is God (i.e., Divine); Amminadab, the Clanman (i.e., the Lord) is bounteous. Thus the very names of those who conducted this great religious event expressed to themselves and others the high spiritual truths that Jehovah the Lord is righteous, the Author and B routower of all knowledge and excellence and working power; that He alone is God; and that He hears prayers, as being a gracious Father unto all His creatures.

(12) Chief of the fathers.—Heads of the father-houses. They were the heads of the chief divisions in each sub-division of the tribe.

Sanctify yourselves.—Special purifications appear to have been prescribed in connection with all sacrifice and worship. (Comp. Gen. xxxv. 2; Exod. xix. 10, 15, xxx. 17—21.) Bathing the person, and washing or changing the garments, and keeping oneself aloof from whatever was regarded as defiling, were the main requisites. And all this was needful to teach Israel that the All-pure requires purity in His worshippers. (Comp. 2 Chron. xxx. 3.)

The ark of the Lord (Jehovah) God of Israel.—Contrast the simpler expression, "ark of God" (chap. xiii. and chap. xiv. 1, 2). Here David uses a specially solemn title, by way of warning. Further, the term "God of Israel" suggests that the undertaking is national, and that the nation's future welfare depends on its due performance (1 Sam. ii. 30). Israel's vocation was to be "a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation" (Exod. xix. 6), as the chronicle has well understood.

Unto the place that I have prepared for it.—Unto (that) I have prepared, for it. The relative is omitted. (Comp. chap. xxix. 3 and 2 Chron. i. 4.)

(13) For because ye did it at the first.—The Hebrew seems to mean, for because on the first occasion it was not you (that is, the heads of the Levitical houses)—scil., who carried up the ark, but Uzza and Ahio, sons of Abinadab (2 Sam. vi. 3). The phrase so rendered only occurs here (kimmabártishónáh = "because at the first").

Our God made a breach.—Broke out upon us; referring to the sudden death of Uzza (chap. xiii. 10). (Comp. Exod. xix. 22, 24, same phrase.)

We sought him not (chap. xiii. 3) after the due order.—The Ark was carried on a cart, instead of being borne by the sons of Kohath "on their shoulders, with the staves thereon" (verse 15; Num. iv. 15). Even the Kohathites themselves were forbidden to "touch any holy thing," as Uzza had ventured to do. It has been said that the "sanctity of institutions," as opposed to the "sanctity of a people under the government of a righteous God," is the leading idea of the Chronicles. It would be difficult to show how "the sanctity of a people is to be secured, and how the government of a righteous God is to be realised, except in and through Divine institutions. As there is a "due order" by which God rules the physical world, so is there a corresponding order whereby His will is fulfilled in the spiritual sphere. There are positive institutions in Christianity as well as in Mosaism; and if we abolish the Divine authority of the one, why not of the other also?

(16) And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God.—The priests and Levites, having purified themselves (verse 14), duly and rightly discharged their sacred office of bearing the Ark. This statement anticipates verse 25, sqq. Such brief anticipative summaries of a series of events afterwards described in detail are very common in Hebrew narrative.

Upon their shoulders with the staves thereon.—Literally, with their shoulder, with the poles upon themselves.

As Moses commanded according to the word of the Lord.—Num. vii. 9, iv. 15; Exod. xv. 13—15.

David spake to the chief.—Ordered the chiefs (sárim).

To appoint their brethren to be the singers.—To station or assign places to their clansmen, the minstrels.

Psalteries and harps.—Harps and lutes, or gutters (nébélím and kinnóríth).

Sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy. —So far as grammar goes, the participle sounding (Heb., causing to hear—i.e., making a loud noise) might refer to the musicians, or to all the instruments mentioned, or to the last kind (the cymbals) only. The third reference is the best, because of the special sense
The Musicians

I. CHRONICLES, XV.

of the verb. (Comp. verse 19 and Ps. cl. 5: “Ioud cymbals,” i.e., cymbals of sound or hearing.) Translate: “harps and lutes and clashing cymbals, in order to swell the sound for gladness:” that is, to express and enhance the rejoicing. (Comp. 2 Chron. v. 13.)

(19) And with them their brethren of the second degree. — So chap. xvi. 5: “Asaph the leader, and his second Zechariah.” Fourteen minstrels of the second rank—that is, subordinate to the first three—are named here.

(20) Ben (son) is not a proper name. That of Zechariah’s father may have fallen out after it (comp. the Syriac and Arabic: “Zechariah son of Né’ael”), or it may be due to a scribe’s inadvertence. The LXX. omits it.

Shemiramoth. — This peculiar name resembles the Assyrian 9ammuramat, the classical Semiramis, Delitzsch suggests that it is a compound of 9ammén (“spices”), and 9mمام (“loving”): a suitable name for a woman, and actually borne by a lady of the court of Nebuchadnezzar (692-656 B.C.).

Jazziel. — Called Jeziel by mistake in chap. xvi. 5.

And Jeiel. — The LXX. adds, “and Azaziah” (Ozias). (Comp. verse 21.) Perhaps this should be read, and “the porters” omitted. (See verse 24.)

(19-21) The minstrels named in verses 17, 18, classified according to their instruments.

(20) The cymbal-players.

Were appointed to sound with cymbals or brass. — Rather, with cymbals of bronze for clashing. Furnished with these instruments, the three chiefs were to lead and accentuate the music.

Verses 19-25 give the order of the procession thus:

I. The three master-singers, and two bands of seven each (verses 19-21).

II. Chenaniah, marshal of the bearers.

III. Two warders of the Ark.

IV. Seven priests, with trumpets.

THE Ark.

V. Two warders of the Ark.

VI. The king, with the heads of the nation.

(20) The eight harpers. Perhaps Maaseiah or Benaiah belongs to the next verse. This would give seven (comp. verse 24) in each band.

Azriel should be Jaaziel, as in verse 18.

Jehiel. — God liveth. Joel = Joel (chap. ix. 6, 35), Remembered of God.

With psalters on Alamoth. — With harps after the mode of maidens.” That is, probably, of soprano compass or pitch. The same expression occurs in the heading of Ps. xlv.

(21) The six lute-players.

With harps on the Sheminith. — “With lutes (or lyres) in the bass.” Literally, after the mode of the eighth—i.e., an octave below the tenor—al ottava bassa. To excel. — To lead the orchestra, to present. (Comp. Ps. vi., heading.)

Rather, And Chenaniah, captain (i.e., conductor) of the Levites in bearing (that is, the sacred vessels), was conducting the bearing, because he was skilled—scil., in the traditional regulations connected with bearing the Ark dully and rightly.

Chenaniah. — Verse 27, and chap. xxvi. 29.

Chief of the Levites. — Not one of the six princes (verses 5-10), or heads of houses, but president of the carriage of the Ark.

Was for song. — So the LXX., which reads “leader of the song,” and although the word masas—i.e., “lifting up,” or “bearing”—might mean “lifting up the voice,” (1) the context is against that meaning here, for Heman, Asaph, and Ethan were conductors of the singing and music; (2) Chenaniah is nowhere else associated with music (see Note on chap. xxvi. 20); (3) the word masas, “bearing,” has the sense we have given it when used in relation to Levites (Num. iv. 19; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3).

He instructed. — The Hebrew has an ambiguous form, which may be an infinitive—“instructing, correcting (yāṣār); or an imperfect of a different verb—was prince over, superintendent of (sārār).

He was skilful. — Comp. chap. xxv. 7; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 12.

(23) Doorkeepers for the ark. — “Porters” (verse 18). Warders are meant. Obed-edom and Jehiah were also warders of the Ark (verse 24). In the procession two may have walked in front of it and two behind. They would be responsible for the prevention of all unauthorised approach to the Ark of God.

Seven priestly trumpeters.

The priests, did blow with the trumpets. — Were blowing. (Comp. Num. x. 2.) A pair of silver clarions were blown by the priests “for the calling of the assembly, and the journeying of the camps.” (See also chap. xvi. 6.) The seven priests perhaps walked immediately before the Ark, as in Josh. vi. 4.
And Obed-edom and Jehiah were doorkeepers for the ark.—Comp. verse 23. It is hardly likely that these persons were identical with the minstrels Obed-edom and Jeiel of verses 18 and 21, for (1) verses 19—24 appear to describe the order of the procession, according to which two “doorkeepers” walked before and two behind the ark (verses 23, 24), whereas Obed-edom and Jeiel the minstrels walked, playing their lutes, two places before even the first pair of doorkeepers (verse 21); (2) the name “Jeiel” is different in form and meaning from that of “Jehiah,” “Jah liveth”; (3) the recurrence of names has been too frequent to allow us to be much surprised at a second Obed-edom. (Comp. chap. xvi. 38.)

So David, and the elders of Israel.—Literally, And it was David and the elders of Israel and princes of the thousands who were walking to bring up the Ark, &c. The preparations for the ceremony are now complete, and the procession starts. A slight change in the Hebrew (omission of the article; so Syriac and one MS. of LXX.) will improve the sense: “And it came to pass, David and the elders . . . were walking to bring up the Ark.”

To bring up the ark.—“Into the city of David” (Samuel).

The ark of the covenant of the Lord.—A special title of the Ark, which has not occurred before in this history. It is not read in the parallel passage of Samuel, where we find only “ark of God,” and “ark of Jehovah.” The phrase may therefore indicate that the chronicler had another source besides that book. (Comp. Josh. iii. 3, 17.) The parallel (2 Sam. vi. 12) makes no mention of “the elders and captains,” but merely states in brief and somewhat abrupt fashion that David went and brought up the Ark, because he had heard of its bringing a blessing upon the house of Israel; and “ark of the Lord.”

With joy.—With set rejoicings and festal mirth.

When God helped the Levites that bare the ark.—Comp. 2 Sam. vi. 13, “And it was so, that when the bearers of the ark of the Lord had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings” (sing. collect.). God had been adverse to those who conducted the Ark on the former occasion (chap. xiii. 9), as was inferred from the sudden death of Uzza. Now, when the Levites had undertaken the work in due order, and no harm had befallen, it was understood that the Divine goodwill was with the enterprise. That they had borne the holy Ark six paces without any sign of wrath was enough to call forth the grateful offerings of hearts relieved from a dread which only ceased to haunt them when the event proved it to be groundless. Our text, more exact than Samuel, gives the number and kind of the victims then sacrificed. Others refer the two accounts to different sacrifices, taking Samuel to mean that at every six paces a bullock and a fat sheep were slain by priests stationed all along the course, while they suppose our text to refer to a final sacrifice, offered when the Ark had reached its destination. This solution of the difficulty appears incredible, especially as regards the supposition of priests not mentioned in the narrative. Another view understands our text in this sense, but makes the offering in Samuel an initial sacrifice of consecration. But it is not likely that the two sacrifices are really different: (1) because the narrative here is generally parallel with Samuel; and (2) the chronicler may have intentionally paraphrased the older text for the sake of explanation. (Comp. Num. xxii. 1, 29 for the sacrifice.)

And David was clothed with a robe of fine linen.—Samuel reads, “And David was dancing before Jehovah with all might” (Heb.). The Hebrew of our text may be a corruption or intentional alteration of this. The word for “clothed” is the Aramaic Daniel iii. 21, mēkurḇāl), which might easily be, by inadvertence or design, substituted for the rare word mēkārkēr (Sam.), “dancing.”

A robe of fine linen.—Heb., a me’il of byssus. The me’il was an upper garment worn by persons of rank. (2 Sam. xii. 19; 1 Sam. xxv. 27; Job xxix. 14.)

And all the Levites . . . and the singers, and Chenaniah.—Scil., were clothed with a me’il of byssus.

The master of the song.—Rather, the chief (overseer) of the bearing. (Comp. verse 22.)

With the singers.—Omit, as an accidental repetition. The word “with” is wanting in the Hebrew, which is ungrammatical as it stands. The entire clause, “and all the Levites . . . with the singers,” is not read in the parallel account.

David also had upon him an ephod of linen.—Literally, and upon David (was) an ephod of linen. (See 2 Sam. vi. 14.) The ephod, a sort of cope, was distinctive of the priests (1 Sam. xxii. 18).

Thus all Israel brought.—And all Israel were bringing. Samuel has “and David and all the house of Israel,” and “ark of the Lord.”

Cornet.—Rather, trumpet.

The rest of this verse is wanting in Samuel, but all the additional instruments have already been mentioned (verses 16—21).

Trumpets.—Clarions, or straight trumpets. The last clause should be rendered, “and with clanging cymbals, with harps and lutes.” (Comp. Ps. el. 3, 4)

And it came to pass.—The verse reads in the Hebrew like a modernised form of 2 Sam. vi. 16.
the covenant of the Lord came to the city of David, that Michal the daughter of Saul looking out at a window saw king David dancing and playing; and she despised him in her heart.

CHAPTER XVI.—(1) So they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it: and they offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings before God. (2) And when David had made an end of offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord, (3) And he dealt to every one of Israel, both man and woman, to every one a loaf of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine.

(4) And he appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the ark of the Lord, and to record, and to thank and praise the Lord God of Israel: (5) Asaph the chief, and next to him Zechariah, Jeiel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Mattithiah, and Eliaib, and Benaiah, and Obed-edom: and Jeiel 1 with psalteries and with harps; but Asaph made a sound with cymbals; (6) Benaiah also and Jahaziel the priests with trumpets continually before the ark of the covenant of God.

As the ark of the covenant of the Lord came.—Rather, The ark had come so far as to the city, and Michal had looked forth by the lattice, and she saw . . .

Dancing and playing.—In the Hebrew two common words have been substituted for the two obsolete ones occurring in Samuel.

Playing.—The Hebrew word denotes dancing combined with singing and playing (Jer. xxx. 19; 1 Sam. xviii. 6, 7).

She despised him.—Because he seemed forgetful of his royal and manly honour, in dancing like a woman.

XVI.

(1) So they brought the ark of God.—Verses 1—3 are wrongly separated from the concluding verses of chap. xv. The narrative is still parallel to 2 Sam. (17—19a). The differences are unimportant.

(2) The burnt offerings.—Heb., the burnt offering, as if one great holocaust were meant. This verse is identical with 2 Sam. vi. 18, only omitting Sabaoth at the end, a Divine title which was perhaps obsolete in the chronicler’s day.

He blessed the people in the name of the Lord.—Comp. Num. vi. 22—27; 1 Kings viii. 14, 55; Deut. xxxii. 1.

To every one . . .—Literally, to every man of Israel from man unto woman. Samuel has, “to all the people, to all the multitude of Israel, from man,” &c.

A loaf (kikkar).—A round cake (1 Sam. ii. 36). The parallel in Samuel has a less common word (hallath), meaning a sacrificial cake punctured all over. (Comp. Exod. xix. 23.)

A good piece of flesh.—A single Hebrew term, found only here and in Samuel (‘eshpiir). It seems to mean “a portion,” i.e., of the victims slain for the “peace offerings.” (The “burnt offerings” were wholly consumed on the altar.) Syriac, “a portion.” Arabic, “a slice of flesh.” Others interpret, “a measure of wine.”

A flagon of wine.—Rather, a raisin-cake—i.e., a mass of dried grapes (Hosea iii. 1); Isa. xvi. 7, “raisin-cakes of Kir-hareseth.”

(4—46) THE INSTITUTION OF A MINISTRY FOR THE ARK. THE ODE SUNG ON THE DAY OF INSTITUTION.

This entire section is peculiar to the Chronicle. Verse 43 is almost identical with 2 Sam. vi. 19, 20. Compared, then, with the older text, this relation of the chronicler’s looks like a parenthesis interpolated from another source into the history, as narrated in 2 Sam. vi. 12—20.

(4) And he appointed certain of the Levites.

To minister.—Literally, ministering—i.e., as ministers. The object of the appointment is defined by the words which follow: “both to remind, and to thank, and to praise Jehovah, the God of Israel.” Each verb expresses a distinct kind of duty in the service of song.

To record is the technical term for chanting the psalms which accompanied the sacrificial burning of the Ashérah, that is, the part of the meat offering that was presented on the altar (Lev. ii. 3). (Comp. the use of the cognate verb in the titles of Pss. xxxviii., lxx.)

To thank was to perform psalms of invocation, and confession of benefits received.

To praise was to sing and play hymns of hallelujah such as Ps. cxlv.—c.

These Levites were to minister thus before the Ark in the sacred tent of Mount Zion.

6, 6) The names of the persons appointed—ten Levites and two priests—all of whom but one, Jahaziel, were in the procession described in chap. xv. 19—21.

Asaph the chief, and next to him (his second) Zechariah.—See chap. xv. 18.

Jeiel.—A scribe’s error for “Jaaziel” (chap. xv. 18).

With psalteries and with harps.—With instruments of harps and lutes (appositive or defining genitive).

But Asaph made a sound with cymbals—Literally, and Asaph with cymbals clanging.

Jahaziel.—Not mentioned in chap. xv., unless he be the Eliezer of verse 24. The number of these musicians is twelve, suggesting the twelve tribes of Israel.

With trumpets.—Clarions, or straight trumpets.

Continually.—The Hebrew term is a special one, denoting at fixed and regularly recurring services.
The Psalm of
I. CHRONICLES, XVI.  Thanksgiving.

(7-36) An ode of thanksgiving appropriate to the occasion.

(7) Then on that day David delivered first this psalm to thank the Lord into the hand of Asaph and his brethren.

(8a) Give thanks unto the Lord, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people. (9) Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works. (10) Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord. (11) Seek the Lord and his strength, seek his face continually. (12) Remember his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth; (13) O ye seed of Israel his servant, ye children of Jacob, his chosen ones. (14) He is the Lord our God; his judgments are in all the earth. (15) Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations; (16) even of the covenant which he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac; (17) and hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting

Make known.—Israel's mission.

Deeds.—Feats, exploits, deeds of wonder; a poetical word.

People.—Peoples.

Sing psalms.—The word implies a musical accompaniment.

Talk ye.—A third term for singing. Chant ye.

His wondrous works.—His wonders, or miracles.

The word means things separate, distinct, and so out of the common (Exod. iii. 20).

That seek the Lord.—Comp. chaps. xiii. 3, xv. 13, where a synonymous term is used. Both occur in verse 11.

And his strength.—Comp. Exod. xv. 2, Isa. xxvi. 4: “Jah, Jehovah is a rock of ages” (Heb.).

His face.—His presence, especially in the sanctuary.

True devotion is the secret of moral strength.

The second strophe of Psalm cv.

Marvellous works.—Wonders, as in verse 9.

His wonders.—His portents; παράκλησις of the New Testament.

The judgments of his mouth. —His judicial utterances, which execute themselves. (Comp. Gen. i. 3; Exod. xii. 12.)

Of his mouth.—Psalm cv. 5 has a different form of the pronoun.

Seed of Israel.—Psalm cv. 6 reads, “Abraham.” “Israel” improves the parallelism, and is probably a correction. Syriac and Arabic have “Abraham.”

His servant.—LXX., “his servants.” (Comp. “servant of Jehovah” as a title of Israel in Isaiah.)

The grand thought of Israel that, though Jehovah is their God, He is not theirs exclusively: He governs the wide world.

Be ye mindful.—Psalm cv. 8, third strophe, begins, “He hath remembered,” that is, “He will certainly remember” His ancient covenant; and the exile and oppression of His people can only be transitory. (Comp. Ps. cxi. 5.) The expression is modified here, to suit different circumstances, and perhaps in view of verse 12.

The word which he commanded to.—Rather, the promise which he established for.

Even of the covenant.—These words should be cancelled. The object is still the word of promise.

Which he made.—Literally, he cut. Same phrase as in Haggai ii. 5.

With Abraham.—Gen. xxii. 16.

Unto Isaac.—Heb., יİŞחא. Psalm cv. 9 has the weaker form, Yishai (Amos vii. 9).

And hath confirmed.—In Psalm cv. the sense is future.

The same.—It, i.e., the word (verse 15).

For a law = as a fixed decree.
everlasting covenant, (18) saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, (19) the lot of your inheritance; (20) when ye were but a few, even a few, and strangers in it. (21) And when they went from nation to nation, and from one kingdom to another people; (22) he suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproved kings for their sakes, (23) saying, 'Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.' (24) Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvellous works among all nations.

The land of Canaan.—In the Hebrew the rhythm is marred here by omission of a particle (eth), found in Psalm cv. 11.

The lot.—Literally, as the measuring line (comp. Ps. xvi. 3), i.e., as your measured or apportioned domain. (19) The fourth strophe of Psalm cv. begins here.

When ye were but few.—The psalm has "when they [that is, your fathers] were but few;" and so LXX. (18)

I. CHRONICLES, XVI.

The fourth strophe of Psalm cv. begins here.

When ye were but few.—The psalmist's idea of the heavenly temple is purposely weakened, by omission of the first and third lines, in order to make it fit in here. Strophe I. is thus compressed into four lines (verses 23, 24).

Sing unto the Lord, all the earth.—The second line of the psalm. The spirited opening of the psalm is purposely weakened, by omission of the first and third lines, in order to make it fit in here. Strophe I. is thus compressed into four lines (verses 23, 24).

All the earth.—All the land (of Israel). Show forth.—Heb., tell the (good) news of. His salvation.—Deliverance (from exile).

Heathen.—Nations (verse 31).

He also.—And he. The conjunction is not in Psalm xcvii., and is a prosaic addition of the compiler. (Comp. verse 20).

People.—Peoples. Idols.—Plural of Messiah. Abraham and Sarah were to be progenitors of kings (Gen. xvii. 16). (Comp. Gen. xxiii. 6.)

My prophets.—Literally, do no harm against my prophets—a construction unparalleled elsewhere. Psalm cv. has the usual expression, "to my prophets." (See Gen. xii., xx., xxvi. for the passages of patriarchal history to which allusion is here made.)

We have now reached the first "seam" in this composite ode. Psalm cv. naturally continues its historic proof of Jehovah's faithfulness, by reference to the sojourn in Egypt, the Exodus, the wanderings, and the occupation of Canaan. Here, however, this train of thought is abruptly broken off, and a fresh start made in verse 23 with Psalm xcvii. The author, or authors, who compiled this hymn of praise "strung together familiar psalms as a sort of mosaic, to give approximate expression to the festsive strains and feelings of the day" (Delitzsch).

(23-33) See Psalm xcvii. This psalm, in the Psalter, consists of five strophes or stanzas of six lines each—an artistic arrangement which has been violated here.
moved. (33) Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice: and let men say among the nations, The Lord reigneth. (32) Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof: let the fields rejoice, and all that is therein. (33) Then shall the trees of the wood sing out at the presence of the Lord, because he cometh to judge the earth. (34) "O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever." (35) And say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glory in thy praise. (36) Blessed be the Lord God of Israel for ever and ever. And all the people said, Amen, and praised the Lord.

And he left there.-Were the above ode interposed by the chronicler himself, he might better have written, "And David left." Resumption and conclusion of the narrative suspended at verse 7.

The world also shall be stable.—A line, which precedes this in the psalm, is omitted here, to the detriment of the sense. That line—"Say ye among the nations, Jehovah is king"—begins the fourth strophe of the original hymn, but is here strangely transferred to verse 31.

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice.—In the Hebrew, the initial letters of these words form an acrostic of the sacred Name of Jehovah; and those of the first half of verse 32 make up Iahu, another form of the Name.

And let men say.—An adaptation of Ps. xcvi. 10: "Say ye among the nations." Let the fields rejoice.—Here begins the fifth strophe of the original psalm.

Fields.—Heb., the field, or open country. Psalm cvi. has an archaic spelling of the word (saddai), which is here modernised (sadch). Let the earth rejoice.—In the Hebrew, the compound preposition of verse 30. The climax of the psalm—"He shall judge the world in righteousness, and peoples in his faithfulness"—is here omitted; and this long and heterogeneous composition terminates with verses borrowed from a third source.

O give thanks unto the Lord.—Several of the later psalms begin with this beautiful liturgic formula. (See Ps. cvi., civii., cxxvi.; and comp. Jer. xxxiii. 11.) The ode thus concludes with the thought from which it started (verse 8).

And say ye.—Not in Ps. cvi. 47. The compiler or interpolator has added it here in order to connect verse 34 (Ps. cvi. 1) with verse 35 (Ps. cvi. 47). It was doubtless suggested by Ps. xcvi. 10: "Say ye among the nations, The Lord reigneth." Gather us.—The phrase used in Jer. xxxii. 37, and many other places, of Israel’s restoration from exile.

And deliver us.—Not in the psalm, where the words "gather us from among the heathen" certainly refer to the dispersion. This reference is eliminated by the compiler’s insertion.

Glory in thy praise.—"Glory" (kislabbdah) is a common Aramaic word, found only here (and in Ps. civi.) in the Old Testament.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel.—The Berakah or benedictory close of the fourth book of the Psalter. This doxology did not form part of the original psalm, which closed with verse 35 (Ps. cvi. 47). After the psalms had been edited in their present arrangement of five books, each concluding with a doxology, these doxologies came in time to be sung in liturgical service as integral parts of the psalms to which they were appended.

And all the people said, Amen.—Ps. cvi. 48 has, "And let all the people say, Amen. Hallelujah." The chronicler, or rather the interpolator of his work, has altered a liturgical direction, or rubric, into a historical statement suitable to the occasion to which his long ode is appended.

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And Obed-edom with their brethren, to minister before the ark; and Zadok the priest, and his brethren the priests,
before the tabernacle of the LORD in the high place that was at Gibeon, 
(40) to offer burnt offerings unto the LORD upon the altar of the burnt offering continually 2 morning and evening, and to do according to all that is written in the law of the LORD, which he commanded Israel; 
(41) and with them Heman and Jeduthun, and the rest that were chosen, who were expressed by name, to give thanks to the LORD, because his mercy endureth for ever; 
(42) and with them Heman and Jeduthun with trumpets and cymbals for those that should make a sound, and with musical instruments of God. And the sons of Jeduthun were 2 porters. 
(43) And all the people departed every man to his house: and David returned to bless his house.

CHAPTER XVII.—(1) Now a it came to pass, as David sat in his house, that David said to Nathan the prophet, Lo, I dwell in an house of cedars, but the ark of the covenant of the LORD remaineth

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either instituted or formally recognised the priesthood of Zadok therein.

And Zadok.—The name is preceded in the Hebrew by the sign of the accusative case, and therefore depends on the verb he left (verse 37).

The priest.—Par excellence—i.e., the High Priest (1 Sam. i. 9, ii. 11; 2 Kings xii. 9, 15).

In the high place.—See 1 Kings iii. 3, 4.

(40) Continually morning and evening.—The Tamid, or regular burnt offering of a lamb at dawn and sunset, with its food offering and drink offering, as prescribed in Exod. xxix. 38, sqq., and Num. xxviii. 3, sqq. And to do.—Literally, and for everything that is written, viz., all the other prescribed sacrifices and duties of the priests. Nothing is here said of similar duties of the priests before the ark on Zion. But it ought not to be argued from this omission that in the chronicler’s opinion only choral services took place there. If, as we have supposed, Abiathar was attached to David’s sacred tent, sacrifice must have been offered there as well as at Gibeon. (Comp. chap. xviii. 15.) The present account says nothing of this, because the writer is mainly interested in the service of song. (See 1 Kings viii. 1–4.)

(43) This verse is a duplicate of 2 Sam. vi. 19, 20a.

Deported.—Plural; Samuel has singular.

Returned.—Rather, went round (chap. x. 14). Samuel has “returned,” which in Hebrew is very similar.

The incident which in 2 Sam. vi. 20–23 here follows (Michal’s encounter with David) is omitted by the chronicler as a matter of purely domestic interest, and therefore out of place in his history, which is mainly concerned with the sacred institutions. Chap. x. 29, however, plainly implies the story.

1. David, desiring to build a house for God, receives from Nathan a Divine promise of perpetual dominion (verses 1–15). 2. His prayer (verses 16–27). This section is a duplicate of 2 Sam. vii. The differences are mostly verbal rather than essential, and are due, as usual, to a natural tendency to interpret and simplify archaisms and obscurities in the original narrative.

(1) Now it came to pass, as David sat in his house.—In both texts the story of this chapter naturally follows that of the removal of the Ark, although the events themselves appear to belong to a later period of David’s reign, “when the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies” (2 Sam. vii. 1; comp. 1 Chron. xvii. 8). Verses 11–14 indicate some time before the birth of Solomon, but the date cannot be more exactly determined.

David.—Three in verses 1, 2, for which Samuel has “the king.” The chronicler loves the name of his ideal sovereign.

Sat.—Dwelt.

Lo.—Samuel, “See, now.”

An house.—The house—viz., that which Hiram’s craftsmen had built (chap. xiv. 1, sqq.).

Of cedars.—A vivid allusion to the splendour of the palace, with its doors, walls, and ceilings of cedar wood.

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under curtains. (2) Then Nathan said unto David, Do all that is in thine heart; for God is with thee.

(3) And it came to pass the same night, that the word of God came to Nathan, saying, (4) Go and tell David my servant, Thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in: (5) for I have not dwelt in an house since the day that I brought up Israel unto this day; but I have gone from tent to tent, and from one tabernacle to another. (6) Wheresoever I have walked with all Israel, spake I a word to any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people, saying, Why have ye not built me an house of cedars? (7) Now therefore thus shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee from the sheeppote, even 2 from following the sheep, that thou shouldst be ruler over my people Israel: (8) and I have been with thee whithersoever thou hast walked, and have cut off all thine enemies from before thee, and have made thee a name like the name of the great men that are in the earth. (9) Also I will ordain a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, and they shall dwell in their place, and shall be moved no more; neither shall the children of

With (in) all Israel.—Samuel, "in (among) all the sons of Israel." (Comp. Lev. xxvi. 11, 12; Deut. xxiii. 15.)

The judges of Israel.—Samuel has "tribes." The term "judges" would be more intelligible in later times, and has probably been substituted for the more difficult original expression. The following clause seems to refer to individual rulers, but is not really incompatible with a reference to the ascendency or hegemony of different tribes at different epochs of Israelite history. (Comp. Gen. xlix. 10; 1 Chron. xxviii. 4; Ps. lxviii. 67, 68.) The word "tribe" (shêbet) might only denote clan, or house, as in Judges xx. 12 (Heb.).

To feed.—Shepherd, or tend,—i.e., to govern. (Comp. Ps. lxxviii. 71.)

(7) I took thee from the sheeppote . . . — Comp. Ps. lxxviii. 70—72. The pronoun is emphatic: "I it was who took thee from the pasture."

From following.—Heb., from behind. Samuel has the older form of this proposition.

That thou shouldest be.—That thou mightest become.

Ruler.—Nâgid (chap. ix. 11, 20). (Comp. chap. xi. 2.)

Whithersoever thou hast walked.—Same phrase as in verse 6, "whithersoever," i.e., throughout thy whole career.

And have cut off all thine enemies.—This appears to refer not merely to the death of Saul and the overthrow of his house, but also to the successful conclusion of some of the wars recorded in the following chapters. (Comp. also chap. xiv. 8—17.)

And have made thee.—Rather, and I will make thee.

The great men.—The sovereigns of Egypt and Babylon, of Tyre, and the Hittite states.

(9) I will ordain a place for my people Israel, and will plant them.—Comp. Exod. xv. 17; Ps. xlv. 2, 3. Although Israel had effected a settlement in Canaan, the history seems to show that down to the times of David the tribal boundaries were subject to great fluctuation, and the inroads of surrounding peoples made their tenure very uncertain.

Them . . . they . . . their.—Heb., him . . . be . . . his; Israel, the subject, being singular.

In their place.—In his own stead, or fixed habitation. (Comp. homestead, farmstead.)

Shall be moved.—Shall be troubled, or disturbed.

Children of wickedness.—Sons of wickedness, i.e., wicked men; like "sons of Belial" (worthlessness).
wickedness waste them any more, as at
the beginning, (10) and since the time
that I commanded judges to be over my
people Israel. Moreover I will subdue all thine enemies. Furthermore I tell
thee that the Lord will build thee an
house. (11) And it shall come to pass,
when thy days be expired that thou
must go to be with thy fathers, that I
will raise up thy seed after thee, which
shall be of thy sons; and I will establish
his kingdom. (12) He shall build me an
house, and I will establish his throne for
ever. (13) a I will be his father, and he
shall be my son: and I will not take
my mercy away from him, as I took
it from him that was before thee:
(14) but I will settle him in mine house
and in my kingdom for ever: and his
throne shall be established for
evermore.
(15) According to all these words, and
according to all this vision, so did
Nathan speak unto David.

Blessings in his Seed.

2. David’s prayer (verses 16—27). The remarks
on verse 15 apply generally to this section also. The prayer

Waste them.—An Aramaic usage of the verb.
Samuel, “afflict them,” which seems original. (Comp.
Gen. xv. 13.)

As at the beginning.—Referring to the bondage
in Egypt.

(10) And since the time that I commanded
judges.—Heb., from days that . . . Samuel, more
definitely, “from the day that I appointed judges
over my people.” This whole clause should not have
been separated from verse 9, which it properly con­
cludes. The allusion is to the oppressions undergone
in the period of the judges, and the troubles of the
former reign.

Moreover (and) I will subdue all thine
enemies.—A continuation of the promises at the
beginning of verse 9. “I will subdue the foes of the
king, as I subdued the foes of the shepherd and the
outlaw.” (Comp. verse 8.) Instead of this, Samuel
has, “And I will give thee rest from all thy enemies.”

Furthermore I tell thee . . .—Literally, And I
have told thee, and a house will Jehovah build thee;”
that is, I have foretold it. (Comp. Isa. xi. 21, xlv. 21.)
That which follows is a sort of ironical
paragraph of verse 4 and 6,

But I will settle him (Heb., mabéh kim stand)
in mine house and in my kingdom.—Samuel,
“and thine house and thy kingdom shall be maintained
for ever,” repeating the same verb thrice. Our text is probably more correct. So
Vulg. and LXX. virtually; but Syriac, “My mercies
shall not depart from him, as I made [them] depart from
Saul who was before thee.”

(11) Omit the mark indicating the beginning of a
paragraph (¶).
And it shall come to pass.—In accordance with
the promise, “The Lord will build thee an house”
(verse 10). The phrase is wanting in Samuel, and
should probably be supplied, with LXX.

Be expired.—Are fulfilled (perfect; Samuel has
imperfect tense).

That thou must go to be with thy fathers.—
Literally, to go with thy fathers—an unusual expres­
sion, for which Samuel has the ordinary, “and thou lie
down with thy fathers.” (Comp. 1 Kings ii. 2: “Go
the way of all the earth.”)

Which shall be (shall arise or come, Gen. xvii. 16)
of thy sons.—Samuel has the more original, “which
shall go forth from thy bowels.” The chronicler has
paraphrased this, to suit the taste of a later age.

His kingdóthi.—Heb., mamlakhthi, a later word than the
synonym in Samuel (mamlákh).
David's Prayer

I. CHRONICLES, XVII.

and Thanksgiving.

(16) And David the king came and sat before the Lord, and said, Who am I, O Lord God, and what is mine house, that thou hast brought me hither? (17) And yet this was a small thing in thine eyes, O God; for thou hast also spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come, and hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O Lord God. (18) What can David speak more to thee for the honour of thy servant? for thou knowest thy servant. (19) O Lord, for thy servant's sake, and according to thine own heart,

hast thou done all this greatness, in making known all these great things. (20) O Lord, there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. (21) And what one nation in the earth is like thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem to be his own people, to make thee a name of greatness and terribleness, by driving out nations from before thy people, whom thou hast redeemed out of Egypt? (22) For thy people Israel didst thou make thine own people for ever; and

undoubtedly breathes the genuine Davidic spirit, even if it be merely an ideal soliloquy. But why may not David himself have recorded the substance of it as a memorial?

(19) Sat before the Lord.—In the tent of the Ark. And said.—Comp. Ps. xviii., title.

Who am I.—The longer form of the pronoun I is used in Samuel (אָנוּכִּי; here 'ani). O Lord God.—Heb. Jehovah Elohim. Samuel has "Adonai Jehovah," which is more original. David addresses God as "my Lord Jehovah;" just as in verses 4, 7, God speaks of David as "my servant." (Comp. the frequent style of the Assyrian kings, who speak of their wars as undertaken in the service of the gods their lords.)

Mine house.—My family.

Hitherto.—To this pitch of greatness. With this and the next verse, compare David's last words (2 Sam. xxiii. 5).

(17) And yet.—Samuel has the word here supplied in italics. David says, "My unlooked-for exaltation was not enough: thou hast also revealed to me the far future of my offspring."

O God.—Here and at the end of the verse Samuel again has "my Lord Jehovah."

Also.—Samuel has this word in the text.

And hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree.—The Hebrew is sanctified by the repetition of his [it] the law of man, my Lord Jehovah." The word "law," (תּוֹרָה) has been supposed to mean manner or custom in this place, but it is not used in that sense elsewhere. Its strict sense is teaching. (Comp. Isa. viii. 16, 20, where the oracles delivered to the prophet are called תּוֹרָה.) The rendering therefore is, and this (thy gracious revelation) is a lesson to mankind. Our text demands one slight alteration, in accordance with this. Read תּוֹרָה for תּוֹרָה, and then we may translate: "and thou regardest me (I.XX., civiles; comp. Luke i. 49) like man's teaching (Ps. xxxii. 8) that bringeth up (same verb, Ezek. xix. 2), O Lord God;" that is to say, Thy revelation is a part of our moral discipline, like the instruction which men give their children. David was not allowed to build the Temple, which was so far a check; but encouragement was added to the prohibition by the wisdom of his heavenly Teacher. If we might assume the other sense of תּוֹרָה, we might render: and thou regardedst me after the manner of men that exaltest, that is, as human benefactors help on those whom they favour. The old versions give no help.

Samuel has the omitted "spoke." (Comp. Ps. cxx. 3.) The word translated "for the honour," may be a corruption of that for "to speak."

Of thy servant?—The Hebrew term is in the accusative case, and should be omitted as a mistaken repetition of the same word at the end of the verse.

(19) O Lord.—Not in Samuel. Probably belongs to end of last verse.

For thy servant's sake.—Comp. Ps. cxxviii. 10; 2 Chron. vi. 42. Samuel has the more original "for thy words' sake." (Comp. verse 23, and chap. xvi. 15.)

Heart—i.e., purpose, intent.

In making known all these great things (greatnesses).—The repetition "greatness . . . greatnesses" is probably a scribe's error. Samuel has the right text: "Thou hast done all this greatness" (work of power, גֶּרֶשׁ, viz., informing Thy servant of what shall be hereafter. Isaiah makes the miracle of prediction a special difference between the true God and idols (Isa. xli. 21—29, xliv. 11, 21).

(20) One or two words are omitted. (See 2 Sam. vii. 22: "Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God, for there is none," &c. Comp. Isa. xlvi. 8, xlv. 5, 6, &c.; Deut. xxxii. 28; and for the end of the verse, Ps. xlv. 1; Exod. x. 2; Deut. iv. 9.)

(21) And what one nation in the earth.—Rather, And who is like Thy people Israel, a single (isolated) race on the earth? (Comp. Num. xxvii. 9.)

Nation (גִּיוֹן)—i.e., race; a people considered as united by common blood, speech, country.

People ( dlgm)—i.e., a political community, social union, or state, owning one sovereign.

Whom God went . . .—Literally, which God went (marched) to redeem to Himself as a people. Samuel has "which gods went."

To make thee a name.—That is, for Thyself, God. Samuel has "for him," in the same sense.

A name of greatness and terribleness.—Both nouns are plural, and imply renown for great and terrible deeds.

By driving.—To drive; parallel with "to redeem" and "to make."

Nations.—Samuel adds, "and his gods." The text of this verse in Samuel is corrupt (comp. the LXX.), and perhaps the added phrase is spurious. But, on the other hand, the chronicler may have omitted it because, like Isaiah, he regarded the heathen deities as nonentities. In earlier times, foreign gods were spoken of as real beings, subordinate to Jehovah. (Comp. the LXX. rendering of Deut. xxxii. 8.)

(22) For thy people Israel . . .—Literally, And Thou gavest (Samuel, confirmedst it) Thy people Israel unto Thyself for a people. Our reading is probably a result of partial obliteration.
And thou, Lord...—Literally, and Thou, Jehovah, becamest unto them for a God. (See Gen. xvii. 7, 8, xxviii. 21; Exod. vi. 3, 7.)

Let the thing...—Let the word (promise) be upheld, maintained, assured. Samuel has a different verb, “establish thou.”

Hast told thy servant...—“Yea, let it be assured. This repetition is wanting in Samuel.

Hast found in his heart.—Rather, hath found his heart—i.e., hath taken courage. The noun is expressed in Samuel. As to its omission here, comp. chap. xiv. 1. The phrase is unique in Hebrew.

To pray.—Samuel adds, “this prayer.”

And thou, Lord...—Literally, and Thou, Jehovah, becamest unto them for a God. (See Gen. xvii. 7, 8, xxviii. 21; Exod. vi. 3, 7.)

Therefore now, Lord, let the thing that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant and concerning his house be established for ever, and do as thou hast said. (24) Let it even be established, that thy name may be magnified for ever, saying, The Lord of hosts is the God of Israel, even a God to Israel: and let the house of David thy servant be established before thee. (25) For thou, O my God, hast told thy servant that thou wilt build him an house: therefore thy servant hath found in his heart to pray before thee. (26) And now, Lord, thou art God, and hast promised this goodness unto thy servant: (27) now therefore let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may be before thee for ever: for thou blessest, O Lord, and it shall be blessed for ever.

CHAPTER XVIII.—(1) Now after this “it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them, and took Gath and her towns out of the hand of the Philistines. (2) And he smote Moab; and the Moabites became variations, such as they are, may be accounted for (1) by mistakes of copiers; (2) by the chronicler’s habit of explaining difficult expressions, abridging what appeared needlessly prolix, and adding here and there small details from another source.

XVIII.

1. A summary account of David’s wars of conquest (verses 1—13).

2. His internal administration (verses 14—17). (Comp. 2 Sam. viii., and the Notes on that chapter.)

(1—3) Reduction of the Philistines, Moabites, and Ammon of Zobah.

Now after this it came to pass.—Literally, And it befell afterwards. This expression does not put the contents of this chapter into direct chronological sequence with those of the last. (Comp. Note on chap. xvii. 1.) The formula of the original history, from which both Samuel and Chronicles have derived a chief part of their substance, has been taken over without modification, after the manner of Oriental compilers. We may, therefore, regard the phrase as a mere mark of transition in the narrative.

Gath and her towns.—Heb., her daughters, that is, outlying dependencies. Samuel has, “And David took the bridle [control, supremacy] of the metheg ha’amah.” &c. The chronicler or his authority has interpreted this curious expression (metheg ha’amah). If at the time Gath was the chief city of Philistia, and David made it recognise his suzerainty by payment of tribute, the phrases of both books are intelligible. In Solomon’s time Gath was ruled by a king, Achish (1 Kings ii. 39), but he was hardly independent of Solomon. (Comp. 1 Kings iv. 24.) The general sense is the same if metheg ha’amah be rendered the bridle of the arm—i.e., the sovereign control, or supremacy.

(2) Much abridged, as compared with Samuel. After the words “he smote Moab,” we read there of a partial massacre of the conquered. The omission is scarcely due to any unfair bias on the part of the chronicler. Indeed, as a Jew, possessed with all the national exclusiveness and hatred of the aliens who always misunderstood and sometimes cruelly oppressed his people, he was not likely to regard the slaughter of captive Moabites from a modern point of view. (Comp. Ezra vi. 21, ix., x.; Neh. ii. 19, iv., vi., xiii.) Besides, he has related the cruel treatment of the Ammonite prisoners (chap. xx. 3). (See the prophecy, Num. xxiv. 17.)
And the Moabites became—literally, and they became—viz., Moab. The name of the country denotes the people. Samuel has “and Moab [i.e., the country] became” (verb singular feminine).

David’s servants.—Samuel, “to David for servants.”

And brought gifts.—Literally, bringers of an offering—i.e., tribute. Similar notices are common in the Assyrian inscriptions. (Comp. 1 Kings iv. 21; 2 Kings iii. 4; and the famous Moabite inscription of which the fragments are now in the Louvre, and which records Mesha’s revolt against the successor of David who slew of the Syrians.—literally, “bringers of a golden offering”—i.e., “collectors” —“the Syriac, "sfrategi," the LXX. and Vulg., "garrison." The Arabic here has "collectors and guards;" the Syriac, "commanders."

Syria-Damascus.—Aram of Damascus (verse 5). (Comp. verse 2 for the next clause.)

David’s servants.—To David servants—the order of Samuel.

Thus.—And.

Preserved.—Made victorious.

Preserved David.—Samuel has “eth-David—i.e., the simple accusative; Chronicles, le-David, a late construction.

Whithersoever he went.—Same phrase as in chap. xvi. 6, 8.

Shields.—Shihté. Probably “armour” or “arms.” (Comp. 2 Kings xi. 10; 2 Chron. xxvii. 9, “the spears, and the shields, and the ebl'ā'im;” Ezek. xxvii. 11; Cant. iv. 4; Jer. xi. 11, “quiwers.”) LXX. here, “golden collars” (Samuel, “bracelets”); Syriac and Arabic, “golden plates which hung on the horses;” Vulg., “quiwers” (Samuel, “golden arms”).

Hadadezer was not dethroned, but became a vassal king.

On.—Samuel, “to” = belonging to.

Tibbath, and • • • Chun.—Two unknown places. The names in Samuel are Betah and Beothah. Tehah occurs as an Aramean name in Gen. xxii. 24, of which “Tibbath” is a feminine form, and “Betah” probably a corruption. Syriac, “Tebah” and “Béruthi” in both explanations. So Arabic of Samuel, “Tábāh” and “Barūth” (here “Himsa” and “Baalbec,” probably by way of an explanation). The readings of the LXX., “Metebak” (or Masbachi) in Samuel, and “Metebeth” here, support Tehah. Vulgate in Samuel, “Bete,” but here “Thebath,” obviously equivalent to Tibbath.
brazen sea, and the pillars, and the vessels of brass.

(9) Now when 1 Tou king of Hamath heard how David had smitten all the host of Hadarezer king of Zobah; (10) he sent Hadoram his son to king David, to enquire of his welfare, and to con­gratulate him, because he had fought against Hadarezer, and smitten him; (for Hadarezer had had war with Tou) and with him all manner of vessels of gold and silver and brass. (11) They also king David dedicated unto the LORD, with the silver and the gold that he brought from all these nations; from Edom, and from Moab, and from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines, and from Amalek. (12) Moreover Abishai the son of Zeruiah slew of the Edomites in the valley of salt eighteen thousand. (13) And he put garrisons in Edom; and all the Edomites became David’s servants. Thus the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.

(14) So David reigned over all Israel, and executed judgment and justice among all his people. (15) And Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the host; and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, recorder. (16) And Zadok the son of Ahitub, and Abimelech the son of Abiathar, were the priests; and Shavsha
I. CHRONICLES, XIX. Hanun are Insulted.

David’s Messengers to Ammon, Hanun’s Insult, and David’s Kindness to Mephibosheth.

CHAPTER XIX.—(1) Now it came to pass after this, that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon died, and his son reigned in his stead. (2) And David said, I will shew kindness unto Hanun the son of Nahash, because his father shewed kindness to me. And David sent messengers to comfort him concerning his father. So the servants of David came into the land of the children of Ammon; and the sons of David were chief about the king.

XIX.

The war with the sons of Ammon and their Aramaean allies. The chapter is a duplicate of 2 Sam. x. The story of David’s kindness to Mephibosheth (2 Sam. xii. 27 ff.), creditable as it was to David, is omitted by the chronicler, as belonging rather to the private than the public history of the king.

(1) Now it came to pass after this.—The same phrase as at chap. xviii. 1; it has no chronological significance (see Note there). The conflict with Ammon, which has been glanced at in chap. xviii. 11, is now to be described at length (chaps. xix. 1—xx. 3), and in connection therewith the overthrow of Hadadezer (chap. xviii. 3—8) is again related, with additional details.

(2) Nahash Samuel omits, but adds “Hanun.” The omissions in each are perhaps accidental. Saul’s first campaign was against Nahash (1 Sam. xi.).

Children of Ammon.—Sons of Ammon, like “sons of Israel.” The title calls attention to their tribal organisation.

Because.—For. Samuel, “according as.”

Shewed kindness to me.—The Hebrew phrase, which answers to the Greek of Luke i. 72. (See Revised Version.)

The rest of the verse is made more perspicuous than in 2 Sam. x. 2 by slight changes and additions.

(3) Are not his servants come . . . for to search, and to overthrow, and to spy out the land?—Literally, Is it not for to search . . . that his servants are come unto thee? This is hardly an improvement on Samuel: “Is it not to search the city (Rabbath-Ammon, the capital), and to spy it out, and to overthrow it, that David hath sent his servants unto thee?” The Syriac and Arabic agree with Samuel in reading “city;” LXX. and Vulg., “land.”

(4) Shaved them.—i.e., the half of their beards (Samuel).

Hard by their buttocks.—Literally, unto the extremities. The chronicler has substituted a more democratic term for the one which appears in Samuel.

Cut off their garments.—To look like captives (Isa. xx. 4).
Hanun hires Chariots

I. CHRONICLES, XIX.

and Prepares for War.

Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown, and then return.

(6) And when the children of Ammon saw that they had made themselves odious to David, Hanun and the children of Ammon sent a thousand talents of silver to hire them chariots and horsemen out of Mesopotamia, and out of Syria-maachah, and out of Zobah. (7) So they hired thirty and two thousand chariots, and the king of Maachah and his people; who came and pitched before Medeba. And the children of Ammon gathered themselves together from their cities, and came to battle. (8) And when David heard of it, he sent Joab, and all the host of the mighty men. (9) And the children of Ammon came out, and put the battle in array before the gate of the city: and the kings that were come were by themselves in the field. (10) Now when Joab saw that the battle was set against him before and behind, he chose out of all the choice men.
of Israel, and put them in array against the Syrians. (11) And the rest of the people he delivered unto the hand of Abishai his brother, and they set themselves in array against the children of Ammon. (12) And he said, If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will help thee. (13) Be of good courage, and let us behave ourselves valiantly for our people, and for the cities of our God: and let the Lord do that which is good in his sight.

(14) So Joab and the people that were with him drew nigh before the Syrians unto the battle; and they fled before him. (15) And when the children of Ammon saw that the Syrians were fled, they likewise fled before Abishai his brother, and entered into the city. Then Joab came to Jerusalem.

(16) And when the Syrians saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they sent messengers, and drew forth the Syrians that were beyond the river: and Shopach the captain of the host of Hadarezer went before them. (17) And it was told David; and he gathered all Israel, and passed over Jordan, and came upon them, and set the battle in array against them. So when David had put the battle in array against the Syrians, they fought with him. (18) But the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew of the Syrians seven thousand men which fought in chariots, and forty thousand footmen, and killed Shopach

The Victory

1. CHRONICLES, XIX.

of Israel.
the captain of the host. (19) And when the servants of Hadarezer saw that they were put to the worse before Israel, they made peace with David, and became his servants: neither would the Syrians help the children of Ammon any more.

CHAPTER XX.—(1) And it came to pass, that after the year was expired, at the time that kings go out to battle, Joab led forth the power of the army, and wasted the country of the children of Ammon, and came and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried at Jerusalem. And Joab smote Rabbah, and destroyed it. (2) And David took the crown of their king from off his head, and found it to weigh a talent of gold, and there were precious stones in it; and it was set upon David’s head: and he brought also exceeding much spoil out of the city. (3) And he brought out the people that were in it, and cut them with saws, and with harrows of iron, and with "horsemen" may be more correct than "footmen." (See chap. xviii. 4, 5.)

And killed Shophach...—Abridged statement. (Comp. 2 Sam. x. 18.)

(19) And when the servants of Hadarezer.—Samuel is fuller and clearer: "And all the kings, servants of Hadarezer." The tributaries of Hadarezer now transferred their fealty to David.

They made peace with David.—Samuel, "with Israel." And became his servants.—Literally, and served him. Samuel, "and served them." To the writer of Samuel God’s people is the main topic; to the chronicler the divinely-anointed king. The difference, therefore, though slight, is characteristic.

Neither would the Syrians’ help.—And Aram was not willing to come to the help of the sons of Ammon. Samuel, "And Aram feared to come to the help," &c.

XX.

(1) The siege and storm of Rabbah. Completion of the Ammonite campaign (verses 1—3). (2) A fragment, relating how three heroes of Israel slew three Philistine giants (verses 4—8).

Section (1) is parallel to 2 Sam. xi. 1 and xii. 26, 30, 31. The chronicler omits the long intervening account of David’s guilt in relation to Uriah and Bathsheba, not because he had any thought of wiping out the memory of David’s crimes (an object quite beyond his power to secure, even if he had desired it, unless he could first have destroyed every existing copy of Samuel), but because that story of shame and reproach did not harmonise with the plan and purpose of his work, which was to portray the bright side of the reign of David, as founder of the legitimate dynasty and organiser of the legitimate worship.

(1) After the year was expired.—Heb., at the time of the return of the year: i.e., in spring. (See 1 Kings xx. 22, 26.)

At the time that kings go out.—See chap. xx. 16. Military operations were commonly suspended during winter. The Assyrian kings have chronicled their habit of making yearly expeditions of conquest and plunder. It was exceptional for the king to “remain in the country.”

Joab led forth the power of the army.—Samuel gives details: "David sent Joab and his servants [the contingents of tributaries, chap. xix. 19], and all Israel “(i.e., the entire national array)."

Wasted the country.—An explanation of Samuel: "wasted the sons of Ammon." Rabbah, or Rabbath Ammon, the capital. (See 2 Sam. xi. 1; Amos i. 14; Jer. xlix. 2, 3.)

But David tarried (Heb., was tarrying) at Jerusalem.—While Joab’s campaign was in progress. In 2 Sam. xi. 1 this remark prepares the way for the account which there follows of David’s temptation and fall. And Joab smote Rabbah, and destroyed it.—A brief statement, summarizing the events related in 2 Sam. xi. 27—29. From that passage we learn that, after an assault which doubtless reduced the defenders to the last stage of weakness, Joab sent a message to David at Jerusalem to come and appropriate the honours of the capture. Our verse 2, which abruptly introduces David himself as present at Rabbah, obviously implies a knowledge of the narrative as it is told in Samuel, and would hardly be intelligible without it. Whether the chronicler here and elsewhere borrows directly from Samuel, or from another document depending ultimately on the original as Samuel, cannot certainly be decided.

(3) The crown of their king.—Or, “of Milcom” or “Moloch,” their god. The Heb. melkám, “their Melech” (i.e., king), occurs in this sense (Zeph. i. 5. Comp. Amos. v. 26). The same title is applied by the prophets to Jehovah (Isa. vi. 5, xlv. 6, “Iahweh, the king [melech] of Israel.” Comp. Zeph. iii. 15, and John i. 49, xii. 15; 2 Sam. xii. 12; Pss. v. 2, lxxix. 18; Isa. viii. 21; and Jer. x. 10). The LXX. here has “Molech, their king”; Vulg., “Melchom”; Arabic, “Malecha, their god;” all confirming our rendering.

A talent of gold.—The Arabic Version says one hundred pounds. Modern scholars consider the “talent of gold” as about one hundred and thirty-one pounds troy. If the weight was anything like this, the crown was obviously more suited for the head of a big idol than of a man.

And there were precious stones in it.—Samuel includes their weight in the talent. And it was set (Heb., became) upon David’s head.—Vulg., “he made himself a crown out of it.” This may be the meaning; or else the weighty mass of gold and jewels may have been held over the king’s head by his attendants on the occasion of its capture.

Exceeding much spoil.—Comp. the continual boast of the Assyrian conquerors: “spoils without number I carried off” (salallat la mani aṣāla). (3) And he brought.—Better, “And the people that were in it he brought out, and saved with the saw, and with the iron threshing-drums (Isa. xxi. 15), and with the axes.”

Sawed.—The Hebrew is an old word, only found here. Samuel reads, by change of one letter, “set them in,” or “among,” the saws, &c.

With the axes.—So Samuel. Our Hebrew text repeats the word “saw” in the plural, owing to a
Three Giants are Slain

I. CHRONICLES, XX.

by David’s Servants.

axes. Even so dealt David with all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David and all the people returned to Jerusalem.

(4) And it came to pass after this, that there arose war at Gezer with the Philistines; at which time Sibbecai the Hushathite slew Sippai, that was of the children of the giant: and they were subdued. (5) And there was war again with the Philistines; and Elhanan

scribe’s error. The two words differ by a single letter. Samuel adds, “and made them pass through the brick-kiln,” or “Moloch’s fire” (2 Kings xxiii. 10).

Even so dealt David.—Literally, And so David used to do. These cruelties were enacted again at the taking of every Ammonite city. There needs no attempt to palliate such revolting savagery; but according to the ideas of that age it was only a glorious revenge. As David treated Ammon, so would the Ammonites have treated Israel, had the victory been theirs. (Comp. their behaviour to the Gileadites, Amos i. 13; comp. also the atrocities of Assyrian conquerors, Hos. x. 14; and of the Babylonians Ps. cxxxvii. 7—9.)

II. This section corresponds to 2 Sam. xxi. 18—22. The chronicler has omitted the history of Absalom’s rebellion, with all the events which preceded and followed it, as recorded in 2 Sam. xiii.—xx.; and, further, the touching story of the sacrifice of seven sons of Saul at the demand of the Gibeonites (2 Sam. xxi. 1—14).

(4) And it came to pass after this.—Comp. Notes on chaps. xviii. I, xix. 1. The chronicler has omitted, whether by accident or design, the account with which, in 2 Sam. xxi. 15—17, this fragmentary section begins, and which tells how David was all but slain by the giant Ishbibenob.

There arose war.—Literally, there stood, an unique phrase, which perhaps originated in a misreading of that which appears in 2 Sam. xxiii. 18, “there became again.”

Gezer.—Samuel, “Gob,” an unknown place. Each word (spelling Gob fully) has three consonants in the name of a god, Tablet I., “forests of weavers” — an absurdity, this is plausible. Whether we proceed further in the same direction must depend on the general view we take of the chronicler’s relation to the Books of Samuel. It is easy, but hardly satisfactory, to allege that he felt the difficulty, which every modern reader must feel, and altered the text accordingly. The real question is whether he has done this arbitrarily, or upon the evidence of another document than his MS. of Samuel. Now, it is fair to say that (1) hitherto we have observed no signs of arbitrary alteration; (2) we have had abundant proof that the chronicler actually possessed other sources besides Samuel. There is no apparent reason why “Lahmi” (i.e., Lahmiyah) should not be a nomen individui. (Comp. Assyrian Lahmû, the name of a god, Tablet I., Creation Series.) It is, however, quite possible that Elhanan is another, and in fact, the original name of David. The appellative David, “the beloved” (comp. Dido), may have gradually supplanted the old Elhanan in the popular memory. Solomon we know was at first named Jedidiah, and it is highly probable that the true designation of the first king of Israel has been lost, the name Stella (“the asked”) having been given in allusion to the fact that the people had asked for a king. We may compare, besides, the double names Jehohaz-Shalum, Mattaniah-Zedekiah, and perhaps Uzziah-Azariah. The Targum on Samuel partly supports this suggestion (see the Note there). I would add that Jaare in Hebrew writing is an easy corruption of Jesse; so that the original reading of 2 Sam. xxi. 18 may have been, “And Elhanan the son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, slew Goliath,” &c. In that case, the reading of Chronicles must be considered an unsuccessful emendation, due probably to the compiler whose work the chronicler followed.

Man of great stature.—See Margin. Samuel has a slightly different form.

Whose fingers . . . .—The Authorised Version here agrees with the Hebrew text of Samuel. The Hebrew text of Chronicles is abridged: “And his digits six and six—twenty and four.”

Was the son of the giant.—Was born to the Rephaim; i.e., the clan so named.
David orders the census of Israel.

I. CHRONICLES, XXI. People to be Numbered.

(8) These were born unto the giant in Gath; and they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants.

CHAPTER XXI. (1) And "Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel." (2) And David said to Joab and to the rulers of the people, Go, number Israel from Beersheba even to Dan; and bring the number of them to me, that I may know it. (3) And Joab answered, The Lord make his people an hundred times so many more as they be: but, my lord the king, are they not all my lord's servants? why then doth my lord require this thing? why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel? (4) Nevertheless the king's word prevailed against Joab. Wherefore Joab departed, and went throughout all Israel, and came to Jerusalem. (5) And Joab gave the sum of the number of the people unto David. And all they of Israel were a thousand

[8] These ('el), a rare word, found eight times in the Pentateuch with the article, here only without; perhaps an error of transcription. Samuel, "these four." The chronicler has omitted one giant. (See verse 4.)

The giant.—The Rephaim: that is, the clan or tribe of Rephaim. They need not have been brothers.

The Census, and consequent plague. The hallowing of the Temple area. Omitting the magnificent ode which David sang to his deliverer (2 Sam. xxii.), and the last words of David (2 Sam. xxiii. 1-7), as well as the list of David's heroes (2 Sam. xxiii. 8-39), which has already been repeated in chap. xi., the chronicler resumes the ancient narrative at the point coincident with 2 Sam. xxiv. (See the notes there.) Though the two accounts obviously had a common basis, the deviations of our text from that of Samuel are much more numerous and noteworthy than is usual. They are generally explicable by reference to the special purpose and tendency of the writer.

In Samuel the narrative of the census comes in as a kind of appendix to the history of David; here it serves to introduce the account of the preparations for building the Temple, and the organisation of its ministry.

(1-6) The Census.

(1) And Satan stood up against Israel.—Perhaps, And an adversary (hostile influence) arose against Israel. So in 2 Sam. xix. 23 the sons of Zeruiah are called "adversaries" (Heb., a Satan) to David. (Comp. 1 Kings xi. 14, 25.) When the adversary, the enemy of mankind, is meant, the word takes the article, which it has not here. (Comp. Job i., ii. and Zech. iii. 1, 2.)

And provoked David.—Pricked him on, incited him. 2 Sam. xxiv. begins: "And again the anger of Jehovah burned against Israel, and He (or it) incited David against them, saying, Go, number Israel and Judah." It thus appears that the adversary of our text, the influence hostile to Israel, was the wrath of God. The wrath of God is the Scriptural name for that aspect of the Divine nature under which it pursues and exacts retribution. (Comp. Rom. i. 18, 24, 26, 28.) The true reading in Samuel may well be, "And an adversary incited David," &c., the word Satan having fallen out of the text.

Yet the expression "Jehovah provoked or incited against . . ." occurs (1 Sam. xxix. 16).

To number Israel—Samuel adds, "and Judah.

(2) And to the rulers (captains) of the people.—Omitted in Samuel, which reads, "Joab, the captain of the host, who was with him." The "captains of the host" are, however, associated in the work of the census with Joab (2 Sam. xxiv. 4). The fact that Joab and his staff were deputed to take the census seems to prove that it was of a military character.

Go.—Plural.

Number.—Enrol, or register (ayyāḏ). A different word (mānāḥ) is used in verse 1, and in the parallel passage. Samuel has, "Run over, I pray, all the tribes of Israel from Dan to Beersheba," using the very word (shāfî) which, in the prologue of Job (chaps. i. 7, ii. 2), Satan uses of his own wanderings over the earth.

From Beersheba even to Dan.—As if the party were to proceed from south to north. (See verse 4.) The reverse order is usual. (See Judges xx. 1; 1 Sam. iii. 20.)

(9) Answered.—Hebrew, said.

The Lord . . . as they be.—Literally, Jehovah added upon his people like them on hundred times, an abridged form of what is read in Samuel.

But, my lord the king, are they not . . .?—Instead of this, Samuel records another wish, "And may the eyes of my lord the king be seeing," that is, proven. (Gen. xvi. 13.)

Why then doth my lord require this thing?—So Samuel, in slightly different terms: "And my lord the king, why desireth he this proposal?"

Why will he be (why should he become) a cause of trespass to Israel?—Not in Samuel. It is an explanatory addition by the chronicler.

(4) Wherefore Joab departed.—"Went out" scil. from the king's presence (Samuel). The chronicler omits the account of the route of Joab and his party, as described in 2 Sam. xxiv. 4-8. They crossed Jordan, and went to Aroer, Jazer, Gilead, and Dan; then round to Zidon, "the fortress of Tyre, and all the cities of the Hivite and Canaanite, and came out at the nāqob of Judah, to Beersheba." The business occupied nine months and twenty days; and the fact that the generalissimo of David's forces and his chief officers found leisure for the undertaking indicates a time of settled peace. The census, therefore, belongs to the later years of the reign.

(5) The number.—Muster, or census (mīḏqāḏ). The first clause is identical with Samuel, but has "David" for "the king," as elsewhere.
thousand and an hundred thousand men that drew sword: and Judah was four hundred threescore and ten thousand men that drew sword. (6) But Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them: for the king’s word was abominable to Joab. (7) And God was displeased with this thing; therefore he smote Israel. (8) And David said unto God, "I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing: but now, I beseech thee, do away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.

And all they of Israel.—And all Israel became (came to). The numbers are different in Samuel, which states them as 800,000 for Israel and 500,000 for Judah. The latter may fairly be regarded as a round number (500,000), our text giving the more exact total (650,000). As to the former, we may assume that the 1,100,000 of our text is an error of transcription, or, more probably, that the traditions respecting this census varied, as may easily have happened, inasmuch as the numbers were not registered in the royal archives (chap. xxvii. 24). Perhaps, however, our estimate includes the standing army of David, reckoned (chap. xxvii. 1-15) at a total of 288,000 men (in round numbers, 300,000); thus 800,000 (Sam.) + 300,000 = 1,100,000 (Chron.). (6) But Levi. ...—This verse is wanting in Samuel, but it probably existed in the original source. There is nothing in the style to suggest a later hand, while the word "counted" (paqad), which has not been used before in this chapter, occurs twice in the parallel passage (2 Sam. xxiv. 2, 4). It is noticeable also that the chronicler writes "the king" (not "David") here, as in Samuel. As regards the fact stated, we may observe that the sacerdotal tribe of Levi would naturally be exempted from a census taken for military or political purposes. (Comp. Numb. i. 47, 49.) And chap. xxvii. 24 expressly asserts that the census was not completed; a result with which Joab’s disapprobation of the scheme may have had much to do. The order in which the tribes were numbered (2 Sam. xxiv. 4-8; see verse 4) makes it likely that Judah and Benjamin were to have been taken last, and that, after numbering Judah, Joab repaired to the capital, where he was ordered by the king to desist from the undertaking. Josephus (Antiq. vii. 13, 1) speaks as if Joab had not had time to include Benjamin in the census. He may have feared to give offence to the tribe of Samul. (7-13) The Divine wrath, declared by Gad the seer.

(7) And God was displeased. ...—This verse also is not read in Samuel, which has instead, "And David’s heart smote him after that he had numbered the people." The peculiarities of expression in Samuel suggest textual corruption. The chronicler’s verse is a sort of general heading, or anticipative summary, to the following narrative. The margin rightly renders the first clause (see Gen. xxi. for the same unusual construction). (8) And David said. ...—This verse is verbatim the same with its parallel, save that it makes the characteristic substitution of "God" for "Jehovah," and adds the explanatory phrase "this thing," in the first half, and in the second omits the Divine Name altogether.

God’s Message to him. (9) And the Lord spake unto Gad, David's seer, saying, (10) Go and tell David, saying, Thus saith the Lord, I offer thee three things: choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee. (11) So Gad came to David, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Choose thee (12) either three years’ famine; or three months to be destroyed before thy foes, while that the sword of thine enemies overtaketh thee; or else three days the sword of the Lord, even the pestilence, in the land, and the angel of the Lord destroying throughout all the thousand and an hundred thousand men that drew sword: and Judah was four hundred threescore and ten thousand men that drew sword. (6) But Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them: for the king’s word was abominable to Joab. (7) And God was displeased with this thing; therefore he smote Israel. (8) And David said unto God, "I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing: but now, I beseech thee, do away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.

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Do away.—Cause to pass over, and so away. David’s conscience misgave him in the night, before his interview with Gad. (See 2 Sam. xxiv. 11.) (9) And the Lord (Jehovah) spake unto Gad.—Samuel, “And David arose in the morning. Now a word of Jehovah had come to Gad the prophet, a seer of David, saying—” This appears to be more original than our text.

David’s seer.—Better, a seer of David’s, for the same title is applied to Heman (chap. xxv. 5). For Gad, see 1 Sam. xxii. 5, and 1 Chron. xxix. 29. From the latter passage it has been inferred that it was Gad who wrote the original record of the census. (10) This verse, again, nearly coincides with the parallel in Samuel. The variations look like corrections and explanatory or paraphrastic substitutions. Thus the word “go” is here imperative, instead of the less usual infinitive; “saying” is added by way of clearness; the easier phrase, “I offer thee” (spread or lay before thee), is given in place of the curious “I lift up” (i.e., impose) “on thee” (notch for nōdel; a change such as is common in the Targum); and, lastly, the pronoun of them, which is masculine in Samuel, is more correctly feminine here. (11) And said unto him.—Samuel has the pleonastic, “And told him, and said,” &c. The following curse from the Annals of Tiglath Pileser I. (circ. 1120 B.C.) well illustrates the three penalties proposed by God to David: “May Asur and Anum, the great gods my lords, mightily rebuke him and curse him with grievous curse . . . The overthrow of his army may they work! In presence of his foes may they make him dwell altogether! May Rimaron with evil pestilence his land cut off! Want of crops, famine, corpses, to his country may be cast!” Thus saith the Lord, Choose thee. Not in Samuel, which has instead a direct question: “Shall there come to thee seven years’ famine in thy land?” Our “choose” (take) is a word of later use in Hebrew. The Syriac gives the same term (gabbēl). (12) Three years’ famine.—This appears correct, as harmonising with the three months and three days of the other visitations. Samuel has the reading “seven,” which perhaps originated in some scribe’s memory of the famine described in Gen. xli. 30, sqq.
While that the sword of thine enemies overtake thee. -Literally, and the sword of thy foes at overtaking. The word "overtaking" (massageth) only occurs besides in Lev. xiv. 21. Samuel has simply, "and he pursuing thee," Perhaps the right text is, and he pursue thee at overtaking. (Comp. the Syriac here: "Three months thou shalt be subdued before thine enemy, and he shall be pursuing thee, and he shall be mastering thee.")

Or else three days the sword of the Lord . . . coast of Israel. -Samuel has the brief, "Or that there be three days' pestilence in thy land." Our text appears to be an exegetical expansion of the older statement. Others suppose it to be the original, of which Samuel is an epitome, alleging that otherwise "the angel" is introduced in 2 Sam. xxiv. 16 quite suddenly and abruptly. But we must remember that in the thought of those times pestilence and "the sword," or "angel of the Lord," would be suggestive of each other. (Comp. 2 Kings xix. 35; and for the three judgments, Ezek. v. 17, xiv. 13-19, 21; Lev. xxvi. 25, 26.)

Throughout all the coasts. -In every border.

Now therefore advise thyself. -And now see, Samuel, "Now know and see."  

And David said. -Almost identical with Samuel. "Let me fall" looks like an improvement of "Let us fall." The word "very" (not in Sam.) mentions the essential fact that David "saw the angel" (text), elsewhere Araunah. "Let me fall" looks like an improvement of (16). This verse is not read in Samuel, which, however, has the brief, "And David said unto God, Is it not I that commanded the people to repented of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, It is enough, stay now thine hand. And the angel of the Lord stood by the threshing-floor of Araunah, the Jebusite. (16) And David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of the Lord stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders of Israel, who were clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces. (17) And David said unto God, Is it not I that commanded the people to

The Pestilence Is sent

I. CHRONICLES, XXI.

1 Or, many.

coasts of Israel. Now therefore advise thyself what word I shall bring again to him that sent me. (13) And David said unto God, I am in a great strait; let me fall now into the hand of the Lord; for very 'great are his mercies: but let me not fall into the hand of man. (14) So the Lord sent pestilence upon Israel: and there fell of Israel seventy thousand men.

(15) And God sent an 'angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it: and as he was destroying, the Lord beheld, and he repented of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, It is enough, stay now thine hand. And the angel of the Lord stood by the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite. (16) And David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of the Lord stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders of Israel, who were clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces. (17) And David said unto God, Is it not I that commanded the people to
Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered?—Literally, to number the people. In Samuel these words are wanting. They may have been added by the chronicler for the sake of clearness, though they may also have formed part of the original narrative. 

Even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed.—Samuel reads, “Lo, I” (different pronoun) “have sinned, and I have dealt crookedly.” Our text here may be paraphrastic, but hardly a corruption of the older one.

But as for these sheep, what . . . father’s house.—Verbatim as in Samuel, save that the appeal, “O Lord my God,” is wanting there. (Literally, But these, the sheep. The king was the shepherd.)

But not on thy people, that they should be plagued.—Literally, and on thy people, not for a plague. The strangeness of this order makes it likely that these words comprise two marginal notes, or glosses, which have crept into the text. They are not read in Samuel. (18-27) The purchase of Ornan’s threshing-floor as a place of sacrifice.

(23) Then the angel of the Lord commanded Gad to say to David.—Rather, Now the angel had told Gad to tell David. In Samuel, the mention of the angel is not mentioned. There we read, “And Gad came that day to David, and said unto him, Go up,” &c. No doubt it is only in the later prophetic books of the Canon that angels are introduced as the medium of communication between God and His prophets. (See Dan. viii. 16, ix. 21; Zech. i. 9, 12, &c.; but comp. Judges vi. 11, 14, 16, &c., and Gen. xviii. 1, 2, 13, xxxii. 24, 30.)

(24) At the saying.—Samuel, “according to.” The difference is only that of the “one tittle,” or small projection, of a letter, mentioned in Matt. v. 18.

Which he spake in the name of the Lord.—Samuel reads, “as the Lord commanded.” The variation is merely verbal.

(29) And Ornan turned back (returned), and saw the angel; and his four sons with him hid themselves (were hiding). There can be little doubt that this is correct, and that the text of Samuel is right, “And Araunah looked up, and saw the king and his servants passing by him.” The LXX. here has “Ornan turned, and saw the king;” the Vulg. “when Ornan had looked up.” The Hebrew words for “returned” and “looked up,” “angel,” and “king,” are similar enough to be easily confused in an ill-written or faded MS.

Now Ornan was threshing wheat.—This clause does not harmonise with the preceding statement, but its genuineness is made probable by the fact that Ornan was in his threshing-floor at the time. Moreover, the LXX. adds to 2 Sam. xxiv. 15, “And David chose for himself the death; and it was the days of wheat harvest.”

And as David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David.—This is wanting in Samuel. The corruption of the previous verse made some such statement necessary here. The rest of the verse nearly corresponds with 2 Sam. xxiv. 20.

(23) Then (and) David said to Ornan, Grant me the place of this threshing-floor, that I may build.—Literally, Pray give me the place of the threshing-floor. Samuel, “And Araunah said Why is my lord the king come to his servant? And David said, To purchase from thee the threshing-floor, to build,” &c.

Grant it me for the full price.—Literally, At a full price give it me. These words are not in Samuel. (Comp. Gen. xxiii. 9—Abraham’s purchase of the Cave of Machpelah.) The recollection of that narrative may have caused the modification of the present. The last clause is word for word as in Samuel.

(23) Take it to thee.—Comp. Gen. xxii. 11.

Let my lord the king do.—Samuel, “offer.” In the Hebrew only one letter is different; and the word “do” may have the meaning “offer,” as in Greek (Comp. Exod. xxix. 38.)

I give thee.—Not in Samuel; an exegetical addition.

For burnt offerings.—For the burnt offerings. Samuel has the singular.

The threshing instruments, or drags. Chap. xx. 3 a different word. See Isa. xlii. 15 and 2 Sam. xxiv. 22, the only other places where this word (môrâq) occurs. Samuel adds, “And the instruments (yokes) of the oxen.”

For wood.—For the wood (Gen. xxii. 7).

And the wheat for the meat offering.—Not in Samuel, but probably part of the oldest text of this narrative.

I give it all.—The whole I have given. Samuel (Heb.), “The whole hath Araunah given, O king to the king.” The rest of 2 Sam. xxiv. 23 is here omitted.
the meat offering; I give it all. (24) And king David said to Ornan, Nay; but I will verily buy it for the full price: for I will not take that which is thine for the Lord, nor offer burnt offerings without cost. (25) So *David gave to Ornan for the place of the threshingfloor six hundred shekels of gold by weight. (26) And David built there an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, and called upon the Lord; and he answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt offering. (27) And the Lord commanded the angel; and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof.

From heaven by fire (with the fire from the heavens).—The Divine inauguration of the new altar and place of sacrifice. (See Lev. ix. 24; I Kings xviii. 24-28—Elijah’s sacrifice; 2 Chron. vii. 1.) Also a sign that David’s prayer was heard.

(27) He put up …—It seems hardly fair to call this verse a “figurative or poetical expression for the cessation of the plague.” In verse 16 David sees the angel with drawn sword; and the older text (2 Sam. xxiv. 16, 17) equally makes the angel a “real concrete being,” and not a “personification,” as Reuss will have it.

Sheath (nādān).—A word only found here. A very similar term is applied to the body as the sheath of the soul in Dan. vii. 18; viz., the Aramaic, midneh, which should, perhaps, be read here.

Chaps. xxi. 28—xxii. 1. These concluding remarks are not read in Samuel, but the writer, no doubt, found some basis for them in his special source. They tell us how it was that Ornan’s threshingfloor became recognised as a permanent sanctuary, and the site ordained for the future Temple. They thus form a transition to the account of David’s preparations for the building (chap. xxii. 2—19).

(28) At that time when David saw . . .—The use of Ornan’s threshingfloor as a place of sacrifice was continued from the time of the cessation of the pestilence. The words “then he sacrificed there” refer to this fact. The answer by fire from heaven (verse 26) was an unmistakable intimation of the Divine will that it should be so. (Comp. also Josh. v. 15.)

(29, 30) A parenthesis, relating why it was that David did not rather resort to the ancient Tabernacle, which then stood at Gibeon. (Comp. chap. xxvi. 39, 40.)

(29) For the tabernacle.—Now the dwelling-place of Jehovah: in contrast with Ornan’s threshingfloor, the new sanctuary.

(30) But (and) David could not go before it—i.e., the Tabernacle at Gibeon and the altar of burnt offering (chap. xvi. 4, 27, 30). To seek Him, that is, to seek His favour by sacrifice and prayer. (But comp. chaps. xiii. 3, xv. 13.)

For he was afraid because of the sword.—“David could not go to Gibon,” says Kaul, “because of the sword of the angel of Jehovah: i.e., on account of the pestilence with which God had stricken him with some bodily weakness. A more natural explanation is that the menacing aspect of the apparition
CHAPTER XXII. — (1) Then David said, This is the house of the Lord God, and this is the altar of the burnt offering for Israel. (2) And David commanded to gather together the strangers that were in the land of Israel; and he set masons to hew wrought stones to build the house of God. (3) And David prepared iron in abundance for the nails overawed the king, so that he durst not follow the usual course in the present instance. It made, as we should say, an indelible impression upon his mind as to the sanctity of the place where it appeared. (Comp. Gen. xxviii. 17; Exod. iii. 5; Josh. v. 15; Judges vi. 21, 26.)

(1) Then.—And. This is the house.—Better, This is a house of Jehovah, the (true) God, and this is an altar of burnt offering for Israel. The verse resumes the narrative suspended at chap. xxi. 23. The place of the appellation is called a house of God," as in Gen. xxvi. 17. Obviously, we have here the goal of the entire narrative of the census, and the pestilence, which the chronicler would probably have omitted, as he has omitted that of the famine (2 Sam. xxi.), were it not for the fact that it shows how the site of the Temple was determined.

(2-8) David gathers craftsmen, and accumulates materials for building the house of God.

(3) And David commanded to gather together the strangers.—The word rendered "to gather together" (kānas) is different from the terms used in chaps. x. 4 and xix. 7, and is late in this sense.

The strangers (gērim).—Sojourners, or resident foreigners, such as Israel had been in Egypt (Gen. xv. 13). The Canaanite population are meant, who lived under the Israelite dominion, and were liable to forced service if the government required it. (See 2 Chron. viii. 7, 8, and 1 Kings ix. 20, 21.) Solomon found them by census to be 153,600 souls. The census was a preliminary to apportioning their child (Isa. vii. 16, viii. 4), a youth (Isa. iii. 14), an inexperienced young man. David repeats the expression (chap. xxix. 1); and it is applied to Rehoboam (2 Chron. xii. 7) at the age of twenty. The word here rendered "young," literally, "youth" (na'ar), is even more vague than the Latin adolescens. It may mean a new-born babe (Exod. ii. 6), a young child (Isa. vii. 16, viii. 4), a youth (Isa. iii. 5; 1 Sam. xviii. 55), or a man in the prime of life (1 Sam. xxx. 17; Exod. xxviii. 39), or a man in the prime of life (1 Sam. xxiv. 20, 21). Solomon called himself "a young child" (na'ar qōdēm) even after his accession to the throne (1 Kings iii. 7), though he was born soon after the time of the Syro-Ammonite war (2 Sam. xii. 24).

Tender.—Timid (Deut. xx. 8). The house that is to be built . . . exceeding magnifical.—Literally, the house to build . . . (one is) to make great exceedingly. For the infinitival construction, comp. chaps. v. 1, xiii. 4, ix. 25, xv. 2.

Exceeding.—Literally, unto height, upwards; an adverbial expression, which frequently occurs in the Chronicles. (See chap. xiv. 2: "On high.")

Of fame and of glory throughout all countries.—Literally, for a name and for glory (tīpḥerēth) for all the lands. (Comp. Isa. ii. 3, lx. 3, et seq., lix. 2, 3.) In similar terms the famous Assyrian Sennacherib (Sin-ah-ir-bi) speaks of his palace as built "for the lodging (taprati) of multitudes of men." And of his temple of Nergal he says: "The house for the doors of the gates, and for the joinings; and brass in abundance without weight; also cedar trees in abundance; for the Zidonians and they of Tyre brought much cedar wood to David. (5) And David said, "Solomon my son is young and tender, and the house that is to be built for the Lord must be exceeding magnifical, of fame and of glory throughout all countries:

hinges. In 2 Chron. xxxiv. 11 the same term is used of wooden clamps or braces.

And brass.—Bronze, which was much used in the ornamental work of ancient buildings. Comp. the plates of bronze which once adorned the doors of the temple of Shalmaneser II. (B.C. 854), at Balawat, and are now in the British Museum. Sennacherib, in a later age (B.C. 700), describes the doors of his palace at Nineveh as "overlaid with shining bronze."

Without weight.—A natural hyperbole. The actual amounts would, of course, be known to the royal treasurers. (Comp. the common use of the phrases la nība, la mani: "without number," "without measure," in Assyrian accounts of spoils and captives.)

Also cedar trees in abundance.—Literally, and beams or logs of cedars without number. A rhetorical exaggeration, like that which we have just noted. (See also chap. xiv. 1.)

The Zidonians and they of Tyre (i.e., the Phoenicians) brought much cedar wood—i.e., in the way of ordinary commerce, to barter them for supplies of grain, wine, oil, and other products of the soil, which their own rocky coast-land did not yield in sufficiency. (Comp. chap. xiv. 1.) At a later time Hiram entered into an express contract with Solomon to supply the cedar and other materials required for building the Temple (1 Kings v. 8—11).

Solomon my son is young and tender—i.e., an inexperienced young man. David repeats the expression (chap. xxix. 1); and it is applied to Rehoboam (2 Chron. xii. 7) at the age of twenty. The word here rendered "young," literally, "youth" (na'ar), is even more vague than the Latin adolescens. It may mean a new-born babe (Exod. ii. 6), a young child (Isa. vii. 16, viii. 4), a youth (Isa. iii. 5; 1 Sam. xviii. 55), or a man in the prime of life (1 Sam. xxx. 17; Exod. xxviii. 11). Solomon calls himself "a young child" (na'ar qōdēm) even after his accession to the throne (1 Kings iii. 7), though he was born soon after the time of the Syro-Ammonite war (2 Sam. xii. 24).

Tender.—Timid (Deut. xx. 8). The house that is to be built . . . exceeding magnifical.—Literally, the house to build . . . (one is) to make great exceedingly. For the infinitival construction, comp. chaps. v. 1, xiii. 4, ix. 25, xv. 2.

Exceeding.—Literally, unto height, upwards; an adverbial expression, which frequently occurs in the Chronicles. (See chap. xiv. 2: "On high.")

Of fame and of glory throughout all countries.—Literally, for a name and for glory (tīpḥerēth) for all the lands. (Comp. Isa. ii. 3, lx. 3, et seq., lix. 2, 3.) In similar terms the famous Assyrian Sennacherib (Sin-ah-ir-bi) speaks of his palace as built "for the lodging (taprati) of multitudes of men." And of his temple of Nergal he says: "The house
David instructs

I. CHRONICLES, XXII.

Solomon.

I will therefore now make preparation for it. So David prepared abundantly before his death.

(6) Then he called for Solomon his son, and charged him to build an house for the Lord God of Israel. (7) And David said to Solomon, My son, as for me, it was in my mind to build an house unto the name of the Lord my God:

(8) but the word of the Lord came to me, saying, *Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight.* (9) Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in

of Nergal, within the city of Tarbiča, I caused to be made, and like day I caused it to shine" (unsamniir).

I will therefore now make preparation for it.—Literally, Let me now prepare for him—the expression after completing his preparations, and shortly before his death (verse 5). (Comp. 1 Kings ii. 1—9, especially verses 3 and 4, of which we seem to hear echoes in the present speech.) Upon grounds of internal evidence we may pronounce this dying address of David to be an ideal composition, put into the king's mouth by the unknown author whose work the chronicler follows: or rather, perhaps, by the chronicler himself, whose style is evident throughout. (Comp. the addresses attributed to David in chap. xxviii.)

So David prepared.—It is strange, but instructive, to remember that there have been critics so destitute of the historical faculty as to allege that "the whole episode about David's preparations is a fiction of the chronicler's" (Gramberg), because the Books of Samuel and Kings are silent on the subject.

(6—16) David gives formal charge to Solomon to build the Temple.

(6) Then he called.—And he called Solomon. When? After completing his preparations, and shortly before his death (verse 5). (Comp. 1 Kings ii. 1—9, especially verses 3 and 4, of which we seem to hear echoes in the present speech.) Upon grounds of internal evidence we may pronounce this dying address of David to be an ideal composition, put into the king's mouth by the unknown author whose work the chronicler follows: or rather, perhaps, by the chronicler himself, whose style is evident throughout. (Comp. the addresses attributed to David in chap. xxviii.)

For the Lord God of Israel.—There ought to be a comma after "Lord." Literally the phrase would run, For Jehovah, the God of Israel. Thus the stress lies on the national aspect of the Deity, for whom Solomon was to undertake this national work.

(7) My son.—So some MSS., the Hebrew margin, and LXX., Vulg., Targ. rightly. The Hebrew text reads, "His son," which is probably an oversight, due to some name ending in -em, and the Hebrew 'em' in the present tense. (Comp. 1 Kings viii. 7, 22; and also Josh. xiv. 7.) It recurs in chap. xxviii. 2 exactly as here.

As for me, it was in my mind.—Literally, I—it became with (near or in) my heart, i.e., it came into my mind, was my intention. The phrase is common in 2 Chronicles, but rare in the older books. (Comp. 1 Kings viii. 17, x. 5; and also Josh. xiv. 7.) It recurs in chap. xxviii. 2 exactly as here.

Unto the name of the Lord.—Comp. 1 Kings viii. 29: "My name shall be there," i.e., My real presence. The statement of this and the following verses refers to what is told in chap. xvii. 1—14.

(8) But the word of the Lord came to me (upon me).—Literally, And a word of Jehovah came upon me. There is a partial correspondence between this "word of the Lord" and that which Nathan is reported as delivering (chap. xvii. 4—14). There, however, David is promised success in war, without any hint that warfare, as such, would unfit him for the sacred task which he longed to undertake. And in 1 Kings v. 3, Solomon implies that David's wars left him no leisure for the work.

Thou hast shed blood.—The emphatic word is "blood." Literally, Blood in abundance hast thou shed, and great wars hast thou made.

Because thou hast shed much blood.—Better, for torrents of blood run, for the house earthward before me. The author of this narrative may well have remembered Gen. ix. 5, 6, and the denunciations of the prophets against men of blood. (Comp. especially Amos i. 3, 13, ii. 1, with David's treatment of the conquered Ammonites, chap. xx. 3. And see also Hosea's denunciation of vengeance upon the house of Jethro for the bloodshed of Jezreel: Hos. i. 4; vii. 7.) Or the verse may express the interpretation which David's own conscience put upon the oracle forbidding him to build the Temple.

(9) Shall be born.—Is about to be born (participle).

Who shall be.—He (emphatic) shall become a man of rest, opposed to "a man of war," such as was David (2 Sam. vii. 8; 1 Chron. xxviii. 3). The phrase is further explained by what follows.

And I will give him rest from all his enemies round about—i.e., the surrounding peoples, who are his natural foes, seeing that they were brought under the yoke by his father, will acquiesce in his dominion. The same words are used, in a somewhat different sense, about David (2 Sam. vii. 1); and in 1 Kings v. 4 Solomon applies them to himself. (Comp. also Prov. xvi. 7.)

Solomon.—The emphatic word. (See 2 Sam. xii. 24.) The Hebrew is Shelómôn; for which the LXX. gives Solomon; Syriac, Sóleimán; Arabic, Suléimán (same as "Solomon the Magnificent"). The original form of the word had the final v which we see in the cognate languages. The Assyrian Shalman (in Shalmaneser) and the Moabite Salamman seem to be identical. The Vulg. has Pacificus (peace-maker). (Comp. the Greek Pseudo, the German Friederich, our "Frederick," peaceful.) Sóleimán is the New Testament spelling.

It would seem that the original name of Solomon was Jedidia (2 Sam. xii. 25), but posterity, looking back with fond regret to the palmy days of his reign, remembered him only as Sóleimàn, "The Peaceful." (See on chap. xx. 5.)

And I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days. Literally, and peace and quietness will I put upon Israel, &c. His name will be a Divine augury of the character of his reign.

Quietness (shqted).—Only here; but compare the cognate verb (Judges v. 31: "had rest").
I. CHRONICLES, XXII.

Solomon.

David instructs his days. (10) He shall build an house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever. (11) Now, my son, the Lord be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of the Lord thy God, as he hath said of thee. (12) Only the Lord give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the law of the Lord thy God. (13) Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfill the statutes and judgments which the Lord charged Moses with concerning Israel; be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed. (14) Now, behold, I have prepared for the house of the Lord an hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver; and of brass and iron without weight; for it is in abundance: timber also and stone have I prepared; and thou mayest add thereto. (15) Moreover there are workmen with thee in abundance.

1° Asver.a: (Comp. chap. xvii.; parts of verses 11, 12, 13 are here repeated. (See the Notes there.)

(11) The Lord be with thee.—See chap. ix. 20. (1 Sam. iii. 19; 2 Kings xviii. 7: “The Lord was with him.”) The phrase is the origin of the familiar liturgical formula, “The Lord be with you.”

And prosper thou, and build the house.—Not a command, but a wish, i.e., mayest thou prosper and build. The verb “prosper” (literally, carry through, make succeed) is used transitively in 2 Chron. vii. 11 and Gen. xxiv. 40.

As he hath said of (upon) thee.—This phrase (dibber ’al) is specially used of Divine threats and promises. (See Gen. xviii. 19; Isa. xxxvii. 22; and comp. verse 8, above: “And the word of the Lord became upon me.”)

(12) Only the Lord give thee wisdom.—Better, at least may the Lord give, &c.; restricting the wish to one supremely important point. (For Solomon’s wisdom, comp. 1 Kings iii. 9—15.)

And give thee charge concerning Israel.—Rather, and appoint thee over Israel (2 Sam. vii. 11). Solomon had been indicated as David’s successor; but, bound as he was to the earthly David, it was not to be expected that his wish and prayer for the Divine ratification of this Divine appointment would be fully granted. (Comp. Dan. vii. 10; Gen. xxxiv. 60; Mic. vi. 7, for a like rhetorical use of “thousands.”) To take an Egyptian illustration, in the famous poem of Pentaur, Ramses II., beset by the Hittites, calls thus upon his god Amen: “Have I not built thee houses for millions of years? I have slain to thee 30,000 bulls.” When the god helps him, he exclaims: “I find Amen worth more than millions of soldiers, one hundred thousand cavalry, ten thousand brothers, were they all joined in one.” There are plenty of numerals here, but who would insist on taking them literally?

That thou mayest keep.—Rather, and mayest thou keep (the infinitive construct); a favourite con­tinuative construction with the chronicler.

(13) Then shalt thou prosper.—The verse makes it quite clear that obedience was an indispensable condition to the full realisation of the promise. (Comp. verse 10 with the actual after-course of history.) Yet the word of the Lord does not return unto Him void; and if the earthly dynasty of David came to an end through disobedience, in due time was born an heir of David and Solomon, who is at this day the Lord’s an hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver —as might easily and naturally be used in rhetorical fashion to suggest amounts of extraordinary magnitude. As David is said to have amassed 100,000 talents of gold and 1,000,000 talents of silver, so he is said, in the same hyperbolical strain, to have hoarded iron and bronze “without weight,” and gold and silver “without number” (verse 16): phrases which nobody would think of taking literally. Doubtless, a modern historian would not handle exact numbers in this free manner; but we are not, therefore, bound to construe these vivid Oriental exaggerations according to the strict letter rather than the spirit and general intention. Of course, the numerals may have been corrupted in transmission; but their symmetry and parallelism is against this hypothesis. (Comp. Dan. vii. 10; Gen. xxxiv. 60; Mic. vi. 7, for a like rhetorical use of “thousands.”)

And thou mayest add thereto.—i.e., to the stores of timber and stone. Solomon did so (2 Chron. ii. 3, 8).

Hewers.—See verse 2.

Workers of stone and timber.—See verse 4 and 2 Chron. ii. 7.

All manner of cunning men . . . work.—Literally, and every skilful one in every work. The word rendered “cunning” is the technical term for a master-craftsman, like Bezaleel, the architect of the Tabernacle (Exod. xxxi. 3, hāḥām; comp. Turkish hâkim, a doctor).
dance, hewers, and workers of stone and timber, and all manner of cunning men for every manner of work. (10) Of the gold, the silver, and the brass, and the iron, there is no number. Arise therefore, and be doing, and the Lord be with thee.

(17) David also commanded all the princes of Israel to help Solomon his son, saying, (18) Is not the Lord your God with you? and hath he not given you rest on every side? for he hath given the inhabitants of the land into mine hand; and the land is subdued before the Lord, and before his people.

(19) Now set your heart and your soul to seek the Lord your God; arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the Lord God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built to the name of the Lord.

CHAPTER XXIII.—(1) So when David was old and full of days, he made Solomon his son king over Israel.

(2) And he gathered together all the princes of Israel, with the priests and the Levites. (3) Now the Levites were numbered from the age of thirty years and upward: and their number by their polls, man by man, was thirty and eight thousand. (4) Of which, twenty and four thousand were to set forward the work

(16) Arise therefore, and be doing.—A phrase which recurs at Ezra x. 4.

(17-19) David invites the cooperation of the chieftains of Israel.

(17) Saying.—The absence of this word from the Hebrew text may be compared with the like omission in chaps. xvi. 7. xxiii. 4. xxviii. 19.

(18) Is not the Lord your God with you?—The proof appears in what follows.

And hath he not?—Rather, and he hath given you rest (verse 9).

He hath given the inhabitants of the land into mine hand.—The surrounding people, whose reduction is described in chaps. xviii.—xx. (Comp. for the phrase, Josh. ii. 24.)

And the land is subdued before the Lord. (19) To seek the Lord.—Hebrew, "to seek unto the Lord," as in 2 Chron. xvii. 4; Ezra iv. 2. The older construction, with a simple accusative, occurred in chaps. xii. 12. xvi. 30.

Arise therefore, and build.—Rather, And arise ye, and build. The second clause explains how the first was to be carried out. Building the Lord a fair and noble sanctuary was equivalent to seeking His favour. Professions cost nothing, and they were not to serve the Lord "without cost" (chap. xxi. 24).

To bring the ark.—From its temporary abode on Mount Zion (chap. xv. 1).

The holy vessels of God—e.g., the altar of burnt offering. That is to be built.—The same participal form as in verse 9: "shall be born."

XXIII.

After a brief notice of Solomon's coronation in the old age of David, the chronicler passes to the main subject (chaps. xiii.—xxvi., viz. David's organisation of the Priests and Levites. The chapter before us presents (1) a summary account of the number and several duties of the Levites (verses 2—5); and (2) the father-houses or clans of the Levites, with an appendix of remarks about their duties from this time forward (verses 6—32).

(1) So when David was old and full of days.

—Literally, Now David had become old and satisfied with days. (See Gen. xxxiv. 29; Job. xiii. 17; where both terms, which are verbs here, appear as adjectives.) Perhaps our pointing is wrong. The expression "satisfied with days" reminds us of Horace, who describes the philosopher as departing this life like a satisfied guest (ut convives satuir., etc.).

He made Solomon his son king.—Heb. and he made, &c. This short statement is all that the chronicler has chosen to repeat from 1 Kings i., a narrative intimately connected with David's family affairs, with which he is not concerned to deal. (Comp. chap. xx., introductory remarks.)

(2—5) The numbering of the Levites and their appointments.

(2) And he gathered together all the princes of Israel.—The form of the verb (the imperfect with convive sauter) implies that this was done in connection with the transfer of the kingdom to Solomon. The following chapters, therefore, relate to arrangements made by David towards the close of his life. (Comp. chap. xxvi. 30, "the fortieth year of the reign of David.")

The princes of Israel.—Comp. chaps. xiii. 1. xv. 25, and xxii. 17. "The princes and the priests and the Levites" together constituted, in the conception of the chronicler, the three estates of the realm: the representatives of all spiritual and temporal authority. David consults with the national assembly in a matter of national concern.

(3) Now . . . and—i.e., after the council had agreed upon it.

The Levites were numbered from the age of thirty years and upward.—A census like that which Moses instituted (Numb. iv. 3. 23, 30, &c.), of all Levites "from thirty years old and upward unto fifty years," for the work of the Tabernacle.

By their polls, man by man.—Lit., As to their skulls, as to men. The second phrase defines the first, and excludes women and children.

(4) Of which, twenty and four thousand were to set forward.—It is clear from verse 5 that David himself is supposed to utter both verses, thus personally assigning their commission to the Levites. The Hebrew here is peculiar. We may render: "Of these let there be for superintending the
of the house of the Lord; and six thousand were officers and judges:

The verb is that of which the participle often occurs in the titles of the Psalms. (Authorised Version, "chief musician.") It means "to lead," or "superintendent.") The Levites had a share in prisoners of war according to Num. xxvi. 50. These they could employ in the more menial work of the sanctuary. (chap. xxv. 1-31), warders (chap. xxvi. 1-19), and scribes and judges (chap. xxvi. 20-32), are first menial workers, and the Levites had a share in prisoners of war, as they were given the same terms (Josh. ix. 23, 27). We have details of the functions of these superintending Levites in verses 28-32, below.

And six thousand were officers and judges. — See above. "Officers" (šōtērîm) are first mentioned in Exod. v. 6 (see Note there; and comp. Deut. xvi. 18). The word means "writers." (comp. Assyrian sâdhâru, to write). The progress of the entire people in power and civilization elevated the Levites also; and from a warlike troop of defenders of the sanctuary, they became peaceful guardians of the great Temple at Jerusalem and its treasures, musicians and artists in its service, instructors and judges scattered throughout the whole country (Ewald). Moreover four thousand were porters. — Literally, and four thousand (are to be) warders. (Comp. chap. ix. 21-27.) Reuss thinks 4,000 warders too many; but the different classes went on duty in turn.

And four thousand praised the Lord. — Rather, and four thousand (are to be) praising the Lord with the instruments that I have made for praising. (On "praising," see chap. xvi. 4.) We have here an interesting reference to the fact that David was not only a minstrel and inspired psalmist, but also an inventor of stringed instruments. So the prophet Amos (chap. vi. 5) speaks of the effeminate nobles of Israel, "who prattle on the mouth of the nebel, that invent themselves instruments of music, like David." The reference is repeated in Neh. xii. 36.

Which I have made. — This expression proves that verses 4, 5 should be within inverted commas, as representing a spoken decree of David. Ewald thinks that the narrative is interrupted in verse 5 by a fragmentary quotation from an ancient poet who speaks in the name of Jehovah, characterizing the musicians as "those whom I have formed to sing my praise." (But see 2 Chron. vii. 6.)

(8) The sons of Laadan. — These are named in two groups: viz., first, the three mentioned in this verse; secondly, the three named in verse 9, and called "sons of Shimei." This Shimei is not the same as the Shimei of verse 7, whose sub-divisions are not given till verse 10.

These were the chief of the fathers of Laadan. — Rather, heads of the father-houses to Laadan. The names seem to be at once those of the clans, or guards, and of their existing chiefs. But perhaps we should render These are the chief father-houses. To Laadan, then, pertained six houses, viz., Jehiel, Zetham, Joel, Shelomith, Haziel, and Haran.

And the sons of Shimei. — That is, of Shimei the "brother" of Laadan (verse 7). The two Shimeis formed four houses, but were reckoned as three, because the two last-named, Jeush and Beriah, were numerically weak, and therefore counted as a single house and class (verse 11).

Zina. — Verse 11 reads "Zizah," for this name, which is thus spelt quite differently in two consecutive verses. "Zizah" is probably right. (Comp. chap. lv. 37; 2 Chron. xi. 20.) So the LXX. and Vulg.; Syriac and Arabic read "Zabah." But Jeush and Beriah had not many sons. — Now Jeush and Beriah had not multiplied sons; so they became (one) father-house (beth 'abb),
Beriah had not many sons; therefore they were in one reckoning, according to their father's house.

The sons of Kohath; Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, four. (13) The sons of Gershom, Shebuel was the chief. (14) Now concerning Moses the man of God, his sons were named of the tribe of Levi. (15) The sons of Moses were, Gershom, and Eliezer. (16) Of the sons of Gershom, Shebuel was the chief. (17) The sons of Moses were, Gershom, Shebuel, and Eliezer. (18) Of the sons of Izhar, Shelomith was the chief. (19) Of the sons of Hebron, Shelomith was the chief. (20) Of the sons of Uzziel, Shelomith was the chief.

He and his sons.—All the priests were included with Aaron. To burn incense.—The Hebrew term means to burn victims as well as incense. To minister unto him, and to bless in his name.—This appears right. His sons were named (or should be named) (21) The sons of Merari; Mahli, and Mushi. (22) And Eleazar died, and had no sons, but daughters: and their brethren the sons of Kish took them.

The sons of Merari; Mahli, and Mushi. The sons of Mahli; Eleazar, and Kish. (23) And Eleazar died, and had no sons, but daughters: and their brethren the sons of Kish took them. (24) The sons of Mushi; Mahli, and Eder, and Jeremoth, three.
of Shoham, Zaceur, and Bari, in the time of David. Adding these, we get seven clans, too many for our purpose.

Perhaps the Mahli of verse 23 is a mistaken repetition from verse 21, due to some ancient scribe. The word "three" at the end of the verse would be added after the mistake had become fixed. It is wanting in ch. xxiv. 30, which otherwise repeats verse 23. Excluding this second Mahli as spurious, we get six clans of Merarites; and thus, altogether, twenty-four classes of Levitical overseers of the work of the sanctuary (verse 4), consisting of nine Gershonite, nine Kohathite, and six Merarite houses. This number of classes or guilds tallies exactly with the total of 24,000 Levites (verse 4), for it allows a thousand to the class (or clan). See on ch. xiii. 1.

It is right to remark (1) that the passage chap. xxiv. 26, 27, itself needs emendation (see Notes there); (2) that the old versions—viz., the LXX., Vulg., Syriac, and Arabic—have the reading of our present text in verses 21—23, so that the assumed omission of Jashah and his sons must be very ancient, and is probably due to an oversight of an early editor, if not of the chronicler himself; (3) in the two other passages of the Old Testament where the sons of Merari are named, only two—viz., Mahli and Mushi—appear; and (4) that the recurrence of the name Mahli in our verse 23 as a son of Mushi is easily paralleled: e.g., in verses 9, 10 ("Shimeu" twice). But it is easier to suppose an omission here than an interpolation of unknown names at (26) And also unto the Levites; they shall no more carry the tabernacle, nor any vessels of it for the service thereof. (27) For by the last words of David the Levites statements, as he found them in his authorities. According to Num. iv. 3, 23, 30, 33, 43, 47, the Levites were bound to serve "from thirty years old and upward" to fifty years of age; whereas Num. viii. 24, 25, fixes the age "from twenty and five years old and upward" to fifty; and this, according to Ewald, is the more exact account. It appears from 2 Chron. xxxi. 17, that the latter practice, at all events, was for the Levites to enter on their sacred functions at the age of twenty. Accordingly, the older commentators have supposed that David twice numbered the Levites; first, as the Law required, from the age of thirty (verse 3); and again, towards the close of his reign (verse 27), from the age of twenty, because he perceived that the duties had become less onerous, and might therefore be borne by younger men. (Comp. however, Num. i. 3, from which it appears that the military age, i.e., the age of full virile strength, was reckoned "from twenty years old and upward.")

For David said.—This verse seems to assign a reason for the extension of the Levitical census. The Lord . . . hath given rest unto his people. —So that they no longer wander from pasture to pasture in the wilderness, nor are any more oppressed by foreign tyrants as in the days of the judges.

That they may dwell.—Rather, And He (the Lord) hath settled in Jerusalem for ever. (Comp. chap. xvii. 5, "I have gone from tent to tent.") Now Jehovah has chosen Zion to be His eternal dwelling-place (Ps. cxxii. 13.)

And also unto the Levites; they shall no more carry . . .—Rather, And the Levites also have not (now) to carry the dwelling and all its vessels for its service, as they had to do in the wanderings of Israel in the desert. The sacred dwelling-place (mishkan) had long been fixed at Gibeon; and the service of the Levites was so much the lighter, as in the olden time they not only had to carry about from place to place, but also to guard the holy tent and its belongings against the attacks of marauders. The inference is that as the duties had become so much less arduous, they might well be undertaken at an earlier age than the ancient custom permitted.

They shall no more carry.—Comp. the same infinitival construction in 2 Chron. v. 11.

For by the last words of David.—That is, owing to his last commands. So Vulg. (givux praecipita David novissima) and Syriac.

The Levites were numbered.—Literally, these (are), i.e., according to the later idiom, this (is) the enumeration of the sons of Levi, from twenty years old and upward. The verse seems to mean that David towards the end of his reign instituted a census of Levites from twenty instead of thirty years old. Thus, the Authorised Version gives the sense. Others render, For in the last words (i.e., records) of David is the number of the sons of Levi from twenty, &c., as if the chronicler were referring to some historical work in which this special census was recorded. (Comp. chap. xxix. 29.) The verse is a parenthetic remark of the chronicler, interrupting the speech of David, which,
were numbered from twenty years old and above; (28) because their office was to wait on the sons of Aaron for the service of the house of the Lord, in the courts, and in the chambers, and in the purifying of all holy things, and the work of the service of the house of God; (29) both for the shewbread, and for the fine flour for meat offering, and for the unleavened cakes, and for that which is baked in the pan, and for that which is fried, and for all manner of measure and size; (30) and to stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at even; (31) and to offer all burnt sacrifices unto the Lord in the sabbaths, in the new moons, and on the set feasts, by number, according to the order commanded unto them, continually before the Lord; (32) and that they should keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the holy place, and the charge of the sons of Aaron their brethren, in the service of the house of the Lord.

CHAPTER XXIV.—(1) Now these are the divisions of the sons of Aaron. (2) The sons of Aaron: Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. (3) But Nadab and Abihu died before their father, and had no children: therefore Eleazar and

however, is resumed in verse 28, and continued to the end of the chapter. (29) Because their office was to wait on the sons of Aaron.—For their appointment (or station) is at the side of the sons of Aaron (i.e., the priests). The Levites had no longer to carry the sacred dwelling and its vessels, but to minister, in subordination to the priesthood, in the permanent sanctuary. In the courts.—Over (i.e., in charge of) the courts, and over the cells, or chambers built around the courts, in which were kept stores and treasures (chap. ix. 26), and in which priests and Levites lived. And in (over) the purifying of all holy things.—2 Chron. xxx. 19. They had to cleanse the sacred vessels and the sanctuary itself. (29) Both for the shewbread, and for the fine flour.—Rather, And over the shewbread, and over, &c. “For (1) continues the sense of “over” (‘al). The Levitical assistants of the priests had to see to the preparation of the things here enumerated. And for that which is baked in the pan.—Literally, and over the pan (Lev. ii. 5). And for that which is fried.—Rather, and over that which is soaked in oil (a kind of cake, Lev. vii. 12). And for all manner of measure and size. The flour and wine and oil, which were the complements of every sacrifice, were measured by the Levites in standard vessels, of which they had the keeping. Exod. xxix. 40 shows that the proportions were fixed in standard vessels, of which they had the keeping. (30) To thank and praise the Lord.—This refers to the special function of the 4,000 musicians (verse 5). Comp. chap. xvi. 4.) Those who slew and flayed the victims could hardly have taken part in the service of song. (31) And to offer all burnt sacrifices.—Rather, And over all offering of burnt offerings. The Levites had to select and prepare the victims, the priests offered them, when ready, upon the altar. The Levites had to do this “by number,” i.e., according to the several numbers prescribed by the Law for each occasion. (See Num. xxvii.) According to the order commanded unto them.—According to the rule concerning them: i.e., concerning the sacrifices. Continually.—Heb., tamid, the technical term in connection with the burnt offerings, which regularly recurred at stated times, e.g., a lamb was offered morning and evening. (Comp. Num. xxviii. 6.) (32) And that they should keep.—This verse sums up the functions of the Levites under three general heads: “And let them keep the charge of the tent of meeting.” The words are evidently based upon Num. xxviii. 3–5. And the charge of the sons of Aaron.—That is, all that the priests committed to them, and required of them (verse 28) as their appointed assistants. The word rendered “charge” literally means keeping, guard, watch. In the service.—For the service.

ADDITIONAL NOTE on verses 28 and 32. The law respecting the sacred tent was naturally applied to the future Temple. It is hardly fair to say, with Renan, that “in the perspective of the author the Tabernacle of David and the Temple of Solomon were confounded with each other.” In chap. xvi. 37–39, the chronicler has clearly distinguished two sacred tents: that of the Ark on Mount Zion, and the ancient sanctuary at Gibeon. Throughout that lengthy narrative of the transfer of the Ark, the Temple is not mentioned at all. And if in verse 28 David speaks of “courts” and “chambers,” that only shows that the king meant his assignation of the duties of the Levites to be permanent. Nor will it make much difference if we allow that the writer, in speaking of David’s tent, has used language more applicable to the Temple of Solomon. The functions of the Levites in both would be essentially the same. The great historian Ewald believed the whole section, ch. xlviii. 24–xxiv. 31 to be an authentic extract from “the Book of Origins,” which he refers to the early years of Solomon’s reign.

XXXIV.

Chap. xxiv. contains (1) an account of the organisation of the priests in twenty-four classes (verses 1–19); (2) a recapitulation of the Levitical classes, as described in the last chapter (verses 20–31).

(1) Now these are the divisions.—Literally, And for the sons of Aaron, their divisions (were as follows). The sentence forms a superscription to the section (verses 1–19).

The sons of Aaron are named above (chap. vi. 3). (Comp. Exod. vi. 23.) As usual, the writer starts ab ovo.

(2) But Nadab and Abihu died before their father.—Lev. x. 1, 2 tells why: viz., because they
Ithamar executed the priest's office.

(3) And David distributed them, both Zadok of the sons of Eleazar, and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar, according to their offices in their service.

(4) And there were more chief men found of the sons of Eleazar than of the sons of Ithamar; and thus were they divided.

Among the sons of Eleazar there were sixteen chief men of the house of their fathers, and eight among the sons of Ithamar according to the house of their fathers. (5) Thus were they divided by lot, one sort with another; for the

offerers “strange fire” before the Lord. (See also Num. iii. 4, from which our text appears to be derived.)

And had no children.—Literally, And sons had not become (been born) to them.

Therefore Eleazar and Ithamar.—And Eleazar and Ithamar acted as priests; Numbers adds, “before the face of Aaron their father.” It is implied that the office of the priesthood remained with the two lines, or houses, of Eleazar and Ithamar.

(3) And David distributed them.—The same phrase as at chap. xxiii. 3. (See Note there.)

Both Zadok of the sons of Eleazar, and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar.—This expression forms part of the subject of the Hebrew sentence. The construction is like that in verse 2. “And Nadab died, and Abihu.” Thus, “And David divided them, and Zadok and Ahimelech, i.e., “And David, with Zadok and Ahimelech, divided them.” The meaning is that Zadok and Ahimelech, the heads of the houses of Eleazar and Ithamar, assisted David in the classification of the priests.

According to their offices.—Rather, According to their official class (chap. xxiii. 11).

(4) And there were more chief men found.—Literally, And the sons of Eleazar were found more numerous as regards the heads of the men than the sons of Ithamar. The basis of division was not the individual members of the different families, but the heads of them. There were more head men, or heads of households, deriving from Eleazar than from Ithamar.

Chief men.—Heb., heads of the men, i.e., heads of single families or households; just as “heads of the fathers” denotes heads of groups of fathers or clans. (Comp. Josh. vii. 14, 16-18.) Of course, as the heads of households were more numerous, the total number of priests claiming descent from Eleazar must likewise have been more numerous than their kinsmen the Ithamarites.

And thus were they divided . . . fathers.—Rather, And they divided them: to the sons of Eleazar, heads of father-houses, sixteen, and to the sons of Ithamar, to their father-houses, eight (heads). They (i.e., David and the two high priests) divided them (verse 3.)

(5) Thus were they divided by lot, one sort with another.—Literally, And they divided them by lots, these with those: i.e., the sons of Eleazar with those of Ithamar, the clans of each standing together, apart from those of the other, and the lots being drawn for each alternately. The object was to decide the question of precedence in the order of ministration (comp. Luke i. 5, 8, 9), the liturgical functions being, of course, the same for all.

For the governors of the sanctuary . . .

Better, for there had arisen holy princes (“lords spiritual”) and princes of God (both) from among the sons of Eleazar, and from among the sons of Ithamar.

The decision was referred to the equal arbitrament of the lot, because there had been, and were, distinguished heads of priestly houses belonging to both lines of descent. “Princes of the sanctuary” (Isa. xiii. 28)—the phrase is equivalent to “princes of the priests” (2 Chron. xxxvi. 14). “Princes of God”—an expression (nēṣî ᵃḏōḥīm) not found elsewhere; it is either synonymous with the last, or perhaps denotes the high priests. (Comp. Notes on chap. vi. 4, 5, 6.) The term “Prince of God” (nēṣî ᵃḏōḥīm) is applied to Abraham (Gen. xxiii. 6), apparently in the sense of mighty prince, which may be the meaning here.

(6) And Shemaiah . . . wrote them.—Made a list of the names in the order determined by lot, as given below (verses 7—18).

The chief of the fathers.—Better, the heads of the houses or clans.

One principal household being taken . . .

The Hebrew text is corrupt, but we may with great probability restore the original reading by the change of a single letter, and translate, one clan was drawn for Eleazar, and one drawn for Ithamar: i.e., alternately. So one Hebrew MS. The LXX. has, “one by one for Eleazar, and one by one for Ithamar.” (So some Hebrew MSS. The Syrian and Vulg. read, “one house for Eleazar, and another house for Ithamar.”) The chances would be that the Ithamarites would all be drawn before the Eleazarites. (Comp. chap. xxv. 22—31, where ten “sons of the Hemanite” are left over, and drawn last.)

(7) The order of the twenty-four classes of priests, as decided by the drawings. We have no means of discovering to which of the lines individual clans belonged, whether to that of Eleazar or to that of Ithamar.

(8) Jehoiarib . . . Jedediah.—See chap. ix. 10. The Maccabean princes were of the house of Jehoiarib (1 Maccab. ii. 1).

Came forth.—From the ur (Josu. xvi. 1, xix. 1).

(9) Harim.—i.e., hārīm, flat-nosed. (Comp. Latin Nason.) This name recurs in Ezra ii. 39; Neh. iii. 11. Seorim (barley)—i.e., bearded (Latin, Barbarus), is not found elsewhere.
third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim, (9) the fifth to Malchijah, the sixth to Mijamin, (10) the seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to Abijah, (11) the ninth to Jeshaiah, the tenth to Shecaniah, (12) the twelfth to Eliashib, the twelfth to Jakim, (13) the thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeshebeab, (14) the fifteenth to Bilgah, the sixteenth to Immer, (15) the seventeenth to Hezir, the eighteenth to Aphashe, (16) the nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to Gamul, (17) the one and twentieth to Jachin, the two and twentieth to Deliahm, (18) the three and twentieth to Maaziah.

(9) "Malchijah."—Neh. iii. 11.

Mijamin.—Looks like on the right hand. Perhaps the first syllable is a disguise of Mē (water—a metaphorical term for son), and then the name would be equivalent to Benjamin (Neh. xii. 5).

(10) "Hakkoz."—The thorn. (Comp. koz, thorn, chap. iv. 8.)

Abijah.—Called "Abia" (Luke i. 5). To this class or course of the priests belonged Zacharias, the father of the Baptist.

(11) "Jeshaiah."—Hob., Yeshia'; in Greek, Ἰερεύς, Jesus (Ezra ii. 1). The name only occurs in Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. The Syriac and Arabic read "Elisha" here.

Shecaniah.—Chap. iii. 21. This was a common name in the post-exilic age (Lah is a neighbour).

(12) "Eliashib" (God will restore).—Chap. iii. 27.

Jakim (Heh, i.e., God, or Jah, will establish).—Equivalent to Eliakim and Jecamiah (chap. viii. 19).

(13) "Huppah."—(Covering, canopy; Isa. iv. 5). Here only as a proper name; but comp. "Huppim" (chap. vii. 12).

Jeshebeab.—Only here. It means, May the Father (i.e., God) cause to lead captive! But the LXX., reads ἀφετέρων, or at least: i.e., ἀφετέρων, "man of Baal." So Vulg., "Isabash."

(14) "Immer."—Chap. ix. 10; Jer. xx. 1 (perhaps a lamb).

Bilgah.—Neh. x. 9 ("Bilgai", xii. 5 (smiling; comp. Isaac, the laughere).

(15) “Hesir"—Hog. (See Neh. x. 21.) The Syriac and Arabic read "Ahazaiah," but Vulg. and LXX. prove "Hezirez."

Aphashe.—Hob., ha-pa'iphōn (the scatterer): here only. LXX., ἀφετέρων; Vulg., "Aphashe," Syrian, and Arabic, "Phasin."

(16) Pethahiah.—Ezra x. 23. (Jah openeth, i.e., Setheth free). (Comp. Jephtaiah: Heh, i.e., Jakh, openeth.)

Jehozekel.—Hob., Yehozekel; Ezekiel.

(17) Jachin.—Gen. xlv. 10; 1 Kings vii. 21 (He, i.e., Jah, Setheth up, made fast firm). The same name as Jehoachin.

Gamul.—Here only as proper name (weaned, Isa. xi. 18).

(18) Delaiah.—Chap. iii. 24, a common post-exile name (Jah draweth out, i.e., frees): but comp. Jer. xxxvi. 12, and Note on 1 Chron. iii. 1.

Maaziah.—Here only. Perhaps "Maitiah" (Neh. xii. 5) should be read. So Syriac, "Maadya;" Arabic, "Midiyā." But LXX. (Vat.), "Massai" (Ps. 55:1); Vulg., "Mazziaum."

(19) These were the orderings of them in their service to come into the house of the Lord, according to their manner, under Aaron their father, as the Lord God of Israel had commanded him.

(20) And the rest of the sons of Levi were these: Of the sons of Amram; Shubael: of the sons of Shubael; Jehdeiah. (21) Concerning Reahiah: of the sons of Reahiah, the first was Isshiah. (22) Of the Izhariotes; Shelomoth: of the sons of Shelomoth; Jahath. (23) And the sons of Hebron; Jeriah the first, Ama­rial the second, Jahaziel the third, Jekameam the fourth. (24) Of the sons of Uzziel; Michah: of the sons of Michah;
The Sons of Merari

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Shamir. (25) The brother of Michah was Isshiah: of the sons of Ishshiah; Zechariah. (26) The sons of Merari were Mahli and Mushi: the sons of Jaaziah; Beno. (27) The sons of Merari by Jaaziah; Beno, and Shoham, and Zaccur, and Ibri. (28) Of Mahli came Eleazar, who had no sons. (29) Concerning Kish: the son of Kish was Jerahmeel. (30) The sons also of Mushi; Mahli, and Eder, and Jeremoth. These were the sons of the Levites after the house of their fathers.

(31) These likewise cast lots over against their brethren the sons of Aaron in the presence of David the king, and Zadok, and Ahimelech, and the chief of the fathers of the priests and Levites, even the principal fathers over against their younger brethren.

CHAPTER XXV. — (4) Moreover David and the captains of the host separated to the service of the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, in chap. xxvi. 12, 16. In 2 Sam. xvi. 13 it has the sense of over against, or parallel with. The lots were cast, as in the case of the priests, to determine the order according to which the classes were to serve in rotation.

Their brethren the sons of Aaron.—This expression seems to indicate that the preceding list does not include all the Levites, but only those who assisted the priests in the Temple services: that is, the 24,000 of chap. xxvii. 4. The chronicler naturally returned to them after his account of the priestly classes. Hence, perhaps, the omission of the Gershonite houses is intentional. The narrative proceeds to treat of the Levites who were not in immediate attendance on the priesthood in chap. xxvi., xxvii.

The chief of the fathers.—Rather, the chiefs of the clans.

Even the principal fathers over against their younger brethren.—Rather, clans — the chief just like his younger brother. The word “fathers” (abōth) is a brief form of “father-houses” (beth-ābōth). The meaning appears to be that all the Levitical houses received their position by lot, senior and junior branches alike. The order, as thus determined, is not communicated; nor is it expressly stated that the Levitical classes were twenty-four in number, but it appears highly probable, both from the data of the text, and from the analogy of the classes of the priests and the musicians (chap. xxv).

XXV.

The Twenty-four Classes of Singers, or Minstrels.

(1) Moreover (and) David and the captains of the host.—The latter “the princes” of chap. xxiv. 6, were also concerned in the arrangement of the priestly classes (chap. xxiii. 2).

Separated to the service of the sons of Asaph.—Rather, separated for service the sons of Asaph, and Heman, and Jeduthun. These formed three guilds of sacred minstrels, famous to all after times. (Comp. the headings of many psalms in which these names occur, and also chap. vi. 33, sqq., whence it appears that Asaph belonged to the sub-tribe of Gershon, Heman to that of Kohath, and Ethan-Jeduthun to that of Merari, so that all the branches of Levi were represented among the musicians.)

Separated.—So Num. xvi. 9, and Gen. i. 7. (Comp. Acts xiii. 2).

Who should prophesy with harps.—In Hebrew, the verb to prophesy is a reflexive form, implying utterance under a spiritual influence. The ancients regarded musical utterance as an effect and proof of direct inspi-
who should prophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals; and the number of the workmen according to their service was: (2) of the sons of Asaph; Zaccur, and Joseph, and Nethaniah, and 1 Asarelah, the sons of Asaph under the hands of Asaph, which prophesied 3 according to the order of the king. (3) Of Jeduthun: the sons of Jeduthun; Gedaliah, and 3 Zeri, and Jeshaiah, Hashabiah, and Mattithiah, 4 six, under the hands of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied with a harp, to give thanks and to praise the Lord. (4) Of Heman: the sons of Heman; Bukkiah, Mattaniah, 5 Uzziel, 6 Shebuel, and Jeremoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, and Romamti-ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, and Mahazioth; (5) all these were the sons of Heman the king’s seer in the 7 words of God, to lift up the horn. And God gave to Heman

ration, and we still speak of the higher results of genius as inspired, however we may choose to explain the term away as a mere figure of speech. The power of moving sounds, whether of voice or instrument, is not to be gained by mere study or training; it is commonly spoken of as a “gift,” and its products are called “inspirations.” Whence come they, if not from the Divine source of life, and of all that makes life glad and beautiful? (James i. 17; 1 Sam. x. 5, xvi. 16, xviii. 10). Harps, with psalteries.—Lutes and harps. And the number of the workmen according to their service was:—Literally, And the number of them—that is, of the men of work—for their service proved (as follows).

Men of work.—A remarkable appellation. The term “work” is popularly restricted to what is called productive labour, but it is not difficult to see that persons engaged, like these minstrels, in singing and playing to the praise of God are actually helping to produce one of the best of real results, viz., the conservation of the religious spirit: that is, of the right attitude of man towards the Power upon whom his entire welfare absolutely depends. (2) Of the sons of Asaph; Zaccur.—Literally, To the sons of Asaph belonged Zaccur. In verses 2-7 the term “sons” appears to mean trained members of the musical guilds, of which the three chiefs, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, were masters. Asarelah.—This singular name is spelt “Jesha­ relah” in verse 14. Ewald identifies it with “Israel,” the name of God as having the force belonging to—literally, towards, unto—so that Jesharelah is in effect the modern Jewish surname Israel. (Comp. “Jachobah,” chap. iv. 36, to Jacob, i.e., Jacobs.) Under the hands of Asaph.—Rather, at the hand of Asaph. It is implied that the four leaders here named were subordinate to Asaph, and under his direction. (Comp. verses 8, 6; 2 Chron. xxiii. 18, xxix. 27; Ezra iii. 10.)

Which prophesied according to the order of the king:—Literally (Asaph), who prophesied (or should prophesy, the participle, as in verse 1) at the hands of the king: that is, either according to the royal arrangements (2 Chron. xxiii. 18), under David’s own appointment, or under the royal direction.

Propheesied.—That is, made music. (See verse 1.) (3) Of Jeduthun: the sons of Jeduthun.—Rather, To Jeduthun (i.e., belonging to the guild so called); the sons of Jeduthun were Gedaliah, &c. Zeri.—The “Zeri” of verse 11 is probably right. (Comp. Num. xxxvi. 49.) The error here is as old as the ancient versions.

Six.—Only five names are now read in the text; that of “Shimei” (verse 17) has fallen out, the only name in verses 9-31 which does not occur in verses 2-4. The Alex. LXX. inserts the name between Jeshaiah and Hashabiah.

Jeshaiah.—Elsewhere spelled Issiah.

Under the hands (see last verse) of their father Jeduthun, who prophesied with a harp.—Literally, according to the Hebrew punctuation, at the hands of their father Jeduthun, with the lute (i.e., provided with lutes, chap. xv. 16), who prophesied (or was to prophesy) for giving thanks and praise to Jehovah. (Comp. chap. xvi. 4.)

4 and 5 Or, the hands of their father. — Under the direction of their conductor.

(4) Of Heman.—Rather, To Heman: the sons of Heman were, &c. Fourteen names of Hemanite leaders are given. Curiously enough, the last six, excluding the peculiar “Joshbekashah,” form, as they stand, a complete poetical couplet, which may be rendered:

“God has come: I have exalted and extolled the help; I have spoken abundance of visions.”

Such words are very suitable in the mouth of a seer, as Heman is called in the next verse, but the arrangement of the names in this order is perhaps only a mnemonic device.

Uzziel.—Power of God (Exod. vi. 18); called “Azareel” in verse 18 (God hath helped, chap. xii. 6). The words differ in Hebrew by one letter only. The Syriac has “Uzziel” (Azael) in both places. But the difference appears in the LXX. and Vulg.

Shebuel.—In verse 20, “Shubael” which the LXX. reads in both places. The Syriac and Vulg. keep the distinction. (Comp. chap. xxiv. 20.)

Giddalti, and Romamti-ezer.—That is, perhaps, Gedaliah and Romamti-ezer. But in verse 29 “Giddalti” occurs again without any such addition, and the name as it stands may be compared with “Mallothi.” The two verbs, giddalti and romamti, occur together in Isa. i. 2: “I have nourished and brought up.”

(5) All these were the sons of Heman.—Literally, Were sons to Heman.

The king’s seer in the words of God.—Or, in the things of God, in Divine (that is, liturgical) matters. Heman was a prophet as well as a minstrel. (For the connection between music and prophecy, comp. 1 Sam. x. 5, 6; 2 Kings iii. 15; Exod. xv. 20.) Comp. also Note on verse 1, above.

Seer.—Heb., hōzēh. Literally, gazer. The word rendered “seer” in chap. xxvi. 28 and 1 Sam. ix. 9 is different (vōzēh). Gad was called “David’s seer” (chap. xii. 9); so also Jeduthun is “the king’s seer” (2 Chron. xxxv. 15).

To lift up the horn.—That is, according to Bertheau, “to blow the horns loudly.” With this he connects the preceding phrase, which he renders “by
fourteen sons and three daughters. (8) All these were under the hands of their father for song in the house of the Lord, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, for the service of the house of God, according to the king’s order to Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman. (7) So the number of them, with their brethren that were instructed in the songs of the Lord, even all that were cunning, was two hundred fourscore and eight.

(8) And they cast lots, ward against ward, as well the small as the great, the teacher as the scholar. (9) Now the first lot came forth for Asaph to Joseph: the second to Gedaliah, who with his brethren and sons were twelve: (10) the third to Zaccur, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve; (11) the fourth to Izri, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve; (12) the fifth to Nethaniah, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve; (13) the sixth to Bukkiah, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve; (14) the seventh to Jesharelah, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve; (15) the eighth to Jashapha, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve; (16) the ninth to Mattaniah, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve; (17) the tenth to Shimei, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve; (18) the eleventh to Azareel, he, his sons, whence the reading of the Authorized Version. The ancient versions omit the word altogether.

As well the small as the great.—Heb., exactly as the small (or, the younger), so the great (or, the elder). (Comp. the Vulg., “ex aequo tam major quam minor.”) But perhaps levunath is here used absolutely: “They cast lots in like manner” (chap. xxiv. 31). The senior houses, or guilds, had no advantage over the juniors, the order of rotation being decided by lot. (Comp. chap. xxiv. 31.)

The teacher as the scholar.—Literally, cunning (verse 7) with learner. According to chap. xxiii. 5, the whole number of Levites appointed for the service of song was 4,000. These were all included in the twenty-four classes, 288 of them being “cunning” men, that is, masters in their art, and the remaining 3,712 forming the rank and file of the choirs under the training of the proficients. The Aramaic word talmid (scholar) occurs nowhere else in the Old Testament. It is the term used of the disciples of the Rabbis in the Talmud, and is the exact equivalent of the New Testament word, μαθητής. (10) Now the first lot came forth for Asaph to Joseph.—See verse 2, according to which, Joseph was the second “son” of Asaph. Although not stated in the text, it must have been true of Joseph, as of all the following heads, that he, his sons, and his brethren were twelve.” The specified total of 288 (verse 7) requires it.

The second to Gedaliah, who with his brethren and sons were twelve. — Rather, Gedaliah was the second, he and his brethren and his sons—twelve. The “brethren” and “sons” of the chiefs, in this and the following verses, are the eleven masters, or proficients, in each class.

Brothers. — Fellow-clansmen, or associates. Sons. — Disciples, or subordinates. Perhaps, however, we should think of elder and younger families, grouped together in one class.

The third to Zaccur.—Literally, The third, Zaccur and his sons and his brethren—twelve. The same mode of expression is used down to verse 18, except in verse 11, which reads, “The fourth for the Izrite, his sons and his brethren—twelve.” The Izrite (not “Izri”) is a Gentile name, and seems to denote a family rather than a person.

Shimei.—Omitted by accident from verse 3.

Azareel.—Called Uziel in verse 4. (Comp. Azariah as a variant of Uzziah, chap. iii. 12, and 2 Chron. xxvi. 1.)
and his brethren, were twelve: (19) the twelfth to Hashabiah, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: (20) the thirteenth to Shubael, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: (21) the fourteenth to Mattithiah, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: (22) the fifteenth to Jeremoth, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: (23) the sixteenth to Hananiah, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: (24) the seventeenth to Joshua-kashah, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: (25) the eighteenth to Hanani, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: (26) the nineteenth to Mallothi, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: (27) the twentieth to Eliathah, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: (28) the one and twentieth to Eliud, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: (29) the two and twentieth to Giddalith, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: (30) the three and twentieth to Mahazioth, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve: (31) the four and twentieth to Romamthi Cloezer, he, his sons, and his brethren, were twelve.

CHAPTER XXVI.—(1) Concerning the divisions of the porters: Of the Korhites was 1 Meshelemiah the son of Kore, of the sons of 2 Asaph. (2) And the sons of Meshelemiah were, Zechariah the firstborn, Jedediael the second, Zebadiah the third, Jethuniel the fourth, (3) Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth, Elioenai the seventh. (4) Moreover the sons of Obed-edom were, Shemaiah the firstborn, Jehozabad the second, Joel the third, and Sacar the fourth, and Nethaneel the fifth, (5) Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peulthai the eighth: for God blessed 3 him. (6) Also unto Shemaiah his son were sons born, that ruled throughout the house

(19) To Hashabiah.—So the Hebrew.  
(20) The thirteenth to Shubael.—The Hebrew is, to thirteenth, Shubael, his sons and his brethren, twelve: and so in the next verse. The meaning seems to be: as to, or as regards, the thirteenth. Shubael (Shebael) has occurred before (chaps. xxiii. 16, xxiv. 20).  
(22) The fifteenth to Jeremoth.—Heb., to fifteenth, to Jeremoth: i.e., as regards the fifteenth lot, it was for Jeremoth. The construction is the same to the end of the chapter.  

XXVI. 

This chapter deals with (1) the classes of the porters, or warders (verses 1—19); (2) the keepers of the treasures of the sanctuary (verses 20—28); (3) the officials charged with external business, and chiefly scribes and judges (verses 29—32).  

(1) Concerning the divisions of the porters. —Literally, (as) to courses to porters. (Comp. chap. xxiii. 6.) As many as 4,000 Levites were set apart for this function by the king’s orders. (Comp. chap. xxiii. 25.)

Of the Korhites was Meshelemiah.—To the Korhites (sons of Korah) belonged Meshelemiah son of Kore. Meshelemiah is called Shelemeiah (verse 14), and Shallum (chap. ix. 19).  

Of the sons of Asaph.—Not the chief musician Asaph, who was a Gershonite (chap. vi. 39—43); whereas the Korhites were a Kohathite stock (Exod. vi. 21). The name here is evidently an abbreviation of Ebiassaph (chap. ix. 19), as Ahaz of Jehoahaz.  

(2) And the sons of Meshelemiah were.—Rather, And Meshelemiah had sons, viz., Zechariah the firstborn. (See chap. ix. 21, and verse 14 below.) The seven “sons” of Meshelemiah-Shallum represent seven guilds of porters.  

(5) For God blessed him.—Comp. chap. xiii. 14, where it is said, “God blessed the house of Obed-edom.” His sons’ names are all testimonies to his thankful recognition of the Divine favour. The firstborn is Shemaiah, Jah hath heard (viz.) the prayer for offspring; Jehozabad, Jah hath bestowed, is the second; Joel, Jah is a kinsman, the third; Sacar, reward (Gen. xv. 1), is the fourth; Nethaneel, or Nathanael (Dositheus, Dorotheus, Deucdedit) God hath given, the fifth; Ammiel, a kinsman is God, the sixth; the seventh, Issachar, there is a reward; the eighth, Peulthai (Heb., Pellethai), work or recompense of Jah.  

(6) That ruled throughout the house of their father.—Rather, The lords of their clan. The word translated “that ruled,” is not a verb, but an abstract noun (mimmshal), like our expression “the authorities,”
of their father: for they were mighty men of valour. (7) The sons of Shemaiah; Othni, and Raphael, and Obed, Elzabad, whose brethren were strong men, Elihu, and Semachiah. (8) All these of the sons of Obed-edom: they and their sons and their brethren, able men for strength for the service, were threescore and two of Obed-edom. (9) And Meshelemiah had sons and brethren, strong men, eighteen. (10) Also Hosah, of the children of Merari, had sons; Simri the chief, for though he was not the firstborn, yet his father made him the chief; (11) Hilliah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth: all the sons and brethren of Hosah were thirteen. (12) Among these were the divisions of the porters, even among the chief men, having wards one against another, to minister in the house of the Lord. (13) And they cast lots, as well the small as the great, according to the house of their fathers, for every gate. (14) And the lot eastward fell to 2 Shelemiah. Then for Zechariah his son, a wise counsellor, they cast lots; and his lot came out northward. (15) To Obed-edom, the sons of Obed-edom: they and their sons and brethren, strong men, were of the sons of Obed-edom; they and their sons and brethren, every man of power in the strength for service. The sons and brethren of the porters may be compared with those of the musicians (chap. xxv. 9, 29). (16) Among these were the divisions of the porters. —Rather, Small and great (senior and junior) alike, according to their houses, for each gate. The posts of the porters were assigned by lot, without distinction of rank between the various families. The Sanctuary was built square with the four points of the compass, and had four gates, one on each side. The orientation of temples was the rule with the ancient Semites; and the importance attached to the cardinal points is illustrated by the ancient designation of the Babylonian and Assyrian sovereigns as “King of the four quarters,” i.e., of heaven (sar carhat kiqarat). (17) To Obed-edom, the sons of Obed-edom: they and their sons and brethren, strong men, were of the sons of Obed-edom; they and their sons and brethren, every man of power in the strength for service. The sons and brethren of the porters may be compared with those of the musicians (chap. xxv. 9, 29). (18) Among these were the divisions of the porters. —Rather, To these, the courses (chap. xxv. 6) of porters, that is, to the heads of the men (chap. xxiv. 4), were watches or charges (chap. xxv. 8) in common with their brethren (chap. xxiv. 31), to minister in the house of Jehovah (chap. xxv. 37). The statement of this verse makes it evident that the names in verses 2—11 represent the courses of the porters or warders. As the twenty-four sons of Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun represented the twenty-four courses of musicians in chap. xxv., a similar classification might naturally be expected here. Accordingly, we actually find seven sons of Meshelemiah (verses 2, 3), eight sons of Obed-edom (verses 4, 5), and four sons of Hosah (verses 10, 11), which together make nineteen heads and classes. It remains to add the “sons” of Shemaiah son of Obed-edom. As the text stands, these appear to be six in number, which would give a total of twenty-five (7 + 8 + 4 + 6). But the connection of the Hebrew in verse 7 is so unusual as to suggest at once that something is wrong; and if we assume Obed-Elzabad to represent one original composite name, like Obed-edom, we get five “sons of Shemaiah,” and so a total of twenty-four classes or courses of warders. (From this verse to the end of chapter xxvii. the Syriac and Arabic versions fail us.) (19) And they cast lots.—Compare chap. xxv. 8. As well the small as the great . . . —Rather, Four chiefs of the sons of Obed-edom are named, and thirteen as assigned as the total number of families belonging to this clan (verses 10, 11). Adding them to the 18 of Meshelemiah and the 62 of Obed-edom, we get a total of 93 principal porters, presiding over the 4,000 Levites appointed to that work (chap. xxiii. 6). Simri (Shimri) the chief (for though he was not the firstborn . . . )—This may mean either that the eldest family had died out, or that none of these families could prove its seniority to the rest. (20) Among these were the divisions of the porters.—Rather, These, the courses (chap. xxviii. 3) of porters, that is, to the heads of the men (chap. xxiv. 4), were watches or charges (chap. xxv. 8) in common with their brethren (chap. xxiv. 31), to minister in the house of Jehovah (chap. xxv. 37). The statement of this verse makes it evident that the names in verses 2—11 represent the courses of the porters or warders. 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As well the small as the great . . . —Rather, Small and great (senior and junior) alike, according to their houses, for each gate. The posts of the porters were assigned by lot, without distinction of rank between the various families. The Sanctuary was built square with the four points of the compass, and had four gates, one on each side. The orientation of temples was the rule with the ancient Semites; and the importance attached to the cardinal points is illustrated by the ancient designation of the Babylonian and Assyrian sovereigns as “King of the four quarters,” i.e., of heaven (sar carhat kiqarat). (22) Among these were the divisions of the porters. —Rather, These, the courses (chap. xxviii. 3) of porters, that is, to the heads of the men (chap. xxiv. 4), were watches or charges (chap. xxv. 8) in common with their brethren (chap. xxiv. 31), to minister in the house of Jehovah (chap. xxv. 37). 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(From this verse to the end of chapter xxvii. the Syriac and Arabic versions fail us.) (23) And they cast lots.—Compare chap. xxv. 8. As well the small as the great . . . —Rather, Small and great (senior and junior) alike, according to their houses, for each gate. The posts of the porters were assigned by lot, without distinction of rank between the various families. The Sanctuary was built square with the four points of the compass, and had four gates, one on each side. The orientation of temples was the rule with the ancient Semites; and the importance attached to the cardinal points is illustrated by the ancient designation of the Babylonian and Assyrian sovereigns as “King of the four quarters,” i.e., of heaven (sar carhat kiqarat). (24) And the lot eastward fell to 3 Shelemiah. —The courses of the sons of Shelemiah (Meshelemiah versus 1, 9, and Shallum ix. 19) received by lot the post of honour on the east side of the Sanctuary. Then for Zechariah his son.—Keh., And Zechariah his son, counselling with sagacity, they cast lots. The proposition for may have fallen out before Zechariah; or perhaps Zechariah is the real subject of the verb “cast lots,” which is plural, because Zechariah is the name of a clan or guild. (Comp. chap. xxiv. 31; xxv. 8). Zechariah, the firstborn of Meshelemiah (verse 2), obtained the charge of the north side. “They cast lots” may mean drew a lot from the urn. A wise counsellor.—This little touch is obviously a mark of truth. The chronicler could have had no motive for so characterising a warder of the Temple, unless he had found it in some older source, of which he has only given extracts. (25) To Obed-edom, the sons of Obed-edom: they and their sons (fell by lot) southward; and to his sons (fell by lot) the house of Asup-
The Gates

I. CHRONICLES, XXVI. Assigned by lot.

edom southward; and to his sons the house of 1 Asuppim. (10) To Shuppim and Hosah the lot came forth westward, with the gate Shalleketh, by the causeway of the going up, ward against ward. (17) Eastward were six Levites, northward four a day, southward four a day, and toward Asuppim two and two. (18) At Parbar westward, four at the causeway, and two at Parbar. (19) These are the divisions of the porters among the sons of Kore, and among the sons of Merari.

(20) And of the Levites, Ahijah was over the treasures of the house of God, and over the treasures of the 3 dedicated things. (21) As concerning the sons of 4 Laadan; the sons of the Gershonite Laadan, chief fathers, even of Laadan the Gershonite, were 5 Jehiel. (22) The

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2 See 1 Kin. 10: 19; 2 Chron. 8: 9.
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sons of Jehiel; Zetham, and Joel his brother, which were over the treasures of the house of the Lord. (23) Of the Amramites, and the Izharites, the Hebronites, and the Uzzielites: (24) and Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, was ruler of the treasures. (25) And his brethren by Eliezer; Rehobiah his son, and Jeshahiah his son, and Joram his son, and Zichri his son, and Shelomith his son. (26) Which Shelomith and his brethren were over all the treasures of the dedicated things, which David, the king, and the chief fathers, the captains over thousands and hundreds, and the captains of the host, had dedicated. (27) 1 Out of the spoils won in battles did they dedicate to maintain the house of the Lord. (28) And all that Samuel the seer, and Saul the son of Kish, and Abner the son of Ner, and Joab the son of Zeruiah, had dedicated; and whosoever had dedicated any thing, it was under the hand of Shelomith, and of his brethren. (29) Of the Izharites, Chenaniah and his sons were for the outward business over Israel, for officers and judges. (30) And of the Hebronites, Hashabiah and his brethren, men of valour, a thousand and seven hundred, were officers among them of Israel on this side Jordan westward in all the business of the Lord, and in the service of the

The Levites in Charge

I. CHRONICLES, XXVI.

of the Treasures.

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And whosoever had dedicated any thing.—These words point to a general prevalence of the practice of dedicating to God the spoils of war. (Comp. 2 Sam. viii. 11; 2 Kings xii. 18). The Law, in fact, ordained the dedication of all metals to the endowment of the Sanctuary (Num. xxxi. 22, 23, 50; Josh. vi. 19). These accumulations of spoil in the times preceding David help us to understand how it was that so much wealth was available for building and decorating the Temple (chap. xxii. 14—16).

Under the hand of Shelomith.—Comp. the same phrase in chap. xxv. 2, 3.

III. THE LEVITES CHARGED WITH BUSINESS EXTERNAL TO THE SANCTUARY (VERSES 29—32).

(29) Of the Izharites, Chenaniah and his sons.—As to the Izharites, Chenaniah, &c. Izhar was the second, as Hebron (verse 30) was the third of the Kohathite stocks (chap. xxiii. 11).

The outward business is defined as that of "officers" (shoterim, scribes) and judges. Six thousand Levites were set apart for these duties (chap. xxiv. 11). As Nehemiah xi. 16 mentions "the outward business of the house of God," the outward business here spoken of may have been in part connected with the Temple, and included such work as the collection of tithes and taxes.

And of the Hebronites, Hashabiah.—Rather, As to the Hebronites, Hashabiah, and his kinsmen, sons of valour (chap. xxvi. 7), a thousand and seven hundred, were charged with (Heb., over) the supervision of Israel on this side of the Jordan, westward, for all the work of Iahweh and for the service of the king.

Officers.—Praefatus (oversight, superintendence). Vulg., praeeentur Iesviti; LXX., ειτι τη ρουσλαον το Ιουσαν. (See chaps. xxiii. 11, xxiv. 19 for another meaning of the word.)

Hashabiah.—A Kohathite of this name is not mentioned elsewhere.

On this side Jordan.—Rather, on the other side (over): the western side of the river is so called in Jos. v. 1; xxii. 7. The use of this expression here seems to imply that the source upon which the chronicle is here dependent, was written in some locality east of the Jordan, perhaps at Babylon.
Officers and Judges.

I. CHRONICLES, XXVII.

The Twelve Captains.

CHAPTER XXVII.—(1) Now the children of Israel after their number, to wit, the chief fathers and captains of thousands and hundreds, and their officers that served the king in any matter of the courses, which came in and went out month by month throughout all the months of the year, of every course were twenty and four thousand.

(2) Over the first course for the first month was Jashobeam the son of Zabdiel: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

(3) Of the children of Perez was the chief of all the captains.

Now the children of Israel.—This first verse is the heading or superscription of the list which follows.

Chief fathers.—Heads of the clans.

Captains of thousands and hundreds.—See chap. xiii. 1.

Their officers.—Scribes, who kept the master-rolls, and did the work of recruiting sergeants.

The courses.—Here, military divisions, corps d'armée. The same Hebrew term (manâhêlıth) was used of the Levitical classes in the preceding chapters.

Which came in and went out.—Cell. The class or corps which came in and went out. Render: That which came in and went out every month, for all the months of the year, i.e., the single corps, was twenty and four thousand. As regards construction, the whole verse, from “the chief fathers” to “of every course,” is a long apposition to “the children of Israel.”

Came in and went out by month.—Every month, the division whose turn it was stood under arms, as a sort of national guard, ready for immediate service.

Over the first course.—Jashobeam son of Zabdiel was commander of the army corps appointed to be ready for service during the first month of the year. (See chap. xi. 11.) The names of the twelve generals of division have already occurred in the list of David’s heroes contained in that chapter.

In his course.—Heb., upon his course.

Of the children of Perez.—The reference is to Jashobeam. He belonged to the branch of Judah called Perez, or Pharez, to which David himself belonged.

The chief of all the captains of the host for the first month.—This notice about Jashobeam is obscure. The “captains of the host” (Heb., hôsâth) seem to be the twelve generals of division. (Comp. verse 5.) Jashobeam, as the first of David’s heroes, may have enjoyed a kind of precedence among the commanders of the army corps; although he was not commander-in-chief of the entire national forces, which was the function of Josh. Or perhaps it is meant merely to emphasise the fact that Jashobeam was “the first” in the rotation of the generals; so that the phrase “for the first month” explains what precedes it. Or “the captains of the host” may possibly mean the officers of the subdivisions of the first army corps, of whom Jashobeam was, of course, the chief. The context appears to favour this last explanation.

After their number.—The stress lies on this phrase. It refers to the twelve courses of twenty-four thousand warriors each.

XXVII.

The account of the religious organisation (chaps. xiii.—xvi.) is naturally followed here by a sort of outline of the military and civil administration, given in the form of a catalogue of officers and ministers of the king.

I. THE TWELVE ARMY CORPS AND THEIR COMMANDERS (verses 1—15).

(1) Now the children of Israel.—This first verse is the heading or superscription of the list which follows.

(31, 32) Among the Hebronites was Jeriah the chief. — Rather, To the Hebronites there was the head Jeriah (as to the Hebronites, according to their registers, according to families, in the fortieth year of the reign of David, they were sought out; and there were found among them valiant warriors in Jazer of Gilead); and his brethren, sons of might, two thousand seven hundred heads of families: and David the king made them overseers over the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, for every matter pertaining to God, and 1 affairs of the king.

(31) Among the Hebronites was Jeriah the chief, even among the Hebronites, according to the generations of his fathers. In the fortieth year of the reign of David they were sought for, and there were found among them mighty men of valour at Jazer of Gilead.

(32) And his brethren, men of valour, were two thousand and seven hundred chief fathers, whom king David made rulers over the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, for every matter pertaining to God, and affairs of the king.

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(32) And his brethren, men of valour, were two thousand and seven hundred chief fathers, whom king David made rulers over the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, for every matter pertaining to God, and affairs of the king.

The chief of all the captains.
of the host for the first month. (4) And over the course of the second month was 1 Dodai an Ahohite, and of his course was Mikloth also the ruler: in his course likewise were twenty and four thousand. (5) The third captain of the host for the third month was Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, a chief priest: and in his course were twenty and four thousand. (6) This is that Benaiah, who was "mighty among the thirty," and above the thirty: and in whose course was Ammizabad his son. (7) The fourth captain for the fourth month was Asahel the brother of Joab, and Zebadiah his son after him: and in his course were twenty and four thousand. (8) The fifth captain for the fifth month was Shamhuth the Izrahite: and in his course were twenty and four thousand. (9) The sixth captain for the sixth month was Ira the son of Ikkes the Tekoite: and in his course were twenty and four thousand. (10) The seventh captain for the seventh month was Helez the Pelon, 2 the son of Zecher the Ahohite. (11) And of his course was his brother Ikkesh the Tekoite. (12) The eighth captain for the eighth month was Eltekeh the Zabdielite. (13) And of his course was Eliphelet the son of Sibbechai, the Hushathite. (14) And of his course was Ira the son of Ikkesh the Tekoite. (15) And of his course was Ikkesh the Tekoite. (16) And of his course was Helez the Pelon. (17) And of his course was Zizah the Shimonite. (18) And of his course was Abiezer the Anathothite. (19) And of his course was Shenathashbam the Bethshemeshite. (20) And of his course was ten thousand. (21) And over those of the host for the ninth month was Maharai the Netophathite, of the Zareites; and in his course were twenty and four thousand. (22) And of his course was Zaccur the Izrahite. (23) And of his course was Shashak the Benhinnethite. (24) And of his course was Ammiudai the Lachishite. (25) And of his course was Sela the Caphtorite, a prince of the hosts. (26) And of his course was Benaiah the Pirathonite, of the children of Ephraim: and in his course were twenty and four thousand.

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(4) Dodai an Ahohite.—The Ahohite. Chap. xi. 11 proves that the right reading is Eliezer son of Dodai the Ahohite.

And of his course was Mikloth also the ruler.—Literally, and his course, and Mikloth the prince (nāgīād); which appears meaningless. Perhaps the "and" before Mikloth is spurious. (Comp. end of verse 6.) The sense may then be that this division included Mikloth "the prince," an unknown personage; or that Mikloth was the chief man in the division. (See chaps. viii. 32, ix. 37, where Mikloth is a Benjamite name.) The LXX. and Vulg. agree with Authorised Version; the Syriac and Arabic are wanting in this chapter.

(5) The third captain of the host.—Heb., captain of the third host. So Vulg.

Benaiah.—See chap. xi. 22. The son of Jehoiada, a chief priest. Rather, son of Jehoiada the priest, as head, viz., of the third army corps. The term "chief," or "head," belongs to Benaiah, not to his father. But perhaps it is an erroneous gloss on Jehoiada. (Comp. 2 Chron. xxii. 8.) Both LXX. and Vulg. make Benaiah the priest.

(6) This is that Benaiah, who was mighty among the thirty.—Literally, he, Benaiah, was a hero of the thirty. (Comp. chap. xi. 25; 2 Sam. xxiii. 23.)

And in his course.—Heb. and his course. Ammizabad his son. Comp. the second clause of verse 4. Here, as there, the LXX. and Vulg. give the sense "over his course," as if Ammizabad were co-adjutor with his father. The text may be defective in both places.

(7) The fourth captain for the fourth month.—Heb., the fourth, for the fourth month; an abridged mode of expression, which is preserved from this point to the end of the list.

Asahel the brother of Joab.—Chap. xi. 26. Asahel was slain by Abner at the beginning of David's reign (2 Sam. ii. 18—23). The added clause, "And Zebadiah his son after him," evidently refers to this fact. Perhaps the difficult statements about Mikloth and Ammizabad in verses 4 and 6 were originally similar to this one about Zebadiah. The fourth division "may have been called by the name of the fallen hero in honour of his memory." (Bertheau).

(8) The fifth captain for the fifth month.—Rather, the fifth, for the fifth month, was the captain Shamhuth. Shamhuth is called "Shammuth the Izrahite" in chap. xi. 27, and "Shammah the Harodite" in 2 Sam. xxii. 25.

The Izrahite.—Heb., ha-yizrah, which is probably a mistake for ha-si'arkhi, "the Izrahite" (comp. verses 11 and 13), i.e., a member of the Judean clan called Zerah. Harod was his town.

(9—14) Comp. chap. xi. 27—31 for the names here given.

(15) Heldai (living).—The same as "Holed" (life) in chap. xi. 30.

Of Othniel.—Of the clan so called. (Comp. Josh. xv. 17.) His town was Netophah, near Bethlehem.

Of the whole list of twelve generals, it is noticeable that eight—viz., the first, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, eighth, tenth, and twelfth—belonged to the royal tribe of Judah. Of the remaining four, the second perhaps, and the ninth certainly, was a Benjamite; the seventh and eleventh were Ephraimites.

II. The Princes or Emirs of the Twelve Tribes (verses 16—24).

(16) Furthermore over the tribes of Israel. Literally, and over the tribes of Israel . . . the Ben­ benites had as prince (nāgīād) Eliezer, etc. Eliezer the son of Zichri.—Originally the emir of the tribe was its leader in war, as well as its chief authority in times of peace. David, as appears by the list (verses 1—15) made the important change of nomi-
The Numbering Hindered.

Because the Lord had said he would increase Israel like to the stars of the heavens. —The reason why David restricted the census to those who were capable of bearing arms (see Gen. xv. 5, xiii. 17). The idea implied seems to be that to attempt to number Israel would be to evince a distrust of Jehovah's faithfulness; and, perhaps, that such an attempt could not possibly succeed.

(24) Joab the son of Zeruiah began. —Or, had begun. This clearly refers to chap. xxi. 6. Joab omitted to number Levi and Benjamin.

Because there fell wrath for it. —The same phrase recurs in 2 Chron. xix. 10, xxiv. 18. (Comp. for the fact, chap. xxi. 7, seq.) The sense of the Hebrow may be brought out better thus: "Joab son of Zeruiah had begun to number, without finishing; and there fell," &c.

Neither was the number put in the account of the chronicles of king David. —Literally, and the number came not up (‘aloah), was not entered. (Comp. 1 Kings ix. 21; 2 Chron. xx. 34.) The number which Joab ascertained was not recorded, as might have been expected, in the official annals of the reign, here designated as "the account of the chronicles of king David (mispar dibri ha-yamin)." It is implied that the chronicler had these annals before him in some form or other, probably as a section of the "History of the Kings of Judah and Israel," and that he found the lists of this chapter in that source. Those of chaps. xxiii.—xxvi may have been derived from the same authority. In 2 Kings xii. 20, xiii. 8, 12, and all similar instances, the phrase for "book of the Chronicles" is not mispar, but sopher dibri ha-yamin. Some suppose that the text here should be altered accordingly; others would render mispar dibri ha-yamin, "the statistical section of the annals." But mispar in Judges vii. 15 means the telling or relation of a dream, and the transition from such a sense to that of written relation is easy. The phrase rendered "Chronicles" is the same as the Hebrew title of these books.

III.—The Twelve Overseers of the Royal Estates and Property (verses 25—31).

The number of these officers is noticeable, twelve being a normal number in Israelite institutions.

(25) And over the king's treasures. —That is, those of the palace on Zion.

And over the storehouses. —The Hebrew has the same word "treasures." The treasures "in the fields" (sadeh), or the country, in the cities, the villages,
the storehouses in the fields, in the cities, and in the villages, and in the castles, was Jehonathan the son of Uzziah: (29) and over them that did the work of the field for tillage of the ground was Eleazer the son of Chelub: (27) and over the vineyards was Shimei the Ramathite: (28) and over the olive trees and the sycomore trees that were in the low plains was Baal-hanan the Gederite: and over the cellars of oil was Joash: (29) and over the herds that fed in Sharon was Shitrai the Sharonite: and over the herds that were in the valleys was Shaphat the son of Adli: (30) over the camels also was Obil the Ishmaelite: and over the ass was Jehdeiah the Meronothite: (31) and over the flocks was Jaziz the Hagerite. All these were the rulers of the substance which was king David's. (32) Also Jonathan David's uncle was a counsellor, a wise man, and a 2scribe: and Jehiel the 3son of Hachmoni was

and the "castles" (migdalim), or towers (2 Chron. xxvi. 10; Micah iv. 8), include all that belonged to David except the walls of Jerusalem.

Jehonathan was comptroller-general of the revenues from these sources. (28) And over them that did the work of the field.—Ezri was steward of the arable domains. (27) Shimeii of Ramah-Benjamin (Josh. xvii. 25) was overseer of the vineyards.

Zabdi.—Zebadiah (the New Testament Zebedee), of the south Judean town Shipshimoth (1 Sam. xxx. 28), was "over that which is in the vineyards for the treasures (stores) of wine," i.e., the wine-cells. So Vulg., cellis vinaris. The territory of Judah was famous as a wine-growing land (Gen. xlix. 11). The memorable "grapes of Esheol" were gathered there (Num. xiii. 19).

"Olive yards."—The same word (zithim) is rendered "olive yards" in Josh. xxiv. 13; 1 Sam. viii. 14, and elsewhere in the Authorised version.

The sycomore trees that were in the low plains.—The sycomore that were in the Shephelah or lowland of Judah, between the hills and the sea (Josh. xv. 53), was a beautiful evergreen tree, indigenous to Egypt, was once a fertile strip of pasture. (Comp. Gen. xxxvii. 25; 1 Chron. ii. 55. It's small sweet figs were much eaten by the poor. (Comp. Amos vii. 14.)

Baal-hanan ("The Lord bestowed").—An older form of "Baal-Hanan." (Comp. the Phenician Hannibal.)

The Gederite.—Of Geder, or Gedor, a town in the hill-country of Judah (Josh. xii. 15, xv. 58). Over the cellars of oil.—Heb., treasuries, or stores of oil. The oil was that of the olives. (Comp. Judges ix. 9.)

And over the herds that fed in Sharon.—Heb., the over that grazed in the Sharon. The Sharon (i.e., "the Level") was a fertile strip of pasture-land running along the coast of the Mediterranean, between Caesarea and Joppa. (See Cant. ii. 1; Isa. xxxiii. 9.)

Shitrai.—Hebrew margin, Shirtaii.

Over the herds that were in the valleys.—Apparently the valleys of the highlands of Judah. Another reading is "in valleys."

Over the camels also was Obil the Ishmaelite.—Obil's name means either "owner of camels" or "a good manager of camels," answering exactly to the Arabic 'ab'il. (Comp. Gen. xxvii. 25, Judges vii. 12.) An "Ishmaelite," i.e., an Arab, would be the fittest person for looking after camels.

The asses.—The she-asses. (Comp. Gen. xlix. 11; Judges v. 10; Zech. ix. 9.)

Jehdeiah the Meronothite.—Of Meronoth, a town perhaps near Mizpah (Neh. iii. 7). The LXX. has Marathon, or Marathon. (28) And over the flocks.—Of sheep and goats. Jaziz the Hagerite.—See chap. v. 10—19, for the conquest of East Gilead, the home of the Hagarim, or "Hagerites," by the tribe of Reuben, in the days of Saul. David's herds of camels and flocks of small cattle may have grazed in the pastures east of the Jordan, under the charge of his Bedawin overseers.

All these were the rulers of the substance which was king David's. The word rendered "rulers" is sariim, "captains" or "princes." (See verse 22.) The same term is translated "stewards" in chap. xxviii. 1.

Substance (vilhah) is an old word, denoting especially the moveable wealth of a nomad chief. (Comp. Gen. vii. 5, xiv. 21.) The wealth of David consisted partly of flocks and herds, but partly also of the produce of husbandry, and, no doubt, of commerce. (See chaps. xiv. 1, xxii. 4.) The period of the kings saw Israel a settled nation, that had exchanged the purely nomad life for an ordered social existence.

IV.—David's Privy Council (verses 32—34).

(32) Also Jonathan David's uncle was a counsellor.—A son of David's brother Shimea was named Jonathan (chap. xx. 7; 2 Sam. xvi. 21). Nothing further is known of the present Jonathan than what is here related.

A wise man, and a scribe.—Rather, a sage and a scholar was he. The word rendered "scribe" (sopher) usually answers to the scribes of the New Testament, and so the LXX. gives it here. We may remember that in the rude epochs of society mere writing has been esteemed an art, so that a king of England who could write was dubbed Beaucler, "fine scholar." Charles the Great never got so rude a scribe: he was a scholar. "Charles the Great never got so rude a scribe: he was a scholar." (See chap. ii. 55; Isa. xxxiii. 18; Ps. lxx. 2.)

David's official sopher, or scribe, was Shavasha (chap. xviii. 16).

Jehiel the son of Hachmoni.—Rather, son of a Hachmonite. (Comp. chap. xi. 11.)

With the king, that is, their tutor. The similar lists in 2 Sam. viii. 15—18, 1 Chron. xvii. 15—17, and 2 Sam. xx. 23—26, lack representatives of the two offices mentioned in this verse. Obviously this account is independent of those.
David Summons and

I. CHRONICLES, XXVIII.

Addresses an Assembly.

with the king’s sons: (33) and Ahithophel was the king’s counsellor; and Hushai the Archite was the king’s companion; (34) and after Ahithophel was Jehoiada the son of Benaiah, and Abiathar: and the general of the king’s army was Joab.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—(1) And David assembled all the princes of Israel, the princes of the tribes, and the captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course, and the captains over the thousands, and captains over the hundreds, and the stewards over all the substance and possession of the king, and of his sons, with the officers, and with the mighty men, and with all the valiant men, unto Jerusalem.

(2) Then David the king stood up upon his feet, and said, Hear me, my brethren, and my people: As for me, I had in mine heart to build an house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and for the footstool of our God, and had made ready for the building: (3) but God said unto me, “Thou shalt not build an house for my name, because thou hast been a man of war, and hast shed 3 blood. (4) Howbeit the Lord God of Israel chose me before all the house of my father to be king over Israel for ever: for he hath chosen 4 Judah to be the ruler; and of the house of Judah,

(33) And Ahithophel was the king’s counsellor.—Rather, a counsellor of the king’s—Ahithophel, the faithless adviser, who committed suicide when his treachery proved unsuccessful (2 Sam. xv. 31 seq., xvii. 23).

Hushai the Archite.—The faithful counsellor, who baffled the wisdom of Ahithophel (2 Sam. xvii.).

(34) And after Ahithophel—After his death, Jehoiada the son of Benaiah, and Abiathar, the Ithamarite high priest, were David’s advisers. Benaiah’s father was named Jehoiada (see verse 5, and chaps. xi. 22, xviii. 17), so that David’s counsellor Jehoiada bore the name of his grandfather—a common enough occurrence. Others assume that the right reading is “Benaiah the son of Jehoiada,” who may have been an adviser of David, as well as capitam of his guard.

XXVIII.

DAVID’S LAST INSTRUCTIONS AND DEATH (chaps. xxviii. xxix.).

David charges Solomon before the National Assembly to build the Temple (verses 1—10), and delivers to him the plans and materials of the building and its furniture (verses 11—21).

(1) And David assembled all the princes of Israel.—As he had called the National Assembly before removing the Ark (chaps. xiii. 1, xx. 3). Who the princes (sārīm) were is defined in the following clauses.

The princes of the tribes.—See the list of them in chap. xxviii. 16—22.

Captains of the companies.—Rather, princes of the courses, who served the king: viz., those enumerated in chap. xxvii. 1—15.

Stewards.—See chap. xxvii. 25—31. Both “captains” and “stewards” are sārīm in the Hebrew.

Possession (nāginḥ).—A word generally used, like the Greek κτήμα (κτήματος), of possessions in cattle—live stock.

And of his sons.—Perhaps considered as his heirs, or rather, from the old tribal view of property, as sharing the royal domains with him.

With the officers.—Heb., sarḥēm, eunuchs. The word appears to be used in a generalised sense, and to denote simply courtiers or palace officials. (Comp. Gen. xxxvii. 30; 1 Sam. viii. 15; 1 Kings xxii. 9; Jer. xxxviii. 7, xlii. 16.)

The mighty men.—“The heroes” (ha-gibbôrīm) or “warriors” of chaps. xi. 31—47 and xii. But the LXX. and Vulg. interpret men of rank and wealth, magnates (τοιούτους, Luke 1. 52).

And with all the valiant men.—Literally, and every mighty man (“gibbôr”) of valour, a phrase meant to include all other persons of importance. It is noticeable that in this meeting of the estates of the realm all the dignitaries of chap. xxvii. are present (contrast chaps. xv. 25, xxiii. 2, xlii. 1), except the priests and Levites. (But comp. verse 21.)

(2) Then David the king stood up upon his feet.—To address the assembly, the king naturally rose from his throne.

Hear me.—Calling attention, as in Gen. xxiii. 11—15.

My brethren, and my people.—Comp. 1 Sam. xxx. 23; 2 Sam. xix. 12. The words do not so much imply condescension as an acknowledgment of what every one of David’s hearers felt to be true—viz., that all Israel were kin, and David the head of the family.

As for me, I had in mine heart to build.—See chap. xxii. 7, 8 and the Notes there. Verses 2—7 of this chapter are in substance, and partly in expression, identical with chap. xxii. 7—10 (David’s private charge to Solomon).

An house of rest—i.e., a permanent abode instead of a sacred tent, which gave the idea of wandering from place to place, like the nomads of the desert. (Comp. Ps. cxxxii. 8.)

The footstool of our God.—The so-called mercy-seat, the golden kappōreth suspended over the Ark, on which were the cherubim—the throne of Delft (Ps. xcix. 1).

And had made ready.—Rather, and I made ready, by amassing stores of material (chap. xxii. 2—4, 14—16).

(3) But God said unto me.—The emphasis lies on the word God, which is in direct contrast with the x 1—in my heart it was,” of verse 2. (Comp. chap. xxii. 8, of which this verse is a summary.)

(4) Howbeit the Lord God of Israel chose me.—Comp. chap. xi. 2 and Notes. The Divine election of David precludes that of Solomon (verse 5).

For he hath chosen Judah to be the ruler.—Better, For Judah it was that he chose for prince
David encourages

I. CHRONICLES, XXVIII. Solomon to build the Temple.

Lord, and in the audience of our God, keep and seek for all the commandments of the Lord your God: that ye may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance for your children after you for ever. (9) And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever. (10) Take heed now; for the Lord hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it.

Seek—i.e., do not neglect; resort to them always as the rule of right living (same word as chap. viii. 13, 15).

That ye may possess this (Heb. the) good land.—Another reminiscence of Deuteronomy (chap. iv. 1, 21).

And leave it for an inheritance.—Lev. xxiv. 46.

(9) And thou, Solomon my son.—The king now turns to his heir, urging a whole-hearted service to his father's God (verses 9, 10).

Know thou.—Regard thou, have care for (Ps. i. 6).

The God of thy father might mean the God of Israel (comp. chap. xxix. 10). But verse 20, where David speaks of “my God,” suggests the simpler meaning, God of David, here. (Comp. Ps. xviii. 2, 6, 22: also Gen. xxxi. 29, 42.)

With a perfect heart.—The word shâlôm means whole, sound, unimpaired; the Latin integer. Hence, what is urged is an undivided allegiance, such as is enjoined by the Decalogue. (Comp. chap. xxix. 9, 19; 1 Kings viii. 61.)

A willing mind.—For service is not real unless it be voluntary, and so glad as well as free.

For the Lord searcheth all hearts.—Search, i.e., seek (verse 8 and below). For the thought, comp. Ps. xxxxix. 1-4, 23; 1 Sam. xvi. 7; Ps. xxiv. 9; Acts i. 24; Heb. iv. 13. The Searcher of hearts will at once see through an insincere and half-hearted obedience.

And understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts.—And every fashioning (yezer, Zech, Bldl) or cast of thoughts he discerneth (Gen. vi. 5, viii. 21).

If thou seek him.—Deut. iv. 29. Seeking Jehovah in earnest always results in finding (Isa. iv. 6). Yet the Divine grace is not restricted even by this condition (Isa. lxv. 1).

If thou forsake him.—Deliberately and of set purpose, as choosing to live by other laws than His.

He will cast thee off.—A strong word (hizînah), meaning strictly, to reject as noisome or foul-smelling. (Comp. Hosea viii. 3, 5.) The verbal form kîphî is peculiar to Chronicles. (See 2 Chron. xi. 14, xxix. 13.)

(10) Take heed now; for the Lord.—Or, See now that Jehovah hath chosen thee; consider this high commission, weigh it well and realise it thoroughly, then be strong, and act. (See chap. xxii. 13, 16.)

David now, in presence of the Assembly, hands over to his son the plans of the Sanctuary and its vessels,
David gives Solomon

I. CHRONICLES. XXVIII.

Patterns and Gold.

(11) Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat, (12) and the pattern of all that he had by the spirit, of the courts of the house of the Lord, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things: (13) also for the courses of the priests and the Levites, and for all the work of the service of the house of the Lord, and for all the vessels of service in the house of the Lord. (14) He gave of gold by weight for things of gold, for all instruments of all manner of service; silver also for all instruments of silver by weight, for all instruments of every kind of service: (15) even the weight for the candlesticks of gold, and for their lamps of gold, by weight for every candlestick, and for the lamps thereof: and for the candlesticks of silver by weight, both for the candlestick, and also for the lamps thereof, according to the use of every

The chambers.—The cells (lēshākḥōth). (Comp. chap. xxviii. 28.)

The treasuries.—For the treasuries (chap. xxvi. 20, and Notes).

(13) Also (and) for the courses of the priests and the Levites.—This connects immediately with the phrase “all the chambers round about,” in verse 12. The chambers or cells round the Temple court were intended not only for the stowage of the treasures, but also for the use of the priests and Levites who would sojourn in them by course. The LXX. and the Vulg. render (David gave him) a description of the courses of the priests and Levites, a sense which the Hebrew admits, and which the Authorised version has adopted; but the former connexion of the words is preferable.

For all the work of the service.—Such as cooking the flesh which fell to the priests from the sacrifices, and baking the shewbread. “The vessels of service,” that is, the utensils used by the Levites in the work just specified, would naturally be kept in the cells.

The Syriac version paraphrases verses 11–13 as follows:—“And David gave to Solomon his son the likeness of the porch, and the measure of the house and of the colonnade (kēlêstētōrôn = ṣorēs), and of the upper chambers; and of the inner cloisters (ṣarētīw = ṣorēw), and of the outer cloisters, and of the upper and of the lower (storeys); and of the treasury (bēth gazzō), and of the house of service of the Lord’s house, and of the kitchens, and of the house of the water-carriers (or cupbearers), and of the house of lampmen.” The last words are interesting, as explaining the nature of “the work of the service” (verse 13).

(14) He gave of gold by weight for things of gold.—The Hebrew is very concise. Apparently it continues the construction of verse 12, so that the sense is: “He gave him a pattern or description for the golden vessels (literally, for the gold), by the weight for the golden vessels (Heb., for the gold), for all vessels of each kind of service (i.e., use); and he gave him a pattern for all the silver vessels, by weight, for all vessels of each kind of service.” In other words, David gave Solomon an account of and schedule of all the different vessels of gold and silver that would be required for the sanctuary, specifying the exact weight of each. (Comp. Ezra viii. 25, seq. 34.)

(15) Even the weight for the candlesticks of gold.—Rather, and a (specified) weight for the golden lampstands, and their golden lamps, and the weight of each lampstand and its lamps; and (a weight) for the lampstands of silver by weight, for a lamp-
candlestick. (60) And by weight he gave gold for the tables of shewbread, for every table; and likewise silver for the tables of silver: (17) also pure gold for the fleshhooks, and the bowls, and the cups: and for the golden basons he gave gold by weight for every bason; and likewise silver by weight for every bason of silver: (18) and for the altar of incense refined gold by weight; and gold for the pattern of the chariot of the cherubims, that spread out their wings, and covered the ark of the covenant of the Lord.

Ps. xviii. 11, where it is said of God, “He charioted on a cherub.” (Comp. also Ps. xcvii. 1.) The rest of the verse describes the purpose of the symbolical cherubic figures, in terms borrowed from Exod. xxv. 20. (Comp. also Ezekiel’s vision, called by the Jews “The Chariot,” Ezek. i.)

And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the Lord God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the Lord. (21) And, behold, the courses of the priests and the Levites, even they stand and its lamps, according to the service of each lampstand. The meaning still is that David gave Solomon a description of the designated articles, fixing the proper weight for each. (Comp. Exod. xxv. 31 sqq.; the great golden candelabrum of the Mosaic sanctuary.)

No mention of the silver lampstands occurs anywhere else in the Old Testament. According to the Rabbis, they stood in the chambers of the priests.

And by weight he gave gold. — And the gold he gave (assigned in the schedule or written plan) a certain weight.

For the tables of shewbread. — Only one table of shewbread is spoken of in the Law. (See Exod. xxv. 23-30, and comp. 1 Kings vii. 48.) The Chronicle was well aware of this, as appears from 2 Chron. xxix. 18; and as he states elsewhere that Solomon made ten golden tables, and put them five on the right and five on the left in the holy place (2 Chron. iv. 8), those tables may be intended here. It may even be the case that the term “shewbread” (hamma’areketh) is a gloss which has displaced the word “gold” (hazzahâb), and that the original text was “for the tables of gold.” (Comp. “for the tables of silver,” at the end of the verse. The table of shewbread would then be included among the golden tables. (But comp. chap. vi. 57; 2 Chron. xxviii. 16.)

For the tables of silver. — The silver tables are not again spoken of in the Old Testament. The rabbis assert that they stood in the court of the Temple, and that the prepared flesh of the sacrificial victims was laid upon them.

Also pure gold for the fleshhooks, and the bowls, and the cups. — Rather, and the forks, and the bowls, and the flagons were (in the schedule or inventory) pure gold. (See Exod. xxvii. 3; 1 Sam. ii. 13, 14.) The bowls were used in lustral sprinkling, the golden flagons in libations (Exod. xxv. 29, xxviii. 32; Num. iv. 7 only).

The golden basons. — Tankards, or lidded pitchers (kêphôrîm): a word only found here and in Ezra i. 10, viii. 27 (among the sacred vessels restored by Cyrus).

By weight. — By the (required) weight. The altar of incense stood within the Holiest (the Dibbôr, or Altar; Exod. xl. 5).

And gold for the pattern of the chariot of the cherubims, that spread out their wings. — Rather, and for the model of the chariot, that is, the cherubim (he assigned) gold; to wit, for beings outspreading (their wings) and overshadowing the Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah. The two cherubs lying on the kappôrôth above the Ark are here called “the chariot,” with obvious reference to such passages as the Lord.

Fear not. . . . forsake thee. — From Deut. xxxi. 6, 8. (See also Josh. i. 5, 6)

My God. — Recalling, in a single word, all his own wonderful experience of the Divine Helper.

Pen. — Drop, let go, and so disperse, desert. Until. — The word implies nothing about the time beyond the expressed limit. (Comp. ës, Matt. i. 25.)

And, behold, the courses of the priests and the Levites. — The form of expression suggests that David pointed to them as he spoke. The representatives of religion would hardly be absent from an assembly of “all the princes of Israel” (verse 1).
shall be with thee for all the service of the house of God: and there shall be with thee for all manner of workmanship every willing skilful man, for any manner of service: also the princes and all the people will be wholly at thy commandment.

CHAPTER XXIX.—(4) Furthermore David the king said unto all the congregation, Solomon my son, whom alone God hath chosen, is yet a young and tender, and the work is great: for the palace is not for man, but for the Lord God.  (2) Now I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God the gold for things to be made of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and the brass for things of brass, the iron for things of iron, and wood for things of wood; onyx stones, and stones to be set, glistering stones, and of divers colours, and all manner of precious stones, and marble stones in abundance.  (4) Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house, (4) even three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and seven thousand talents of refined silver, to overlay the walls of the houses within: (3) the gold for things of gold, and the silver for things of silver, and for all manner of work to be made by

(Comp. chap. xxiv. 5. "princes of God.") They might also be included among "the valiant men." (Comp. chap. ix. 13.)

And there shall be with thee for all manner of workmanship. — Rather, And with thee in every kind of work will be every volunteer with skill, for every kind of service: that is to say, skilled craftsmen have volunteered for the work (chap. xxii. 15), and will support thy endeavours. The word rendered "volunteer" (naddîb) strictly means one who offers free-will offerings. (Comp. Exod. xxxv. 5, 22; and the verb Judges v. 1, kithnaadeb.) The phrase "volunteer with wisdom," or artistic skill, is not found elsewhere.

Also the princes and all the people. — Spoken, perhaps, with another gesture. The whole assembly would subserve the wishes of Solomon.

Wholly at thy commandment. — Literally, For all thy words: i.e., orders (Vulg., praecepta), or matters, business (chap. xxvi. 92).

XXIX.

CONTINUATION OF PROCEEDINGS IN THE ASSEMBLY.

(1) Furthermore. — And. David reviews his own preparations, and asks the offerings of the assembly, which are cheerfully accorded (verses 1-9).

Alone. — Of all his brothers.

Young and tender. — Chap. xxii. 5.

The palace (birâh). — A word peculiar to the Chronicles, Nehemiah, Esther, and Daniel. It usually means the palace at Susa (comp. the Persian word bârûn, "citadel"), and this is the only passage of Scripture in which it denotes the Temple. From its august associations, the word was well calculated to convey to the minds of the chronicler's contemporaries some idea of the magnificence of the Temple of Solomon as he imagined it.

(2) Now I have prepared. — And with all might have I prepared (chap. xxii. 14; comp. also Deut. vi. 5, xxviii. 9).

The gold for things to be made of gold. — Literally, the gold for the gold, and the silver for the silver, &c. (Comp. chap. xxviii. 14.)

Onyx (shôhām). — So Vulg. The LXX. keeps the Hebrew word 'abneh. (See Gen. ii 12; Exod. xxv. 7, xxviii. 9, 20; Job xxviii. 16.) The uncertainty of meaning is illustrated by the fact that the LXX. in various passages translates shôhām by onyx, beryl, sardius, emerald, and sapphire.

Stones to be set (abînâ millâ'îm). — Stones of settings; strictly, fillings; LXX., ἐπιφυλάκια (Exod. xxxv. 7, xxxv. 9).

Glistening stones, and of divers colours. — Literally, stones of pâk and rîmgîth. Pâk is the pigment used by Eastern ladies for darkening the eyebrows and lashes (kohl: 2 Kings ix. 30). It here seems to denote the colour of the stones in question. Perhaps some kind of decorative marble is intended (comp. Isa. liv. 11). Rîmgîth stones are veined or variegated marbles, or, perhaps, tesselated work (comp. Ezek. xix. 3; Judges v. 30). The LXX. renders the phrase "costly and variegated stones."

All manner of precious stones. — 2 Chron. iii. 6.

Marble stones. — Stones of shârysh, a word only here. It means white marble. The LXX. and Vulg. have Parian marble, but the Targum simply marmora, "marbles." (Comp. Esther i. 6; Cant. v. 15, where shâsh is equivalent to the present form.)

(3) I have set my affection to the house. — Chap. xxviii. 4 (he liked, râpâh: Ps. xxvi. 8).

I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver. — I have a personal property in gold and silver. For the word segîlûth, peculium, see Exod. xix. 5. I have given—i.e., I give (chap. xxi. 23).

Over and above (lèsma'âth). — Chap. xxii. 5.

(4) Three thousand talents of gold. — Comp. chap. xxii. 14. The sum would be about £18,000,000 sterling.

Gold of Ophir. — Indian gold, from Abhira, at the mouth of the Indus.

Seven thousand talents of refined silver. — About £2,800,000 sterling.

To overlay. — Strictly, to besmear (Isa. xlv. 18).

The houses. — The chambers (chap. xxviii. 11; see 2 Chron. iii. 4-9). The Syriac and Arabic have "a thousand thousand talents of gold," and "twice a thousand thousand talents of silver."

(5) The gold for things of gold. — Literally, as for the gold, for the gold, and as for the silver, for
The Princes and People

I. CHRONICLES, XXIX.

Offer Willingly.

the hands of artificers. And who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?

(6) Then the chief of the fathers and princes of the tribes of Israel, and the captains of thousands and of hundreds, with the rulers of the king’s work, offered willingly, (7) and gave for the service of the house of God of gold five thousand talents and ten thousand drams, and of silver ten thousand talents, and of brass eighteen thousand talents, and one hundred thousand talents of iron. (8) And they with whom precious stones were found gave them to the treasure of the house of the Lord, by the hand of Jehiel the Gershonite.

(9) Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord; and David the king also rejoiced with great joy.

(10) Wherefore David blessed the Lord before all the congregation: and David said, Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel our father, for ever and ever.

(11) “Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine;
thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. (12) Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. (14) Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. (14) But who am I, and what is my people, that should I be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee. (15) For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow. (16) O Lord our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own. (17) I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with joy thy people, which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee. (18) O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee: and give unto Solomon my son a perfect heart, to keep thy commandments, thy testimonies, and thy statutes, and to do all these things, and to build the palace, for the which I have made provision.

All that is in the heavens is thine. The pronoun (lêk̂h) seems to have fallen out before the following: “Thine (lêk̂h) is the kingdom.” (Comp. for the idea Pss. lxxxix. 11, xxiv. 1.)

The kingdom. The universal sovereignty (Pss. xcvii. 10, xcviii. 1, xxii. 28).

Thou art exalted as head above all. Literally, And the self-exalted over all as head (art thou). (Comp. Numb. xvi. 3.) Here also the pronoun (âlîāh) may have been lost at the end. Ewald, however, explains the apparent participle as an Aramaic infinitive: “And the being exalted over all as head is thine.” (Comp. Isa. xxiv. 21 for the supremacy of God over all powers of heaven and earth.)

As head. Comp. Deut. xxviii. 13; Ps. xcviii. 43; Col. ii. 10.

Both riches and honour come of thee. Literally, And the riches and the honour are from before thee. (Comp. Prov. iii. 16; 1 Kings iii. 13.)


Might. Rendered “power” in verse 11. And in thine hand it is to make great (1 Sam. ii. 7, 8; Luke i. 52).

Now therefore, our God, we thank thee. And now, our God, we are thanking thee, and praising (participles in the Hebrew). Mâḏîm, “thanking,” occurs nowhere else, though the verb is common in other forms.

Thy glorious name. The name of thy glory: here only. (Comp. Isa. iii. 14, and Ps. lxxx. 10.)

But who am I? And, indeed, who am I? (answering to the Greek καὶ ὅπως.)

That we should be able. That we should hold in: i.e., keep strength (âṣar kəḇâš), a phrase confined to six passages in the Chronicles and three in Daniel (comp. xi. 6; x. 8, 16).

All things come of thee. For from thee is the whole (seîl) of our wealth and power. (Comp. verse 16.)

And of thine own. And out of thine own hand.

For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners. (Comp. Ps. xxxix. 12.)

Our days on the earth are as a (the) shadow. —Job vii. 9; Ps. cxviii. 4.

And there is none abiding. Rather, and there is no hope; no outlook, no assured future, no hope of permanence. What is the ground for this plaintive turn in the thought? Merely, it would seem, to emphasise what has just been said. We, as creatures of a day, can have no abiding and absolute possession. Our good things are lent to us for a season only. As our fathers passed away, so shall we.

All this store. Strictly, multitude; and so multitude of goods, riches (Ps. xxxvii. 16).

Cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own. —From thine own hand it is, and thine is the whole. The whole verse is a clearer expression of the second half of verse 14. (Comp. Ps. civ. 28.)

Thou triest the heart. —Pss. xi. 4, vii. 9, xxvi. 2.

Hast pleasure in. —Chap. xxviii. 4, verse 3. (Comp. also chap. xxviii. 9.)

Uprightness. —Or, sincerity (mēšāhārīm, Cant. i. 4).

In the uprightness (yōšācher), integrity (Deut. ix. 5), a synonym of mēšāhārīm. Both literally mean straightness: e.g., of a road (Prov. ii. 13, xxiii. 31). The connexion of ideas is this: Thou that lookest upon the heart knowest that my offering has been made without grudging and without hypocrisy; my motive was not my own interest, but Thy glory. Hence my joyful thanksgiving, because of the free generosity of Thy people.

Which are present here. Literally, Who have found themselves here (reflexive verb). (So 2 Chron. v. 11, and other places.)

Israel. —Verse 10. (See Gen. xxxii. 28, and Exod. iii. 6.)

Keep this for ever in the imagination. Rather, preserve this for ever: to wit, “the cast (chap. xxviii. 9) of the thoughts of the heart of thy people.” Give permanence to the frame of mind which has evinced itself in the freewill offerings of to-day.

Prepare their heart. —Or, direct (1 Sam. vii. 3). (Comp. Ezek. iv. 3, 7, “direct the face towards”), Prov. xvi. 9, “direct his going.” (Comp. also 2 Chron. xii. 14, xx. 33.)

To keep thy commandments, thy testimonies, and thy statutes, and to do all these things, and to build the palace, for the which I have made provision.
And David said to all the congregation, Now bless the Lord your God. And all the congregation blessed the Lord God of their fathers, and bowed down their heads, and worshipped the Lord, and the king. (21) And they sacrificed sacrifices unto the Lord, and offered burnt offerings unto the Lord, on the morrow after that day, even a thousand bullocks, and a thousand rams, and a thousand lambs, with their drink offerings, and sacrifices in abundance for all Israel: (22) and did eat and drink before the Lord on that day with great gladness. And they made Solomon the son of David king the second time, and anointed him unto the Lord to be the chief governor, and Zadok to be priest. (23) Then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him. (24) And all the princes, and the mighty men, and all the sons likewise of king David, submitted themselves unto Solomon the king. (25) And the Lord magnified Solomon exceedingly in the sight of all Israel, and bestowed upon him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel.

And to do all these things.—And to do the whole; (secl.) of thy commandments, testimonies, and statutes (comp. chaps. xxii. 13, xxviii. 7), or, to carry out all my designs.

For the which I have made provision.—Which I have prepared (secl.) to build (chap. xxviii. 2).

The sacrificial feast and anointing of Solomon.

Blessed the Lord God of their fathers.—Probably using a liturgical formula, like the doxologies which close the books of the Psalter (Pss. xii. 13, lxiii. 18, 19, lxix. 52, &c.).

And bowed down their heads.—Or, and bowed. Vulg., inclinaverunt se; LXX. here, κατέθανον τὰ γόνατα, bowing the knees; but usually κυψευσα, stooping, bowing.

Worshipped.—Prostrated themselves. LXX., προσενεκώντος. The two expressions “bowed and worshipped” are always united, as here (save in 2 Chron. xx. 18. Comp. Gen. xxiv. 26; Exod. xii. 27). The Syriac renders, “fell down and worshipped.”

And the king.—As God’s earthly representative, David receives the same tokens of reverence and homage (Comp. 1 Kings i. 31.)

On the morrow after that day (lēmōhibrath, ḥayyōm ḥālāh); here only. (Comp. Jonah iv. 7.) That is, on the day after the assembly.

A thousand bullocks . . .—Heb., Bullocks a thousand, rams a thousand, &c., according to the later mode of speech; and their libations (Ps. xvi. 4; Exod. xxix. 40; Lev. xxii. 13).

And sacrifices in abundance for all Israel.

—The word “sacrifices” (zāḇāḥîm) occurred in a general sense at the beginning of the verse. Here, in connection with burnt-offerings, it has the special meaning of “thank-offerings” (shallāmim; Authorized Version, “peace-offerings,” Deut. xii. 6). See for both kinds of sacrifice, Lev. i. 1 sqq.; Exod. xx. 24, xxiv. 5.

For all Israel.—So that every one present might partake of the sacrificial meal. (Comp. Notes on chap. xvi. 2, 3; Deut. xii. 7; 1 Sam. i. 3–5, 13.)

And did eat and drink.—And they ate and drank. (Comp. the account of the feasting at David’s coronation, chap. xii. 39, 40.)

And they made Solomon the son of David king the second time.—The first time is briefly noticed in chap. xxiii. 1. (Comp. the full account, 1 Kings i. 32–40.)

And anointed him unto the Lord to be the chief governor.—And anointed (him; perhaps the suffix has fallen out) for Jehovah as prince (nāgīd, chap. xxvii. 16; 1 Kings i. 35).

Anointed.—Judg. ix. 15; 2 Sam. ii. 4. The expression “for Jehovah” seems to mean, according to His will. (Comp. chap. xxviii. 5.) Or perhaps we should render, anointed him as prince, and Zadok as priest, to Jehovah. The king was Jehovah’s viceroy, as Zadok was His priest. The theocratic nature of the Israelite monarchy is again insisted upon. (Comp. chaps. xvii. 14, xxviii. 5.)

Zadok to be priest.—A remarkable notice, peculiar to the Chronicles. Among other things, it vividly illustrates the almost sovereign dignity of the high priest’s office; it also explains the deposition of Abiathar (comp. 1 Kings i. 32, ii. 26) as having been already contemplated by David.

Then.—And.

Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord.—Comp. chap. xxviii. 5.

As king instead of David his father.—It is not meant that David abdicated. Verses 23–25 are anticipatory of the history of Solomon’s reign. At the same time, their introduction here is natural, not only as relating the immediate sequel of Solomon’s coronation, but also as showing how David’s last wishes in regard to his son were realised.

And all the princes (sāriṯim).—The grandees of chaps. xxvii., xxviii. 1, xix. 6; not members of the royal house, who are designated as “the king’s sons.”

Submitted themselves.—See marginal rendering. The Vulg. has the exegetical expansion, “dercunct manuum et subjicietur Salomon regi.” The Hebrew phrase “put (nāṭḥān) hand under . . .” is not met with elsewhere. (Comp. Gen. xxiv. 2, 9.) It appears to be different from “give hand to . . .” in token of good faith or submission. (Comp. 2 Chron. xxx. 8; Lam. v. 6; Ezek. xvii. 18.) An ancient mode of doing homage may be intended. The whole sentence may contain an allusive reference to the attempt of Adonijah (1 Kings i. 5–33).

And bestowed upon him such royal majesty as had not been on any king before him in Israel.—Literally, and put upon him a glory of kingship that had not become on any king over Israel before him. The phrase “put glory upon . . .” (nāṭḥān ḥōd ‘al . . .) occurs in Ps. vii. 2. Only two or, counting Ish-bosheth, three kings had preeced
Thus David the son of Jesse reigned over all Israel. And the time that he reigned over Israel was forty years; seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem. And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour; and Solomon his son reigned in his stead.

Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer, with all his reign and his might, and the times that went over him, and over Israel, and over all the kingdoms of the countries.

Solomon. (Comp. 1 Kings iii. 12; 2 Chron. i. 12.)

Thus David . . . reigned.—Rather, Now David . . . had reigned.

Verses 26–30.—Concluding remarks upon David’s history.

Over all Israel.—This alludes to the antecedent reign over Judah only. (See 2 Sam. v. 1–5; chaps. xi. 1, xii. 38.)

And the time (Heb., the days). That he reigned.—This verse is a duplicate of 1 Kings ii. 11, omitting the words “David” at the beginning and “years” at the end.

Seven years.—More exactly, seven and a-half. (See 2 Sam. v. 5.)

In a good old age.—Gen. xv. 15.

Full of days.—From LXX. and Vulg. (εὐφόρος πλέον διερου—plenus dierum). Literally, satisfied with days. Syriac, “And he was great in the riches of the world, and in the honour thereof.”

And Solomon his son reigned in his stead. —The regular formula, from 1 Kings xi. 43 to the end of the history of the kings.

Now the acts of David the king, first and last.—Literally, And the words (dibré) of David the king, the former and the latter, behold they are written in “the words of Samuel the seer” (ró-éh), and in “the words of Nathan the prophet,” and in “the words of Gad the seer” (hózéh). For “written in,” the Hebrews said “written on.” (See Exod. xxxiv. 1; Isa. viii. 1.)

The acts of David.—Or, the matters, history of David. The Heb. dábár is (1) a word, (2) something spoken about, a matter, transaction, or event. (Comp. chap. xvi. 37; 2 Kings xvii. 11; Gen. xv. 1; 2 Sam. xi. 18, 19.) Gesenius renders here: Et res gestae regis David . . . ecce eae scriptae in libro cui titulus, Res Samuelis (Thesaur., p. 722). As to the sources apparently cited by the chronicler in this passage, see the remarks in the Introduction.

And his might.—Or, valour, prowess. (See verse 11.) His warlike achievements are intended. (Comp. 1 Kings xv. 23; Judg. viii. 21.)

And the times that went over him.—Heb., passed over him. The seasons of good and evil fortune, the vicissitudes of his own and his people’s history. (Comp. chap. xiii. 1; Gen. xxxv. 29.)

Riches and honour.—Verse 12. Syriac, “And he was great in the riches of the world, and in the honour thereof.”

And over all the kingdoms of the countries. —Viz., those with which David had relations of friendship or war, such as the Philistines, Arameans, Hamathites, and other surrounding peoples. (Comp. chap. xiv. 17.)

Kingdoms of the countries.—2 Chron. xii. 8. xvii. 10, xx. 29; not elsewhere.

The Syriac adds: “Because that David did that which was good before the Lord, and departed not from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life.”
THE SECOND BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES.
CHAPTER I. — (1) And Solomon the son of David was strengthened in his kingdom, and the Lord his God was with him, and magnified him exceedingly. (2) Then Solomon spake unto all Israel, to the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and to the judges, and to every governor in all Israel, the chief of the fathers. (3) So Solomon, and all the congregation with him, went to the high place that was at Gibeon; for there was the tabernacle of the congregation of God, which Moses the servant of the Lord had made in the wilderness.

(4) But the ark of God had David brought up from Kirjath-jearim to the place which David had prepared for it; for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem. (5) Moreover the brasen altar, that Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made, he put before the tabernacle of the Lord; and Solomon

THE REIGN OF SOLOMON (chs. i.—ix.).

1. Chap. i. describes a national sacrifice at Gibeon, and in connection therewith a dream in which God reveals His will to Solomon (1 Kings iii. 5). A few details are added respecting Solomon's power, wealth, and commerce.

2. Chaps. ii.—vii. are concerned with the principal topic of the writer's presentation, viz., the building and consecration of the Temple.

3. Chaps. viii., ix. supply further particulars of Solomon's public works, his regulation of worship, his foreign relations, his revenues, wisdom, and glory; followed by a reference to authorities, and notice of his death.

THE SECOND BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES.

I.

(a) The sacrifice at Gibeon, and Solomon's dream (verses 1—13). (b) The king's chariots and horsemen, wealth and commerce (verses 14—17).

(3) The tabernacle of the congregation of God. — Rather, God's tent of meeting; viz., with man (Exod. xxv. 22; xxvii. 21; Num. xvii. 4). Solomon required to Gibeon because "that was the great high place" (1 Kings iii. 4). We learn from our text why Gibeon stood pre-eminent above the other high places. (Comp. 1 Chron. vi. 31 sqq.; xvi. 39 sqq.)

(4) But.—Or, But indeed, but no doubt (ábbáth) (chap. xiii. 3; xxxii. 17). For the transfer of the ark see 1 Chron. xiii. xv.; 2 Sam. vi.

(5) Moreover the brasen altar ... he put before the tabernacle of the Lord. — Rather, And the brasen altar ... was there before the dwelling of Jehovah. In Hebrew, šâm is "there"; and šām, "he put." Some MSS., supported by the LXX. and Vulg., read the former; most of the MSS. and the Syr., Arab., and Targ., the latter. The former reading is preferable, as it is not likely that David found the brasen altar separated from the Mosaic sanctuary, and restored it to its place. The sentence further explains why Solomon resorted to Gibeon. The presence of the old brasen altar constituted it the legitimate place of sacrifice. With perfect consistency, the chronicler accounted for David's not going to Gibeon (1 Chron. xxii. 28—30).

(6) And Solomon and the congregation sought unto it. — Rather, And Solomon and the assembly

B.C. 1015.

a 1 Kings 2. 66.

b 1 Kings 4. 21. 22.

c 2 Chron. 1. 21. 22.

d 2 Chron. 1. 26. 27.

1 Or, was there.
and the congregation sought unto it. (6) And Solomon went up thither to the
brasen altar before the Lord, which was at the tabernacle of the congre-
gation, and offered a thousand burnt offerings upon it.

(7) In that night did God appear unto Solomon, and said unto him, Ask what
I shall give thee. (8) And Solomon said unto God, Thou hast shewed great
mercy unto David my father, and hast made me king to reign in his stead. (9) Now,
O Lord God, let thy promise unto David my father be established; § for thou hast
made me king over a people like the

sought Him,—i.e., the Lord. (Comp. 1 Chron. xiii. 3; xvi. 13; xxi. 30.) The old versions translate as A. V.

(6) And Solomon went up thither to the
brasen altar.—So Vulg. incorrectly. Rather, And
Solomon offered there on the brasen altar; so LXX. and Syriac.

Before the Lord.—The altar stood before the entry of the Lord's dwelling-place (Exod. xl. 6). (Comp. Judges xx. 23, 26.)

Which was at the tabernacle of the congre-
gation.—Which altar belonged to the tent of trust: in 1 Kings vi. 22 the golden altar is said in like manner to belong to the Holy of holies, before which it stood. (The Vulg. seems to have read “the brasen altar, before the Lord’s tent of meeting”; comp. verse 3.)

And offered.—He offered (I say). The verb is repeated before its object for clearness’ sake.

(7–13) God’s revelation to Solomon by night. (Comp. 1 Kings iii. 5–15.)

(7) In that night did God appear unto Solo-
mon.—Kings, “In Gibeon did Jehovah appear unto Solomon in a dream of the night.” Our text fixes the night as that which followed the sacrifices; the parallel passage explicitly states that it was in a dream that God appeared.

Ask what I shall give thee.—Rather, Ask thou what shall I give thee? So Kings.

(8) Thou hast shewed great mercy unto
David.—Literally, Thou, thou hast done great kindness with David. (The regular phrase; comp. Luke i. 72.) From this point the relation here is briefer on the whole than that of Kings. The greater part of the long verse (1 Kings iii. 6) is omitted, and the variations between the two texts become numerous, though the general sense is the same in each.

And hast made me to reign in his stead.—Comp. 1 Kings iii. 7; and the similar language of Esarhaddon, king of Assyria (B.C. 681–668); “Ever since Asshur, Samas, Bel, Nebo . . . made me, Esar-
haddon, sit securely on the throne of my father” (Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia, ii. 15, col. 2).

10. Now, O Lord God, let thy promise unto
David my father be established.—A reminis-
cence of 1 Chron. xvii. 23.

Over a people like the dust of the earth in
multitude.—Over a people numerous as the dust of the earth. This last clause freely corresponds with 1 Kings iii. 8. (Comp. the common title of Assyrian monarchs, “king of multitudes,” sar kisšit.)

(10) Give me now wisdom and knowledge.—Now wisdom and knowledge give thou me; a petition co-ordinate with that of verse 9: “Now, O Lord God,” &c. The clause answers to 1 Kings iii. 9. The word rendered “knowledge” (madá‘) is late, and occurs besides only in Dan. i. 4, 17; Eccles. x. 20.

That I may go out and come in before this people.—See 1 Kings iii. 7; Num. xxvii. 17; Deut. xxxi. 2.

For who can judge.—The simple impf.; Kings has, “who is able to judge?”

This thy people, that is so great (gaddêl),—Kings: “This thynumerous (kabéd) people.” For the king as judge comp. 1 Sam. viii. 20.

(11) Because this was in thine heart.—For this phrase see 1 Chron. xxii. 7.

Wealth, or honour.—Added by chronicler. Wealth (neksin) is a late word, common in the Targums, and in Syriac (nekásim). The phrase “riches, wealth, and honour” occurs in Ecc. vi. 2.

Long life.—Many days.

But (and) hast asked wisdom and knowledge
for thyself, that thou mayest judge . . . king.—An expansion of what we find in Kings: “And hast asked discernment for thyself, to hear judgment.” The verb hast asked is expressed in better idiom than in Kings.

(12) Wisdom and knowledge.—The wisdom and
the knowledge, viz., which thou hast asked for.

Is granted unto thee.—The Hebrew expression is found only here and in Esther ii. 11. The parallel passage gives three verses for this one (1 Kings iii. 12–14).

And I will give thee.—Kings, “I have given.” The perfect tense (I will certainly give) is more idiom-
tic than the chronicler’s simple imperfect.

Such as none of the kings have had that
have been before thee . . . the like.—Rather, Such as hath not been to the kings before thee, and after thee shall not be. (Comp. 1 Chron. xxix. 25 and Note.)

The Assyrian kings were fond of similar comparisons between themselves and their predecessors. Kings: “That there hath not been (i.e., shall not be) a man like thee among the kings, all thy days,” a different promise. The conditional promise, “And if thou wilt walk in my ways . . . I will lengthen thy days” (1 Kings iii. 14), is here omitted, although verse 11 has mentioned long life; perhaps because Solomon fell short of it. But comp. chap. vii. 17 seq. Of course the omission may be a mere abridgment.
such as "none of the kings have had that have been before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like.

(13) Then Solomon came from his journey to the high place that was at Gibeon to Jerusalem, from before the tabernacle of the congregation, and reigned over Israel. (14) And Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen; and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, which he placed in the chariot cities, and with the king at Jerusalem. (15) And the king made silver and gold at Jerusalem as plenteous as stones, and cedar trees probably lay in the south towards Egypt. The Simeonite Beth-macaboth (house of chariots), and Hazar-susim (court of horses) may have been included amongst them. (See 1 Chron. iv. 31.)

II. CHRONICLES, II.

Solomon's Labourers.

The building and consecration of the temple (chaps. ii.—vii.).

Preliminary measures: (1) The levy of Canaanite labourers (verses 1, 2, and 17, 18). (2) The treaty with Huram of Tyre (verses 3—16).

(1) Determined.—Literally, said, which may mean either commanded, as in chap. i. 2; 1 Chron. xxi. 17,
II. CHRONICLES, II.

Huram for Workmen.

Burnt offerings morning and evening, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts of the LORD our God. This is an ordinance for ever to Israel. (8) And the house which I build is great: for great is our God above all gods. (9) But who is able to build him a house, seeing the heaven and the powers of the heaven cannot contain him? who am I then, that I should build him a house, save only to burn sacrifice before him? (10) Send me now therefore a man cunning to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in iron, and in purple, and crimson, and and a continual pile (of shewbread) and burnt offerings. (See Lev. xxiv. 5, 5; Num. xxvii. 4.)

On the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts. — 1 Chron. xxiii. 31.

"Solomons banquet: sat seasons. These special sacrifices are prescribed in Num. xxvii. 9—xxix. This is an ordinance for ever to Israel. — Literally, for ever this is (is obligatory) upon Israel, viz., this ordinance of offerings. (Comp. the similar phrase, 1 Chron. xxiii. 31; and the formula, "a statute for ever," so common in the Law, Exod. xii. 14; xxix. 9.)

(5) And the house which I build is great. — 1 Chron. xxix. 1.

Great is our God above all gods. — Exod. xviii. 11; Deut. x. 17; Ps. lxvii. 13; xev. 3. According to modern notions of magnitude, the Temple of Solomon was a small building. (See on 1 Kings vi. 2, 3.)

Shelley's

"There once proud Salem's haughty flame
Rear'd high to heaven its thousand golden domes,
Is pure fancy."

(6) But who is able. — Literally, who could keep strength? (See 1 Chron. xiv. 14.)

The heaven . . . cannot contain him. — This high thought occurs in Solomon's prayer (1 Kings viii. 27; 2 Chron. vii. 13).

Who am I then . . . before him? — That is, I am not so ignorant of the infinite nature of Deity, as to think of localising it within an earthly dwelling. I build not for His residence, but for His worship and service. (Comp. Isa. xla. 22.)

To burn sacrifice. — Literally, to burn incense. Here, as in verse 4, used in a general sense.

(7) Send me now . . . And now send me a wise man, to work in the gold and in the silver (1 Chron. xxiii. 15; verse 13).

And in (the) purple, and crimson, and blue. —

No allusion is made to this kind of art in chap. iv. 11—16, nor in 1 Kings vii. 13 seq., which describe only metallurgic works of this master, whose versatile genius might easily be paralleled by famous names of the Renaissance.

Purple (argēwān). — Aramaic form. (Heb. 'argēwān, Exod. xxv. 4.)

Crimson (karmīl). — A word of Persian origin, occurring only here and in verse 13, and chap. iii. 14. (Comp. our word carnine.)

Blue (telēlāth). — Dark blue, or violet. (Exod. xxv. 4, and elsewhere.)
Solomon’s Requests.

<table>
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<th>II. CHRONICLES, II.</th>
<th>Huram’s Answer.</th>
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</table>
| blue, and that can skill to grave with the cunning men that are with me in Judah and in Jerusalem, whom David my father did provide. (8) Send me also cedar trees, fir trees, and almagum trees, out of Lebanon: for I know that thy servants can skill to cut timber in Lebanon; and, behold, my servants shall be with thy servants, (9) even to prepare me timber in abundance: for the house which I am about to build shall be of wondrous great. (10) And, behold, I will give to thy servants, the hewers that cut timber, twenty thousand measures of beaten wheat, and twenty thousand measures of barley, and twenty thousand baths of wine, and twenty thousand baths of oil. (11) Then Huram the king of Tyre answered in writing, which he sent to Solomon, Because the Lord hath loved his people, he hath made thee king over them. (12) Huram said moreover, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, that made heaven and earth, who hath given to David the king a wise son, endowed with prudence and understanding, that might build an house for the Lord, and an

<table>
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<th>Can skill.—Knoweth how.</th>
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<tr>
<td>To grave.—Literally, to carve carvings; whether in wood or stone. (1 Kings vi. 29; Zech. iii. 9; Exod. xxviii. 9, on gems.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>With the cunning men.—The Hebrew connects this clause with the infinitive to work at the beginning of the verse. There should be a stop after the words to grave.</td>
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<td>Whom David my father did provide (prepared, 1 Chron xxix. 2).—1 Chron. xxii. 15; xxviii. 23.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fir trees.—The word bérôšìm is now often rendered cypress. But Professor Robertson Smith has well pointed out that the Phoenician Ebusus (the modern Ivy) is the &quot;isle of bérôšìm,&quot; and is called in Greek Phœnissa, i.e., &quot;Pine isles.&quot; Moreover a species of pine is very common on the Lebanon.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Almagum trees.—Sandal wood; Heb. 'almugnim, which appears a more correct spelling of the native Indian word (valgiska) than the almaggym of 1 Kings x. 11. (See Note on chap. 10.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Out of Lebanon.—The chronicler knew that sandal wood came from Ophir, or Abhira, at the mouth of the Indus (chap. x. 10; comp. 1 Kings x. 11). The desire to be concise has betrayed him into an inaccuracy of statement. Or must we suppose that Solomon himself believed that the sandal wood, which he only knew as a Phoenician export, really grew, like the cedars and almaggym, on the Lebanon? Such a mistake would be perfectly natural; but the divergence of this account from the parallel in 1 Kings leaves it doubtful whether we have in either anything more than an ideal sketch of Solomon's message.</td>
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<td>For I know that thy servants ... —Comp. the words of Solomon as reported in 1 Kings v. 6.</td>
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<td>Even to prepare me timber in abundance. (A use of the infinitive, to which the chronicler is partial: see 1 Chron. v. 1, ix. 25; xiii. 4, xv. 2, xxiii. 5.) So Syriac, &quot;Let them bring being to me.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shall be wondrous great.—See margin; and LXX., μέγας καὶ τέκτονις, &quot;great and glorious;&quot; Syriac, &quot;an astonishment&quot; (temhā).</td>
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<tr>
<td>And, behold, I will give ... barley.—Rather, And, behold, for the hewers, that is, for the woodcutters, I will give wheath as food for thy servants, viz., twenty thousand kors, and barley twenty thousand kors, &amp;c. &quot;For the hewers&quot; may mean &quot;as for the hewers&quot; (Gen. iv. 23). The latter sense would bring the verse into substantial harmony with 1 Kings v. 11, where we read: &quot;And Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand kors of wheat as food for his household, and twenty kors (LXX., 20,000 baths) &quot;of pure oil; so used Solomon to give to Hiram year by year,&quot; i.e., during his building operations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaten wheat.—The Hebrew (hittim makkōth) is literally wheath—strokes. But it is obvious that makkōth is a misreading for makkōlēth, food, the word used in 1 Kings v. 11; and so the LXX. renders. The expression &quot;thy servants&quot; here seems to correspond with the phrase &quot;his household&quot; there; and the drift of the whole passage is that, in return for the services of the Tyrian artificers, Solomon engages to supply Hiram's royal household with provisions of corn and wine and oil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others assume, without much likelihood, that the two passages relate to two distinct agreements, by one of which Solomon undertook to supply Hiram's court, and by the other his Tyrian workmen, with provisions.</td>
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<td>Hewers (hōkēbim).—An old word, not recurring in the chronicle, and therefore explained by the writer.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Measures (ānōrim).—The kor was a dry measure—one quarter. (Syriac, ρήπι, &quot;quarters.&quot; ) The bath, a liquid measure, of six or seven gallons' capacity. Both words occur in the Greek of Luke vi. 6, 7. (11-15) Huram's reply. (Comp. 1 Kings v. 7-9.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Answered in writing.—Said in a letter. This seems to imply that Solomon's message had been orally delivered.</td>
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<td>Because the Lord hath loved his people.—So chap. ix. 8; 1 Kings x. 9. In the parallel passage Huram blesses Jehovah, on hearing Solomon's message, apparently before writing his reply.</td>
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<td>Huram said moreover.—And Huram said, that is, in his letter to Solomon.</td>
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<td>Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, that made heaven and earth.—In 1 Kings v. 7 we read simply, &quot;Blessed be the Lord this day, which hath given unto David a wise son over this great people.&quot; The chronicler has perhaps modified the words of his source in a monotheistic sense; although it is quite possible that Jehovah was known to the polytheist Phoenician by the title of &quot;Maker of heaven and earth.&quot; (Comp. Gen. xiv. 19.) An inscription of the Persian emperor Xerxes speaks of the Supreme in terms which resemble what Solomon says in verse 5, as well as Huram’s language here. &quot;The great god Ahuramazda, great one of the gods, who made this heaven, who made these heavens&quot; (inscription on rocks at Elwed).</td>
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<tr>
<td>An house for his kingdom.—A royal palace (chap. vii. 11; viii. 1).</td>
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Huram's Answer.

II. CHRONICLES, II.

The Strangers in the Land.

...which my lord hath spoken of, let him send unto his servants: (16) and we will cut wood out of Lebanon, 1 as much as thou shalt need: and we will bring it to thee in fletes by sea to Joppa; and thou shalt carry it up to Jerusalem.

(17) And Solomon numbered all the strangers that were in the land of Israel, after the numbering wherewith David his father had numbered them; and they were found an hundred and fifty thousand and three thousand and six hundred. (18) And he set three scores and ten thousand of them to be bearers of burdens, and fourscore thousand to be writers; 1 Kings v. 8 has the classical phrase, "all thy desire."

To Joppa.—1 Kings v. 9 has the less definite "unto the place that thou shalt appoint me." Joppa (modern Jaffa) was the harbour nearest Jerusalem.

And thou shalt carry it up to Jerusalem.—This interprets the curt phrase of 1 Kings v. 9, "and thou shalt take (them) away."

A comparison of this and the parallel account of Huram's letter makes it clear (1) that the chronicler has not written without knowledge of the older text; (2) that neither text has preserved the exact form of the original documents. From Josephus (Ant. viii. 2, 8) it would appear that some record of the negotiations between Huram and Solomon was still extant at Tyre in his day, if only we might trust his authority.

(17, 18) Solomon's levy of Canaanite labourers. (A return to the subject of verse 2.)

All the strangers.—The indigenous Canaanite population. (Comp. the use of the term in Gen. xxiii. 4; Exod. xxi. 21; Lev. xxvii. 8.)

After the numbering.—The word sēphār" reckoning," "census," occurs here only in the Old Testament. Wherewith David his father.—The former census of the native Canaanites, which had taken place by order of David, is briefly recorded in 1 Chron. xxii. 2. (Comp. 2 Sam. xx. 24, "and Adoram was over the levy," from which it appears that the subject population was liable to forced labour under David; comp. also 1 Kings iv. 6; v. 14; xii. 4—15.)

And they were found.—The total of the numbers here given is 153,600, which is the sum of the figures assigned in the next verse, viz., 70,000 + 80,000 + 5,600.

And he set...—Literally, and he made seventy thousand of them bearers of burdens, and eighty thousand hewers in the mountains. This exactly agrees with 1 Kings v. 15.

And three thousand and six hundred overseers.—The same number was given in verse 2. In 1 Kings v. 16 we read of 3,300 officers. In the Hebrew, three (shallūḵ) and six (šēḵ) might easily be confused; our reading appears right. The chronicler omits all notice of the levy of 30,000 Israelites, which...
CHAPTER III.—(1) Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite. (2) And he began to build in the second day of the second month, in the fourth year of his reign.

III.

THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE AND MAKING OF THE SACRED VESSELS (chaps. iii.—v. 1; comp. 1 Kings vi., vii.).

(a) Site and date (verses 1, 2). (b) Its dimensions: the porch and the Holy Place, or nave (verses 3—7). (c) The Holy of holies, or chancel, with the cherubim and the veil (verses 8—14). (d) The two bronze pillars in the porch (verses 15—17).

(a) SITE AND DATE (verses 1, 2).

(1) At Jerusalem in mount Moriah.—Nowhere else in the Old Testament is the Temple site so specified. (Comp. “the land of Moriah,” the place appointed for the sacrifice of Isaac, Gen. xxii. 2.)

Where the Lord appeared unto David his father.—So LXX.; rather, who appeared unto David his father. Such is the meaning according to the common use of words. There is clearly an allusion to the etymology of Moriah, which is assumed to signify “appearance of Jah.” (Comp. Gen. xxii. 14.) Translate, “in the mount of the Appearance of Jah, who appeared unto David his father.” The Vulgate reads: “in Monte Moria quia demonstratus fuerat David patri ejus;” but mir’ah never means to be shown or pointed out. The Syriac, misunderstanding the LXX. (אִירְאָ֑ה), renders “in the hill of the Amorites.”

In the place that David had prepared.—This is no doubt correct, as the versions indicate. The Hebrew has suffered an accidental transposition.

In the threshingfloor of Ornan.—1 Chron. xxii. 1, 2; xxvi. 1.

(2) In the second day of the second month.—Heb., in the second month in the second. The versions omit the repetition, which is probably a scribe’s error. “On the second day” would be expressed in Hebrew differently. Read simply, “And he began to build in the second month,” i.e., in Zif (or April—May). See 1 Kings vi. 1.

(b) DIMENSIONS OF THE TEMPLE; THE PORCH AND THE HOLY PLACE, OR NAVE (verses 3—7).

(3) Now these are the things wherein Solomon was instructed.—Rather, And this is the foundation (or ground-plan) of Solomon. The plural pronoun τῆς, “these,” is used as a neut. sing. “this” (comp. 1 Chron. xxiv. 19), and the hophal infinitive hílād, “to be founded,” is used substantively, as in Ezra iii. 11. So Vulgate, “Et haec sunt fundamenta qua jecit Solomon.”

After the first measure.—Rather, in the ancient measure, an explanation not found in the parallel passage, 1 Kings vi. 2. The ancient or Mosaic cubit was one hand-breadth longer than the cubit of later times (Ezek. xl. 5; xliii. 13). The chronicler has omitted the height, which was thirty cubits (1 Kings vi. 2).

(4) And the porch... twenty cubits.—Heb., and the porch that was before the length (i.e., that lay in front of the oblong main building), before the breadth of the house, was twenty cubits (i.e., the porch was as long as the house was broad). This curious statement answers to what we read in 1 Kings vi. 3: “And the porch before the hēl of the house, twenty cubits was its length, before the breadth of the house.” But the Hebrew is too singular to pass without challenge, and comparison of the versions suggests that we ought to read here: “And the porch which was before it (Syriac), or before the house (LXX.), its length before the breadth of the house was twenty cubits.” This would involve but slight alteration of the Hebrew text. (Comp. verse 8.)

And the height was an hundred and twenty. This would make the porch four times the height of the main building, which was thirty cubits. The Alexandrine MS. of the LXX., and the Arabic version, read “twenty cubits;” the Syriac omits the whole clause, which has no parallel in Kings, and is further suspicious as wanting the word “cubits,” usually expressed after the number (see verse 3). The Hebrew may be a corruption of the clause, “and its breadth ten cubits.” (Comp. 1 Kings vi. 3.)

And he overlaid it with pure gold.—See 1 Kings vi. 21.

The greater house.—Or, the great chamber, i.e., the Holy Place, or nave. (Comp. 1 Chron. xxviii. 11.)

He cieled with fir tree.—He covered with planks of fir; or, panelled with fir. To cieel, or rather see...
gold, and set thereon palm trees and chains. (6) And he garnished the house with precious stones for beauty: and the gold was gold of Parvaim. (7) He overlaid also the house, the beams, the posts, and the walls thereof, and the doors thereof, with gold; and graved cherubims on the walls. (8) And he made the most holy house, the length whereof was according to the breadth of the house, twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits: and he overlaid it with fine gold, amounting to six hundred talents. (9) And the weight of the nails was fifty shekels of gold. And he overlaid the upper chambers with gold. (10) And in the most holy house he made two cherubims of image work, and overlaid them with gold. (11) And the wings of the cherubims were twenty

**II. CHRONICLES, III.**

**The Cherubims.**

Six hundred talents.—The weight of gold that expended on the plating of the walls of the inner shrine is not given in Kings. Solomon's whole yearly revenue was 666 talents (1 Kings x. 14).

(9) And the weight of the nails was fifty shekels of gold.—Literally, And a weight for nails for shekels—fifty in gold. The LXX. and Vulg. take this to mean that the weight of each nail was fifty shekels; and this is probably right, for fifty shekels as a total would be a trifling sum to record along with six hundred talents. The nails were used to fasten the golden plates to the wooden wainscoting of the edifice.

Whatever may be thought of the apparently incredible quantities of gold and silver stated to have been amassed by David for the Temple (1 Chron. xxii. 14; xxiv. 4, 7), it is clear that no inconsiderable amount of the former metal would be required for the plating of the chambers as described in this chapter. And it is well known, from their own monuments, that the Babylonian sovereigns of a later age were in the habit of thus adorning the houses of their gods. Nebuchadnezzar, for instance, who restored the great temple of Borsippa, says: "E-zaidda, the strong house, in the midst thereof I caused to make, with silver, gold, alabaster, bronze...cedar I caused to adorn (or, completed) its sibir. The cedar of the roof (?) of the shrines of Nebo with gold I caused to clothe." In another inscription we read: "The shrine of Nebo, which is amid E-Sagili, its threshold, its bolt, and its babnaku, with gold I caused to clothe." And again: "The cedar roof of the oracle I caused to clothe with bright silver." The Assyrian Esarhaddon, a century earlier, boasts that he built ten castles in Assyria and Accad, and "made them shine like day with silver and gold."

And he overlaid.—And the upper chambers he covered with gold. The chambers over the Holy of holies are mentioned in 1 Chron. xxviii. 11. The two statements of this verse are peculiar to the chronicle. The Syriac and Arabic omit the verse.

(10) Two cherubims.—1 Kings vi. 23—28. They were made of oleaster, plated with gold.

Of image work.—Literally, a work of statuary. The Hebrew word meaning "statuary" occurs here (c). The rendering in the LXX. as "a work of logs"; the Syriac as "a durable work." With the last three renderings comp. 1 Kings vi. 23, "wood (or blocks) of oleaster," a specially hard wood. The rendering of the LXX. suggests that the original reading may have been ma'asu 'eqim, "woodwork."

And overlaid.—Heb., and they overlaid.

And the wings of the cherubims were twenty cubits long. (9) And he overlaid, altogether, twenty cubits: so that, being outspread, they reached from wall to wall of the Holy of holies, which was
II. CHRONICLES, IV. The Vail and Pillars.

The Vail and Pillars.

The Altar of Brass.

cubits long: one wing of the one cherub was five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house: and the other wing was likewise five cubits, reaching to the wing of the other cherub. (12) And one wing of the other cherub was five cubits, reaching to the wall of the house: and the other wing was five cubits also, joining to the wing of the other cherub. (13) The wings of these cherubims spread themselves forth twenty cubits; and they stood on their feet, and their faces of that on the right hand.

Also he made before the house two pillars of thirty and five cubits high, and the chapter that was on the top of each of them was five cubits. (16) And he made chains, as in the oracle, and put them on the heads of the pillars; and made an hundred pomegranates, and put them on the chains. (17) And he reared up the pillars before the temple, one on the right hand, and the other on the left; and called the name of that on the right hand Jachin, and the name of that on the left Boaz.

CHAPTER IV. (1) Moreover he made an altar of brass, twenty cubits which is clearly corrupt. But if we read kad-debir for kad-debir, an infinitesimal change in Hebrew writing, we get the sense which our version suggests: And he made chainwork as in the chancel. It is true that the sacred writer has not told us that the walls of the Holy of Holies were so ornamented, but in verse 5 he states it of the great hall or holy place, and 1 Kings vi. 29 declares that the whole house was adorned with mural carvings. It was quite natural to write, “and he made chainwork as in the oracle,” assuming that such decorations really existed in the inner chamber. There seems therefore to be no need to alter debir into rábid, (“collar”) as most commentators have done, although the change is very slight in Hebrew writing. The LXX. had the present Hebrew text, but, apparently, not understanding it transliterated the Hebrew words: “He made severseth in the debir.” So Vulg., “as it were chainlets in the oracle.” The Syriac and Arabic have “and he made chains of fifty cubits.”

An hundred pomegranates.—So Jer. lii. 23. (See 1 Kings vii. 20, 42, from which it appears that there were altogether four hundred pomegranates, viz., an upper and lower row of one hundred each upon the chainwork of each pillar. So chap. iv. 13.)

(17) Before the temple.—Vulg., in vestibulo templi. So 1 Kings vii. 21, “at the porch of the temple.” 1 Kings vii. 22 adds, “and upon the top of the pillars was lily-work.”

Jachin . . . Boaz.—See 1 Kings vii. 21. “The description of the two brazen pillars,” says Reuss, “much more detailed in 1 Kings vii. 15 ff., has become almost unintelligible, under the pen of the abbreviator.” This is a strong exaggeration. He also pronounces the word bad-debir in verse 16, “absolutely unintelligible,” and to be accounted “foreign to the text.” How little we agree with this hasty decision will be evident from our Note on that verse.

IV.

(a) The principal vessels of the Temple (verses 1—10).
(b) Huram’s works in brass (verses 11—18).
(c) Catalogue of golden objects, and conclusion verse 19—chap. v. 1.)

(1) An altar of brass.—The brazen altar, altar of burnt offering, made by Solomon, is not noticed in the
the breadth thereof, and twenty cubits
the height thereof.

(5) Also he made a molten sea of ten

cubits round from brim to brim, round in
compass, and five cubits the height
thereof; and a line of thirty cubits did
compass it round about. (3) And under
it was the similitude of oxen, which did
compass it round about: ten in a cubit,
compassing the sea round about. Two
rows of oxen were cast, when it was
cast. (4) It stood upon twelve oxen,
three looking toward the north, and three
looking toward the west, and three
looking toward the south, and three
looking toward the east: and the sea
was set above upon them, and all their
hinder parts were inward. (5) And the
thickness of it was an hand breadth,
and the brim of it like the work of the brim
of a cup, with flowers of lilies; and
it received and held three thousand
baths.

(6) He made also ten lavers, and put
five on the right hand, and five on the
parallel chapters of Kings (1 Kings vi., vii.)
which describe the construction of the temple and its
vessels of service, but it is incidentally mentioned in
another passage of the older work (1 Kings ix. 25), and
its existence seems to be implied in 1 Kings viii. 22, 64.
This altar stood in the inner court of the temple.
It rose from a terraced platform. (Comp. Ezek. xlvii.
13-17.) The Hebrew of this verse is such as to
suggest that it must have existed in the original docu-
ment. The style is the same. (Comp. the construction
of the numerals with the noun, and note the word
gōnāh, "height," now used for the first time by the
chronicler.) It would appear, therefore, that the verse
has been accidentally omitted from the text of Kings.

THE BRAZEN SEA (verses 2-5). (Comp. 1 Kings
vii. 29-26.)

(2) Also he made a molten sea.—And he made
the sea (i.e., the great basin) molten—i.e., of cast metal.

Of ten cubits. . . therefrom.—Ten in the cubit
from its lip to its lip, circular all round; and five in
the cubit was its height. Word for word as in 1 Kings
vii. 23, save that Kings has one different preposition
("ad, "unto," instead of "el, "to"). "Lip." Comp.
"lip of the sea," Gen. xxii. 17; "lip of the Jordan,"
2 Kings ii. 13; a metaphor which is also used in
Greek.

And a line of thirty cubits. . .—Line, i.e.,
measuring-line, as in Ezek. xlvii. 3. The Hebrew is
qānoc. In Kings we read a rare form, qavesch. The rest
of the clause is the same in both texts.

Did compass.—Would compass, or go round it.

(9) And under it was the similitude of oxen.

—Literally, And a likeness of oxen (figured oxen)
under it around surrounding it, ten in the cubit en-
compassing the sea around: two rows were the oxen,
smelted in the smelting of it. In the parallel passage
(1 Kings vii. 24) we read: And wild gourds under-
neath its lip around surrounding it," &c., as here;
two of rows were the gourds, smelted in the smelting
thereof. The Hebrew words for "oxen" and "gourds"
might easily be confused by a transcriber, and accord-
ingly it is assumed by most commentators that the text
of the chronicler has suffered corruption, and should
be restored from that of Kings. But there seems
no reason—unless we suppose that each writer has
given an exhaustive description, which is clearly not
the case—why the ornamental rows which ran round
the great basin should not have included both features,
small figures of oxen, as well as wild gourds. Reus
objects on the ground of the diminutive size of the oxen
("ten in a cubit"); but such work was by no
means beyond the resources of ancient art. (Comp.
the reliefs on the bronze doors of Shalmaneser II.
(859-825 B.C.); 1 Kings vii. 29 actually gives
an analogous instance.) The word pēqētim, "wild
gourds," only occurs in one other place of Kings, viz.,
1 Kings vi. 15. (Comp. pāqqu'oth, 2 Kings iv. 20.)
A copyist of Kings might have inadvertently repeated
the word from the former passage in 1 Kings vii. 24.
In any case it is sheer dogmatism to assert that "the
copyists (in the Chronicle) have absurdly changed the
gourds into oxen" (Reuss). The Syriac and Arabic
omit this verse; but the LXX. and Vulg. have it.

(4) It stood.—The whole verse coincides verbally
with 1 Kings vii. 25, with one slight exception: the
common form of the numeral "twelve," shōnōm 'āsār,
is substituted for the rare shōnāh 'āsār.

(6) And the thickness . . . a cup.—Identical
with 1 Kings vii. 25.

With flowers of lilies.—See margin. "Lily" here
is shōshannah; in Kings, shōshān. LXX., "graven
with lily buds." Syriac and Arabic, "and it was very
beautiful." Vulg., "like the lip of a cup, or of an open
lily."

And it received and held three thousand
baths.—Literally, holding (whole) baths: three thou-
sand would it contain. The bath was the largest of
Hebrew liquid measures. Perhaps the true reading is,
"holding three thousand baths," the last verb being a
gloss borrowed from Kings. So Vulg. Syriac and
Arabic omit the clause. The LXX. had the present
reading: ext. 1 Kings vii. 29 reads, two thousand baths
would it contain. Most critics assume this to be
correct. Some scribe may have read 'alāphim, "thou-
sands," instead of 'alpayim, "two thousand," and then
have added "three" (shālōsha) under the influence of
the last verse. But it is more likely that the numeral
"three" having been inadvertently omitted from the
text of Kings, the indefinite word "thousands" was
made definite by turning it into the dual "two thou-
sand." Either mistake would be possible, because in the
unpointed text 'alāphim and 'alpayim are written
alike. The Syriac has the curious addition, "And
he made ten poles, and put five on the right and five on
the left, and bare with them the altar of burnt offer-
ings." Similarly the Arabic version.

THE TEN LAVERS: THEIR USE, AND THAT OF THE
SEA (verse 6). (Comp. 1 Kings vii. 27-30.)

The chronicler now returns to his abbreviating
style, and omits altogether the description of the ten
bases, or stands, upon which the lavers were placed,
and which are described in full and curious detail in
left, to wash in them: such things as they offered for the burnt offering they washed in them; but the sea was for the priests to wash in. (7) And he made ten candlesticks of gold according to their form, and set them in the temple, five on the right hand, and five on the left. (8) He made also ten tables, and placed them in the temple, five on the right side, and five on the left. And he made an hundred 3 basons of gold.

The ten tables are not mentioned in the parallel narrative, which speaks of one table only, viz., the table of shewbread (1 Kings vii. 48).

The LXX. renders λουτράς, " baths; " the Syriac, ḥaqūn, "bathes" (laganae, ḥaqūn).

To wash in them.—This statement, and indeed, the rest of the verse is peculiar to the chronicler. On the other hand, 1 Kings vii. 38 specifies the size and capacity of the lavers here omitted.

Such things as they offered for the burnt offering they washed in them.—This gives the meaning. Literally, "put them five on the right hand and five on the left."

But the sea was for the priests to wash in. —The Hebrew words have been transposed apparently. The same infinitive (tērokoph) occurs in Exod. xxx. 18; xl. 30, in a similar context. Instead of all this, the Syriac and Arabic versions read: "put them five on the right hand and five on the left, that the priests might wash in them." (Comp. Exod. xxx. 18, 28.) The LXX. renders λουτράς, "baths." The Syriac, ḥaqūn, "bathes" (laganae, ḥaqūn).

The Ten Golden Candlesticks, the Ten Tables, the Hundred Golden Bowls, and the Courts (verses 7-9).

This section is peculiar to Chronicles.

(7) And he made ten candlesticks of gold according to their form. —And he made the golden lampstands ten, according to their rule, or, prescribed manner. (Comp. 1 Kings vii. 49; and Exod. xxv. 31—40, where their type is described.) So the Vulg., "secondum speciem quæ jussa erant fieri." The same infinitive appears to be derived from Exod. xxx. 19; xl. 31.

In the temple.—And before the cherub (1 Kings vii. 49; verse 20, infra).

(8) He made also ten tables. —Perhaps the golden candlesticks stood upon them. (Comp. 1 Chron. xxviii. 16; and verse 19, infra.)

Side.—Not in the Hebrew.

An hundred basons.—Bowls for pouring libations (Amos vi. 6; same word, mizrāgūm). The Syriac and Arabic make the number of these vessels a hundred and twenty.

Furthermore he made the court of the priests, and the great court, and doors for the court, and overlaid the doors of them with brass. (10) And he set the sea on the right side of the east end, over against the south. (11) And Huram made the pots, and the shovels, and the 3 basons. And Huram finished the work that he was to make for king Solomon for the house of God; (12) to wit, the two pillars, and the ten tables are not mentioned in the parallel narrative, which speaks of one table only, viz., the table of shewbread (1 Kings vii. 48).

"Basons," or bowls, are spoken of in 1 Kings vii. 45, 50 (mizrāgūth), but their number is not given.

The court of the priests.—See 1 Kings vi. 36; vii. 12, "the inner court;" Jer. xxxvi. 10, "the higher court.

And the great court.—"Azārāh, "court," a late word, common in the Targums for the classical ḥeqār, which has just occurred. The azārāh was the outer court of the temple. It is not mentioned at all in the parallel narrative. The LXX. calls it "the great court;" the Vulg., "the great basilica." The Syriac renders the whole verse: "And he made one great court for the priests and Levites, and covered the doors and bolts with bronze." (Comp. Note on verse 3 for this plating of the doors with bronze.) The bronze-plated doors of Shalmaneser’s palace at Balawat were twenty-two feet high, and each leaf was six feet wide.

And he set the sea. —Literally, And he set the sea on the right shoulder, eastward, in front of the southward; i.e., on the south-east side of the house (1 Kings vii. 39, b). The LXX. and some MSS. add "of the house," which appears to have fallen out of the text.

Hiram’s Works in Brass (verses 11-18).

Throughout this section the narrative almost textually coincides with the parallel account.

And Huram made the pots. —1 Kings vii. 40 has "lavers" (pans). Our reading, "pots," appears correct, supported as it is by many MSS. and the LXX. and Vulg. of Kings. A single stroke makes the difference between the two words in Hebrew writing. These "pots" were seculles for carrying away the ashes of the altar.

Basons.—"Bowls" (mizrāgūth). Probably the same as the mizrāqīm of verse 8. So kīyōrōth (Kings) and kīyōrūm (Chron).

Hiram.—Hebrew text, Hiram, as in Kings. The LXX. renders: "And Hiram made the fleshhooks (epedēas) and the firepans (yopōn), and the hearth of the altar and all its vessels.

The work.—Kings, "all the work;" and so some MSS., LXX., and Vulg. of Chron. The Syriac and Arabic omit verses 11—17 and 19—22.

He was to make.—Rather, he made.

For the house.—In the house. Chronicles supplies the preposition in, which is not required according to ancient usage.

And the pommels, and the chapiters,—i.e., the globes and the capitals. Kings, Authorised Version,
The pommels, and the chapiters which were on the top of the two pillars, and the two wraiths to cover two pommels of the chapiters which were on the top of the pillars; (13) and four hundred pomegranates on the two wraiths; two rows of pomegranates on each wraith, to cover the two pommels of the chapiters which were upon the pillars. (14) He made also bases, and two lavers made he upon the bases; (15) one sea, and twelve oxen under it. (16) The pots also, and the shovels, and the fleshhooks, and all their instruments, did Hiram his father make to king Solomon for the house of the Lord of 3 bright brass. (17) In the plain of Jordan did the king cast them, in the 4 clay ground between Succoth and Zeredathah.

Thus Solomon made all these vessels in great abundance; for the weight of the brass could not be found out. (19) And Solomon made all the vessels that were for the house of God, the golden altar also, and the tables whereon the shewbread was set; (20) moreover the candlesticks with their lamps, that they should burn after the manner before the oracle, of pure gold; (21) and the
flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs, *made he of gold, and that 1 perfect gold;* (2) and the snuffers, and the 2 basons, and the spoons, and the censers, of pure gold; and the entry of the house, the inner doors thereof for the most holy place, and the doors of the house of the temple, were of gold.

CHAPTER V.—(1) Thus all the work that Solomon made for the house of the LORD was finished: 3 and Solomon brought in all the things that David his father had dedicated; and the silver, and the gold, and all the instruments, put he among the treasures of the house of God.

And that perfect gold.—It was perfection of gold. The word miklōth, "perfections" (intensive plural) occurs nowhere else. It is derived from kālāth, "to be finished," not kādal (Bishop Wordsworth). The LXX. omits the clause; not so the Vulg., which renders "all were made of purest gold." This little touch, added to heighten the effect, is quite in the manner of the chronicler, and is certainly not to be suspected, as Zöckler asserts. Perhaps we should read miklōth, "perfection" (Ezek. xxiii. 12), instead of the isolated miklōth.

And the snuffers.—Before this expression, and the basons (1 Kings vii. 50) has probably fallen out.

Snuffers.—Shears or scissors, for trimming the lamps.

The spoons, and the censers.—Or, trays and snuff-dishes.—See 1 Kings vii. 50; Exod. xxv. 38.

And the entry of the house.—Including both the doors of the nave or holy place, and those of the chancel or holiest. The words are explained by those which follow: "viz., its inner doors to the holy of holies and the doors of the house—viz., to the nave (hekāl, great hall)." In 1 Kings vii. 50 we read, "And the kihāth to the doors of the inner house—viz., the holy of holies, (and) to the doors of the house—viz., to the nave, were of gold." The word rendered kihāth (pōthōth) resembles that rendered entry (pēthēth); and some have supposed that the latter is a corruption of the former, and would alter our text accordingly. Two reasons seem to be decisive against such a change. (1) Pōthōth, "hinges," occurs nowhere else in the Bible; and may not be genuine. It is likely enough that the doors of the Temple were plated with gold (1 Kings vi. 32, 33), but hardly that their hinges were made of gold.

(3) Even if pōthōth be correct in Kings, the chronicler might have understood the word to mean openings, rather than hinges, and so have substituted the common word pēthah, which has that sense. The resemblance of the one word to the other would be a further consideration in its favour, according to ancient notions of interpretation.

V.

(1) Thus.—And. This verse is identical with 1 Kings vii. 51. (The chronicler has made three slight corrections of the older text.)

Brought in all the things ... dedicated.—Brought in the holy (or hallowed) things of David his father. (Comp. 1 Chron. xviii. 11; xxvi. 26—28.)

The implements.—Or, vessels. The word all is omitted by some MSS., and by the LXX., Syriac, and Arabic. "The holy things of David" are identical with "the silver and the gold and the vessels."

The Dedication of the Temple (chaps. v.—vii. 22).


National Ceremony of the Transfer of the Ark into the Temple. (Comp. 1 Kings viii. 1—11.)

The chapter is an almost literal duplicate of the parallel text. The desire to explain and abridge accounts for such variations as are not due to the transcribers.

The chief of the fathers.—Rather, the chiefs of the clans (father-houses). Vulg., "capita familiaorum;" LXX., τοις γενεαίοις πατέρων.

Elders ... sheikhs ... ameers. Zion.—Syr. and Arab., Hebron.

In the feast which was in the seventh month.—Heb., in the feast; that is, the seventh month. The words "in the month of Ethanim" (Kings) have been accidentally omitted before the expression rendered "in the feast." The Authorised Version suggests another mode of emending the text. (Comp. Neh. viii. 14.) Syr., "in the month of the fruits (ebō) of the feast of Tabernacles; that is the seventh month." The LXX. had the present faultily Hebrew.

The Levites.—Kings has the priests; and so Syr. and Arab. here; but LXX. and Vulg., Levites. The latter term, as the tribal name, may of course be used to include the priests or Aaronites, as well as their inferior brethren. Verse 7 shows that the priests are intended here.

These did the priests and the Levites bring up.—Heb., the priests the Levites (which some explain "the Levitical priests," as in Josh. iii. 3) brought them up. But some Hebrew MSS., LXX., and Syriac, read "the priests and the Levites:" Arab., "the Levites and the priests;" and Vulg., "the priests with the Levites." Above all, 1 Kings viii. 4 has, "And the priests and the Levites brought them up." It appears, therefore, that the conjunction is rightly supplied by the Authorised Version.

Assembled.—Nā'ad, to meet at an appointed time and place, Exod. xxv. 22). Not the same word as in verses 2 and 3 (qāhal), of which the root meaning is probably to call together.
The Ark.

II. CHRONICLES, V.

The Trumpeters and Singers.

and all the congregation of Israel that were assembled unto him before the ark, sacrificed sheep and oxen, which could not be told nor numbered for multitude. (7) And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the Lord unto his place, to the oracle of the house, into the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims: (8) for the cherubims spread forth their wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above. (9) And they drew out the staves of the ark, that the ends of the staves were seen from the ark before the oracle; but they were not seen without. And there it is unto this day. (10) There was nothing in the ark save the two tables which Moses put therein at Horeb, when the Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of Egypt.

(11) And it came to pass, when the the priests were come out of the holy place: (for all the priests that were present were sanctified, and did not then wait by course: (12) also the Levites which were the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, being arrayed in white linen, having cymbals and psalteries and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets.) (13) It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instru-

Before the ark.—By the omission of a single Hebrew word ["kēvən"] before this phrase, the whole form of the sentence is altered from that of Kings. There we read "(were) with him before the Ark sacrificing," &c.

Sacrificed.—Were sacrificing.

And the priests . . .—The verse is wholly identical with 1 Kings vii. 8 (see Notes there). (9) For the cherubims spread forth their wings.—Rather, And the cherubim were spreading forth wings. Kings has for (ki); making the sentence an explanation of the last clause of verse 7.

Covered.—Kings has the technical term for the cherubim "covering" the ark (Exod. xxv. 20; 1 Chron. xxviii. 18). In Hebrew writing, the difference is marked by the transposition of a single letter. Perhaps, therefore, our present reading is a clerical error. And did not then wait by course.—They perhaps, therefore, our present reading is a clerical error. And did not then wait by course.—They—Rather, (the contrast with the former part of the chapter. As to the

For all the priests.—From this point to "for his mercy endureth for ever," verse 13, the narrative is peculiar to the chronicler. He has characteristically inserted between the two halves of the short verse (1 Kings viii. 10) a long parenthesis, dwelling upon the Levitical ministrations.

That were present.—That could be found. So Vulg. (Comp. 2 Kings xix. 4.)

Were sanctified.—Had sanctified (or purified) themselves, for the purpose of taking part in the ceremony (1 Chron. xv. 12).

And did not then wait by course.—They had not to observe courses (1 Chron. xxiv.). Not merely the class of priests then on duty, but all the classes indiscriminately took part in the solemnity.

All of them of Asaph . . .—brethren.

Heb., to all of them, to Asaph, to Heman, &c., &c., and to their sons, and to their brethren. This use of the particle le (to, for) is characteristic of the chronicler, whose style in these verses stands in marked contrast with the former part of the chapter. As to the Levitical guilds of musicians, comp. l Chron. xxv. 1—7, xv. 16, seq.

Arrayed in white linen.—1 Chron. xv. 27.

Having cymbals and psalteries and harps.—With cymbals and nebels and kinnor (harp's and lutes, or guitar). (See 1 Chron. xv. 28.)

Stood at the east end of the altar.—Were standing east of the altar.

And with them . . . trumpets.—And with them priests, to a hundred and twenty, were trumpeting with trumpets. (See 1 Chron. xiv. 24.)

An hundred and twenty.—Thus five to each of the twenty-four classes of the priests.

The mark of parenthesis should be cancelled.

(13) It came even to pass . . . thanking the Lord.—And the trumpeters and the ministrats were to sound aloud, as one man, with one sound, in order to praise and thank the Lord. This ends the parenthesis.
ments of music, and praised the Lord, saying, "For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord; (14) so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God.

CHAPTER VI.—(1) Then spake Solomon, The Lord hath said that he would dwell in the thick darkness. (2) But I have built an house of habitation for thee, and a place for thy dwelling for ever. (3) And the king turned his face, and blessed the whole congregation of Israel: and all the congregation of Israel stood.

(4) And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who hath with his hands fulfilled that which he spake with his mouth to my father David, saying, (5) Since the day that I brought forth my people out of the land of Egypt I chose no city among all the tribes of Israel to build an house in, that my name might be there; neither chose I any man to be a ruler over my people Israel: (6) but I have chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there; and have chosen David to be over my people Israel. (7) Now "it was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the Lord God of Israel. (8) But the Lord said to David my father, Forasmuch as it was in thine heart to build an house for my name, thou didst well in that it was in thine heart: (9) notwithstanding thou shalt not build the house; but thy son which shall be兴起。
come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house for my name. (10) The Lord therefore hath performed his word that he hath spoken: for I am risen up in the room of David my father, and am set on the throne of Israel, as the Lord promised, and have built the house for the name of the Lord God of Israel. (11) And in it have I put the ark, wherein is the covenant of the Lord, that he made with the children of Israel. (12) And he stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands: (13) for Solomon had made a brazen scaffold, of five cubits 1 long, and five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court: and upon it he stood, and kneeled down upon his knees before all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven, (14) and said, O Lord God of Israel, in heaven above, and on earth beneath, (15) there is no God like thee in heaven above, and on earth beneath; (16) that thou holdest thy promise, which thou hast promised thy servant David my father. 

(10) The Lord . . . his word.—And Jehovah hath established, or ratified, his word. Literally, caused to rise up. Spoken—i.e., promised. Set.—Seated. (No variant from Kings.)

(11) And in it have I put the ark. — And I have set there the ark, abridged from 1 Kings viii. 21, “and I have set there a place for the ark.” So Syriac and Arabic, “and I have prepared a place for the ark.”

Wherein is the covenant.—The two tables of the Law. (See chap. v. 10.)

3. The King uttereth the prayer of consecration (verses 12–42). (Comp. 1 Kings viii. 22–53.)

The whole is given as in Kings, save that one verse (13) is added, and the peroration (40–42) is quite different.

(12) Stood.—Took his place. It is not implied that he remained standing. (Comp. 1 Sam. xvii. 51; verse 3, supr.)

Spread forth his hands.—Towards heaven (Kings). Syriac and Arabic have both. (13) For Solomon had made a brazen scaffold.—This verse is not in Kings. But it may once have followed 1 Kings viii. 22. At least, marks of the chronicler’s individual style are not apparent in it. Scaffold.—Literally, pan (kîyôr; see chap. iv. 6). The “scaffold” looked like a “laver” turned upside down, and was doubtless hollow underneath. (Comp. Neh. ix. 4 for an analogous structure.)

Kneeled down upon his knees, and spread forth his hands.—An attitude of prayer which may be seen figured upon the monuments of ancient Egypt. Toward heaven (ha-shâmây’mah).—The chronicler has used the exact form for the less precise ha-shâmâyim of 1 Kings viii. 22.

(14) In the heaven nor in the earth.—Abridged from “in the heaven above, and upon the earth beneath” (Kings). Syriac, “Thou art the Lord that sittest in heaven above, and Thy will (pl.) is done on earth beneath,” apparently a curious reminiscence of the Lord’s Prayer. The Assyrians also spoke of their gods as “without an equal” (dinêna la isê, “a rival he has not”).

Which keepest covenant and shewest mercy.—Literally, keeping the covenant and the mercy: i.e., the covenanted mercy. (Comp. Isa. iv. 3.)

With thy servant.—Heb., for; so in verse 16. (The verse is word for word as in Kings.)

And spake with thy mouth . . . — Chap. vi. 4.

(16) Now therefore.—And now. So in verse 17. Keep that which thou hast promised—i.e., Thy further promise. See the fulfilment of the former promise, as described in verse 10, supr.

There shall not fail thee.—See margin. Authorized Version follows LXX., óm οὐκ ἐκλεισθη σου; and Vulg., “non deficiet ex te.” To sit.—Heb., sitting; LXX., καθήμενος. Yet so that.—Only if; assigning a single condition; provided that . . . LXX., πλὴν ἐκείνων ζωής; Vulg., “ita tamen ei custodierint.” Take heed to.—Heb., keep (verses 14, 15, 16).

In my law.—The only variant from 1 Kings viii. 25. The chronicler has avoided a seeming tautology, as elsewhere. Syriac, “before me in the Law.”

(17) Be verified.—1 Chron. xvii. 23. LXX. and Syriac add, “I pray” (Heb., nà), as in Kings.

Thy word.—Or promise (verses 10, 15, supr.). Unto thy servant David.—Heb., to thy servant, to David. Kings, “to thy servant David my father.” So Syriac here.

(18) But will God in very deed.—Or, what will God, &c.—The LXX. imitates the Hebrew bêni e ἀληθής κατωτέρας; Vulg., “ergone credibile est ut habitet Deus . . .”

With men.—Not in Kings. Syriac, “with his people, Israel;” Arabic, “with his people.” (Comp. Rev. xxi. 3.)
tain thee; how much less this house which I have built! (19) Have respect therefore to the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O Lord my God, to hearken unto the cry and the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee: (20) that thine eyes may be open upon this house day and night, upon the place whereof thou hast said that thou wouldst put thy name there; to hearken unto the prayer which thy servant prayeth 1 toward this place. (21) Hearken therefore unto the supplications of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, which they shall 2 make toward this place: hear thou from thy dwelling place, even from heaven; and when thou hearest, forgive.

(22) If a man sin against his neighbour, 3 and an oath be laid upon him to make him swear, and the oath come before thine altar; (23) then hear thou from heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, by requiring the wicked, by recompensing his way upon his own head; and by justifying the righteous, by giving him according to his righteousness.

(19) Have respect therefore.—But turn thou upb. The Authorised Version follows the LXX. and Vulg., ἵνα εἰρηνεύῃς; “ut respicias.”

Before thee.—Kings adds, “to-day.” So LXX., Syriac, Arabic here.

Unto or toward. “Day and night” (as in Ps. i. 2); Kings, “night and day” (as in Isa. xxvii. 3); for which the chronicler has substituted a more usual phrase. The Syriac and Arabic follow Kings.

Prayeth.—Shall pray, sel., at any time. Toward this place.—The margin is wrong, though supported by the Syriac, Arabic, and Vulg. The Temple of Jerusalem was, and is, the Kebla of the Jew. (Comp. Dan. vi. 10, and verse 34 infr., which is a kind of paraphrase of this expression.)

(21) Supplications.—Tahanunim, a word chiefly poetic and late, which nowhere appears in Kings, and only here in Chronicles. Kings has the older synonym tekumah.

Hear thou from thy dwelling place, even from heaven.—Yea thou shalt hear from the place of thy dwelling, from the heavens. For “from,” in both places, Kings has “unto,” an unusual provincial construction, which is probably original.

If a man sin.—Kings, “whatever a man sin.”

And an oath be laid upon him.—And he (i.e., his neighbour or, indefinitely, people) lay an oath upon him. (See Exod. xxii. 11.)

And the oath come before thine altar.—And he (the offender) enter upon an oath before thine altar. (Comp. Exod. xvii. 13.) But all the versions have, “and he come and swear before thine altar,” a difference which involves merely the prefixing of one letter (w) to the Hebrew word rendered “oath.”

1 Pray—Shall pray, sel., at any time.

2 Toward—Unto.

3 Supplications—Tahanunim.

24) And if thy people Israel be put to the worse before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee; and shall return and confess thy name, and pray and make supplication before thee in this house; (25) then hear thou from the heavens, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest to them and to their fathers.

(26) When the heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; yet if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou dost afflict them; (27) then hear thou from heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, when thou hast taught them the good way, wherein they should walk; and send rain upon thy land, which thou hast given unto thy people for an inheritance.

(28) If there be earth in the land, if there be pestilence, if there be blasting, or mildew, locusts, or caterpillers; if their enemies besiege them in the cities of their land; whatsoever sore or whatsover
soever sickness there be; (29) then what prayer or what supplication soever shall be made of any man, or of all thy people Israel, when every one shall know his own sore and his own grief, and shall spread forth his hands 1 in this house: (30) then hear thou from heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and render unto every man according unto all his ways, whose heart thou knowest; (for thou only 4 knowest the hearts of the children of men;) (31) that all people of the earth may know thy name.

Moreover concerning the stranger, 4 which is not of thy people Israel, but is come from a far country for thy great name's sake, and thy mighty hand and thy stretched-out arm; and shall spread forth his hands in this house; (33) then hear thou from the heavens, even from thy dwelling place, and forgive, and maintain their cause.

If they sin against thee, (for there is no man which sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them over before their enemies, and they carry them away captives unto a land far off or near; (35) yet if they bethink themselves in the land whither they are carried captive, and turn and pray unto thee in the land of their captivity, saying, We have sinned, we have done amiss, and have dealt wickedly; (36) if they return to thee with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity, whither they have carried them captives, and pray toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, and toward the city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house which I have built for thy name: (37) then hear thou from the heavens, even from
thy dwelling place, their prayer and their supplications, and maintain their cause, and forgive thy people which have sinned against thee.

(40) Now, my God, let, I beseech thee, thine eyes be open, and let thine ears be attentive unto the prayer that is made in this place. (41) Now therefore arise, O Lord God, into thy resting place, thou, and the ark of thy strength; let thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness. (42) O Lord God, turn not away the face of thine anointed: remember the mercies of David thy servant.

CHAPTER VII.—(1) Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house.

And forgive thy people.—This is the first clause of 1 Kings vii. 50; and from this point to the end of Solomon's Prayer, the two texts are wholly dissimilar.

(40-42) The Peroration.

(40) Let, I beseech thee, thine eyes be open. —Comp. verse 20, supr., and chap. vii. 15; also 1 Kings vii. 52.

And let thine ears be attentive.—Attentive, listening (qas'ëloth). The same phrase recurs (chap. vii. 15), which is, in fact, a repetition of the whole verse in the shape of a Divine promise. Qas'ëloth occurs, besides, only in the late Ps. cxii. 2.

The prayer that is made in this place.—See margin. “The prayer of this place” is a strange phrase, only occurring here and in chap. vii. 15.

(41) Now therefore arise, O Lord God, into thy resting place.—The two verses (41, 42) are slightly altered from Ps. cxvii. 8—10. It would seem that the chronicler selected them as forming a more natural and appropriate conclusion to the Prayer of Dedication than that which he found in the older account. The aptness of the quotation may be admitted, without assuming that “for want of this summons to take possession of the sanctuary, the point of the whole prayer is wanting in Kings” (Zöckler). The peroration of 1 Kings vii. 50—53 is quite natural, though different; the closing thoughts being a return to those with which the prayer began, so that the prayer forms a well-rounded whole, and the suggestion of a lacuna is out of place. There is no difficulty in this view; the difficulty lies rather in maintaining the originality of these verses here. (Comp. the free adaptation of several late Psalms in the Hymn of Praise in 1 Chron. xvi. 8, supp.) The versification of the original psalm is neglected here, as there.

(41) Now therefore.—And now, added by chronicler.

O Lord God.—Iahweh 'elohîm. This rare divine title occurs thrice in these two verses, but nowhere else in the prayer. The chronicler uses it at least eight times, and it does not appear at all in the books of Kings. In the Psalm we read simply Iahweh.

Into thy resting place.—Nô'âh. A late word, found besides only in Esther ix. 16—18 (nôâh). In the Psalm it is menînâhîm, a common word.

The idea that the sanctuary is God's resting-place is not in keeping with the spirit of the prayer. (Comp. verse 18; and the frequent expression, “Hear Thou from heaven thy dwelling place.”)

Let thy priests, O Lord God.—Ps. cxvii. 9. The Divine name is added here.

Salvation.—Or, prosperity. The Psalm has, “with righteousness;” but the other idea occurs a little after in verse 16.
filled the house. (2) And the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house. (3) And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the Lord upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.

(4) Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the Lord. (5) And king Solomon offered a sacrifice of twenty and two thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep; so the king and all the people dedicated the house of God. (6) And the priests waited on their offices: the Levites also with instruments of music of the Lord, which David the king had made to praise the Lord, because his mercy endureth for ever, when David praised by their ministry; and the priests sounded trumpets before them, and all Israel stood. (7) Moreover Solomon hallowed the middle of the court that was before the house of the Lord: for there he offered burnt offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings, because the brasen altar which Solomon had made was not able to receive the burnt offerings, and the meat offerings, and the fat.

(8) Also at the same time Solomon kept the feast seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt. (9) And in the eighth day they made a solemn assembly: for they kept the dedication of the Lord, which is a thanksgiving feast, and a solemn assembly, and a month which is the beginning of the year. (10) And on the seventh day they made the feast seven days, and gathered the people together as much as could be."
altar seven days, and the feast seven days. (10) And on the three and twentieth day of the seventh month he sent the people away into their tents, glad and merry in heart for the goodness that the Lord had shewed unto David, and to Solomon, and to Israel his people.

(11) Thus Solomon finished the house of the Lord, and the king's house; and all that came into Solomon's heart to make in the house of the Lord, and in his own house, he prosperously effected.

(12) And the Lord appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice.

(13) If I shut up heaven, that there be no rain, or if I send pestilence among the people; (14) if my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

The chronicler says: "and on the eighth day he dismissed the people," i.e., after this final gathering.

And as for thee, if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, and do according to all that I have commanded thee, and shalt observe my statutes and my judgments; (18) then will I establish the throne of thy kingdom, according as I have covenanted with David thy father, saying, There shall not fail".

The substance and, for the most part, the language of both passages are the same, but the chronicler paraphrases occasionally, and has added a considerable section not extant in Kings (verses 13-16).

For they kept the dedication of the altar seven days.—The seven days preceding the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles, or the 8th to the 14th of the month of Tisri, had been kept as an extra festival on account of the inauguration of the Temple. After this festival, the Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated in due course for seven days more.

This explains the obscure words of 1 Kings viii. 65, "(Solomon and all Israel) kept the feast seven days and seven days, fourteen days," a brief expression which combines the two distinct celebrations. So Syriac, "seven days of the feast, and seven days of the inauguration of the house;" these and these, their amount was fourteen days. And on the day of the full moon in the month of Tisri the king sent the people away.

And on the three and twentieth day of the seventh month.—Beginning with the evening of the twenty-second.

For the goodness.—Some MSS., Syriac, and Arabic, "for all the goodness," as in 1 Kings viii. 66.

David, and to Solomon.—Kings, "David his servant." The mention of Solomon was added by the chronicler. (Comp. chap. vi. 4, 8, 15-17, 42, where all Solomon's success is connected with the promise to David.)

The Lord's Response to the Prayer of Solomon (verses 11-22. Comp. 1 Kings ix. 1-9).

The substance and, for the most part, the language of both passages are the same, but the chronicler paraphrases occasionally, and has added a considerable section not extant in Kings (verses 13-16).

All that came into Solomon's heart to make.—A paraphrase of all the desire (Isa. xxii. 4; 2 Chron. viii. 6) of Solomon that he willed to do. The rest of the verse is wanting in Kings.

By night.—This is implied in Kings, which has, "as He had appeared unto him in Gibeon."

I have heard thy prayer.—From this point the chronicler's addition to the prayer as extant in the older text. Judging by the style, the added section must have formed an integral part of the original text, from which both the editor of Kings and the chronicler drew their narratives.

An house of sacrifice (beth zhabah).—A phrase occurring nowhere else in the Old Testament.

If I shut up heaven that there be no rain.—Deut. vii. 17; chap. vi. 26.

He, as in Jer. iii. 1; Isa. liv. 15.

The locusts.—Hågath, a winged and edible species (Lev. xi. 22). In chap. vi. 28, two other kinds, the 'arbeh and hásîl, were mentioned.

If I send pestilence.—Chap. vi. 28; 1 Chron. xxi. 14.

My people, which are called by my name.—See margin; chap. vi. 33; Amos ix. 12; Jer. xiv. 9.

The sense is: which are dedicated to me.

Humble themselves.—Lev. xxvi. 41, in a similar context.

Seek my face.—Ps. xxiv. 6, xxvii. 8.

Turn from their wicked ways.—Hosea vi. 1; Isa. vi. 10; Jer. xxv. 5.

Heal their land.—Ps. lx. 4.

Now mine eyes shall be open.—Comp. chap. vi. 40, and Notes.

Have I chosen.—Chap. vi. 6, and verse 12, supr.

Sanctified this house.—1 Kings ix. 3. The two accounts are again parallel.

Perpetually.—All the days.

Walked.—Kings adds, "in perfection of heart, and in uprightness." So Syriac and Arabic.

And do.—So LXX., Vulg., and Arabic. The Heb. is we-la'asôth, "and to do," a construction which the chronicler sometimes uses in continuation of a future (imperfect tense). But Kings has "to do," an infinitive defining the former verb; and so the Syriac here.

As I have covenanted with.—Heb. kôrafîth lê, "cut (a covenant) for." The word bûrîth, "covenant," is omitted, as in chap. v. 10. So LXX., ἀκορθῆ μετὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ὦ Σαλομών, "As I spake concerning David." Kings: "As I spake concerning David." (kôrafîth may be an ancient misreading of dibbârîth, "I spake," the two being much alike in Heb. writing).

Ruler in Israel (mûshēh).—Kings, "From upon the throne of Israel." The chronicle has substituted
a reminder of Micah v. 1, probably correcting a defective text, the word *throne* having fallen out. Syriac, "whom standeth on the throne of Israel." (23) But,—And. Kings omits, but emphasises the verb, "If ye will turn," or, "if turn ye will." The order of words in the Heb. implies that "and your children," has fallen out of the text: "And if ye turn, ye and your children." So Kings, and Syriac and Arabic here. Kings adds, "From after me." And forsake.—Kings, "and keep not." So Syriac and Arabic. (20) Then will I pluck them up by the roots —i.e., *your children* (see last verse). (Comp. Deut. xxix. 27.) Vulg. rightly, "evellam vos de terra mea." The opposite idea is that of *planting* a nation in a land (Jer. xxvi. 6). Kings, "Then will I cut off Israel from upon the face of the land." The chronicler has softened the severity of the expression, cut off Israel. Will I cast out of my sight.—Vulg. more literally, "procficam a facie mea." The exact phrase occurs nowhere else; but comp. Ps. li. 13, which is very similar; also Ps. cii. 11. Instead of *'ashlik,* "I will cast," Kings has *'ashlahlah," I will send," i.e., throw (Amos ii. 5). And will make it.—A softening down of, and Israel shall become (Kings). Comp. Deut. xxviii. 37. So Syriac. (21) And this house, which is high.—A correction of Kings: "and this house shall be high," which appears meaningless in the context. But the Syriac (and Arabic) here and in Kings has, "And this house shall be laid waste" (nehmu hreb); and the Targum of Kings combines both readings thus: "And this house which is high shall be laid waste" (yh' horth). It appears, therefore, that the original reading of the Heb. text was, "and this house shall become ruinous heaps" ("iyfn, "heaps," not *el'iyfn," "high"). (Comp. Micah lii. 12. The mistake is as old as the LXX., δ επο πέσα, ας έν εσβρατε, LXX. Shall be an astonishment to every one that passeth by it.—*Every one that passeth by it shall be astonished* : τον δε βασιλευομενον αυτων έκσφαζε, LXX. Syriac, "Every one that passeth by it shall stop and shake his head, and away with his land, and say"

Kings adds, "and shall hiss" (certainly original). (22) And it shall be answered.—And men shall say,

**Hath he brought.** —Kings, "hath Jehovah brought." (So the Syriac and Arabic here.)

**VIII.**

**Solomon's Government and External Glory.**—*His Death* (chaps. viii.—ix.). Chap. viii. Solomon's public works.—Forced labour. —Religion.—Maritime commerce. (Comp. 1 Kings ix. 10—28.)

(a) Public Works, Building and Fortification of Towns (verses 1—6).

(1) And it came to pass.—The verb is identical with 1 Kings ix. 10, slightly abbreviated. Wherein.—When. "The "twenty years" are reckoned from the fourth year of the reign (1 Kings vi. 6), and include seven years during which the Temple was building, and thirteen during which the palace was built (1 Kings vi. 38; vii. 1). (2) Which Huram had restored.—Literally, which Huram gave. Solomon built them.—Rebuilt or restored and fortified (Josh. vi. 26; 1 Kings xv. 17). The parallel passage (1 Kings ix. 11—13) records a contrary transaction; that is to say, it represents Solomon as giving to Huram twenty cities in Galilee, as a return for his past services. It is added that these cities did not please Huram, in consequence of which they got the name of "The Land of Kûbbêl" (i.e., "Like-nought"). The Authorised Version here assumes that the explanation of Josephus (Antt. viii. 5, § 3) is correct. That writer states that Huram restored the despised cities to Solomon, who thereupon repaired them, and peopled them with Israelites. Others assume an exchange of friendly gifts between the two sovereigns; so that Solomon gave Huram twenty Israelite cities (Kings), and Huram gave Solomon twenty Phenician cities (Chronicles): this seems highly improbable. The former explanation appears to be substantially correct. The chronicler, or the authority which he follows here, has omitted to notice a fact which seems to derogate from the greatness of Solomon, viz., the previous surrender of the territory in question to the Tyrian king; and has chosen to speak of Huram's non-acceptance or return of Solomon's present, as a gift. He then goes on to tell of the future fate of the twenty cities. Solomon repaired or fortified them, and colonised them with Israelites; for this border-land was chiefly in-
(3) And Solomon went to Hamath-zobah, and prevailed against it. (4) And he built Tadmor in the wilderness, and all the store cities, which he built in Hamath. (5) Also he built Beth-horon the upper, and Beth-horon the nether, fenced cities, with walls, gates, and bars; (6) and Baalah, and all the store cities that Solomon had, and all the chariot cities, and the cities of the horsemen, and all that Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and throughout all the land of his dominion.

Solomon's Cities

[II. CHRONICLES, VIII.]

and his Vassals.

(7) As for all the people that were left of the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which were not of Israel, (8) but of their children, who were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel consumed not, them did Solomon make to pay tribute until this day. (9) But of the children of Israel did Solomon make no servants for his work; but they were men of war, and chief of his captains, and captains of his chariots and horsemen. (10) And these were the chief of king Solomon's

hounded by Gentiles (Isa. ix. 1, “Galilee of the Gentiles”). A border-land is naturally more exposed to the ravages of an invader; and the cities which Solomon ceded to Hiram may have been in a half-ravaged condition. This would account for Hiram’s disappointment in them. The statement of our text, then, is neither an “effacement,” nor a “travesty” (Reuss), nor even a “remodelling” of that of the older text “in favour of Solomon” (Zöckler). It replaces the older text by another statement which is equally true, and not incompatible with it.

(3) And Solomon went.—Marched (2 Sam. xii. 29).
Hamath-zobah.—That is, Hamath bordering on Zobah. (Comp. 1 Chron. xviii. 3.) Solomon’s conquest of the kingdom of Hamath, which had been on terms of amity with David, is not mentioned in 1 Kings ix.; nor indeed anywhere else in the Old Testament. Thenius (on 2 Kings xiv. 25) supposes that the text describes not a conquest of Hamath itself, but only the annexation of part of its territory; viz., a part of the highly fruitful plain of Cœle-Syria, called by the Arabs Arad-el-Beqāa. This appears to be correct.

Against it.—Or, over it (a late construction, chap. xxvii. 5; Dan. xi. 5).

(4) And he built Tadmor in the wilderness.—That is, Palmyra, in the wilderness, on the traders’ route between the coast and Thapsacus on the Euphrates. Consumed not.—1 Sam. xv. 18. Kings, “were not able to exterminate.” The chronicler’s reading is probably due to the fading of letters in his MS. authority.

And all the store cities, which he built in Hamath.—1 Kings ix. 19 mentions these cities, but not their locality. They were no doubt “places of part of part,” viz., walls, doors, and bar (Micah vii. 12; Deut. iii. 5). This description is wanting in Kings.

Also.—And. 1 Kings ix. 17, “As and Solomon built Gezer, and Beth-horon the nether.”

Built — i.e., fortified, as the rest of the verse explains. (See 1 Chron. vii. 24.) He built them as (or into) fences, viz., walls, doors, and bar (Micah vii. 12; Deut. iii. 5). This description is wanting in Kings.

And Baalah.—1 Kings ix. 18. Like the two Beth-horons, it lay west of Jerusalem, and was a bulwark against the Philistines. (Comp. Josh. xix. 44, a Danite town.) The rest of this verse is identical with 1 Kings ix. 19, which see. (Chronicler has twice added all.)

In the above section no mention is made of the fortification of Jerusalem, and the building of Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer, which last city had been taken by Pharaoh, and given by him to his daughter, Solomon’s wife. (See 1 Kings ix. 15, 16.) On the other hand, as we have seen, the chronicler supplies several important details which are wanting in the parallel account.

(b) The Forced Labour of the Canaanites

(verses 7—10).

With this section comp. 1 Kings ix. 20—23, and the Notes there. In Kings it stands in more obvious connection with what precedes; for there the account of Solomon’s buildings is headed by the words, “And this is the reason of the levy which king Solomon raised, for to build the house of the Lord,” &c. (1 Kings ix. 15.)

(7) As for all the people that were left.—The verse agrees with 1 Kings ix. 20.

(8) But.—Omit. The of is wanting in 1 Kings ix. 21. So Syriac, but not LXX. and Vulgate. Consumed not.—1 Sam. xix. 18. Kings, “were not able to exterminate.” The chronicler’s reading is probably due to the fading of letters in his MS. authority.

Them did Solomon make to pay tribute.—On them did Solomon levy a tribute. Kings has the fuller expression, mais “tribute of labourers.” “Salomon en fit de levées pour la corvée” (Reuss).

(9) But of the children of Israel.—See 1 Kings ix. 22. The Heb. text has the relative (‘asher) after “children of Israel.” But some MSS., and the ancient versions, omit it. It is, perhaps, an accidental repetition from the beginning of verse 8.

According to Dio, Sic. i. 36, Sesostris (Rameses II.), the great Egyptian monarch, was wont to inscribe over the temples he built, “No native hath laboured hereon.” After “men of war,” Kings adds, “and his servants,” which is omitted here as unsuitable, after the preceding statement. It means, however, courtiers and officers.

Chief of his captains.—Heb., captains of his knights; which appears to be incorrect. Read, “his captains and his knights,” or “aides-de-camp,” as in Kings. LXX., και ἥρωτες και οἱ διάτηροι.

(10) The chief of king Solomon’s officers.—“Captains of the overseers,” or “prefects,” i.e., chief
Solomon Appoints

I. CHRONICLES, VIII. the Priests to their Places.

officers, even two hundred and fifty, that bare rule over the people.

(11) And Solomon brought up the daughter of Pharaoh out of the city of David unto the house that he had built for her: for he said, My wife shall not dwell in the house of David king of Israel, because the places are holy, whereunto the ark of the Lord hath come.

(12) Then Solomon offered burnt offerings unto the Lord upon the altar that he had built before the porch, (13) even after a certain rate every day, offering according to the commandment of Moses, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts, three times in the year, even in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles. (14) And he appointed, according to the order of David his father, the courses of the priests to their service, and the Levites unto their charges, to praise and minister before the priests, as the duty of every day required: the *porters also by their courses at every gate: for so had David the man of God commanded. (15) And they departed not from the commandment of the king unto the priests and Levites concerning any matter, or concerning the treasures. (16) Now all the

overseers, or inspectors of works (Comp. 1 Chron. xxv. 31, and 2 Chron. xvii. 2, for the word נָּבִית, prefects). The Heb. margin suggests נָצֻּרָה, the word used in Kings.

King Solomon's. —Literally, Who were to king Solomon. Kings, who were over the work for Solomon. Clearly the latter has been corrupted into the form presented by our text through a confusion of נָצֻּרָה, "work," with נָצְח, "king."

Two hundred and fifty. —See chap. ii. 17, and 1 Kings ix. 23. In the latter place 550 is the number. The number here is an error of transcription, כ י, i.e., 550, having been mistaken for כ, i.e., 250 (Kennicott).

Bare rule. —They were taskmasters. (Comp. Syriac, "who made the people work who were working at the works.")

The people. —i.e., the Canaanite remnant (verse 7). Kings adds, who were labouring at the work. (See Syriac.)

(11) And Solomon brought up the daughter of Pharaoh. —See 1 Kings ix. 24, which is much briefer than the present notice. The chronicler has not mentioned this princess before (comp. 1 Kings iii. 1, ix. 16), and mentions her here only in connection with Solomon's buildings. (See Note on chap. xii. 2.) Solomon's Egyptian consort was probably a princess of the XXII. Babastite Dynasty, founded by Shishak, which was of Semitic origin.

For he said. —The motive here assigned is wanting in the other text, and is characteristic of the chronicler in thought and language; though it is too much to say with Thenius that the princess could not have lived anywhere else than in the old palace of David, until the new one was built. 1 Kings iii. 1 says only that Solomon brought her "into the city of David."

King of Israel. —In contrast with the Egyptian origin of the princess.

Because the places are holy. —For a holy thing is that unto which, &c. (The plural pronoun הָאֵמוֹת, "they," is equivalent to a neuter-sing. in the usage of the chronicler.)

(c) Regulation of the Temple Worship

(verses 12–18).

This whole section corresponds to the single verse, 1 Kings ix. 25, which the chronicler has paraphrased in verses 12, 13, and extended by the addition of further details in verses 14, 15.
work of Solomon was prepared unto the day of the foundation of the house of the Lord, and until it was finished. So the house of the Lord was perfected.

Then went Solomon to Ezion-geber, and to Eloth on the sea side in the land of Edom. (a) And Huram sent him by the hands of his servant ships, and servants that had knowledge of the sea; and they went with the servants of Solomon to Ophir, and took thence four hundred and fifty talents of gold, and brought them to king Solomon.

CHAPTER IX.—(1) And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to prove Solomon with hard questions at Jerusalem, with a very great company, and camels that bare spices, and gold in abundance, and precious stones; and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with all of that was in her heart. (2) And Solomon told her all her questions: and there was nothing hid from Solomon which he told her not. (3) And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, and the house that he had built, (4) and the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel; his 2 cupbearers also, and their apparel; and his ascent by which he went up into the house of the Lord:

(1) Or, builder.

II. CHRONICLES, IX. The Queen of Sheba's Visit.

The Temple Finished. (chap. ii.), and secondly, the prosecution of the work to its completion (chap. iii.—v. 1). (The Heb. is, unto that day of the foundation,” i.e., that memorable day, see chap. iii. 1—3.) All the versions, however, understand from the day of the foundation unto the completion of the Temple, and perhaps "ad ha-yom is, in the chronicler's Hebrew equivalent to lemin ha-yom, expressing the terminus a quo.

So the house of the Lord was perfected.—Omit so, and comp. 1 Kings ix. 25, "and he finished [same root as perfected] the house." The verse thus closes the entire account of the building and inauguration of the Temple.

(d) The Voyage to Ophir (verses 17, 18). Comp. 1 Kings ix. 26—28.

(17) Then (אָז).—After the completion of the Temple. Went Solomon to Ezion-geber, and to Eloth.—Syr., "Ezion-geber, a city which is over against Eloth." 1 Kings ix. 26 reads, "And a fleet did king Solomon make at Ezion-geber, which is near Eloth." The sea.—Kings, the Red Sea. So Vulg. The words of our text do not necessarily imply a personal visit on the part of Solomon. He sent his shipwrights to the Idumean port.

(18) And Huram sent him by the hands of his servants ships.—When Solomon began to evince an interest in maritime affairs, his Tyrian ally presented him with a number of vessels and their crews of trained seamen. To what port the vessels were sent is not expressly stated. Probably they put in at Joppa (chap. ii. 16). Others assume the meaning to be that the ships were sent from Tyre to Ezion-geber, and then ask whether they were dragged across the desert which divides the Mediterranean from the gulf of Akaba, or whether they circumnavigated Africa. The dilemma is only apparent. The Greek historians of later times often speak of the transport of ships overland; and the galleys of Solomon's age were probably small. Even the circumnavigation of Africa was achieved by a Phoenician expedition sent out by Necho about four centuries later (Herod. iv. 42). But neither alternative seems necessary. If Huram provided Solomon with skilled mariners, they would naturally sail from Tyre to Joppa in their own ships. The Tyrian vessels may have been left at Joppa, while a portion of their crews proceeded, by Solomon's order, to Ezion-geber. In short, "ships and servants" means "ships with servants," or "ships conveying servants."

And they went.—Huram's mariners. Comp. 1 Kings ix. 27: "And Huram sent in the fleet (which Solomon had built) his servants, men of ships that had knowledge of the sea." So the Syr. and Arab. here.

To Ophir.—See 1 Kings ix. 28. LXX., Sophira. Fifty.—Kings, twenty. The difference may be due to a scribe's error, the letter כ being confused with נב.

IX.


(a) The Visit of the Queen of Sheba (verses 1—12). Comp. 1 Kings x. 1—13.

The Hebrew text coincides with Kings, allowing for a few characteristic alterations, the chief of which will be noticed.

(1) And when the queen of Sheba heard.—Now the queen of Sheba had heard. Kings, was hearing.

The fame of Solomon.—Kings adds a difficult phrase ("as to the name of Jehovah") which the chronicler omits.

Hard questions. —Riddles, enigmas. LXX., σφιχαδαρον (Judg. xiv. 12). At Jerusalem.—An abridgment but not an improvement of Kings. The Syr. agrees with the latter.

Gold in abundance.—The chronicler has substituted a favourite expression for the "very much gold" of Kings.

(4) And his ascent by which he went up into the house of the Lord.—Kings, "And his burnt offering which he offered in the house of the Lord." The LXX., Syr. and Vulg. here agree with Kings; and the Arab. reads, "the altar on which he offered." In all other passages, the word used in our text (alayah) means not ascent, but upper chamber; it is likely, therefore, that in the present instance it is merely an error of transcription for the term occurring in Kings (olath, "burnt-offering").
Solomon and

II. CHRONICLES, IX.

The Queen of Sheba.

there was no more spirit in her. (5) And she said to the king, *It was a true report which I heard in mine own land of thine acts,* and of thy wisdom; (6) howbeit I believed not their words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the one half of the greatness of thy wisdom was not told me: for thou exceedest the fame that I heard. (7) *Happy are thy men, and happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom.* (8) Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee to set thee on his throne, *to be king for the Lord thy God;* because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee king over them, to do judgment and justice. (9) And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices great abundance, and precious stones: neither was there any such spice as the queen of Sheba gave king Solomon.

(10) And the servants also of Huram, and the servants of Solomon, which brought gold from Ophir, brought almug trees and precious stones. (11) And the king made of the almug trees 4 terraces to the house of the Lord, and to the king’s palace, and harps and psalteries for singers: and there were none such seen before in the land of Judah. (12) And king Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that which she had brought unto the king. So she turned, and went away to her own land, she and her servants.
Solomon's Gold.

II. CHRONICLES, IX. His Throne.

(13) Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred and three score and six talents of gold; (14) beside that which chapmen and merchants brought. And all the kings of Arabia and 1 governors of the country brought gold and silver to Solomon.

(15) And king Solomon made two hundred targets of beaten gold; six hundred shekels of beaten gold went to one target. (16) And three hundred shields made he of beaten gold: three hundred shekels of gold went to one shield. And the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon. (17) Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold.

(18) And there were six steps to the throne, with a footstool of gold, which were fastened to the throne, and 2 stays on each side of the sitting place, and two lions standing by the stays: (19) and twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps. There was not the like made in any kingdom. (20) And all the drinking vessels of king Solomon were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold; 3 none were of silver; it was not any thing accounted of in the days of Solomon. (21) For the king's ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Huram: every three years once came the ships of Tarshish bringing gold, and silver, 4 ivory, and apes, and peacocks.

(22) And king Solomon passed all the

(6) SOLOMON'S INCOME, SPLENDOUR, AND DOMINION—(verses 13-28). Comp. 1 Kings x. 14-29, and 1 Kings iv. 26, 27.

(13) Now the weight of gold.—See 1 Kings x. 14, with which this verse coincides.

(14) Besides that which chapmen and merchants brought.—The Hebrew is difficult, and probably corrupt. Literally it seems to run, besides the men of the itinerants (a strange phrase), and that which the merchants were bringing; or, perhaps, apart from the men of the itinerants and the merchants bringing. The last word may be a clerical error, as it occurs again directly. The conjecture of Thenius on 1 Kings x. 15 seems to be borne out by the ancient Versions. He would read instead of 'qinshî ha-tàrîm, “men of the travellers,” 'onshe ha-râ'dâmîm, “fines or tributes of the subjects.” The Syriac of Chronicles has “tributes of the cities.” Perhaps, therefore, the true original reading was ‘onshe hâ’ârin. The Vulg. renders “euvors of divers peoples;” but the LXX., “men of the subjected (states).”

For the second half of the phrase Kings has, “and the merchandise of the pedlars.”

The kings of Arabia.—Kings, “the kings of the mixed tribes;” that is, the Bédâouis, bordering on and mingling with Israel. (Comp. Exod. xii. 38.) The difference depends on the vowel pointing only. (Comp. Jer. xxv. 24, where both words occur; and Ezek. xxx. 5.)

Governors.—Pachoth, i.e., pashas. Thenius is wrong in supposing this word to be a token of the “later composition of the section.” (See Note on 2 Kings xviii. 24.)

Brought.—Were bringing = used to bring. (Comp. verses 23, 24.)

(15) And king Solomon made.—Word for word as 1 Kings x. 15.

Beaten gold.—Rather, according to Gesenius, mixed or alloyed gold. But the word (shâhîth, i.e., shattâsh) seems to mean gold beaten out, gold-leaf. So LXX., òraùôr, 

Went to.—He put on, i.e., he plated the “targets,” which were large oblong shields, with gold. (Comp. Amos viii. 10, “And I will put upon all loins sackcloth.”) So in verse 16.

Shields.—Magirimmim. The magîn was a round or oval shield, about half the size of the “target” (qinah), with which it is often contrasted; e.g., Ps. xxxv. 2; LXX., òwôlôs.

Three hundred shekels of gold.—Kings, three manâhs of gold. The manâh or mina (Assyrian, muna), was 1/60th part of a talent, and was equivalent to fifty or sixty shekels. Either the reading of our text is an error of transcription (shîloth mûthîth for shîloth manîn), or the word shekels is wrongly supplied in our version, and we ought rather to read drachmas (100 drachmas = 1 mina). The Syriac reads, “And three minas of gold wrought on the handle of one shield;” so also the Arabic.

(16) Pure.—Tahôr, a common word, for the once occurring mishaph of Kings.

(17) With a footstool of gold, which were fastened to the throne.—Instead of this Kings has, And the throne had a rounded top behind. Although the footstool is a prominent object in Oriental representations of thrones, it is quite possible that our text is due to a corruption of that which appears in Kings, and with which the Syriac here agrees. The LXX. renders, “and six steps to the throne, fastened with gold,” omitting the footstool. The Hcb. is at all events suspiciously awkward.

For the remainder of this and the following verse see 1 Kings x. 19, 20. The chronicler has made two slight verbal corrections in verse 19.

(18) None were of silver; it was not anything accounted of.—The not appears to be rightly supplied by our version; comp. 1 Kings x. 21, with which the verse otherwise entirely agrees.

(19) For the king's ships went to Tarshish.—1 Kings x. 22, “For the king had a Tarshish fleet on the sea, with the fleet of Hiram.” It is generally assumed that the words of the chronicler are an erroneous paraphrase of the expression, “Tarshish fleet,” i.e., a fleet of ships fitted for long voyages. (Comp. Isa. ii. 16.) The identity of the present fleet with that mentioned above in verse 19 is not evident. Solomon may have had a fleet in the Mediterranean (“the sea” of 1 Kings x. 22) trading westward, as well as in the Red Sea, trading south and east. Some have identified Tarshish with Cape Tarsis in the Persian Gulf. (See Note on chap. xx. 36.)

(20) And king Solomon.—See 1 Kings x. 23.

Passed all.—Was great above all.
kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.

(23) And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, that God had put in his heart.

(24) And they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and raiment, harness, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year.

(25) And Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen; whom he bestowed in the chariot cities, and with the king at Jerusalem.

(26) And he reigned over all the kings from the river even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt.

(27) And the king made silver in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made silver in Jerusalem as stones.

(28) And Solomon brought up horses and chariots out of Egypt, and out of all lands.

(29) Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, are they not written in the book of the history of Solomon?

Solomon's Presents.

II. CHRONICLES, X.

His Death.

...to Solomon horses out of Egypt, and out of all lands.

(20) Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, are they not written in the book of the history of Solomon?

(21) And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat had fled from the face of Solomon the king, that Jeroboam returned from Egypt.

(22) And the king slept with his fathers, and they buried him in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years.

(23) And the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and of all that Solomon did, and all that reigned of him, are they not written in the book of the history of Solomon?

(24) Solomon's Presents.

Solomon's Presents.
whither he had fled from the presence of Solomon the king, heard it, that Jeroboam returned out of Egypt. (3) And they sent and called him. So Jeroboam and all Israel came and spake to Rehoboam, saying, (4) Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore ease thou somewhat the grievous servitude of thy father, and his heavy yoke that he put upon us, and we will serve thee. (5) And he said unto them, Come again unto me after three days. And the people departed.

(6) And king Rehoboam took counsel with the old men that had stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, saying, What counsel give ye me to return answer to this people? (7) And they spake unto him, saying, If thou be kind to this people, and speakest good words to them, they will be thy servants for ever. (8) But he forsook the counsel which the old men gave him, and took counsel with the young men that were brought up with him, that stood before him. (9) And he said unto them, What advice give ye that we may return answer to this people, which have spoken to me, saying, Ease somewhat the yoke that thy father did put upon us? (10) And the young men that were brought up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou answer the people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it somewhat lighter for us; thus shalt thou say unto them, My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins. (11) For whereas my father put a heavy yoke upon you, I will put more to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.

(12) So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king bade, saying, Come again to me on the third day. (13) And the king answered them roughly; and king Rehoboam forsook the counsel of the old men, (14) and answered them after the advice of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, but I

not alluded before to his flight thither. (See 1 Kings xi. 26-40.)

That Jeroboam returned out of Egypt.—Kings continues the parenthesis, “and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt.” The words dwelt and returned are spelt with the same letters in Hebrew, and the difference being one of emphasis, which the chronicler has avoided, at the expense of the literal text of Kings, both here and in verse 14.

All Israel.—Chron. omits assembly of. “Came,” singular; Kings, plural.

Mado . . . grievous . . . ease thou.—Made hard . . . lighten.

Now therefore.—And now. Kings and the Syriac here, “and thou now”—w‘attah ‘attah : an assonance which the chronicler has avoided, at the expense of the proper emphasis, which lies on thou. (Some Hebrew MSS. and the Vulgate and Arabic read, and thou. (Comp. verse 10, and thou . . . lighten it.)

Come again unto me after three days.—Kings, “with him”; probably a mistaken repetition. Kings, “unto him,” and so LXX.; but Syriac, “with him.”

Answer.—Say to, the people.—This people (Kings).

But make thou it somewhat lighter for us.—Literally, And thou lighten from upon us. LXX., well: καί ὅποι ὁ παλαιός ἤρως.

Thus shalt thou say.—Kings, “speak.”

My little finger.—The word “finger” should not be italicised. The word qaneth means “little finger.”

Whips . . . scorpions.—The whips . . . the scorpions.

I will chastise you.—These words are found in the text of Kings, both here and in verse 14.

Roughly.—Hardly.

King Rehoboam.—Not in Kings, which adds, “that they counselled him.”

Advice.—Counsel.

My father made your yoke heavy.—The Tar-gum and a large number of Hebrew MSS. read, “I will make heavy.” This appears to be an error arising out
of a fusion of the two words "abi hikhbid into 'akhbid. All the versions have the reading of the text.

Thereto. — "To your yoke" (Kings).

The cause was of God. — It was brought about by God. Literally, it was a turn or turning-point (of events) from with God. The word n'sibbah is equivalent to sibbah of Kings. Both are isolated in the Old Testament. The latter is the common word for "cause" in Rabbinc, as sibbah sibbōth—causa causarum.

That the Lord might perform his word. — The chronicler does not deviate from the text of Kings here, although he has not mentioned Ahijah's prophecy to Jeroboam before. (Comp. chap. ix. 21.)

And when all Israel saw. — Now all Israel had seen. Kings: "And all Israel saw." The chronicler makes a new start. (The word "saw" is wanting in very many Hebrew MSS. and in LXX, Vulg., and Targ., and some Hebrew editions.)

Answered. — Returned the king—selah, a word, which Kings supplies.

Every man to your tents, 0 Israel. — Literally, A man ('ish) to thy tents, &c. The word "man" is probably spurious, being due to a repetition of the letters of the preceding proper name Jesse (Heb., Yəhāy or Ishai). Kings, LXX, Vulg. are without it, but Syriae has it.

See to thine own house—i.e., govern Judah, thine own tribe. Vulg., "passe domum taum."

Hadoram. — Kings, "Adoram." LXX. (Vat.), Adoram. (Comp. 1 Kings iv. 6.)

The tribute—The levy (ha-mas).

The children of Israel. — Kings, "all Israel."

Made speed—Had made speed.

His chariot.—The (royal) chariot.

Unto this day. — Neither the compiler of Kings nor the chronicler saw fit to alter a phrase which no longer applied to the political circumstances of their own day. (Comp. 1 Chron. iv. 41, 43, v. 26.)

Revolt of Israel.

II. CHRONICLES, XI. Shemaiah's Message.

1. And when Jeroboam was come to Jerusalem, he gathered of the house of Judah and Benjamin an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against Israel, that he might bring the kingdom again to Jeroboam.

2. But the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah the man of God, saying,

3. Speak unto Jeroboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, saying,

4. Thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren: return every man to his house: for this thing is done of me. And they obeyed the words of the Lord, and returned from going against Jeroboam.
5 And Rehoboam dwelt in Jerusalem, and built cities for defence in Judah.
6 He built even Beth-lehem, and Etam, and Tekoa, (7) and Beth-zur, and Shoco, and Adullam, (8) and Gath, and Marreshah, and Ziph, (9) and Adoraim, and Lachish, and Azekah, (10) and Zorah, and Aljalon, and Hebron, which are in Judah and in Benjamin fenced cities. (11) And he fortified the strong holds, and put captains in them, and store of victual, and of oil and wine. (12) And in every several city he put shields and spears, and made them exceeding strong, having Judah and Benjamin on his side.

19 And the priests and the Levites that were in all Israel 1 resorted to him out of all their coasts. (14) For the Levites left their suburbs and their possession, and came to Judah and Jerusalem: for "Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priest's

Words.—"Word," Kings and the versions here, no doubt rightly, as this is the usual phrase. But comp. 1 Sam. xv. 1.

From going against Jeroboam.—Kings, "To go away, according to the word of the Lord"—a tautology which the chronicler has avoided. The rest of xiv. 1-9, where they break

And Rehoboam Strengthens the Defences of his Kingdom (verses 5-12).

This section is peculiar to the chronicler.

5 Dwelt in Jerusalem.—As the capital.

Cities for defence.—(Arîm ʻumādūr = ʻarē majāry, chap. viii. 3), "embattled cities;" LXX., Πόλεις ῥυγέων.

In Judah.—Not the territory of the tribe, but the kingdom is intended, for some of the fortresses were in Benjamin (verse 10).

6 He built even.—And he built—i.e., fortified.

Beth-lehem.—Beit-lahm, a rocky eminence, two hours south of Jerusalem (Gen. xxxv. 19; Micah v. 2; Matt. ii. 6). The birthplace of David and of Christ.

Etam.—Ain Attâtan; different from the place mentioned in 1 Chron. iv. 32 and Judges xv. 8, which lay in Simeonite territory.

Tekoa.—Tehu‘a; ruins on a hill two hours south of Bethlehem. (See Josh. xv. 59, Note.)

(7) Beth-zur.—Beit-si‘ir; a ruin midway between Urtâs and Hebron (Josh. xv. 58).

Shoco.—Heb. Sôco; as Sûneîkîch, in Wady Sunet, three and a-half hours south west of Jerusalem (Josh. xv. 35; 1 Sam. xvii. 1).

Adullam.—Josh. xv. 35. Perhaps Aid-el-Mich.

(8) Gath.—Uncertain. Perhaps Wady-el-Gat north of Ascalon. (See 1 Kings ii. 39 and 1 Chron. xviii. 1, from a comparison of which it appears that, under Solomon, Gath was ruled by a vassal king.)

Marreshah.—Marash; a ruin two miles south of Beit-jibrin, Eleutheropolis (Josh. xv. 44; 2 Chron. xv. 9).

Ziph.—Tel Zîf; ruins about one hour and a quarter south east of Hebron (Josh. xv. 55; 1 Sam. xxiv. 14, seqq.) Another Judean Ziph is mentioned (Josh. xv. 24).

(9) Adoraim.—Dîrama; a village about seven and a-half miles south west of Hebron. Called Abûsâ 1 Macc. xiii. 20, and often mentioned by Josephus in connection with Marissa (Marreshah). The name is not found elsewhere in the Old Testament.

Lachish.—Um Lakia; a ruined city on a round hill, seven hours west of Beit-jibrin, on the road from Hebron to Gaza (Josh. x. 3, xv. 39).

Azekah.—Uncertain; near Socoh (1 Sam. xvii. 1; Josh. x. 10, xv. 33).

(10) Zorah.—Surâh; a ruin on the ridge north of the Wady-es-Surar. The birthplace of Samson.

Aljalon.—Yalo, north of Surâh, four leagues west of Gibeon. Zorah and Aljalon, or Ajalon, may have become Benjamite cities at the epoch of the migration of Dan (Judges xviii.). (See Josh. xix. 41, 42; also Josh. xv. 33, x. 12.) Of the fifteen fortified cities here enumerated these two lay farthest north.

Hebron.—El Khudîl (Gen. xxii. 2). This is the only place which are in Judah and in Benjamin.—This refers to the entire list.

Fenced cities.—Arē ʻumādūr ("cities of ramparts," or "strongholds"); a phrase peculiar to the chronicler. (Comp. chap. xii. 4.) The fifteen cities [excluding Zorah and Aljalon] were on the south and west of Jerusalem. Hence Rehoboam appears to have been more afraid of an attack from the south and west—that is, from the Egyptians—than of a war with the northern kingdom. (Bertheau.)

11 And he fortified.—Literally, strengthened, i.e., put them in an efficient condition for defence, by providing commandants and stores of arms and food.

The strong holds.—M’tserôth; the word in last verse.

Captains.—N’qîdîm; leaders, princes (1 Chron. ix. 11). Here it means commandants.

(12) Shields.—The "targets" of chap. ix. 15. Made them exceeding strong.—Strengthened them (the same word as "fortified" in verse 11) very abundantly (Parâbîh möd‘îh). A form of words only used by the chronicler. (See chap. xvi. 8; and comp. Neh. vi. 18.)

Having Judah and Benjamin on his side.—Literally, and he had (or, there fell to him) Judah and Benjamin. A definition of Rehoboam's territory. (Comp. chap. x. 17.)

The Priests and Levites, and all who are Faithful to the Legitimate Worship, Desert the Northern Kingdom (verses 13-17).

This section also is peculiar to the chronicler, though indirectly confirmed by the notices in 1 Kings xii. 31; xiii. 33.

(13) Resorted to him.—Presented themselves before him (Job i. 6; li. 1).

Coasts.—Border, domain. The term "Levites" is here used in the general sense as including the priests.

(14) Their suburbs.—Pâture-grounds (Num. xxxv. 1-8).

And their possession—i.e., the cities assigned to them among the ten tribes.
office unto the Lord; (18) and he ordained him priests for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made. (19) And after them out of all the tribes of Israel such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the Lord God of their fathers. (20) So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong, three years: for three years they walked in the way of David and Solomon.

Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priest's office unto the Lord. — See 1 Kings xii. 25—31. There we are told that this was a matter of policy. Jeroboam, according to different accounts, erected two centres of worship within his own dominions, so that his subjects might cease to visit the Temple of Jerusalem. In appointing priests chosen promiscuously from all classes of the people to minister in the new sanctuaries, Jeroboam struck a direct blow at the Levitical order, and "threatened them out from acting as priests to Jehovah," as our verse declares. And his sons.—Usually explained to mean his successors on the throne. (Comp. 1 Chron. iii. 16.) For in this matter all the kings of Israel walked in the footsteps of Jeroboam (Keil). Of Jeroboam's own sons Nadab was the only one who reigned (1 Kings xv. 4). This record also is wanting in the Book of Kings. And he ordained.—And had appointed (1 Chron. xv. 16, 17; xxii. 2). For the high places.—Bámóth. (See Note on 1 Kings xii. 31 seqq.) Such local sanctuaries existed not only at Dan and Bethel, but also in other cities of the northern kingdom. (Comp. 2 Kings xiv. 9.) And for the devils.—Sé'évim, "satyrs" (Isa. xiii. 21). Literally, "goats." (See Note on Lev. xvii. 7.) The phrase indicates a prevalence of detesting idolatry in the time of Jeroboam. And for the calves.—See Note on 1 Kings xii. 28. The "calves" represented the God of Israel. It appears therefore that Jeroboam encouraged a system of syncretism, or mixture of worships.

For three years.—Literally, "for three years." The reason of the strengthening. They (i.e., the people of Judah) walked in the way of David and Solomon.—i.e., served Jehovah according to the system of worship enacted by those monarchs. The countenance which Solomon in his old age gave to foreign religions is here again ignored by the chronicler. What happened after the three years of faithfulness is told in chap. xii. Here follow

PARTICULARS CONCERNING REHOBOAM'S FAMILY (verses 18—23). This record also is wanting in the Book of Kings. It appears to have been derived from the sources designated in chap. xii. 15.

(18) The daughter.—So rightly, LXX., Vulg., and many Hebrew MSS. for the ordinary reading "son." Of Jerimoth the son of David.—Jerimoth does not occur in the list of David's sons (1 Chron. iii. 1—8), unless we suppose the name to be a corruption of "Ithream." Probably he was one of "the sons of the concubines" (1 Chron. iii. 9).

And Abihail.—The and is not in the present Hebrew text, but is supplied by the LXX. "And of Abihail" is probably the meaning, so that both of Mahalah's parents are named. The LXX. and Vulg. make Abihail a second wife of Rehoboam; but verses 19, 20, as well as the construction of the sentence, make it evident that only one wife is mentioned here. A daughter of David's eldest brother could hardly become the wife of David's grandson.

Eliah the son of Jesse.—1 Sam. xvii. 13; 1 Chron. ii. 13. (19) Which bare.—And she (i.e., Mahalah) bare. Shemariah.—Shemariah. These sons of Rehoboam occur here only.

(20) Maachah the daughter of Absalom,—i.e., granddaughter, as appears from 2 Sam. xiv. 27, where Tamar is named as the "one daughter" of Absalom. Josephus says Maachah was daughter of Tamar (Ant. viii. 10, 1). (Comp. 2 Sam. xviii. 18; 2 Chron. xiii. 2; 1 Kings xiv. 10.) Which bare him Abijah.—Rehoboam's successor, called "Abijah" in Kings. The other three are unknown.

(21) Loved Maachah.—She probably inherited her mother's and grandfather's beauty. For he took—Nāād, as in chap. xiii. 21; a later usage instead of lāqūth.
Abijah Exalted.

II. CHRONICLES, XII. Invasion by Shishak.

And threescore concubines.—Josephus (l.c.) says, "thirty," and the difference in Hebrew is only of one letter. The recurrence of the same number immediately ("threescore daughters") is also suspicious.

And Rehoboam made Abijah the son of Maachah chief of the brethren; for he thought to make him king. He desired many wives.

CHAPTER XII.—(1) And it came to pass, when Rehoboam had established the kingdom, and had strengthened himself, he forsook the law of the Lord, and all Israel with him.

(2) And it came to pass, that in the fifth year of king Rehoboam Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, "because they had transgressed against the Lord," with twelve hundred chariots, and threescore thousand horsemen: and the people were without number that came with him out of Egypt; the Lubims, the Sukkiims,
The Princes humble themselves. II. CHRONICLES, XII.

1. Or, a little while.

By the hand of Shishak.—The destruction of Jerusalem was reserved for the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

2. Nevertheless they shall be.—For they shall become servants (i.e., tributaries) to him; or, for a while.

3. That they may know (or, discern) my service, and the service of the kingdoms.—That they may learn by experience the difference between the easy yoke of their God, and the heavy burden of foreign tyranny, which was entailed upon them by deserting Him.

4. Kingdoms of the countries.—See 1 Chron. xxix. 30.

5. So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem.—The conclusion is resumed after the parenthesis relating to Shemaiah by repeating the statement of verse 2.

6. And took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house; he took all: he carried away also the shields of gold which Solomon had made. (10) Instead of which king Rehoboam made shields of brass, and committed them to the hands of the chief of the guard, that kept the entrance of the king's house. (11) And when the king entered into the house of the Lord, the guard came and fetched them, and brought them again into the guard chamber. (12) And when he humbled himself, the wrath of the Lord turned

7. Of Shishak. (6) Nevertheless they shall be his servants; that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries.

8. So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house; he took all: he carried away also the shields of gold which Solomon had made. (10) Instead of which king Rehoboam made shields of brass, and committed them to the hands of the chief of the guard, that kept the entrance of the king's house. (11) And when the king entered into the house of the Lord, the guard came and fetched them, and brought them again into the guard chamber. (12) And when he humbled himself, the wrath of the Lord turned

9. Nevertheless they shall be his servants; that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries.

10. So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house; he took all: he carried away also the shields of gold which Solomon had made. (10) Instead of which king Rehoboam made shields of brass, and committed them to the hands of the chief of the guard, that kept the entrance of the king's house. (11) And when the king entered into the house of the Lord, the guard came and fetched them, and brought them again into the guard chamber. (12) And when he humbled himself, the wrath of the Lord turned

11. Of Shishak. (6) Nevertheless they shall be his servants; that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries.

12. So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house; he took all: he carried away also the shields of gold which Solomon had made. (10) Instead of which king Rehoboam made shields of brass, and committed them to the hands of the chief of the guard, that kept the entrance of the king's house. (11) And when the king entered into the house of the Lord, the guard came and fetched them, and brought them again into the guard chamber. (12) And when he humbled himself, the wrath of the Lord turned

and the Ethiopians. (4) And he took the fenced cities which pertained to Judah, and came to Jerusalem.

5. Then came Shemaiah the prophet to Rehoboam, and to the princes of Judah, that were gathered together to Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said unto them, Thus saith the Lord, Ye have forsaken me, and therefore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak. (6) When the princes of Israel saw that they humbled themselves, the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah, saying, They have humbled themselves; therefore I will not destroy them, but I will grant them some deliverance; and my wrath shall not be poured out upon Jerusalem by the hand

6. The verse is not in Kings. Thenius (on them, but I will grant them some deliverance; and my wrath shall not be poured out upon Jerusalem by the hand of Shishak. (6) Nevertheless they shall be his servants; that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries.

7. By the hand of Shishak.—The destruction of Jerusalem was reserved for the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

8. Nevertheless they shall be.—For they shall become servants (i.e., tributaries) to him; or, for a while.

9. That they may know (or, discern) my service, and the service of the kingdoms.—That they may learn by experience the difference between the easy yoke of their God, and the heavy burden of foreign tyranny, which was entailed upon them by deserting Him.

10. Kingdoms of the countries.—See 1 Chron. xxi. 30.

11. So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem.—The narrative is resumed after the parenthesis relating to Shemaiah by repeating the statement of verse 2.

12. And took away the treasures of the house of the Lord.—See 1 Kings xiv. 26, with which the rest of this verse is identical.

13. Instead of which king Rehoboam made. —See Note on 1 Kings xiv. 27, with which verse this verse coincides.

14. Chief of the guard.—Literally, captains of the runners, or couriers.

15. And when. —And as often as.

16. The guard came and fetched . . . —The runners came and bore them; and they (after the royal procession) restored them to the guard room of the runners. (See on 1 Kings xiv. 28, which reads, "the runners used to bear them.")

17. Solomon’s golden shields had been kept in “the house of the forest of Lebanon” (chap. ix. 16).

18. And when he humbled himself, the wrath of the Lord turned from him.—In fulfilment of the promise of verse 7. This remark, the tone of which is in perfect accord with the chronicler’s conception of the real import of Shishak’s invasion, is wanting in Kings.

19. That he would not destroy him.—Literally, and not to destroy. The infinitive is used as in chap. xi. 22.

20. Altogether. —Unto consumption, a phrase only found here and in Ezek. xiii. 13.
from him, that he would not destroy him altogether; and also in Judah things went well.

(13) So king Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem, and reigned for one and forty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the Lord had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there. And his mother's name was Naamah an Ammonitess. (14) And he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord, but did evil in the eyes of Jehovah.

(15) Now the acts of Rehoboam, first and last, are they not written in the book of Shemaiah the prophet, and of Iddo the seer concerning genealogies? And there were wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually. (16) And Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David: and Abijah his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XIII. (Now in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam began Abijah to reign over Judah. (2) He reigned three years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was Michaiah the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. And there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. (3) And Abijah set the battle in array with an army of valiant men of war, even four hundred thousand chosen men.

Omit him. A general destruction of the country is meant.

And also in Judah things went well. Moreover in Judah there were good things. (Vulg., "siquidem et in Judah inventa sunt opera bona." The phrase, "good things," recurs chaps. xix. 3, xxx. 19; Ezra 10. xvi. 16. (Comp. l Kings xiv. 21, 22, 29, 31.)

Moreover in Judah there were good things. (Vulg., "cumque iniisset Ahia certamen" forbade a campaign in which Abijah totally defeated his rival the obediencp of the northern kingdom by force of arms. The permanent attitude of the rival kings could hardly be other than hostile, especially as Jeroboam appears to have instigated the Egyptian invasion of Judah; and this hostility must often have broken out into active injuries.

Abijah. Chap. xi. 22. Abijam, the spelling of Kings, is probably due to an accident of transcription.

And Rehoboam slept with his fathers. Abridged from 1 Kings. xiv. 31, which see.

Abijah. Chap. xi. 22. Abijam, the spelling of Kings, is probably due to an accident of transcription.

2. THE REIGN OF ABIJAH. (Comp. 1 Kings xv. 1—8.)

(1) Now. Not in the Hebrew. The verse is nearly identical with the parallel in Kings.

(2) His mother's name also was Michaiah the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. Kings reads for the names "Maachah the daughter of Ahitubalom" and as the chronicler has himself already designated Abijah as son of Maachah, daughter of Absalom (chap. xi. 20—22), there can be no doubt that this is correct, and that "Michaiah," which is elsewhere a man's name, is a corruption of Maachah. This is confirmed by the LXX., Syriac, and Arabic, which read Maachah. As we have already stated (chap. xi. 20), Maachah was granddaughter to Absalom, being a daughter of Tamar the only daughter of Absalom. Uriel of Gibeah, then, must have been the husband of Tamar. (See on chap. xv. 10. Uriel of Gibeah is otherwise unknown.)

And there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. Now war had arisen. See 1 Kings xvi. 6. "Now war had prevailed [same verb] between Abijah [common Hebrew text incorrectly has Rehobam] and Jeroboam all the days of his life" The chronicler modifies the sense by omitting the concising phrase, and then proceeds to give a striking account of a campaign in which Abijah totally defeated his rival (verses 3—20); of all which we find not a word in Kings.

(3) Set the battle in array. Began the battle. Vulg., "cumque iniisset Abia certamen" (1 Kings xx. 14).
men: Jeroboam also set the battle in array against him with eight hundred thousand chosen men, being mighty men of valour. (4) And Abijah stood up upon mount Zemaraim, which is in mount Ephraim, and said, Hear me, thou Jeroboam, and all Israel; (5) ought ye not to know that the Lord God of Israel gave the kingdom over Israel to David for ever, even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt? (6) Yet Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon the son of David, is risen up, and hath rebelled against his lord. (7) And there are gathered unto him vain men, the children of Belial, and have strengthened themselves against Rehoboam the son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young and tender-hearted, and could not withstand them. (8) And now ye think to withstand the kingdom of the Lord in the hand of the sons of David; and ye be a great multitude, and there are with you golden calves, which Jeroboam made you for gods. (9) Have ye not cast out the priests of the Lord, the sons of Aaron, and the Levites, and have made you priests after the manner of the nations of other lands? so that whosoever cometh 1 to consecrate himself with a young bullock and seven rams, the same

Four hundred thousand chosen men.—In David's census, Judah mustered 470,000 fighting men, and Israel 1,100,000, without reckoning Levi and Benjamin (1 Chron. xxi. 5). The numbers of the verse present a yet closer agreement with the results of that census as reported in 2 Sam. xxiv. 9; where, as here, the total strength of the Israelite warriors is given as 800,000, and that of Judah as 500,000. This correspondence makes it improbable that the figures have been falsified in transmission. (See Note on verse 17.)

Jeroboam also set the battle in array.—While Jeroboam had drawn up against him. Vulg., in trutzat e contra deum.

(4) And Abijah stood up upon mount Zemaraim.—While the two hosts were facing each other, king Abijah addressed his foes from mount Zemaraim, as Jotham addressed the Shechemites from the top of Gerizim in the days of the judges (Judges ix. 7). Upon.—Literally, from upon to mount Zemaraim; a mark of the chronicler's hand.

Mount Zemaraim is otherwise unknown. A city so called is mentioned (Josh. xviii. 22) as near Bethel, and probably lay a little to the south of it, on the northern frontier of Judah, perhaps upon this mountain.

Mount Ephraim.—The hill country of Ephraim.

(5) Ought ye not to know.—Literally, is it not to you to know? A construction characteristic of the chronicler. Abijah contrasts the moral position of his adversaries with his own, asserting (1) that their separate political existence is itself an act of rebellion against Jehovah; (2) that they have abolished the only legitimate form of worship, and established in its place an illegal cultus and priesthood; whereas (3) he and his people have maintained the orthodox ritual and ministry, and are therefore assured of the divine support.

By a covenant of salt. —As or after the manner of a covenant of salt, i.e., a firm and unalterable compact (see Num. xviii. 19). According to ancient custom, salt was indispensable at formal meals for the ratification of friendship and alliance; and only a “salt treaty” was held to be secure. Salt therefore accompanied sacrifices, as being, in fact, so many renewals of the covenant between man and God. (Lev. ii. 13; Ezek. xliii. 24; Lev. xxiv. 7 in the LXX.)

The antique phrase, “covenant of salt,” is otherwise important, as bearing on the authenticity of this speech.

(6) The servant of Solomon.—See 1 Kings xi. 26.

Is risen up, and hath rebelled. —Arose and rebelled. (See 1 Kings xi. 26—40).

(7) And there are gathered.—Omit are.

Vain men (reqim, Judges ix. 4, xi. 3).—Said of the followers of Abimelech and the freebooter Jephthah. Neither this nor the following phrase, “the children of Belial,” (literally, sons of worthlessnesse, i.e., men of low character and estimation) occurs again in the Chronicles. (See Judges xix. 22, xx. 13; 1 Kings xxi. 10, 13, for the latter.)

Have strengthened. —Omit have.

Young and tender-hearted. —Rather, a youth and soft of heart, faint-hearted. A similar phrase occurred 1 Chron. xxix. 1. The expression is somewhat inexact, as Rehoboam was forty-one when he ascended the throne (chap. xii. 13). But Abijah is naturally anxious to put the case as strongly as possible against Jeroboam, and to avoid all blame of his own father. In chap. x. Rehoboam appears as haughty and imperious, rather than timid and soft-hearted.

Could not withstand them.—Did not show himself strong or firm (chap. xii. 13).

Against them.—Before them. (Comp. 1 Chron. xii. 17; a usage of the chronicler's.)

(8) And now ye think.—Literally, say, i.e., in your hearts (chap. ii. 11). To withstand the kingdom.—Literally, to show yourselves strong before the kingdom, as in last verse.

In (through) the hand of the sons of David. —The meaning is, the kingdom which Jehovah holds by the instrumentality of the house of David, as His earthly representatives. (Coup. Vulg., “regno Domini quod possidet per filios David.” (See 1 Chron. xix. 23).

And there are with you golden calves.—And therefore you believe yourselves assured of Divine aid, in addition to the strength of numbers. But your trust is delusive, for Jeroboam made the objects of your fond idolatry (see Isa. xliv. 9—17); and you have superseded the only lawful worship of Jehovah (verse 9).

(9) The priests of the Lord . . . and the Levites.—The Hebrew seems to include the Levites among the priests of the Lord.

Cast out. —Banished (Jer. viii. 3).

After the manner of the nations of other lands.—Literally, like the peoples of the lands; that is, priests of all classes of the nation, and not members of the divinely chosen tribe of Levi. (See 1 Kings
Abijah's Speech.

II. CHRONICLES, XIII.

Victory of Judah.

may be a priest of them that are no gods. (10) But as for us, the Lord is our God, and we have not forsaken him; and the priests, which minister unto the Lord, are the sons of Aaron, and the Levites wait upon their business: (11) and they burn unto the Lord every morning and every evening burnt sacrifices and sweet incense; the shewbread also set they in order upon the pure table; and the candlestick of gold with the lamps thereof, to burn every evening: for we keep the charge of the Lord our God; but ye have forsaken him. (12) And, behold, God himself is with us for our captain, and his priests with sounding trumpets to cry alarm against you. O children of Israel, fight ye not against the Lord God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper.

(13) But Jeroboam caused an ambushment to come about behind them: so they were before Judah, and the ambushment was behind them. (14) And when Judah looked back, behold, the battle was before and behind: and they cried unto the Lord, and the priests sounded with the trumpets. (15) Then the men of Judah gave a shout; and as the men of Judah shouted, it came to pass, that God smote Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah. (16) And the children of Israel fled before Judah: and God delivered them into their hand. (17) And
Abijah and his people slew them with a great slaughter: so there fell down slain of Israel five hundred thousand chosen men.

Thus the children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the Lord God of their fathers. And Abijah pursued after Jeroboam, and took cities from him, Beth-el with the towns thereof, and Ephrain with the towns thereof.

Neither did Jeroboam recover strength again in the days of Abijah: and the Lord struck him, and he died.

And the rest of the acts of Abijah, and his ways, and his sayings, are written in the 1st story of the prophet Ido.

CHAPTER XIV.—(1) So Abijah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David: and Asa his son reigned in his stead. In his days the

Five hundred thousand chosen men.—Or more than half of Jeroboam’s entire army.

It is hardly true to say that “there is nothing in the original to indicate that this slaughter was all on one day.” (Speaker’s Commentary.) On the contrary, it is perfectly evident from the whole narrative that this verse describes the issue of a single great and decisive encounter of the rival hosts.

The result is certainly incredible, if the numbers be pressed; but it seems more reasonable to see in them “only a numerical expression of the belief of contemporaries of the war, that both kings had made a levy of all the fighting men in their respective realms, and that Jeroboam was defeated with such slaughter that he lost more than half his warriors” (Keil). The Syriac reads “five thousand.”

The number of slain on the other side is not stated. But it is absurd to talk as Reuss does, of Abijah’s 400,000 as being “still intact,” and then to ask why they did not proceed to reduce the northern kingdom.

Were brought under.—Were humbled, bowed down (the same word as in chap. xii. 6). (Judg. iii. 30.)

Prevalued.—Was strong. (Ps. xviii. 13; Gen. xxv. 23.)

They relied upon the Lord.—Isa. x. 20. (Authorized Version, “stay upon.”)

Took cities from him.—The three cities and their districts were only temporarily annexed to Judah. According to 1 Kings xv. 17-21, Baasha, King of Israel, attempted in the next reign to fortify Ramah, which was only about five miles north of Jerusalem. He had probably recovered these towns before doing so (Bertheau).

Bethel.—Beitina. (Gen. xii. 8; Josh. vii. 2.)

Jeshanah.—Not mentioned elsewhere in the Old Testament. Probably identical with Ἱσάς of Josephus (Ant. xiv. 15, § 12); site unknown. Syriac, Sheid; Arabic, Silt.

Ephrain.—So the Heb. margin; Heb. text, Ephron; and so LXX., Vulg., Syriac, Arabic. Mount Ephron (Josh. xv. 9) was situated too far to the south to be intended here. Perhaps Ephrah, near Bethel (Judges vi. 11), or the town called Ephraim (John vi. 54)—especially if Ephrain be the right reading—which also was near Bethel, according to Josephus (Bell. Jud. iv. 9, §§ 9), is to be understood. Ephrah and Ephrain may be identical.

The Arabic adds: “And Zāghār with the towns thereof.”

Neither did Jeroboam recover strength.

And Jeroboam retained strength no longer.
Regn. of Asa (chaps. xiv.—xvi.)

(a) Efforts to Root Out Illegitimate Worships, and to Strengthen the System of National Defences (chap. xiv. 2—7; comp. 1 Kings xv. 9—15).

(2) That which was good and right.—Literally, "The good and the right," an expression defined in verses 3, 4. It is used of Hezekiah, chap. xxxi. 20. See 1 Kings xi. 11, "And Asa did the right in the eyes of the Lord, like David his father." For (and) ... the altars of the strange gods.—Literally, "altars of the alien." Vulg., "altar peregrini cultus." Comp. the expression, "gods of the alien" (Gen. xxxiv. 2, 4). (Comp. 1 Kings xiv. 12b, and he took away all the idols that his fathers had made; a summary statement, which is here expanded into details.) But both here and in chap. xii. 1, 2, the chronicler has omitted to mention the qôshedim. (Authorised Version, "Sodomites"). (1 Kings xv. 12b)

And the high places.—i.e., those dedicated to foreign religions. It is clear from chap. xv. 17, as well as 1 Kings xv. 11, that high places dedicated to the worship of Jehovah were not done away with by Asa.

Brake down the images.—Brake in pieces (or shattered) the pillars. They were dedicated to Baal, and symbolised the solar rays, being, no doubt, a species of obelisk. (See Gen. xxviii. 18; Exod. xxxiv. 13; Judg. iii. 7.) The "high places, images, and groves" of this verse are all mentioned in 1 Kings xiv. 23.

(4) And commanded Judah to seek.—'amar with infinitive. (Comp. 1 Chron. xxi. 17.) The chronicler's own style is visible in this verse.

To seek the Lord God of their fathers.—The same phrase recurs in chap. xv. 12.

The law and the commandment.—Exod. xiv. 12, "That I may give thee the tables of stone, and the law and the commandment that I have written" (Deut. vii. 25).

And the images.—Hammanim. (Comp. the word hamah, "sun.") Pillars or statues to the sun-god, standing before or upon the altars of Baal, are intended (see Lev. xxvi. 30; Isa. xii. 8; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 4.) Comp. the Phoenician deity Baal-hamman.

The kingdom was quiet before him.—Enjoyed peace under his oversight. Compare the use of the word "before," in Num. viii. 22; Ps. lxxi. 5 ("before the moon").

(5) And he built fenced cities.—See chap. xi. 5, xii. 4; and for the expression "had given him rest," 2 Sam. vii. 1.

(7) Therefore, he said unto Judah, Let us build these cities, and make about them walls, and towers, gates, and bars, while the land is yet before us; because we have sought the Lord our God, we have sought him, and he hath given us rest on every side. So they built and prospered. (8) And Asa had an army of men that bare targets and speaks, out of Judah three hundred thousand; and out of Benjamin, that bare shields and drew bows, two hundred and fourscore thousand: all these were mighty men of valour.

(9) And there came out against them...
Zerah the Ethiopian.—Heb., ha-Kush. (See Note on 1 Chron. i. 8 [Cusha].) Zerah is identified with Osorhon II., hieroglyphic Usarken, who succeeded Shishak as king of Egypt. The name of this king is curiously like that of Sargon, the great Assyrian conqueror of the eighth century B.C. (See Note on chap. xii. 2.) The object of the expedition appears to have been to bring Judah again under the yoke of Egypt. Shishak had made Rehoboam tributary (chap. xii. 8), after reducing his fortresses and plundering Jerusalem. But now Asa had restored the defences of his country, and apparently reorganised the fighting material; steps indicating a desire for national independence. A thousand thousand.—This very large and symmetrical number would probably be best represented in English by an indefinite expression, like “myriads.” It is otherwise out of all proportion to the three hundred chariots, which last seems a classical expression. "To fight with." —"To retain strength" for of nomad Bedawin whom they encountered in the desert about Gerar. (Comp. 1 Chron. iv. 41, “smote with Osorchon II., hieroglyphic Usarken, who succeeded rightly trust in thee." This is much more like a Tangum than a translation. The difficulty of the text is evaded, not explained.

We go.—Wese (chap. xiii. 18). We rest.—Relig (chap. xiii. 18).

The Ethiopians were overthrown, that they could not recover themselves.—Literally, And there fell of Kushites until they had no revival, or survival (Ezr. ix. 8, 9). The latter seems preferable, as a vivid hyperbole, like 2 Kings xix. 35, “When men arose in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.” So Vulg., “usque ad interneconem.”

But now Asa had restored the defences of his country, and apparently reorganised the fighting material; steps indicating a desire for national independence.

The Syriac paraphrases thus: "Thou art our Lord, the helper of thy people. When thou shalt deliver a great army into the hands of a few, then all the inhabitants of the world will know that we rightly trust in thee." This is much more like a Tangum than a translation. The difficulty of the text is evaded, not explained.

We rest.—Relig (chap. xiii. 18).

We go.—We se (chap. xiii. 18).

The Lord, it is nothing to thee . . . have no power.—Rather, Lord, there is none beside, or like [literally, along with] thee to help between strong and powerless, i.e., in an unequal conflict to interpose with help for the weaker side. Between strong and [literally, to] powerless. The same construction occurs Gen. i. 6, “between waters to waters.” Others assume between . . . to, to mean whether . . . or, which would be in accordance with Rabbinic rather than ancient usage. A very plausible view is that of Kamphausen, who proposes to read la’azor for la’av (“to retain strength” for “to help”), an expression which actually occurs at the end of the verse, and to render the whole: “Lord, it is not for any to retain (strength) with (i.e., to withstand) Thee, whether strong or powerless.” (Comp. chap. xiii. 29; 1 Chron. xxix. 14). The Syriac paraphrases thus: "Thou art our Lord, the helper of thy people. When
Azariah

CHAPTER XV.—(1) And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded: (2) and he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you. (3) Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law. (4) But when they in their trouble did turn unto the Lord God of Israel, and sought him, he was found of them. (5) And in those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the countries. (6) And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city: for God did vex them with all adversity. (7) Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded.

1 Ech., before dat.
2 Heb., beaten in piece.

II. CHRONICLES, XV. Instructs Asa.

Asa’s Reformation of Religion.

(a) Address of the Prophet Azariah ben Oded (verses 1—7).

This section also is peculiar to the Chronicle.

(1) And the Spirit of God.—Literally, And Azariah son of Oded, there fell upon him spirit of God (i.e., a holy inspiration). The prophet is unknown, except from this chapter. The name Oded comprises the same radical letters as Idod (chap. ix. 20; xii. 15); but whether the same prophet or another be meant, is beyond decision.

(2) And he went out to meet.—Literally, before. (1 Chron. xii. 17; chap. xiv. 9.) Azariah met the king on his return from battle.

(3) And if ye seek him . . . forsake you.—This generalises the preceding statement. It is a favourite formula with the chronicler. (See 1 Chron. xxviii. 9; and for the last clause, chap. xii. xvi. 20; comp. also Jer. xxix. 13, 14.)

(4) He will be found.—Or, is found.

(5) He will forsake.—Or, he forsaketh.

(6) Now for a long season Israel hath been.—Literally, And many days to Israel, without true God, and without teaching priest, and without teaching. This is clearly an illustration of the general truth asserted in last verse. “Many a time hath Israel been without true God,” etc. Periods of religious decline, such as those recorded in the Book of Judges, as well as of later times, especially since the division of the kingdom, are adduced as historical proof of the statement that the Lord was with Israel while they were with him. (Comp. Judg. ii. 11—19, iii. 7—10; also Hos. iii. 4, 5.)

(7) Without.—Lehi, only here in this sense.

(8) The true God.—Jer. x. 9: “Jehovah is true God.” (’elohim ’emeth).

Teaching priest.—Kohèn moresh. (See Lev. x. 11; Deut. xvi. 9, xxii. 10, xxv. 8; Ezek. xlv. 23; Jer. xviii. 18; Mal. ii. 6, 7.) The priests instructed the people in the Torah, or divine Law (literally, teaching).

(4) But when they in their trouble did turn.—Literally, and he returned in his straits (Deut. iv. 30) unto Jehovah, the God of Israel; they sought him, and, etc. (See Judg. iii. 9, 15, iv. 3, 15, vi. 6, sqq.; Ps. cvi. 44, evii. 6.)

(5) And in those times.—The “many days” of verse 3; the times of national unfaithfulness. There was no peace . . . came in.—(See Judg. v. 6, 11; vi. 11.)

But great vexations.—For great confusions (m’humah). (See Deut. xxviii. 20, where m’humah, “confusion” or “discomfiture,” is foretold as a punishment of apostasy. Here the meaning seems to be tumultuous, as in Amos iii. 9. “The countries” are the territories or provinces of Israel, as in chap. xxxiv. 33.)

(6) And nation was destroyed of nation.—And they were crushed, nation by nation and city by city. The verb khathath occurs Isa. i. 4 (“to beat”); but in its (intensive) passive form only here. Some MSS. have the (intensive) active form, which is found elsewhere. So LXX. and Vulg.: “And nation shall fight against nation.” Nation is goy, i.e., a community of kindred, such as a tribe or clan, rather than a merely political aggregate. The allusion is to the old feuds and contentions between rival tribes, e.g., between Ephraim and Gilead (Manasseh; Judg. xii.), or between Benjamin and the other tribes (Judg. xx.). The verse vividly portrays an internecine strife, like that described in Isa. xix. 2: “And I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians, and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbour; city against city, kingdom against kingdom;” or like that depicted by the same prophet (Isa. ix. 18—21): “No man shall spare his brother . . . they shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm [i.e., of his natural ally]: Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh; and they together shall be against Judah.”

Did vex them with all adversity.—Had confounded (or, discomfited) them with every kind of distress. (Comp. Zech. xiv. 13: “A great confusion from the Lord.”)

(7) Be ye strong therefore.—Rather, But ye, be ye strong.

Be weak.—Droop, or hang down (Zeph. iii. 16; 2 Sam. iv. 1).

Your work shall be rewarded.—Literally, there is indeed a reward for your work; words occurring in Jer. xxxi. 16. We have here the moral of the prophet’s address. The ruinous results of not “seeking,” and “forsaking,” Jehovah (verse 2) have been briefly but powerfully sketched from the past history of the nation. The conclusion is, Do not ye fall away like your forefathers; but let your allegiance to Jehovah be decided and sincere.

Your work.—Of rooting out idolatry.

etc.
(8) And when Asa heard these words, and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage, and put away the abominable idols out of all the land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the cities which he had taken from mount Ephraim, and renewed the altar of the Lord, that was before the porch of the Lord. (9) And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance, when they saw that the Lord his God was with him. (10) So they gathered themselves together at Jerusalem in the third month, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa. (11) And they offered unto the Lord the same time, of the spoil which they had brought, seven hundred oxen and seven thousand sheep. (12) And they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul; (13) that whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman. (14) And they sware unto the Lord with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets. (15) And all Judah rejoiced at the oath: for they had sworn with all their heart, and

(b) The Reform of Worship, and Public Renewal of the Covenant (verses 8–15).

(8) And the prophecy of Oded the prophet.—Heb., And the prophecy Oded the prophet; without any connection. This is suspicious, and suggests the idea that Oded the prophet is a marginal gloss, which has crept into the text; especially as, according to verse 1, not Oded, but Azariah son of Oded, was the author of the prophecy. Possibly there is a lacuna, and the original text ran: “And the prophecy which Azariah son of Oded, the prophet, spake.” There is no variation in Heb., MSS., and the readings of the versions only show that the difficulty is ancient. (LXX., Vulc., “the prophecy of Adad the prophet;” but in verse 1: “Azarias son of Oded;” Alex., “Azarias son of Adad the prophet;” Syr., “Azariah son of Azur;” Vulg., “Azariah son of Oded the prophet.”) These words and the prophecy, i.e., these words, even (or, that is) the prophecy. Epexegetical use of the conjunction. He took courage.—Hithchazzag, strengthened himself (chap. xii. 13). The same verb as be strong (chizqit), verse 7.

And put away.— Removed (1 Kings xv. 12).

The abominable idols.—Abominations (shiqqātim): one of the many terms of contempt applied to idols (Deut. xxix. 17; 1 Kings xi. 3, 7; Jer. iv. 1).

The cities which he had taken from mount Ephraim.—The hill-country of Ephraim. In chap. xvii. 2 we read again: “the cities of Ephraim, which Asa had taken.” It is generally assumed that in both passages there is a somehow inaccurate reference to the conquests of Abijah recorded in chap. xiii. 19; for hitherto Asa had had no wars with the northern kingdom (chaps. xiv. 1, 6; xv. 19). But Asa may have annexed some of the towns on his northern border without resistance, after his victory over Zerah. (Comp. the voluntary immigration into Judah described in verse 9.) Thonisin, who fixes the date of Baasha’s attempt before the Cushite invasion, says that Asa seems to have assumed the offensive after Baasha’s retreat from Ramah.

And renewed the altar.—The context seems to imply that this “renewal” consisted in reconsecration, the altar having been defiled by an illegal cultus. So the Heb., and Vulg., ezrephit, ezrephit. The word, however, may only mean repaired, restored. The altar had now stood sixty years. (Comp. chap. xxiv. 4.)

(9) The strangers—i.e., the non-Judeans; members of the northern kingdom. A similar accession to the southern kingdom had taken place under Rehoboam (chap. xi. 16); and another yet is related in the reign of Hezekiah (chap. xxx. 11, 18).

And out of Simeon.—This tribe is again mentioned along with Ephraim and Manasseh in chap. xxxiv. 9, although its territory lay “within the inheritance of the children of Judah” (Josh. xix. 1). Perhaps a portion of the tribe had migrated northward (comp. Judg. xviii.), and some of these now settled again in Judah. Gen. xii. 7 speaks of Simeon as “divided in Jacob, and scattered in Israel.”

Another solution is, that although politically one with Judah, the tribe of Simeon was religiously isolated by its illegal worship established at Beersheba, similar to that at Bethel and Dan (Amos iv. 4, v. 5, viii. 14). But this hardly agrees with the next clause: “They fell to him out of Israel.”

They fell to him.—(1 Chron. xii. 19; 2 Kings vii. 4.)

When they saw that the Lord.—They had heard of his great deliverance from Zerah.

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa.—This seems to indicate that the Cushite invasion took place not long before, perhaps in the spring of the same year (see Note on 1 Chron. xx. 1).

(11) The same time.—On that day; viz., the day appointed for the festival, in the third month, i.e., Sivan, corresponding to part of May and June.

Of the spoil which they had brought.—The spoil of Zerah, the cities round Gerar, and the nomadic tribes (chap. xiv. 15–15).

(12) And they entered into a (the) covenant.—Jer. xxxiv. 10. The phrase means that they bound themselves by an oath (verse 14). Comp. Neh. x. 30.

To seek the Lord . . . with all their heart . . .—See the same phrase in Deut. iv. 29.

(13) That.—And.

Whosoever would not seek the Lord God . . .—Part of the solemn oaths of the king and people; a sanction prescribed by the law of Deut. xiii. 6, 9, xvi. 2–6.

(14) With shouting, and with trumpets, and with cornets.—See on 1 Chron. xv. 28; chap. xxiii. 13. The acclamations of the people, accompanied by the loud blasts upon trumpet and clarion, naturally enhanced the solemnity of the oath.

(15) All Judah.—The entire southern kingdom.
Maachah deposed.

II. CHRONICLES, XVI.

Baasha invades Judah.

With their whole desire.—Or, assent; with perfect willingness. Vulg., “in tota voluntate.”

And he was found of them.—Or, was at hand to them; in accordance with the promise of Azariah the prophet (verse 2).

The Lord gave them rest.—Another period of tranquillity, like that mentioned in chap. xiv. 6, 7; and perhaps of equal duration. (See on chap. xvi. 1.)

And also concerning Maachah.—Verses 16—18 are a duplicate of 1 Kings xv. 13—15, with a few unimportant variations. See the commentary there.

The mother of Asa the king—i.e., his grandmother. (See chap. xiii. 2; and 1 Kings xv. 13). Others have supposed that Maachah the mother of Abijah, and Maachah the “mother” of Asa, were different persons, the former being the daughter of Absaalom, the latter the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. There are really no grounds for this. Maachah, the mother of Abijah, enjoyed the rank of queen-mother not only during his short reign of three years, but also during that of her grandson Asa, until deposed by him on account of her idolatry.

Queen.—Gebrabah, lady, mistress; but always used of a queen. Compare the position of Athaliah (chap. xxii. 2).

An idol.—Miphletseth; a thing of fear; a horror; a term only found here and in 1 Kings xv. 13. (Not as Merx suggests, nor a phalus, as others think. Comp. the cognate words in Job. ix. 6, xxi. 6; Jer. xxix. 13.)

In a grove.—Rather, for Asherah (2 Kings xvii. 16).

Stamped it.—Crushed it. A detail added by the chronicler. So Moses treated the golden calf (Exod. xxxii. 20); and Josiah the high place at Bethel (2 Kings xxiii. 15).

But the high places were not taken away.—See on chap. xiv. 3, 5. An explanation of the discrepancy has been suggested there; but a better one perhaps may be thus stated. The former passage relates what the good king had resolved and attempted to effect; the present records his want of success, owing to the obstinate attachment of his people to their old sanctuaries.

A similar explanation applies to the apparent contradiction of chap. xvi. 6 by chap. xx. 33.

Out of Israel.—Not in Kings. The southern kingdom is meant.

The heart of Asa was perfect.—Kings adds, with Jehovah. The meaning is, that though he failed to get rid of the high places, Asa himself was always faithful to the lawful worship of the Temple. (Comp. 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.)

And he brought into the house of God.—The verse is identical with 1 Kings xv. 15, substituting "the house of Jehovah." "The things that his father had dedicated" were, doubtless, taken from the spoils after Abijah’s great victory over Jeroboam (chap. xiii. 16—19); and "the things that he himself had dedicated" were a portion of the Cushite booty (chap. xiv. 13—15).

The brief reference contained in that single verse of Kings is thus an evident confirmation of the chronicler’s narrative concerning the victories of Abijah and Asa, which he alone records.

And there was no more war unto the five and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa.—Literally, and war arose not until, etc. This statement appears to refer back to verse 15: "And the Lord gave them rest round about," and so to assign the limit of that period of peace, which ensued after the defeat of Zerah.

In 1 Kings xv. 16 we find a different statement: "And war continued between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days," a statement which is repeated in verse 32 of the same chapter.

The chronicler has evidently modified the older text, in order to assign a precise date to the outbreak of active hostilities between the two monarchs. (Both 1 Kings xv. 16 and the present verse 19 begin with the same two Hebrew words, meaning “and war was,” but the chronicler inserts a not).

The verse of Kings need not imply more than that no amicable relations were ever established between the two sovereigns. They had inherited a state of war, although neither was in a condition to make an open attack upon the other for some years.

The five and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa.—This limit does not agree with the data of Kings (see on chap. xvi. 1). Thenius suggests that the letter l, denoting 30, got into the text originally, through some transcriber, who inadvertently wrote the l with which the next Hebrew word begins twice over. Later on, some other抄写者 naturally corrected chap. xvi. 1, to agree with this. Assuming thus that the right readings here were originally the fifth and sixth years of the reign of Asa, Thenius concludes that in chap. xvi. 1 the letter v (i.e., 5) has been shortened into y (10); and that Baasha’s attempt preceded the invasion of Zerah. The false dates probably existed already in the source which the chronicler followed.

XVI.

The War with Baasha.—(Verses 1—6). Comp. 1 Kings xv. 17—22.

(1) In the six and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa Baasha king of Israel came up. According to 1 Kings xv. 33, xvi. 8, Baasha began to reign in the third year of Asa, reigned twenty-four
and built Ramah, to the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. (2) Then Asa brought out silver and gold out of the treasures of the house of the Lord and of the king's house, and sent to Ben-hadad king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying, (3) "There is a league between me and thee, as there was between my father and thy father; behold, I have sent thee silver and gold; go, break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me. (4) And Ben-hadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel; and they smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-maim, and all the store cities of Naphtali. (5) And it came to pass, when Baasha heard it, that he left off building of Ramah, and let his work cease. (6) Then Asa the king took all Judah; and they carried away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha was building; and he built therewith Geba and Mizpah. (7) And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said unto him, Because thou hast relied on the king of Syria, and not relied on the Lord thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of thine years, and died in the twenty-sixth year of Asa. These statements are obviously irreconcilable with that of our verse. We must suppose either that the chronicler has accepted a different calculation from that of the Kings—a calculation which he may have found in one of his documents; or that the text here is unsound, and thirty-six has been substituted by an error of transcription for sixteen, or twenty-six; and that in chap. xvi. 19 by a similar mistake thirty-five has taken the place of thirty. (8) Asa took all the silver and the gold that were in the treasures of the house of the Lord and of the king's house. (9) And he restored all the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house, unto the officers of the prophet Hanani. (10) Then Asa called together all Judah; and none was exempted. (11) And Asa took all the silver and the gold that were found in all the treasures of the house of the Lord, and of the king's house, (12) and brought it to Shechem, and carried it to the house of David, that is, to the king's son. (13) And he took all the chief of the army, that were over thirty years old, and called them to him. (14) And Asa made a covenant with the whole house of Israel, to seek the Lord God of their fathers; (15) and of the things delivered by David and Asa his father, were not accounted small, even from the book of the kings of Judah. (16) And all the store-cities that were in the hands of Jabin the king of Canaan, the Habiru of Zaanannim, and Rehob, were given unto Israel. (17) And Asa reigned over Judah forty-one years; and he reigned over Benjamin, and over all Israel, thirty years. (18) And Asa rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. (19) And Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead. (20) And the rest of the acts of Asa, and all that he did, and how he fought, and built cities, are they written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. (21) And Jehoshaphat rested with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. Then Jehoram his son reigned. (22) Now there werecaptains of the host, Adonikam, and Abishar, and Jetakiah, and Jozabad, (23) and of the king's sons, Azariah, and Joel, and Obadiah, and Jehoshaphat, (24) and Maaseiah, and Eliazari, and Mattaniah, and Amasa, and Jehoadah. (25) And they built Beth-shemesh and Azmaveth, and Elaanah, andoid, and Gezer, and Dor, and Baalah, and Tadmor, (26) and Joktheel, and all the summits of the border, and all the palm trees and fir-trees, from Libnah; for he and all Judah did well. (27) Also in the days of Jehoshaphat there were peace both within and without. (28) For he walked in the way of David his father, and did not turn aside from it, doing that which was right in the sight of the Lord, (29) that the Lord his God was with him. And the Lord gave him success in all his ways until the days of Ahab king of Israel. (30) Then the kingdom was strong; for the people sought the Lord God of their fathers. (31) And after this man dwelt in Jerusalem, and he built Mizpah in the wilderness.
hand. (8) Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge host, with very many chariots and horsemen? yet, because thou didst rely on the Lorp, he delivered them into thine hand. (9) For the eyes of the Lorn run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of whom his heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth shalt thou have wars. (10) Then Asa was wroth with the seer, and put him in a prison house; for he was in a rage with him because of this thing. And Asa oppressed some of the people the same time.

(11) And, behold, the acts of Asa, first and last, lo, they are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.

(12) And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great: yet in his disease he sought not to the Lorp, but to the physicians.

He that keepeth Israel neither slumbereth nor sleepeth.

In the behalf of.—With, i.e., on the side of. The phrase “to shew oneself strong with,” i.e., strongly to support, occurred in 1 Chron. xi. 10. (For the Heb. construction, which omits the relative, see 1 Chron. xv. 12.) Out of the twenty-seven occurrences of the form hithpaeling, “to show oneself strong,” fifteen are found in the Chronicle.

Whose heart is perfect.—See Notes on 1 Chron. xii, 38, xxvii, 9, xxix, 19; 1 Kings xv. 14; 2 Chron. xv. 17.

Herein thou hast done foolishly.—Literally, Thou hast shown thyself foolish (2 Sam. xiv. 10; 1 Chron. xxi. 8) in regard to this, i.e., in seeking the help of Syria against Israel.

Therefore from henceforth shalt have wars.—Instead of peace (chap. xiv. 6, xv. 15). Literally, For (the proof of thy folly) from henceforth, &c. The sense appears to be that the peace secured by Asa’s worldly policy would not be permanent; a prediction verified over and over again in the after-history of the kingdom of Judah (see chap. xxviii. 20, 21). The record is silent as to any future wars in which Asa himself was involved, simply because the writer, having already fulfilled his didactic purpose so far as concerns this reign, presently draws its history to a close.

Then.—And. In a prison house: in the stocks. Literally, House of the stocks (Jer. xx. 2, xxix, 26). The word malkiheketh literally means “turning,” “distortion,” and so an instrument of torture, by which the body was bent double, hands and feet being passed through holes in a wooden frame. (See Acts xvi. 24.) The Syriac and LXX. have simply “prison.” Vulgate, “nervus,” i.e., stocks. (Comp. the similar behaviour of Abah to the prophet Michaiah, 1 Kings xxii. 26, 27.)

Because of this thing =—“Herein” of verse 9.

And Asa oppressed.—Biyqa (Job. xx. 19; comp. 1 Sam. xii. 3).

The same time.—At that time.

Some of the people.—Those who sympathised with Hanani. Asa suppressed their murmurs with violence.

Conclusion of the Reign (verses 11—14). Comp. 1 Kings xv. 23, 24.

The acts of Asa.—Or, history. The book of the kings of Judah and Israel.—See Introduction, and 1 Kings xv. 23. The mention in that verse of his “might” or “prowess,” and of “the cities that he built,” confirms the account in chap. xiv. concerning his defensive measures and the invasion of Zerah.

Diseased in his feet.—1 Kings xv. 23, “only in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet.”
Death of Asa.

II. CHRONICLES, XVII.

Jehoshaphat succeeds.

The nature of the disease is not specified here or in Kings.

Until his disease was exceeding great.—Unto excess was his disease: 'ad lēmālah, a clause added by the chronicler (see on 1 Chron. xxii. 5).

Yet.—And also in his disease, as well as in his war with Baasha.

He sought not to the Lord.—Omit to.

But to the physicians.—The preposition is expressed here (comp. 1 Chron. x. 13, 14; 2 Kings i. 2).

Asa, like Ahaziah, neglected to consult Jehovah through his priests, and preferred to trust in the “Healers” of his day, whose art of healing probably consisted in the use of magical appliances, such as amulets, charms, and exorcisms, as we may infer from the analogous practices of Babylon and Assyria. It is not to be supposed that Israel was more enlightened in such matters than the nations to which it owed so large a share of its civilisation, or, indeed, than Christian England of the seventeenth century.

And died in the one and fortieth year of his reign.—Not in 1 Kings xv. 24, which continues, with the usual formula, “and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father, and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead.” (See 1 Kings xv. 10, “And forty and one years reigned he in Jerusalem.”)

And they buried him.—The particulars of this verse are also added by the chronicler.

In his own sepulchres.—Not therefore in the ordinary tombs of the Kings. The plural sepulchres indicates a family tomb containing many cells.

Which he had made.—Dugged, or hewn out of the rock. (Comp. Job. iii. 14; Isa. xxii. 16.) Like the Pharaohs, Asa, who was a great and powerful sovereign, prepared his own last resting-place.

Which was filled.—Literally, which one had filled. Sweet odours.—Besāmīm, “spices” (chap. ix. 1, 9).

Kinds. Heb., ʿennūm, an Aramaic word common in the Targums, but in Old Testament Hebrew only found here and in Ps. cxliv. 18.

Prepared by the apothecaries’ art.—Literally, Compound in a compound of work (art). The particle mērūqakh only occurs here. The word rendered compound means an ointment or compost of various spices (1 Chron. ix. 30). The full phrase “compound of the work of the compounder” occurs Exod. xxx. 25, 33.

And they made.—Literally, And they burned. Very.—‘Ad lēmōd. Only here, a later equivalent of ‘ad mōḏ (Gen. xxvii. 33). The burning of aromatic woods and spices was usual at the obsequies of kings (see chap. xxi. 19; Jer. xxxiv. 5, and Note on 1 Chron. x. 12). Asa’s distinction as a wealthy and powerful monarch, and the high esteem with which his subjects regarded him, are indicated by the extraordinary amount of spices burnt in his honour. There is no ground for supposing that the chronicler blames “the exaggerated splendour and lavish excess with which this custom was observed at the burial of Asa, as if it were the burial of an Egyptian Pharaoh.” (Zöckler).

His account of the splendour of Solomon proves that he delighted to dwell on the glory of the ancient kings of his people.

Jehoshaphat (chaps. xvii.—xx.). PROPHETIC MINISTRY OF MICAH THE SON OF IMLEAH AND JEHU THE SON OF HANANI.

Jehoshaphat labours to strengthen his realm internally and externally.

This entire chapter is peculiar to the Chronicle.

And Jehoshaphat . . . in his stead.—The last words of 1 Kings xv. 24. The name means Jah judge.

And strengthened himself against Israel.—As described in verse 2. Israel is here the northern kingdom. These defensive measures were taken in the early part of the reign, and before Jehoshaphat connected himself by marriage with the northern dynasty (chap. xviii. 1).

And he placed forces.—Comp. chap. xi. 12.

The fenced cities.—‘AROLL ha-bēhārōth. (Comp. chap. xi. 5 sqq.; xiv. 6, 7.)

And set garrisons. Placed military posts or prefects (artīsim). (1 Chron. xi. 16; chap. xi. 11.) Syriac, “appointed rulers.”

The cities of Ephraim . . . had taken.—See on chap. xv. 8.

He walked in the first ways.—The former or earlier ways of David, as contrasted with his later conduct—a tacit allusion to the adultery with Batsheba and other sins of David committed in his later years (2 Sam. xi.—xxiv.). A few MSS. and the LXX. omit David.

And sought not unto Baalim.—And sought not the Baals (dārōš šē, a late construction). The Baals were different local aspects of the sun-god. Here the term no doubt includes the illegal worship of Jehovah under the form of a bullock, as instituted by Jeroboam, and practised in the northern kingdom (“the doing of Israel” verse 4). Syriac, “and prayed not to images.”

Therefore.—And so “also,” “so that,” in verses 7, 10.)
The Lord established the kingdom in his hand.—Comp. 2 Kings xiv. 5.

Princes.—Minwāh. This word often means tributary offerings, as in verse 11, but here it obviously denotes the voluntary gifts of loyal subjects, usual at the beginning of a reign (1 Sam. x. 28).

And he had (or got) riches and honour in abundance.—Like David and Solomon (1 Chron. xxix. 28; chap. i. 12).

(6) And his heart was lifted up.—Gābhāh lēbh, which usually, like the phrase of Authorised version, has a bad meaning, as in comp. xxvi. 16. The margin is right here: "his courage rose high," or "he grew bold in the ways of Jehovah, i.e., in the path of religious reform. Vulg., "cum sumpsisset cor ejus audaciam propter viae Domini."

Moreover. — And again, further. Referring to verse 3. Not only did he not seek the Baals, but more than this, he removed the high places, &c. (This is the common explanation. But the sense may rather be: "And he again removed," referring back to Asa's reforms, chap. xiv. 5.)

Groves.—Asherīm, "Asherahs." (Chap. xiv. 21.)

The COMMISSIONERS OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION IN THE LAW.

(7) He sent to his princes, even to Ben-hail . . . to Michaiah.—Rather, He sent his princes, Ben-hail and Obadiah . . . and Michaiah. (The le "to," in the chronicler's idiom, marking the object of the verb.)

If, however, Authorised Version were correct, the construction would not be unique, as the Speaker's Commentary asserts. (Comp. 2 Kings v. 7, "this man sendeth to me to recover a man," &c.)

Princes.—None of the personages mentioned in this and the following verse are otherwise known. The "five princes" were lūmim of rank, and were accompanied by nine (eight) Levites and two priests.

Ben-hail.—Son of valour. A compound proper name, only occurring here, but analogous to Ben-hur, Ben-deker, and Ben-hesed in 1 Kings iv. 8, 9, 10. (The LXX. renders "the sons of the mighty," Syriac, "the chiefs of the forces," apparently reading bêq ha'ail.)

Nethaneel.—Syriac, Mattanael; Arabic, Mattanah, Michah. — Syriac and Arabic, Malekiah.

(8) And with them he sent Levites.—Rather, And with them were the Levites. The construction being changed. So LXX. and the Syriac. (Comp. 1 Chron. xvi. 41, 42, xv. 18, for the same mode of enumeration, which is characteristic of the style of the chronicler.

Zebadiah.—Some MSS. and Syriac and Arabic read Zechariah.

Shemiramoth.—So LXX. and Vulg. (see 1 Chron. xvi. 5, xv. 18.). The Heb, text is probably incorrect. Syriac and Arabic read instead Nātāra.

Tob-adonijah.—This curious name occurs only here, and is perhaps a mere mistake arising out of the preceding Adonijah and Tobijah. The Syriac and Arabic omit it.

Priests.—The priests.

The commission was a mixed one of civil and ecclesiastical persons (comp. 1 Chron. xiii. 1, 2, xxiii. 2, xxiv. 6.)

And had the book of the law of the Lord. —And with them was the book of the law (teaching) of Jehovah. For the construction, compare 1 Chron. xvi. 42. The writer evidently means the Pentateuch; and if this notice was derived by him from a contemporary source, e.g., the "words of Jehu the son of Hanani," to which he refers as an authority for the reign (chap. xx. 34), it would constitute an important testimony to the existence, if not of the five books, at least of an ancient collection of laws at this early date (circa 850 B.C.).

And taught the people.—Taught among the people.

JEHOASHAPHAT BECOMES A POWERFUL SOVEREIGN.

(10) The fear of the Lord. —A dread of Jehovah (parshād), chap. xiv. 13, xx. 29. (Comp. Exod. xv. 16; 1 Sam. xi. 7; Isa. li. 10.) This phrase is not peculiar to the chronicler, as Keil and Bertheau assert. "The kingdoms of the lands" is so (chap. xii. 8; 1 Chron. xxix. 30).

They made no war.—The reward of Jehoshaphat's piety (1 Chron. xxii. 9; Prov. xvi. 7): "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." (Comp. also Gen. xxxv. 5.)

Brought—i.e., continually. Such is the force of the participle.

Presents. — An offering, i.e., tribute (minwāh, verse 5).

And tribute silver.—Rather, and silver, a load, or burden, i.e., a great quantity (natses), chap. xx. 25. As if, "silver as much as they could carry"—a natural hyperbole. Not all the five states of the Philistines were subject to Jehoshaphat. (Comp. 2 Sam. viii. 1.)

The Arabians.—Arbī'im, here only equivalent to 'Arbī'yim (chap. xxvi. 7), and 'Arbīm (chap. xxii. 19). They are in each case grouped with the Philistines. The nōmâd Bedāwīn conquered by Ass (chap. xiv. 15)
seven thousand and seven hundred he goats. (12) And Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly; and he built in Judah 1 castles, and cities of store. (13) And he had much business in the cities of Judah: and the men of war, mighty men of valour, were in Jerusalem.

(14) And these are the numbers of them according to the house of their fathers: Of Judah, the captains of thousands; Adnah the chief, and with him mighty men of valour three hundred thousand. (15) And next to him was Jehohanan the captain, and with him two hundred and fourscore thousand. (16) And next him was Amasiah the son of Zichri, who willingly offered himself unto the Lord; and with him two hundred thousand mighty men of valour. (17) And of Benjamin; Eliada a mighty man of valour, and with him armed men with bow and shield two hundred thousand. (18) And next him was Jehozabad, and with him an hundred and fourscore thousand ready prepared for the war. (19) These waited on the king, beside those whom the king put in the fenced cities throughout all Judah.

appear to be meant here; or else some tribes which recognised the overlordship of Jehoshaphat after his reduction of Edom (chap. xx. 22, sqq.).

Brought him flocks.—Comp. Meshah of Moab's tribute to Ahab (2 Kings iii. 4).

(12) And Jehoshaphat waxed great.—Literally, And Jehoshaphat was going on and waxing great, i.e., became greater and greater. (Comp. 1 Chron. ix. 9.) Exceedingly.—Ad Binath'. This phrase occurs again in chaps. xvi. 12, xxvi. 8, and nowhere else in the Old Testament. (See on 1 Chron. xiv. 2.)

And he built.—Like his predecessors—Solomon, Rehoboam, Ass—he displayed his wealth and power in great public works. The records of the Assyrian and Babylonian sovereigns are largely taken up with similar accounts of temple and palace building.

Castles. —Biraniyuth, a derivative from birah (1 Chron. xxix. 1, 19; comp. Syriac here, birathô). It only recurs at chap. xxvii. 4. It is an Aramaic term. (Comp. biranyûthâ, which in the Targums means "palaces").

Cities of stores.—Comp. chaps. viii. 4, xvi. 4; Exod. i. 11.

(13) Business. —Rather, much goods, or stores; literally, work (melakah) and then produce. The Hebrew word is so used in Exod. xxi. 7, 10 ("His neighbour's goods"). Stores of provisions and war material seem to be intended. (Comp. chap. xi. 12.)

The men of war ... were in Jerusalem.

—Rather, and (he had) men of war ... in Jerusalem.

In Jerusalem.—Not the entire army corps whose numbers are given in verses 14—18, but simply their chiefs.

And these ... their fathers.—And this is their muster (or census), according to their father-houses (clans). 1 Chron. xxiv. 3. The warriors were marshalled in the army according to clans, so that men of the same stock fought side by side with their kindred. Perhaps in the original document this heading was followed by a much more detailed scheme of names and divisions than that which the text presents.

Of Judah.—To Judah (belonged) captains of thousands, viz., the three enumerated in verses 14—16: Adnah, Jehohanan, and Amasiah. They were the principal officers, or generals, of the entire forces of Judah. Adnah the chief—To wit, the captain Adnah. That Adnah was commander-in-chief is implied by his being named first, and his corps being the largest.

(15) Next to him.—At his hand, i.e., beside him, and subordinate to him. (Comp. 1 Chron. xxv. 2.)

(16) Amasiah.—Iah carrieth (Isa. xi. 11); different from Amaziah (Iah is strong).

Who willingly offered himself unto the Lord.—Judges v. 2, 3. An allusion to some noble act of self-devotion, which was doubtless more fully recorded in the source from which the chronicler has drawn this brief account. Such allusions, though no longer intelligible, are important as conducing to the proof of the historical value of the narratives in which they occur. LXX., ἄνυπαθός τοῦ κυρίου; Vulg., coiuservatus Domino.

(17) Armed men with bow and shield.—Literally, drawing bow and grasping shields: i.e., as the Targums explains, "drawing bow and grasping shields." (Comp. 1 Chron. xii. 2.) LXX., «Αρχαρίστας καὶ πελατάς; Vulg., "Grasping bow and shield." (Comp. also 1 Chron. viii. 40, for the arms of the Benjaminites.)

Ready prepared for the war.—Equipped for service. (See on 1 Chron. xii. 23, 24; Num. xxxi. 5, xxxii. 29.) The hoplites or heavy-armed infantry are probably meant.

(18) These waited on the king.—Rather, these are they that ministered unto the king, viz., the five generals above named.

Beside those whom the king put in the fenced cities—i.e., the commandants of the fortresses of the kingdom (chap. xi. 11, 25). These latter, as well as the generals of the forces, are called the king's "ministers" (mishërêthim)—a word which is not used of service in the field, but implies their presence at court ("in Jerusalem," verse 13, as the royal staff).

According to the above list, the army of Jehoshaphat was organised in five grand divisions, corresponding perhaps to five territorial divisions of the southern kingdom. The totals are the largest assigned to the two tribes anywhere in the Old Testament; viz, Judah 780,000, and Benjamin 380,000; in all, 1,160,000. At David's census Judah had 500,000 warriors (2 Sam. xxiv. 9), and Israel 800,000. Again, in chap. xiv. 8, Ass's army consists of 300,000 men of Judah and 280,000 Benjaminites: clearly such an increase as our text indicates is unaccountable. At the same time, it is equally clear that the present numbers are not fortuitous results of clerical errors, for they follow each other in the order of relative strength: Judah, 300,000, 280,000, 290,000; Benjamin, 280,000, 150,000; and they are evidently independent of the estimates of chap. xiv. 8 above quoted.

In the absence of adequate data for modifying these certainly startling figures, it is well to bear in mind that we need not understand by them an army which
Jehoshaphat joins Ahab

CHAPTER XVIII.—(1) Now Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab. (2) And after certain years he went down to Ahab to Samaria. And Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that he had with him, and persuaded him to go up with him to Ramoth-gilead. (3) And Ahab king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat king of Judah, Wilt thou go with me to Ramoth-gilead? And he answered him, I am as thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in the war.

(4) And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Enquire, I pray thee, at the word of the Lord to day. (5) Therefore the king of Israel gathered together of prophets four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for God will deliver it into the king's hand. (6) But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides, that we might enquire of him? (7) And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man, by whom we may enquire of the Lord; but I hate him; for he never prophesied good unto me, but always evil: the same is Micaiah the son of Imla. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so. (8) And the

ever actually mustered in the field or on parade, but simply an estimate of the total male population liable to be called out for the national defence; although, even upon that understanding, the total appears to be at least three times too great, considering the small extent of the country.

XVIII.

Jehoshaphat makes affinity with Ahab, and takes part in the Syrian War at Ramoth-Gilead.

Comp. I Kings xxii. 2—35. Only the introduction of the narrative (verses 1, 2) differs from that of Kings—a change necessitated by the fact that the chronicler is writing the history, not of Ahab, but of Jehoshaphat. (Comp. 1 Kings xxii. 2-35. Only the introduction of the verse has been disregarded by the chronicler, in order to make Jehoshaphat express the same wish as Ahab, to the word of the Lord to day.)

To go up ... to.—To make an expedition against a town or country (Isa. vii. 1, 6; 1 Kings xv. 17). Comp. Isa. viii. 7, 8.

(3) And Ahab king of Israel.—This verse is essentially the same as 1 Kings xxii. 4. From this point the two narratives practically coincide. (See the Notes on 1 Kings xxii.)

To Ramoth-gilead—i.e., Ramoth of, or in, Gilead. Ramoth ("heights"?), or Ramath or Ramah ("height"), was a common name in such a hilly country as Palestine. Kings adds, to the war.

And my people ... in the war.—The symmetry of this part of the verse has been disregarded by the chronicler, in order to make Jehoshaphat express an apparently more definite assent to Ahab's request. (Comp. Kings: "My people as thy people, my horses as thy horses." (kamoni kamoka, ke'ammi ke'ammonka, kessiia kessiiteka). The Syriac reads: "And my horses as thy horses; and I will go with thee to the war," Similarly the Arabic: "My horsemen as thy horsemen.

(4) And Jehoshaphat.—So exactly 1 Kings xxii. 5.

Enquire ... at the word.—Seek the word.

(5) Therefore.—And.

Of prophets.—Rather, the prophets.

Four hundred.—Kings, "About four hundred." Also Adonai ("the Lord"); instead of la'telohim ("the [true] God"); and "I go against" for "we go to," where the former is obviously more appropriate.

(6) But—And. So 1 Kings xxii. 7, literally.

(7) He never prophesied good unto me, but always evil.—Literally, He is not prophesying to me for good, but all his days for evil. Kings: "He prophesied not to me good but evil." The chronicler has aggravated the idea of opposition, by adding "all his days," i.e., throughout his prophetic career. (Comp. Homer, Iliad, i. 106.)

Micaiah.—Heb., Mik'ayyah, which presupposes an older Mik'ayyahu ("Who like Iahu?"). Iahu is in all probability the oldest form of the Divine Name, Iah being an abridgment of it. Syriac and Arabic, "Micaiah"; the form in verse 2 (Ezra). Imla.—He is full, or, he filled; etymologically right.

Let not the king say so.—Jehoshaphat hears in the words a presentiment of evil, and deprecates the omen.

(8) Called for one of his officers.—Literally, Called to a council. (See on 1 Chron. xxvii. 1.)
Micaiah

- Hebrew text, Mikăáh, a contracted form.
- The Hebrew margin substitutes the usual spelling.
- And the king of Israel . . . sat either of them on his throne. — Rather, Now the king of Israel . . . were sitting each on his throne.
- Clothed in their robes. — The pronoun, which is indispensable if this be the meaning, is wanting in the Hebrew. The Syriac has probably preserved the original reading: “Clothed in raiment spotted white and black.” (Vid. infr.)
- And they sat. — Were sitting. Explanatory addition by chronicler.
- A void place. — A threshingfloor. LXX., ἐν τῷ ἀνθεμίῳ. “in the open ground,” Vulg., “in a threshing-floor.” The word is probably corrupt, and may have originated out of חֵרָדָם, “spotted,” i.e., perhaps embroidered; an epitaph of robes.
- Push. — Butt (Dan. viii. 4). Figuratively, as here, Deut. xxxii. 17.
- Until they be consumed. — Unto destroying them.
- Prophesied. — Nabbé’im, “were prophesying.” Vulg., “prophetabant.” In verse 9 the synonym mith-nabbé’im was used, which also signifies “mad, raving” (Jer. xxix. 26). The root meaning of this word is probably visible in the Assyrian nabbû, “to call, proclaim,” so that the nabbût, or prophet, was the nabbûlûm or spokes-man of God, the herald of heaven to earth. (Comp. the name of the god Nebo, Nabi’im, who answers in the Babylonian Pashkeon to the Greek Hermes.)
- And prosper — i.e., and thou shalt prosper. So LXX., καὶ εὐφέρησεν. Vulg., “prosperabirts.” Comp. “This do, and live!” and Gen. xx. 7: “he shall pray for thee, and live thou!”
- For. — And.
- The words of the prophets . . . one assent. — See margin, and comp. Josh. ix. 2, “they assembled . . . to fight against Israel, one month” — i.e., with one consent.)

Probably instead of dôbrè, “words,” we should read dôbèrâ, “they said,” a far slighter change in Hebrew writing than in English: “Behold the prophets have with one mouth spoken good unto (or, of) the king.” So LXX.

Like one of their’s. — Literally, like one of them.
- Kings, like the word of one of them.
- Even. — Nay, but whatsoever my God shall say.
- My God. — Kings, Jehovah.
- Shall I forbear. — Kings, shall we forbear.
(See Note on verse 5.)
- And he said, Go ye up . . . and they shall be delivered. — Kings repeats the words of verse 11, “Go thou up, and prosper thou, and the Lord,” &c. The chronicler has substituted a reply, which states quite definitely that they (i.e., the Syrians) shall be delivered into the hands of the allied sovereigns. In verse 11 the object of the verb “deliver” was not expressed. This rather reminds us of the Delphic oracle: “If Cresus pass the Halys, a mighty empire will be overthrown,” though the words of Zedekiah in the preceding verse are plain enough.
- And the king said. — I Kings xxii. 18 literal.
- I adjure thee. — Compare the words of the high priest to Christ (Matt. xxvi. 63).
- Upon the mountains. — Kings, “unto the mountains.”
- As sheep. — Like the flock, both of sheep and goats.
- But evil? — So Kings. Heb., here as margin. (Comp. verse 7.)
- Again. — And.
- Therefore. — LXX., not so, as if the Hebrew were לְכַא instead of לְכָה. Vulg., excellently, “at ille: idicre ait etinde verbum domini.”
- Hear ye. — Kings, hear thou.
- Standing on his right hand. — Literally, were standing. Kings, And all the host of heaven was standing by him, on his right hand and on his left. The chronicler has abridged.
all the host of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left. (19) And the Lord said, Who shall entice Ahab king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one spake saying after this manner, and another saying after that manner. (20) Then there came out a "spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will entice him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? (21) And he said, I will go out, and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And the Lord said, Thou shalt entice him, and thou shalt also prevail: go out, and do even so. (22) Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath spoken evil against thee. (23) Then Zedekiah the son of Cheenaah came near, and smote Micaiah upon the cheek, and said, Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee? (24) And Micaiah said, Behold, thou shalt see on that day when thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thyself. (25) Then the king of Israel said, Take ye Micaiah, and carry him back to Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son; (26) And say, Thus saith the king, Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and with water of affliction, until I return in peace. (27) And Micaiah said, If thou certainly return in peace, then hast not the Lord spoken by me. And he said, Hearken, all ye people. (28) So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah went up to Ramoth-gilead. (29) And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself, and will go to the battle; but put thou on thy robes. So the king of Israel disguised himself; and they went to the battle. (30) Now the king of Syria had commanded the captains of the chariots that were with him, saying, Fight ye not with small or

(19) And one spake, saying,—Literally, and one said (i.e., it was spoken), this one saying thus, and that one saying thus. The text is certainly right.

After this manner.—Kakhiih. Kings, bkikh. Kings has, and this one said in this wise, and that one said in that wise.

(20) Then there came out a spirit.—Rather, And the spirit came forth. LXX., xai εὐαγγέλον τοῦ τιμίου. (Comp. Isa. xxii. 28.)

And be.—Become (ωσάγιλθε λέ). Kings omits the particle.

A lying spirit.—A spirit of falsehood. (Comp. Isa. xi. 2, xix. 14; Ezek. xix. 9: "And the prophet, if he be deceived, and speak a word, it is, Jehovah, who have deceived that prophet.") The verb "deceive" is that which is rendered "entice" here and in verse 19, πίπταν. LXX., ἀπανθίζεσις. (See also 2 Thess. ii. 11.)

Now therefore.—And now.

Of these.—Kings, of all these. So some Hebrew MSS., Vulg., Syriac, Arabic, and one MS. of LXX.

(22) Then.—And.

And smote.—Way-yak, a correction of way-yakkèh (Kings), such as the chronicler often makes.

Which way.—Literally, where is the way the spirit of Jehovah passed. Kings, where passed the spirit, &c.

Unto thee.—With thee.

Thou shalt see.—Thou art to see, or, destined to see, on that day when thou shalt enter a chamber in a chamber to hide thyself (לכָּחֵבָה), correctly. Kings, לִכְחָבָה. Zedekiah's further history is not recorded—an indication, as Ewald justly observes, that the original narrative contained much more than the present extract from it.

Take ye.—carry him.—Kings, Take thou . . . carry thou, addressed to some single officer.

Governor.—Sar, "prefect." LXX., ἄρχων. Syria, šallitīh.

Carry back—i.e., convey back. Literally, make him return.
A Battle with the Syrians.

The whole chapter is original, so far as regards the Book of Kings.

(1) Jehoshaphat . . . returned to his house in peace.—A contrast with the fate of Ahab is suggested. (Comp. chap. xvi. 27, 34; and ibid. 16.)

In peace.—In wholeness, soundness, i.e., unhurt.

(2) And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer.—The seer whose father had suffered for his reproof of Asa (chap. xvi. 7–10), and who had himself already witnessed against Baasha, king of Israel (1 Kings xvi. 1–7).

To meet him.— Unto his presence (1 Chron. xii. 17; chap. xvi. 2).

King.—The king. The prophets never shrank from facing the highest representatives of earthly power (comp. 1 Kings xxi. 20).

Shouldest thou help.—Literally, to help the ungodly. The infinitive (as in 1 Chron. v. 1, ix. 25), i.e., oughtest thou to help.

The ungodly.—The emphatic word. (See Pss. cxxxiv. 21, 22; cxx. 158: "I beheld the transgressors with loathing.")

Them that hate the Lord.—And haters of Jehovah least thou? (The particle le prefixed to the word for "haters" is characteristic of the chronicler's style.)

Therefore is wrath upon thee.—See the same phrase, 1 Chron. xxvii. 24. In the case of David, the Divine wrath was embodied in pestilence; what form did it take with Jehoshaphat? The following chapters seem to supply the answer. His land suffered invasion and his fleet shipwreck; his posterity was evil, and came to an evil end (chaps. xx., xxii., xxiii.). There may be reference also to the failure of the campaign in which Jehoshaphat had engaged, and his inglorious return to his own land.

They compassed about him.—Or, came round against him. Kings, wrongly, "turned aside against him." In Hebrew the difference turns on half a letter.

And Jehoshaphat cried out.—Probably to bring his followers to the rescue. (1 Kings xxii. 32 ends with these words.)

And the Lord helped him; and God moved him to depart from him. (2) For it came to pass, that, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back again from pursuing him. (3) And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the king of Israel between the joints of the harness; therefore he said to his charioteer, Turn thine hand, that thou mayest carry me out of the host; for I am wounded. (4) And the battle increased that day: howbeit the king of Israel stayed himself up in his chariot against the Syrians until the evening; and about the time of the sun going down he died.

CHAPTER XIX.—(1) And Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem. (2) And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee.
Jehoshaphat sets

II. CHRONICLES, XIX.  
Judges in the Land.

from before the LORD. (3) Nevertheless there are *good things found in thee, in that thou hast taken away the groves out of the land, and hast prepared thine heart to seek God.

(4) And Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusalem: and he went out again through the people from Beer-sheba to mount Ephraim, and brought them back unto the Lord God of their fathers. (5) And he set judges in the land throughout all the fenced cities of Judah, city by city.

(3) Nevertheless,—Yet the Divine wrath will not pursue thee to destruction, for there are *good things found in thee. (So chap. xii. 12; comp. also 1 Kings xiv. 13.)

Thou hast taken away the groves.—Thou hast consumed (or exterminated) the Asherahs. (Deut. xiii. 6; 2 Kings xxii. 24.) So Asa had done (chap. xviii. 4. (Asherah, as equivalent to Ashérim, recurs in chap. xxxiii. 3 and in Judg. iii. 7 only.)

And hast prepared.—Or, directed. The contrary was said of Rehoboam (chap. xii. 14.)

Further Proceedings in the Reform of Justice and Religion.

(4) And he went out again.—This refers to the former Visitation or Royal Commission for the instruction of the people in the sacred Law (chap. xvii. 7—9).

From Beer-sheba, the southern, to the hill country of Ephraim, the northern limit of his dominions.

He went out.—Not necessarily in person, but by his accredited representatives.

Brought them back.—Made them return (chap. xiv. 19).

Unto the Lord God of their fathers.—From the worship of the Baals and the illicit cultus of Jehovah. The local worship of the God of Israel “necessarily came into contact with the Canaanite service of Baal, and, apart from the fact that the luxurious festivals of the latter had a natural attraction for the more sensual nature of the Hebrews, there was a more innocent motive which tended to assimilate the two worship.

The offerings and festivals of Jehovah were acts of homage in which the people consecrated to Him the good things of His bestowing. These were no longer the scanty products of pastoral life, but the rich gifts of a land of corn and wine... Thus, the religious feasts necessarily assumed a new and more luxurious character, and, rejoicing before Jehovah in the enjoyment of the good things of Canaan, the Israelites naturally imitated the agricultural feasts which the Canaanites celebrated before Baal.

It is not, therefore, surprising that we find many indications of a gradual fusion between the two worship; that many of the great Hebrew sanctuaries are demonstrably identical with Canaanite holy places; that the autumn feast, usually known as the Feast of Tabernacles, has a close parallel in the Canaanite Vintage Feast, that Canaanite immorality tainted the worship of Jehovah; and that at length Jehovah Himself, who was addressed by His worshippers by the same general appellation of ‘Baal’ or ‘Lord’ which was the ordinary title of the Canaanite nature-god, was hardly distinguished by the masses who worshipped at the local shrines from the local Baalim of their Canaanite neighbours” (Prof. Robertson Smith, Prophets of Israel, p. 38).

(5) And he set.—Appointed, or stationed.

The fenced cities.—As being the chief centres of each district.

City by city.—For every city, according to the Law, Deut. xvi. 18, “in all thy gates.” (Comp. 1 Chron. xxiii. 4; xxvi. 29.) The judges would be Levites, and probably also priests and family chiefs, as in the case of Jerusalem (verse 8).

(6) Ye judge not for man, but for the Lord.—‘To for man that ye will judge, but for Jehovah, as His vicegerents, and ministers of His will. (Comp. Rom. xiii. 1—4.)"

Who is with you in the judgment.—This rightly gives the sense of the brief words: ““and with you in word of doom,” i.e., Jehovah will be present with you at the time of your giving sentence. (See on chap. xx. 17, and comp. Ps. lxxxii. 1—4: “God standeth in the High Court of Appeal, in the capital, such as Deut. xvii. 8—12 prescribes.”

(7) Wherefore.—And.

The fear of the Lord.—A dread, or awe, of Jehovah. (See chap. xviii. 10.)

Take heed and do (as hendiadys, i.e., act heedfully, deal wary). Iniquity—i.e., want of equity, unfaithfulness, injustice (‘awlah). To the marginal references add the prohibition, Deut. xvi. 19. They who judge for Jehovah (verse 6) are bound to judge like Jehovah.

(8) Did... set.—Appointed some of the Levites.

Chief of the fathers.—Heads of the clans or families. (Comp. Exod. xviii. 21—26; Deut. i. 15—17, where the judicial functions of the family chiefs are said to have been ordained by Moses.) The 6,000 Levites set apart by David to be writers (shéhérín) and judges (1 Chron. xxiii. 4) appear to have been intended to act as their assessors, as being professional experts in the Law. In this measure, it is probable that David merely systematised traditional usage. Jehoshaphat re-organised the administration of justice throughout the country, and established a superior tribunal, or High Court of Appeal, in the capital, such as Deut. xvii. 8—12 prescribes.

For the judgements of the Lord.—Comp. verse 11: “For every matter of Jehovah,” i.e., for all ecclesiastical as opposed to civil causes. The latter are here called “controversies” (rīb, strenge, litigation), and in verse 11, “every matter of the king.”
II. CHRONICLES, XX.

When.—And. There should be a full-stop at “controversies.” “And they returned to Jerusalem” refers to the return of the Royal Commission of verse 4. So Syriac and Arabic, which make the clause begin verse 9: “And he returned to Jerusalem, charged them, and said to them.”

Thus.—Viz, as verse 10 explains.

Them.—The members of the Superior Court; just as the ordinary judges had been charged (verses 6, 7).

Perfect heart.—i.e., integrity. (See chaps. xv. 17, xvi. 9.)

And.—To wit.

Cause.—Rabb, “controversy” (verse 8).

Shall come to you.—i.e., be referred to you as the Supreme Court of Appeal.

Of.—From your brethren—i.e., not your judicial brethren, but your fellow-countrymen.

That dwell in their cities.—In the various country towns, as opposed to the capital.

Between blood and blood.—See Deut. xvii. 8.

Questions growing out of cases of homicide—e.g., whether a given crime were murder or manslaughter.

Between law and commandment, statutes and judgments.—That is, questions about the interpretation and application of the different legal rules and principles. The phrase “commandment, statutes, and judgments,” is a sort of summary of the various kinds of law.

Ye shall even warn them that they trespass not.—Then ye shall instruct them, in order that...&c.

Warn.—Teach (Exod. xviii. 20) them the true sense and bearing of the law in the particular case.

Trespass.—Incur guilt; by giving false judgment.

And so wrath (verse 2)...brethren.—The miscarriage of justice would involve not only the immediate agents, but the whole people, in guilt and its penal consequences.

This do...trespass.—Thus shall ye do (verse 9), that ye may not incur guilt.

And behold.—For the form of the sentence, comp. 1 Chron. xxviii. 21.

Amariah the chief priest.—Rather, High Priest (ha-rush), the Head (chap. xxviii. 6). Vulg., “sacerdos et pontifex vester.” In 1 Chron. vi. 11 Amariah is the fifth from Zadok, the famous High Priest of David and Solomon’s time. As Jehoshaphat was the fifth king from David, the name Amariah probably denotes the same person in both places.

Over you in all matters of the Lord.—The High Priest was naturally declared the President of the Court in all spiritual cases (see on verse 5).

CHAPTER XX.—(1) It came to pass after this also, that the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them other beside the Ammonites, came against Jehoshaphat to battle.

Zebadiah the son of Ishmael (or, Zachariah the son of Shemaiah, Syr. and Arab.) “the ruler of the house of Judah,” the naqid, emir, or tribal prince, was appointed President of the Court in civil causes (“for all the king’s matters”).

Also the Levites shall be officers.—Literally, And Writers shall the Levites be; inferior officials of the Court, such as scribes and notaries.

Before you.—In your presence, and under your direction (chap. xiv. 5).

Deal courageously.—Literally, be strong and act. A favourite location of the chronicler’s. (Comp. 1 Chron. xxviii. 10, 20.)

The Lord shall be.—Or, Jehovah be! a wish or prayer. This too is a characteristic expression of the writer. (Comp. 1 Chron. ix. 20, xv. 2, xx. 17.)

XX.

INVASION OF THE MOABITES, AMMONITES, AND MAONITES. THEIR MARVELLOUS OVERTHROW—(verses 1—30).

The chronicler only has preserved an historic account of this great deliverance. But certain of the Psalms have been with much probability supposed to commemorate it. The contents of Psalms xlv.—xlviii, harmonise well with this assumption; and they are referred by their titles to the “sons of Korah,” a fact which corresponds with the statement of verse 19 that certain of the Korahite Levites sang praises to Jehovah on occasion of the prophecy of Jahaziel. Further, Jahaziel himself was an Asaphite Levite, and it is noteworthy that Ps. lxxviii., which is a prayer against a hostile confederacy of Edom, Ammon, Moab, and other races, is headed “A Psalm of Asaph.” It may have been composed by the prophet whose name is only recorded in this chapter.

(1) It came to pass after this also.—Rather, And it came to pass afterwards, i.e., after the battle of Ramoth-Gilead, and Jehoshaphat’s reformation of law and religion.

And the children of Ammon, and with them other beside the Ammonites.—This is an attempt to get a reasonable sense out of a corrupted text. What the Heb. says is: And the sons of Ammon, and with them some of the Ammonites. So the Vulg., “et filii Ammon et cum eis de Ammonitis.” Transpose a single Hebrew letter, and there results the intelligible reading: And the sons of Ammon, and with them the Moabites (Heb., Me’ûnim. See on 1 Chron. iv. 41, 42.) The Moabites are mentioned again (chap. xxvi. 7)
in company with Arabs. They appear to have been a tribe, whose chief seat was Moab, on the eastern slopes of the chain of Mount Seir, after which they are called “sons,” or “inhabitants of Mount Seir” in verses 10, 22, 23. Accordingly Josephus (Ant. i. 1, § 2) calls them a multitude of Arabs. [The LXX. reads: “And with them some of the Minauoi,” a name which possibly represents the μεναοί of the Heb. text of 1 Chron. iv. 41. Syr., “and with them men of war;” Arabic, “brave men.” Perhaps the expression rendered and with them—we'immahem—is a relic of an original reading, and the Moanites; and the some of the Ammonites (meh'd'amminim) which follows, is merely a gloss on an obscure name by some transcriber].

(2) Then there came some that told.—And they (i.e., messengers; Vulg., “muntiti”) came and told.

Cometh.—Is come.

The Sea.—The Dead Sea, east of which lay the territories of Ammon and Moab; while to the south of it, not far from Petra, was Moab.

On this side Syria.—Heb., from Aram; and so LXX. and Vulg. But Edom is probably the true reading—a name often confused with Aram. As the invaders marched round the southern end of the Dead Sea, they were naturally described as coming from Edom. The Syr. and Arab. have: from the other side of the Red Sea. Hazon-tamar.—See Gen. xiv. 7.

Engedi (Ain-jidy), midway on the western coast of the Dead Sea (see 1 Sam. xxii. 29), about thirty-six miles from Jerusalem. The Syr. and Arab. have Jericho for Hazon-tamar (? meadow of palms). Jericho was also called “city of palms.”

(3) And Jehoshaphat.—And he was afraid (scil., at the news). And Jehoshaphat set his face, &c. Literally, put his face—a phrase used in Dan. ix. 3 (comp. 2 Kings xii. 15), and implying resolved, determined.

To seek the Lord.—The Hebrew construction is that of chap. xv. 13 (le is here a sign of the accusative). Praised a fast.—An act of national self-humiliation, implying an admission of guilt, and intended to evoke the Divine pity and succour. (Comp. Judg. xx. 26; Joel ii. 12—17; 1 Sam. vii. 6; Ezra vii. 21.)

(4) To ask.—Literally, to seek (baggesh, a synonym of dārash, verse 2) from Jehovah; scil., help, which Authorised Version rightly supplies.

Even out of all the cities of Judah.—Emphasising the fact that the gathering in the Temple represented the whole nation. “Syriae and Arabic, “and even from the distant cities.”

(5) And Jehoshaphat stood.—Comp. chap. vi. 12, 13.

Judah and Jerusalem.—So verse 27. Jerusalem is thus mentioned side by side with the country, as being by far the most important part of it. (See also the headings of Isa. i., ii.)

Before the new court.—This name, “the New Court,” only occurs here. It probably designates the “Great” (chap. iv. 9) or outer court of the Temple, in which the people assembled. Jehoshaphat stood facing the people, in front of the entrance to the Court of the Priests. Perhaps the court was called New, as having been recently repaired or enlarged. Syr. and Arab., “before the new gate.”

Art not thou God in heaven.—So Ps. cxv. 2, 3. Jehovah, the Worship of Israel, is no limited local or tribal deity, but God over all. (Comp. also the first clause of the Lord’s Prayer.)

And rulest not thou over all the kingdoms?—Comp. 1 Chron. xxix. 12 (David’s prayer), “and Thou reignest (rulest) over all; and in Thine hand is power and might.” This and next sentence should be rendered affirmatively, as in that place. (Comp. also Ps. lvi. 8: “God reigneth over the heathen.”)

So that none is able to withstand thee.—Vulg., “nee quiquam tibi potest resistere;” LXX., καὶ δεν ἐπιτήρησαν τὸν θεόν. Literally, and there is none against thee to stand up. For this construction, comp. Ps. xcv. 16: “Who will stand up for me with (i.e., against) workers of wickedness. (Comp. also Ps. ii. 2; and the last words of Assa’s Prayer, chap. xiv. 11.)

Syr. and Arab., “and I am standing and praying before thee.”

(6) Art not thou our God?—Didst not Thou, our God, drive out, &c. (Comp. Josh. xxii. 5, 9; Deut. iv. 38, xi. 23; and for the form of appeal, Isa. li. 9, 10. Comp. also Ps. lxi. 3, 4.)

And gavest it to the seed of Abraham.—According to the Promise, Gen. xiii. 15, 16, xv. 18.

For ever.—Gen. xvii. 8, “for an everlasting possession.”

Thy friend.—Or, lover. So Isa. xli. 8, “seed of Abraham, my friend.” This title of Abraham is mentioned again by St. James (chap. ii. 23). Hebron, the patriarch’s burial-place, is at this day known to the Muslim world as el-Khalil, “the Friend.”

(7) And have built thee a sanctuary therein.—And built thee therein a sanctuary for thy name. “A sanctuary for thy name” is a single expression. (Comp. chap. vi. 5, 6, 7, 8, “that my name might be there.”) The name of Jehovah designates all that He is to Israel; His revealed character.
n a sanctuary therein for thy name, saying, (9) If, when evil cometh upon us, as the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, (for thy name is in this house,) and cry unto thee in our affliction, then wilt thou hear and help. (10) And now, behold, the children of Ammon and Moab and mount Seir whom thou wouldst not let Israel invade, when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them, and destroyed them not; (11) behold, I say, how they reward us, to come to cast us out of thy possession, which thou hast given us to inherit. (12) O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee. (13) And all Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives, and their children.

(14) Then upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Beniaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, came the Spirit of the Lord in the midst of the congregation; (15) and he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the Lord the God of Israel, saying, (16) Thus saith the Lord, Make ye a great assembly, for the day of this solemnity is come to accomplished that which is written. (17) Gather yourselves together unto me, O Jehoshaphat, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and with thee unto the Lord thy God, and to the houses of Judah, and to the princes of Israel, and to the heads of the fathers of the tribes of Israel.
of Jeruel. (17) Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to-morrow go out against them; for the Lord will be with you. (18) And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the Lord, worshipping the Lord. (19) And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites, stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with a loud voice on high.

leading up from Engedi to this desert table-land. (With the name Hazziz, comp. Hakkoz. Perhaps Husasah preserves a trace of it. The LXX. has ‘Aρμαχας. Syriac and Arabic, “the ascent of dawn," omitting "Jeruel.")

The Lord with you.—Some explain the connection thus: “The Lord (who is) with you.” Yahweh ‘immākhōn may, perhaps, be compared with ‘immāna ‘ēl, “with us God” (Isa. vii. 14, viii. 8); it will then be a divine title, suited to the present emergency. But, more probably, the stop should be at verse 22 thus: "It is not for you to fight." (Comp. 1 Chron. vi. 22.)

In this.—Herein, in this instance. (Comp. for the phrase, chap. xix. 2.)

Set yourselves (i.e., “withstand,” verse 6).—Station yourselves, take your stand. Here the next verb, stand ye still, seems added as an explanation, and is, perhaps, a marginal gloss. “Fear not: take your stand, and see the salvation of the Lord,” was the command of Moses to Israel at the Red Sea, just before the great Deliverance (Exod. xiv. 13). (Comp. also the words of Ps. xvi. 8, “Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth.”)

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And the Levites. —The Levites are the first to rise up, in order to break forth into a hymn of Thanksgiving.

Of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites.—Sons of the Kohathites specifies the clan, and sons of the Korhites the house of the musicians who rose up on this occasion. The Korhites were the leading division of Kohath (1 Chron. vi. 22). "And is explanatory; even, namely some of the sons of Korah." The "sons of Korah" were a guild of Levitical minstrels of the first rank. (Comp. the headings of many psalms, e.g., xliv.—xlix., connecting them with their authorship.)

To praise the Lord God of Israel.—1 Chron. xvi. 14 (hallel).

Went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa. —Part of the wilderness of Jeruel (verse 16). Tekoa (Shekwa) is about ten miles south of Jerusalem, and commands a view over the table-land of el Husasah.

And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa: and as they went forth, Jehovah stood and said, Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper. (21) And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the Lord, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the Lord; for his mercy endureth for ever. (22) And when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord

Jehoshaphat stood.—Or, came forward. The king probably stood in the gate at Jerusalem.

Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established.—An affirmative way of putting the words. (18) of Isaiah to Ahaz: “If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.” (Isa. vii. 9.)

Believe his prophets.—Believe in, as before, i.e., put confidence in their advice and leading.

So shall ye prosper.—And prosper ye. (Comp. chap. xviii. 11.)

And when he had consulted with.—Or, advised, given counsel to, warned. (Comp. 2 Kings vii. 8.) Vulg., “dediquet consilium populo, et statutum cantores domini.”

And that should praise the beauty of holiness.—Rather, "and men praising, in holy apparel, Levitical vestments (1 Chron. xvi. 29; Ps. xxii. 20)."

And to say.—And saying. Praise the Lord. —Give thanks unto Jehovah. The refrain of the singers. (See on 1 Chron. xvi. 34, 41; 2 Chron. v. 13, vii. 3.) The band of Levitical minstrels were to march before the army (halaq, the armed host; Josh. vi. 7).

And when they began.—Literally, And at the time when they began with shouting and praise. (Comp. Deut. xvi. 9, to begin with.) They had now reached the neighbourhood of the enemy; and their joyful psalm was the signal for a divine interposition. (Comp. Josh. vi. 16, 20, and Ps. xlvii. 6.)

The Lord set ambushments. —Jehovah placed liers in wait (Judges ix. 25). (nāthān here is equivalent in meaning to sāhū there.)

Come against.—Come into, i.e., invade (verse 10). They were smitten.—Right, according to the ordinary usage. (See 1 Chron. xix. 16, 19, “put to the worse.”) This statement anticipates what follows. The ancient translators felt a difficulty here, as is evident from their versions. Thus the LXX. has, “The Lord made the sons of Ammon to war upon Moab and Mount Seir, who came out against Judah; and they were routed.” The Vulg., “The Lord turned their ambushment against themselves, viz., that of the sons of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir, who had gone forth to fight against Judah, and they were smitten.”

The Syriac (and Arabic) travesty verse 21 and the first clause of verse 22 thus: “And he stood in the midst of the people, and said, Come, let us give thanks unto the Lord, and let us laud the splendour of his holiness, when he goeth out before our hosts, and maketh war for us with our foes; and be saying, Give
The Overthrow

II. CHRONICLES, XX.

set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten. (23) For the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them: and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped 2 to destroy another.

(24) And when Judah came toward the watch tower in the wilderness, they looked unto the multitude, and, behold, they were dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped. (20) And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away the spoil of them, they found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies, and precious jewels, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away: and they were three days in

thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, and his goodness endureth for ever. The hills began praising, and the mountains began rejoicing. They then continue as in verse 24, omitting “The Lord set ambushments. . . . they were smitten.”

The self-destruction of the allied hordes was undoubtedly providential, but it need not have been miraculous. How was it brought about? The answer depends on the meaning of the term “lens in wait.” Were angels meant, as some have thought (Ewald’s böser Geister), a more appropriate and less ambiguous term would have been employed to express their agency. Nor is it likely that a partial confusion which thus originated was a term would have been employed to express their agency. Nor is it likely that a partial confusion which thus originated thus obscurely mentioned without any further reference or explanation: indeed it is evident from verses 15, 17, 24, that the part of the Judges was that of mere spectators of an accomplished fact. Nor, finally, must we suppose that “the waylaying was done by a section of the confederates themselves, probably certain of the Moabites.”

The truth appears to be that some portion of the unwieldy and straggling host was suddenly attacked by a lurking band of Bedawi freebooters. In the providence of God the partial confusion which thus originated speedily became a universal panic. The Ammonites and Moabites instantly suspected their less civilised allies, the Moabites of treachery, and fell upon them in a frenzy of revenge; after which, maddened by slaughter and mutual suspicion, and the memory of ancient feuds, they turned their reeking swords against each other, and the strife only ended with the self-annihilation of the allies. The occurrence is thus to some extent parallel with the self-destruction of the Midianite hordes, when thrown into confusion by the stratagem of Gideon (Judges vii. 22).

The marvellous result, marvellously predicted, was brought to pass by a perfectly natural sequence of events, just as was Elisha’s prophecy of plenty to famine-stricken Samaria, though at the time when it was uttered fulfilment seemed impossible, unless the Lord were to “make windows in heaven,” and pour down supplies from thence by a visible miracle. In neither case was the course of events foreseen by the prophet, but only their issue. (See 2 Kings vii.)

(25) Stand up against. —Amad ‘al, a late usagé. (So 1 Chron. xxi. 1.)

Utterly to slay. —To exterminate (ba’arrim), denote to destruction.

Made an end of. —Finished with. (See on verse 22, “begin with,” and compare Gen. xlv. 12.)

Every one helped . . . another. —Literally, they helped, each against (or, in the case of) his fellow, for destruction (mashā’ith, chap. xxii. 4; Ezek. v. 16).

(26) And when Judah came. —Now Judah had come; by the time the slaughter was complete.


They looked. —And they looked.

Behold, they were dead bodies.—Comp. 2 Kings xix. 35.

None escaped. —No survivors were anywhere visible. Vulg. —“Eripuit Judah neminem remissum ad speculum quae respicit, solitudinem vidit procul . . . nee superesse quemquam qui necem potisset evadere.” (25) When.—Omit.

They found. —And found.

With them in abundance both riches.—Instead of bahom, “among them,” the LXX. reads bēhāmah, “cattle,” which seems preferable. “And found cattle in abundance and substance” (rēkāḥah, movable goods of all sorts, including flocks and herds; Gen. xii. 5).

With the dead bodies.—And corpses, which they stripped of their ornaments and clothing. But bégādim, “clothes,” not pegārin, “corpses,” should be read with some MSS., and apparently the Vulg., “inter cadaveras . . . vestes quoque.” The Syriac has, “and they found among them a very great spoil of precious jewels,” which seems preferable. “And found cattle in abundance and substance” (rēkāḥah, movable goods of all sorts, including flocks and herds; Gen. xii. 5).

Which they stripped off for themselves.—Or, and they spoiled them, i.e., the enemy. (Comp. Exod. iii. 22; LXX., ἕσσωντος καὶ ἀφράτον.)

More than they could carry away.—Literally, until there was no loading or carrying.

Gathering—i.e., taking away (bōzā‘im, “plundering”). (Comp. Judges viii. 24—26 (the spoils of Midian). The amount of the spoil is explained by the circumstance that the invaders had intended to effect a permanent settlement in Judah, and so brought all their goods with them (verse 11). (Comp. Ps. lxviii. 12.)

The invasion was thus similar in character to the migrations of the barbarian hordes, which broke repeatedly over the declining Roman empire, though of course it was on a much smaller scale. Its repulse, however, has proved not less momentous in the history of mankind, than that of the Persians at Marathon, or of the Saracens at Rome on the Alps. The greatness of the overthrow may be inferred from the fact that the prophet Joel makes it a type of the coming judgment of Israel’s enemies in the “Valley of Jehoshaphat”—a prophetic designation which alludes at once to the catastrophe recorded here, and to the fact that “Jehovah is judge” of all the earth (Joel iii. 2, 12, 14).
The People Return in Triumph.  

II. CHRONICLES, XX.  
Jehoshaphat's Reign.

(26) Valley of Berachah—i.e., blessing. The place is still called Wady Berakut, a wide, open valley west of Tekoa, near the road from Hebron to Jerusalem. St. Jerome speaks of a Capar Barah, “village of blessing,” in the same neighbourhood.

(27) Then. —And.

Every man.—All the men (collective).

In the forefront of them.—At their head. LXX., ἁγγείους αὐτῶν. To go again ... with joy.—They returned, as they came, in festal procession.

The Lord had made them to rejoice.—See the same phrase, Ezra vi. 22; Neh. xii. 43. (Comp. Ps. xxx. 2.) LXX., well, ἐν εὐφρασίᾳ μεγάλῃ διὶ ἐφαρμος αὐτῶν εἰς τὸν Κυρίον αὐτῶν. With psalteries, and harps, and trumpets unto the house of the Lord. (28) And they came to Jerusalem with joy; for the Lord had made them to rejoice over their enemies. (29) And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries, when they had heard that the Lord fought against the enemies of Israel. (30) So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet; for his God gave him rest round about.

(31) And Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah: he was thirty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother’s name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi. (32) And he walked in the way of Asa his father, and departed not from it, doing that which was right in the sight of the Lord. (33) Howbeit the high places were not taken away; for as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers.

(34) Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last, behold, they are written in the third book of Jehu the son of Hanani, who is mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel. (35) And after this did Jehoshaphat king of Judah join himself with Ahabiah...
which had remained in the days of his father Asa, he consumed out of the land. There was then no king in Edom: a deputy was king. The former is probably due to the fact that it was the religious aspect, and not the political antecedents, of Jehoshaphat's conduct that most interested the chronicler. Hence also the didactic tone of the following verses as compared with 1 Kings xxii. 48, 49. The expression, "after this," can only mean after the overthrow of the three nations (verses 1-30). As Ahaziah began to reign in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat, and reigned two years (1 Kings xxii. 51), the league between them was formed in the seventeenth or eighteenth year of the king of Judah.

Then said Ahaziah the son of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in traffic. The verse is literally the same as if the Heb. were Divadhah; Vulg., "Dodau."

At that time Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the Lord hath broken thy works. And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish.

CHAPTER XXI.—(1) Now Jeho­

which had remained in the days of his father Asa, he consumed out of the land. There was then no king in Edom: a deputy was king. The former omission is perfectly natural, as the Qôdešhim were not mentioned in Asa's reign (comp. 1 Kings xv. 12); and the latter is probably due to the fact that it was the religious aspect, and not the political antecedents, of Jehoshaphat's conduct that most interested the chronicler. Hence also the didactic tone of the following verses as compared with 1 Kings xxii. 48, 49. The expression, "after this," can only mean after the overthrow of the three nations (verses 1-30). As Ahaziah began to reign in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat, and reigned two years (1 Kings xxii. 51), the league between them was formed in the seventeenth or eighteenth year of the king of Judah.

Join himself (ethchabbar).—An Aramaism (here only). This verse is peculiar to the chronicler.

Who did very wickedly.—He (viz., Ahaziah, the pronoun is emphatic) did very wickedly. The implied thought is: And, therefore, Jehoshaphat's alliance was wrong. (Comp. chap. xix. 2.)

(30) And he joined himself with him.—Literally, and he joined him with himself, an expression only occurring here.

To make ships to go to Tarshish.—In 1 Kings xxii. 48, 49, we read, "Jehoshaphat made ships (i.e., a fleet) of Tarshish, to go to Ophir for gold; and it went not; for the ships were broken (i.e., wrecked) in Ezion-geber. Then said Ahaziah the son of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in traffic." The expression, "ships to go to Tarshish," appears to be an erroneous paraphrase of "ships of Tarshish," or "Tarshish-men," as we might say; a phrase which really means, vessels built for long sea-voyages. According to Kings, the ships were built "to go to Ophir for gold;" in other words, to renew Solomon's traffic with India from the port on the Red Sea.

And they made the ships in Ezion-geber.—The Edomite port at the head of the Gulf of Akba. If Tarshish means the Phoenician Tartessus in Spain, the fleet could only go thither by doubling the Cape, or crossing the Isthmus of Suez. Therefore some have supposed another Tarshish somewhere in the Persian Gulf or on the north-west coast of India. (See on chap. ix. 21.)

(57) Then.—And.

Eliezer the son of Dodavah.—A prophet who is otherwise unknown.

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(57) Then.—And.

Eliezer the son of Dodavah.—A prophet who is otherwise unknown.
(4) Now when Jehoram was risen up to the kingdom of his father, he strengthened himself, and slew all his brethren with the sword, and divers also of the princes of Israel.

(5) Jehoram was thirty and two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. (6) And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, like as did the house of Ahab: for he had the daughter of Ahab to wife: and he wrought that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord. (7) Howbeit the Lord would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that he had made with David, and as he promised to give a light to him and to his sons for ever.

(8) In his days the Edomites revolted from under the dominion of Judah, and made themselves a king. (9) Then Jehoram went forth with his princes, and all his chariots with him: and he rose up by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him in, and the captains of the chariots. (10) So the Edomites revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day. The same time also did

Precious things (migdónoth; Gen. xxvi. 53).—Such as jewels, robes, and spices.

Because he was the firstborn.—This was the rule. (Comp. Deut. xxi. 15—17.) For exceptions, see 1 Chron. xxviii. 5; 2 Chron. xi. 23, xxviii. 9.

(4) Now when Jehoram was risen up to the kingdom of his father.—Literally, And Jehoram arose over the kingdom, &c., a peculiar expression, only found here. It seems to mean, established himself on the throne. (See Exod. i. 8 for a similar phrase, and comp. the use of the same verb, 1 Sam. xiv. 20.)

He strengthened himself.—Secured his hold of power (chap. i. 1, xii., &c.).

And slew all his brethren.—In order to prevent intrigues against himself. Such ruthless crimes have been customary at Oriental accessions, and are one of the natural results of polygamy. (Comp. the conduct of Abimelech (Judges ix. 5) and of Athaliah (chap. xxii. 10). It was thus that Jehoram “strengthened himself.”

And divers also of the princes of Israel.—Some of the chiefest of the clans, whose power or sympathy with his murdered brothers Jehoram may have dreaded. Or, like other Oriental despots, Jehoram may have acted from no other motive than a rapacious desire to confiscate their wealth. Some suppose that both his brethren and these “princes” had given signs of dissatisfaction at Jehoram and Athaliah’s heathen policy. (Comp. verse 13, “thy brethren . . . which were better than thyself.”)

Jehoram’s Idolatry. The Revolt of Edom and Libnah (verses 5—11).

This section is parallel with 2 Kings viii. 17—22.

(5) Jehoram was thirty and two years old.—2 Kings viii. 17. “He was,” because the name had just occurred in the former verse.

(6) And he walked in the way.—A repetition of 2 Kings viii. 15, literally.

(7) The Lord would not destroy the house of David . . .—An exegetical (not arbitrary, as Theunis asserts) expansion of “The Lord would not destroy Judah, for the sake of David his servant” (Kings).

The covenant that he had made with David.—Literally, for David. So Isa. lv. 3, “I will make an everlasting covenant for you, even the sure mercies of David.” This construction is generally used of the stronger imposing conditions on the weaker. (Comp. Josh. ix. 6; 1 Sam. xi. 1, 2.) In the Pentateuch, God makes a covenant with (im or ets) His people (Gen. xv. 16; Exod. xxiv. 8).

To give a light to him and to his sons.—Literally, a lamp. Some critics find another “divining lamp” here, and render 1 Kings viii. 19, “to give a lamp to him in respect of his sons.” But many Hebrew MSS., and the LXX., Vulg., and Targum of that passage, read, “and to his sons,” as here. Syriac, “On account of the oaths which he sware to David, to give to him a burning lamp, and to his sons all the days.”

For ever.—All the days.

(8) In his days the Edomites revolted.—2 Kings viii. 20. See also 1 Kings xxxii. 47, from which it appears that under Jehoshaphat “a deputy,” or viceroy, ruled in Edom. (Comp. chap. xx. 35, Note.)

Then Jehoram went forth.—And Jehoram passed over.

With his princes.—Captains (im sàdrî); Kings, “to Zair,” which appears to be a corruption of “to Seir.” The chronicler has substituted an intelligible for an obscure expression.

And he rose up by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him in.—Literally, and it came to pass, he rose. Brief as the notice is, it is evident that the verse relates not a victory of Jehoram’s, but his desperate escape by cutting his way through the enemy’s troops, which had surrounded him and his forces. (See on 2 Kings viii. 21, where it is added, “and the people fled to their tents.”) (Syriac, “And Jehoram passed over with his captains; and all his chariots with him. And it came to pass that when he rose in the night, he destroyed the Edomites, and the captains of the chariots came with him.”)

(9) Unto this day.—See on chap. v. 9. The date thus assigned is some time prior to the captivity. No account is taken of Amaziah’s reduction of Edom (chap. xxv. 11—15), which was probably not permanent.

The same time also.—Literally, then revolted Libnah at that time. 2 Kings viii. 22 ends here. The chronicler adds, “from under his (i.e., Jehoram’s) hand,” and assigns a moral ground for the successful rebellion: “For he had forsaken Jehovah, the God of his fathers.” (Theunis can hardly be right in asserting that the chronicler meant to say that Libnah, as a city of the priests, refused obedience to the idolatrous king; nor Hitzig, in explaining the revolt as merely a religious secession.) He forsakes Jehovah, by “walking in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab,” i.e., by adopting and popularising the worship of the Tyrian Baal, to please his wife and her people. In those days

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Libnah revolt from under his hand; because he had forsaken the Lord God of his fathers.

(11) Moreover he made high places in the mountains of Judah, and caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to commit fornication, and compelled Judah thereto.

(12) And there came a writing to him from Elijah the prophet, saying, Thus saith the Lord God of David thy father, Because thou hast not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat thy father, nor in the ways of Asa king of Judah, (13) but hast walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a whoring, like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab, and also hast slain thy brethren of thy father's house, which were better than thyself: (14) behold, with a great plague will the Lord smite thy people, and thy children, and thy wives, and all thy goods: (15) and thou shalt have great sickness by disease of thy bowels, until thy bowels fall out by reason of the sickness day by day.

(16) Moreover the Lord stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines, and of the Arabians, that were Israel, and hast made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to go a whoring, like to the whoredoms of the house of Ahab, and also hast slain thy brethren of thy father's house, which were better than thyself: (14) behold, with a great plague will the Lord smite thy people, and thy children, and thy wives, and all thy goods: (15) and thou shalt have great sickness by disease of thy bowels, until thy bowels fall out by reason of the sickness day by day.

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Friendship with an alien race seems to have involved recognition of their gods. (Comp. Amos i. 9 for the alliance between Tyre and Judah.)

Libnah.—Syria, "the Edomites that lived in Libnah."

(11) Moreover he made.—There is a stress on the pronoun, "he made," in contrast with Asa and Jehoshaphat, his worthier predecessors (chap. xiv. 23, xvi. 6). Or he himself, and not the people. (Vulg., "caused to commit fornication" (verse 11). Like "caused to commit fornication" (verse 11). Like the whoredoms, infinitive of the same verb; as the house of Ahab caused them to commit fornication. This verb, zainah, occurred in 1 Chron. v. 25, but the writer does not use it again.

Hast slain thy brethren.—Verse 4, supr.

(14) Behold, with a great plague will the Lord smite thy people.—Literally, Behold, Jehovah is about to smite a great smiting in thy people and in thy sons. The immediate object of the verb is not expressed. (Comp. verse 18.) It was Jehovah himself who was smitten in his people, and in his sons, and in his wives, and in all his goods, as verse 17 shows. The "smiting"—i.e., heaven-sent stroke, or Divine visitation—consisted in an invasion of Philistines and Arabs, who sacked Jerusalem and the royal palace.

(15) And thou shalt have great sickness.—Literally, And thou shalt be in great diseases through diseasing of thy bowels. (Comp. for the two synonyms, Deut. xxvii. 59, Prov. xviii. 14.)

Fall out.—Come out.

Day by day.—Literally, days upon days, i.e., probably, "a year upon a year," or "in two years." (Comp. verse 19, and 1 Sam. 5. 3; Isa. xix. 1.)

Moreover.—And, here equivalent to so.

The Lord stirred up against Jehoram.—Isa, xiii. 17. The phrase, "stirred up the spirit."—i.e., the will—of a man to an undertaking, is found in Jer. li. 11; Hag. i. 14. (Comp. 1 Chron. v. 26; Ezra i. 1.)

The Philistines, and of the Arabians.—These are mentioned together elsewhere as enemies of Judah. (See chaps. xvi. 7, xvi. 11; Jer. xxv. 20.) The invasion of the Philistines and Arabians accords with Joel iii. 4—6, and is certainly historical (Thenius on 2 Kings xiii. 23, 24).

That were near the Ethiopians.—Literally, At the hand of (i.e., beside) the Cushites. Some tribes of southern Arabia. There were Cushite settlements on both sides of the Red Sea. LXX., well: τῶν ὀμουσίων τῶν Ἀθιητῶν; Vulg., "qui confines sunt Aethiopum."
near the Ethiopians: (17) and they came up into Judah, and brake into it, and carried away all the substance that was found in the king's house, and his sons also, and his wives; so that there was never a son left him, save Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons. (18) And after all this the Lord smote him in his bowels with an incurable disease. (19) And it came to pass, that in process of time, after the end of two years, his bowels fell out by reason of his sickness: so he died of sore diseases. And his people made no burning for him, like the burning of his fathers. (20) Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years, and departed without being desired. Howbeit they buried him in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings.

CHAPTER XXII.—(1) And the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah his youngest son king in his stead: for the band of men that came with the Arabians to the camp had slain all the eldest. So Ahaziah the son of Jeho-

(17) And brake into it.—Literally, clave it asunder (Exod. xiv. 16). Here as in 1 Chron. xi. 18; 2 Sam. xxii. 16.

And carried away all the substance . . . his wives.—This statement implies that the enemy entered Jerusalem, although the chronicler has not expressly said it. In the same way (chap. xii. 9) he omitted to state that Shishak captured the city before plundering the Temple and palace. The desire to be concise accounts for both omissions. (See on chap. xxii. 1.)

All the substance that was found in the king's house.—Literally, that belonged to the king's house. (Comp. chap. xxxiv. 32 for in; comp. also Deut. xxi. 17.) It is not said that the Temple was plundered; but nothing can be inferred from the writer's silence on this point.

So that there was never a son left him.—They were not only taken, but slain (chap. xxi. 17). It is not said that the Temple was plundered; but nothing can be inferred from the writer's silence on this point. (Comp. chap. xxxiv. 32 for in; comp. also Deut. xxi. 17.) It is not said that the Temple was plundered; but nothing can be inferred from the writer's silence on this point.

Save Jehoahaz.—Called Ahaziah in chap. xxii. 1, which is the same name with the elements of it reversed. It means "Jah holdeth." The "Azariah" of chap. xxii. 6 seems to be a mistake. LXX., Syriac, Arabic, and Targum, "Ahaziah."

(18) With an incurable disease.—This is correct. Literally, to a disease, to want of healing. (Comp. chap. xxxvi. 16.) The Syriac and Arabic make verses 16—18 part of the prophecy.

(19) In process of time.—Comp. verse 15. Literally, ad days from days, i.e., "a year after a year," or "after two years."

After the end of two years.—This clause more exactly defines the preceding. Literally, and about the time of the going forth of the end of two years, i.e., when two full years after the delivery of the prediction had expired. The time of the event exactly coincided with the time predicted. Vulg., well: "duorum annorum postremi, "Syriac, "When the prophet's word was fulfilled touching two years."

By reason of his sickness.—Literally, along with, i.e., in, during, his disease, which appears to have been a violent dysentery.

So he died of sore diseases.—And he died in sore pains (tachal'îm, Deut. xxix. 21).

And his people made no burning for him.—The usual honors of a sovereign were withheld in his case. (See on chap. xvi. 14; and comp. Jer. xxii. 19.)

So Syriac: "And his people did him no honour, as they did to his fathers."

(20) Thirty and two years.—The word "years" has fallen out of the Hebrew text; but some MSS. contain it. The repetition of his age, &c., is curious. (See verse 6.) It seems to indicate that the writer was here transcribing from another source.

And departed without being desired.—And he departed without regret, died unwreathed. Hemadah answers to the Latin desiderium. The LXX. and Vulg. render: "And he walked not in approbation," or "rightly." Comp. Jeremiah's prophecy concerning the end of king Jehoiakim: "They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah, my brother!" &c. (Jer. xxii. 18, 19). So Syriac and Arabic.

Howbeit.—And.

They buried him.—LXX., Syriac, and Arabic: "He was buried."

But not in the sepulchres of the kings.—Chaps. xxiv. 23, xxvi. 23. Another circumstance of dishonour. It is not mentioned in 2 Kings viii. 17. Thenius asserts that in these additions to the history of Jehoram there is traceable, not only a traditional or legendary element, but also pure embellishment on the part of the chronicler. The grounds he alleges, however, by no means necessitate his conclusion, being themselves misinterpretations of the statements of Kings.
Ahaziah joins Jehoram.

II. CHRONICLES, XXII.

III.

Joram. (6) And he returned to be healed in Jezreel because of the wounds 1 which were given him at Ramah, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria.

And 2 Azariah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Jehoram the son of Ahab at Jezreel, because he was sick.

(7) And the destruction of Ahabia was of God by coming to Joram: for when he was come, he went out with Jehoram against Jehu the son of Nimshi, 1 whom the Lord had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab.

(8) And it came to pass, that, when Jehu was executing judgment upon the house of Ahab, and found the princes of Judah, and the sons

Targum, as well as some Hebrew MSS. The Hebrew text has “because the wounds,” which makes no sense. The word rendered “wounds” (makkoh) only occurs besides in 2 Kings viii, 29, ix, 15. (Ks. “because,” has originated out of “from.”)

Azariah.—A mistake for “Ahaziah.” So Kings, LXX., Vulg., Syriac, Arabic, and some Hebrew MSS.

Went down.—Whether from Ramah or Jerusalem is not clear. (See 2 Kings ix, 14.)

Jehoram.—Kings, Joram; and so the versions.

And the destruction of Ahabia was of God.—Literally, And from God came the downtreading of Ahabia, so that he went to Joram. The coincidence of the visit with Jehu’s rebellion revealed the working of Divine providence. It thus came to pass that the three chief representatives of the house of Ahab—Joram, Jezebel, and Ahabia—were involved in one catastrophe of ruin: Ahabia, however, escaped for the time. “Downtreading” (tebilsah) occurs here only.

(Comp. mebusah, Isa. xxii, 5.)

For.—And.

With Jehoram.—So 2 Kings ix, 21.

Against Jehu.—Rather, unto Jehu. Kings, l.c., “to meet Jehu.”

The son of Nimshi—i.e., grandson. Jehu was son of Jehoshaphat, son of Nimshi (2 Kings ix, 2).

Whom the Lord had anointed.—Comp. 1 Kings xiii, 16; 2 Kings ix, 1–10.

When Jehu was executing judgment upon the house of Ahab.—The Hebrew phrase strictly means to plead with, or argue a cause with. (Comp. 1 Sam. vii, 7.) When God is said to plead with men, the notion of judicial punishment is often involved, as in Joel iii, 2; Isa. lxvi, 10; and such is the meaning here. Jehu was an instrument of Divine vengeance, even when fulfilling the projects of his own ambition, as were the savage Assyrian conquerors (Isa. x, 5–7).

And found.—Rather, he found.

The sons of the brethren of Ahabia.—Comp. 2 Kings x, 12–14, where the details are given. The persons whom Jehu slew are there called Ahabia’s brethren”—i.e., kinsmen (a common use; so LXX. here), and are said to have been forty-two in number. The Hebrew term is wide enough to include cousins and grandsons as well as nephews of the king. The “princes of Judah” who accompanied them would naturally be members of the court in charge of them, and are perhaps to be included in the total of forty-two persons. Thenias, indeed, in his note on 2 Kings x, 13,
Ahaziah is Slain.

II. CHRONICLES, XXIII.

Athaliah Reigns.

of the brethren of Ahaziah, that ministered to Ahaziah, that slew them. (9) And he sought Ahaziah: and they caught him, (for he was hid in Samaria,) and brought him to Jehu: and when they had slain him, they buried him: Because, said they, he is the son of Jehoshaphat, who sought the Lord with all his heart. So the house of Ahaziah had no power to keep still the kingdom.

(10) But when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the seed royal that were of Ahaziah, he slew them. For she said, He sought Ahaziah: and they caught him, and said, Him, too, smite (shoot) ye him in the chariot!—on the ascent of Gâur, beside Ibleam; and he fled to Megiddo, and died there. (Perhaps and they smote him has fallen out before the words on the ascent of Gâur.) "And his servants brought him in the chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own grave, with his fathers, in the city of David." Such divergences are valuable, because they help to establish the independence of the two accounts.

For he was hid.—Now he was hiding. And when they had slain him.—And they put him to death, and buried him; for they said, &c. He is the son of Jehoshaphat, who sought the Lord.—A didactic remark in the usual manner of the chronicler.

So the house of Ahaziah had no power to keep still the kingdom.—Literally, And the house of Ahaziah had none to retain strength for kingship (= capable of assuming the sovereignty). Another sentence marked throughout by the chronicler's own style. (Comp. chap. xiii. 20, "retained strength.") It forms the transition to the account of Athaliah's usurpation of the throne.

Athaliah Seizes the Government (verses 10—12). (Comp. 2 Kings xi. 1—3.)

(10) But when Athaliah.—See 2 Kings xi. 1, with which this verse nearly coincides.

slain, and put him and his nurse in a bedchamber. So Jehoshabeath, the daughter of king Jehoram, the wife of Jehoiaada the priest, (for she was the sister of Ahaziah,) hid him from Athaliah, so that she slew him not. (12) And he was with them hid in the house of God six years: and Athaliah reigned over the land.

CHAPTER XXIII.—(1) And in the seventh year Jehoiada strengthened himself, and took the captains of hundreds, Azariah the son of Jeroham, and Ishmael the son of Jehohanan, and Azariah the son of Obed, and Maaseiah the son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat the son of Jehoshaphat, the chief officers of the house of David: (2) And they made a conspiracy against Athaliah: for they feared her not. (3) And when they had slain all the princes of the house of Ahab, they sent and fetched the priests and the Levites from Baalmeon. (4) And the Levites were assembled from all Judah, and from Benjamin, and from the two tribes of Manasseh, and Ephraim, and from all the house of Israel greatly, and from a great multitude out of Judah, even out of Jerusalem, and they fetched the priests and the Levites out of Baalmeon. (5) And the priests and the Levites were numbered together twenty and three hundred and sixty. (6) And they appointed overseers of the towers also, even over the storehouses of God, and over the wine cellars, and over the oil cellars: (7) And certain of them took charge of fitting every sort of service for the priests and the Levites; and they were in charge of all that pertained to the service of the house of God. (8) And the king appointed for himself four captains over the body-guard, that should be about the king. (9) And he set the army in four ranks, even an army for the king, and an army against the king, and an army for the princes, and an army for the governors of the country, encamping against the city. (10) And he put Athaliah and her sons slain, and put them to death; and all the house of Ahab they slew, after whom she had sought: but the rest of the children of the house of Ahab did Athaliah not slay. (11) And he took all the princes of the house of Ahab, and all his elders, and all the officials of the land, and all the soldiers, and put them to death at Bethel, beside the altar of Bethel. (12) And the dogs ate them, and wept for them. (13) And she had slain all the royal seed, so that there should not be left to Jehoiada and to the priests, and to the Levites, one to be officer over the house of the Lord. (14) And he said, Let her remain; for she is the daughter of Ahab, and she had a little residue left (or body-guard) after him—terms which were probably obscure to the chronicler.

All the seed royal.—Even after the massacres described in verses 1, 8, there would doubtless he left a number of persons more or less nearly connected with the royal family, besides the immediate offspring of Ahaziah, who are, in the first instance, intended by this phrase.

(11) Jehoiada.—Kings, "Jehosheba." (Comp. "Elsheba," Exod. vi. 23; and ἕλσαβετ (LXX.), Luke i. 7.)

That were slain.—That were to be put to death.

In a bedchamber.—Literally, in the chamber of beds, i.e., where the bedding was kept. (See Note on 2 Kings xi. 2.)

The wife of Jehoiada the priest.—So Josephus. Thunius questions the fact, on the supposed grounds—(1) that the high priest did not live in the Temple; but the passage he alleges (Neh. iii. 20, 21) does not prove this for Jehoiada; and (2) that the chronicler contradicts himself in asserting that the priest's wife also lived within the sacred precinct; but again his reference (2 Chron. viii. 11) is irrelevant. Ewald calls the statement in question "genuinely historical," and there is not the smallest reason to doubt it.

(12) With them.—With Jehoiada and his wife. Kings, "with her;" LXX., "with him;" Syriac and Arabic, "with her." (See Note on 2 Kings xi. 3.)

XXIII.

The Fall of Athaliah, and Succession of Josiah. (Comp. 2 Kings xi. 4—20.)

(1) Jehoiada strengthened himself.—Showed himself strong or courageous, behaved boldly (1 Sam. iv. 9). The chronicler has substituted a favourite expression (ḥîṭhōṣazzq) for the term used in Kings, "Jehoiada sent."
Jehoiada makes a Covenant with the Levites.

Zichri, into covenant with him. (2) And they went about in Judah, and gathered the Levites out of all the cities of Judah, and the chief of the fathers of Israel, and they came to Jerusalem. (3) And all the congregation made a covenant with the king in the house of God. And he said unto them, Behold, the king's son shall reign, as the Lord hath said of the sons of David. (4) This is the thing that ye shall do; A third part of you entering on the sabbath, of the priests and of the Levites, shall be porters of the doors; (5) and a third part shall be at the king's house; and a third part at the gate of the foundation: and all the people shall be in the courts of the house of the Lord. (6) But let none come into the house of the Lord, save the priests, and they that minister of the Levites: they shall go in, for they are holy: but all the people shall keep

Azariah ... and Azariah.—Heb., 'Azaryáh ... and ' 'Azaryáhí. (Comp. chap. xxi. 2.) These names are introduced in the chronicler's well-known manner (by the prefix le, marking the object of the verb). His style is very visible in the additions to the narrative as compared with Kings.

(2) And they went about in Judah.—Chap. xvii. 9; 1 Sam. vii. 16.

The chief of the fathers.—The heads of the clans, or chief of houses. This and the next verse are added by the chronicler. In Kings the narrative passes at once to the charge of verse 4: “This is the thing that ye shall do,” which is there addressed to the “captains of the hundreds,” or transacted in the sanctuary to which they were attached. The Third of it is merely an emphatic repetition of the direction of verse 2, which appears there as a gate of the palace. (LXX., “the middle gate;” Syr., “the gate Sur,” which appears there as a gate of the palace. (LXX., “the middle gate”; Syr. and Arab., “the Butchers’ gate.”)

As the Lord hath said.—Spake concerning the sons of David, in the oracle delivered by the prophet Nathan (2 Sam. vii. 4–17).

(4) This is the thing that ye shall do.—2 Kings xi. 5: “And he charged them saying, This is the thing.” There he charges the captains of the guard as being the leaders of the conspiracy.

A third.—The third. So verse 5. “The third of you who come in on the Sabbath” is read also in 2 Kings xi. 4. The chronicler has added the explanatory words: “belonging to the priests and to the Levites. This can hardly be harmonised with 2 Kings xi. 4–12. The chronicler may have misunderstood the words, which in the older account designate the royal guard; and it might have appeared to him impossible that any but members of the sacred orders would be called together in the Temple by the high priest. (Comp. verses 5, 6 with 2 Kings xi. 4: “brought them into the house of the Lord.”) But he may also have had before him an account in which the part taken by the sacerdotal caste in the revolution was made much more of than in the account of Kings. Moreover the priests and Levites would be likely to play a considerable part in a movement tending to the overturning of a dynasty antagonistic to their own, especially when that movement originated with their own spiritual head, and was transacted in the sanctuary to which they were attached. The chronicler, therefore, cannot with fairness be accused of “arbitrary alterations,” unless it be supposed that his sole authority in writing this account was the Second Book of Kings. The priests and Levites used to do duty in the Temple from Sabbath to Sabbath, so that one course relieved another at the end of each week. (See 1 Chron. xxiv.; Luke i. 5.) That the companies of the royal guards succeeded each other on duty in the same fashion is clear from the parallel narrative.

The king's son shall reign.—Or, Behold the king's son shall reign.

As the Lord hath said.—Spoke concerning the sons of David, in the oracle delivered by the prophet Nathan (2 Sam. vii. 4–17).

(4) This is the thing that ye shall do.—2 Kings xi. 5: “And he charged them saying, This is the thing.” There he charges the captains of the guard as being the leaders of the conspiracy.

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Shall be porters of the doors.—Warders of the thresholds, that is, of the Temple (1 Chron. ix. 19, 22). 1 Kings xi. 5 says: “The third of you that come in on the Sabbath, they shall keep the guard of the king's house;” the latter part of which answers to the first sentence of the next verse: “And the third part (shall be) at the king's house.” The king's "house" in Kings means the royal palace; the chronicler appears to mean by it his temporary dwelling within the Temple precincts.

And a third part at the gate of the foundation.—2 Kings xi. 6 reads: “the gate Sur,” which appears there as a gate of the palace. (LXX., "the middle gate;" Syr. and Arab., "the Butchers' gate.")

And all the people shall be in the courts of the house of the Lord.—This appears to be written from the point of view of a strict legalist, according to which none might enter the holy house itself save the priests. It looks like a protest against 2 Kings xi. 4, where it is said that Jehoiada brought the centurions of the royal guard into the house of the Lord.

(5) But let none come into the house of the Lord.—This verse is not read in Kings. Apparently it is merely an emphatic repetition of the direction of the last verse that all the people were to remain in the courts, and not to break the law by presuming to enter the holy chambers. In 2 Kings xi. 7 we read instead: “And the two parts among you, all that go out on the Sabbath, they shall keep the watch of the house of
Jehoiada Proclaims to the Priests (9:1-11)

The priests had commanded, and took the watch of the Lord, and the Levites and all Judah did according to all things that Jehoiada had commanded, and took every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, with them that were to go out on the sabbath: for Jehoiada the priest dismissed not the courses. Moreover Jehoiada the priest delivered to the captains of hundreds the spear and the bucklers, and shields, that had been king David's, which were in the house of Jehovah. The chronicler has added Jehoiada and the bucklers, and turned the spear into spears, rightly according to most critics.

Spears, bucklers, and shields.—Each word has the article in the Hebrew. That had been king David's.—Comp. 1 Chron. xviii. 7, 11, and 1 Sam. xxiii. 10, xvii. 7.

(10) And he set all the people, every man having his weapon in his hand, from the right side of the temple to the left side of the temple, along by the altar and the temple, by the king round about. (11) Then they brought out the king's son, and put upon him the crown, and gave him the testimony, and made him king. And Jehoiada and his sons anointed him, and said, 2 God save the king.

(12) Now when Athaliah heard the noise of the people running and praising the king, she came to the people into the house of the Lord: (13) and she looked, and, behold, the king stood at his pillar at the entering in, and the princes and the trumpets by the king:

the Lord, with regard to the king.” The last words of the present verse, “And all the people shall keep the watch of the Lord,” repeat a portion of this, but in a different sense: “Let all the people carefully observe the legal rule against entering the sanctuary.”

(7) And the Levites shall compass the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand; and whosoever else cometh into the house, he shall be put to death: but be ye with the king when he cometh in, and when he goeth out.

(8) So the Levites and all Judah did according to all things that Jehoiada the priest had commanded, and took every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, with them that were to go out on the sabbath: for Jehoiada the priest dismissed not the courses. Moreover Jehoiada the priest delivered to the captains of hundreds, and bucklers, and shields, that had been king David’s, which were in the house of God.
and all the people of the land rejoiced, and sounded with trumpets, also the singers with instruments of music, and such as taught to sing praise. Then Athaliah rent her clothes, and said, 11Treason, treason. (14) Then Jehoiada the priest brought out the captains of hundreds that were set over the host, and said unto them, Have her forth of the ranges; and whose so followeth her, let him be slain with the sword. For the priest said, Slay her not in the house of the LORD. (15) So they laid hands on her; and when she was come to the ranks of guards, she was slain. (16) And Jehoiada the priest took in hand the works of the house of the LORD, by the hand of priests and Levites. (17) Also Jehoiada appointed the offices of the house of the LORD by the hand of the priests the Levites, whom David had distributed in the house of the LORD, to offer the burnt offerings of the LORD, as it is written in the law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, as it was ordained by David. (18) And he set the porters at the gates of the house of the LORD, that none which was unclean in any thing should enter in. (19) And he took the captains of hundreds, and between the king, that they should be the LORD's people. (20) Then all the people went to the house of Baal, and brake it down, and brake his altars and his images in pieces, and slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. (21) Also Jehoiada appointed the offices of the house of the LORD by the hand of the priests the Levites, whom David had distributed in the house of the LORD, to offer the burnt offerings of the LORD, as it is written in the law of Moses, with rejoicing and with singing, as it was ordained by David. (22) And he set the porters at the gates of the house of the LORD, that none which was unclean in any thing should enter in. (23) And he took the captains of hundreds, and between the king, that they should be the LORD's people.
CHAPTER XXIV.—(1) Joash was seven years old. This verse coincides with 2 Kings xii. 1, 2, merely omitting the note that his accession took place “in the seventh year of John.” There he is called Jehoash, of which Joash is a contraction. (Comp. Jehoram-Joram.) The meaning may be “Iahu is fire” (comp. Isa. xxxiii. 14); but more probably it is “Iahu is a man.” (Comp. Ashbel.) (2) And Joash did that which was right in the sight of the Lord all the days of Jehoiada the priest. (3) And Jehoiada took for him two wives; and he begat sons and daughters. (4) And it came to pass after this, that Joash was minded to repair the house of the Lord. (5) And he gathered together the priests and the Levites, and said to them, Go out unto the cities of Judah, and gather of all Israel money to repair the house of your God from year to year, and see that ye hasten the matter. Howbeit the Levites hastened it not.

(6) And the king called for Jehoiada the chief, and said unto him, Why hast thou not required of the Levites to bring in out of Judah and out of Jerusalem the collection, according to the commandment of Moses the servant of the Lord, Hebrew term. The account of the restoration of the Temple is given here in different language from what we find in the parallel passage, which is not very clear. The chronicler appears to have paraphrased the account he found in his authority. The Levites are not mentioned in Kings. (7) Go out unto the cities of Judah, and gather of all Israel money. This is the chronicler’s interpretation of “Let the priests take it to themselves, each from his own acquaintance” (Kings). The priests and Levites of the different districts were to collect the moneys due to the sanctuary, each in his own neighbourhood.

And see that ye hasten the matter. Literally, and, for your part, hasten ye in regard to the matter (comp. chap. xviii. 8); and the Levites hastened not. This agrees with the statement in 2 Kings xii. 6, 8, “And it was so, that in the three and twentieth year of king Jehoash the priests had not repaired the breaches of the house.” The remissness of the priestly order is evidently inferable from these words. (8) And the king called for Jehoiada. So 2 Kings xii. 7.

The chief. Literally, the head, i.e., of the sacerdotal caste. Usually kohen, “priest,” is added, as in chaps. xix. 11, xxvi. 20. Kings has simply “the priest,” adding “and for the priests.” Why hast thou not required of the Levites. Or, Why hast thou not attended to the Levites (comp. chap. xxxi. 9), that they might bring . . . ? (i.e., seen about the Levites bringing). 1XX. Διὰ τὸν ἐπισκόπον τῶν λευτέρων τῶν ἱερευνών, κ.τ.λ. The collection. Rather, the tax (Ezek. xx. 40). “The tax of Moses” is not the poll-tax of half-a-shekel, for the sanctuary, imposed Exod. xxx. 12—16, and collected Exod. xxxviii. 25, 26; but rather a general designation of the moneys mentioned in 2 Kings xii. 23. (See Note on verse 4, supra.)

For the tabernacle of witness. Or, the tent of the testimony (Num. ix. 15; comp. Note on chap. xxiii. 11); i.e., “the Tent of the Law.” In Kings, the question of Joash is, “Why are ye not repairing the breaches of the house?” He then continues: “And now, receive not money from your acquaintances, for the breaches of the house ye should give it” (i.e., instead of appropriating it to the nobles, and the governors of the people, and all the people of the land, and brought down the king from the house of the Lord: and they came through the high gate into the king’s house, and set the king upon the throne of the kingdom. (2) And all the people of the land rejoiced: and the city was quiet, after that they had slain Athaliah with the sword.

The nobles, and the governors of the people. —Kings has: “And the Carians and the Couriers.” (See Note on verse 1.)

The nobles.—Comp. Ps. xvi. 3.

Governers of the people.—Comp. Isa. xxviii. 14. These “nobles and governors” are perhaps “the heads of the clans” of verse 2, and “the princes” of verse 13; though the phrase certainly looks like an attempt at explaining obscure titles of the royal guard.

And they came through the high gate.—Kings, “And they came by the way of the Couriers’ Gate.” (See Note on verse 5, supra.) The Couriers’ Gate may have been called the High Gate, as being the grand entrance to the palace. A gate of the Temple has the same designation in chap. xxvii. 3.


(1) All the days of Jehoiada the priest. —Kings: “all his days, while (or because) Jehoiada the priest instructed him.” The expression “all his days” is of course relative to the clause which follows it; and the chronicler has accurately given the meaning.

(2) And Jehoiada took for him two wives. —A statement not found in the parallel narrative, and doubtless taken by the compiler from another source. Instead of this, we read in 2 Kings xii. 4: “Only the high places were not taken away; the people were still wont to sacrifice and burn incense on the high places.”

(3) Was minded. —Literally, “it became with the heart of Joash” (chap. vi. 8, ix. 1; 1 Kings viii. 18). To repair. —See margin to chaps. vi. 8. “To restore” is perhaps the best modern equivalent of the Hebrew term. The account of the restoration of the Temple is given here in different language from what we find in the parallel passage, which is not very clear. The chronicler appears to have paraphrased the account he found in his authority. The Levites are not mentioned in Kings. (4) Go out unto the cities of Judah, and gather of all Israel money. This is the chronicler’s interpretation of “Let the priests take it to themselves, each from his own acquaintance” (Kings). The priests and Levites of the different districts were to collect the moneys due to the sanctuary, each in his own neighbourhood.

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Joash Reigns, and Orders

II. CHRONICLES, XXIV. the Repair of the Temple.
and of the congregation of Israel, for the tabernacle of witness? (7) For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken up the house of God; and also all the dedicated things of the house of the Lord did they bestow upon Baalim. (8) And at the king’s commandment they made a chest, and set it without at the gate of the house of the Lord. (9) And they made a proclamation through Judah and Jerusalem, to bring in to the Lord the collection of the servant of God through Judah and Jerusalem, to bring in to the Lord the collection that Moses the servant of God laid upon Israel in the wilderness. (10) And all the princes and all the people rejoiced, and brought in, and cast into the chest, until they had made an end. (11) Now it came to pass, that at what time the chest was brought unto the king’s office by the hand of the Levites, and when they saw that there was much money, the king’s scribe and the high priest’s officer came and emptied the chest, and took it, and carried it to his place again. Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance. (12) And the king and Jehoiada gave it to such as did the work of the service of the house of the Lord, and hired masons and carpenters to repair the house of the Lord, and also such as wrought iron and brass to mend the house of the Lord. (13) So the work-
men wrought, and the work was perfected by them, and they set the house of God in his state, and strengthened it.

(14) And when they had finished it, they brought the rest of the money before the king and Jehoiada, whereof were made vessels for the house of the Lord, even vessels to minister, and to offer withal, and spoons, and vessels of gold and silver. And they offered burnt offerings in the house of the Lord continually all the days of Jehoiada.

(15) But Jehoiada waxed old, and was full of days when he died; an hundred and thirty years old was he when he died.

(16) And they buried him in the city of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, both toward God, and toward his house.

(17) Now after the death of Jehoiada came the princes of Judah, and made obeisance to the king. Then the king hearkened unto them. (18) And they left the house of the Lord God of their fathers, and served groves and idols: and wrath came upon Judah and Jeru-

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(13) So the workmen wrought.—Literally, And the makers of the work made. And the work was perfected by them.—Literally, and a bandage was applied to the work by their hand. This curious metaphor, expressive of restoration, is used again in a similar way in Neh. iv. 1, “a bandage was applied to the walls of Jerusalem,” Jeremiah had used it before (Jer. vii. 22, xxx. 17; comp. also Isa. lviii. 8) of the national restoration.

And they set the house of God in his state.—Rather, and they made the house of God to stand according to the measure thereof, i.e., in its original proportions. (Comp. Exod. xxx. 32; nathketh, “measure,” “proportion.”) This verse is not read in Kings.

Before the king and Jehoiada.—The expression appears to be characteristic of the present account. (Comp. Note on verse 11.)

(14) Whereof were made vessels for the house of the Lord.—Literally, and he (i.e., Jehoiada) made it into vessels for the house of Jehovah, vessels of ministering and of offering, &c. For “vessels of ministering,” comp. Num. iv. 12.

Spoon.—Cups or bowls (kappoth, Exod. xxv. 29). The chronicler apparently reverses the statement of 2 Kings xii. 13, 14, “Howbeit there were not made for the house of the Lord, bowls of silver, snuffers, basins, trumpets, any vessels of gold or vessels of silver of the money that was brought into the house of the Lord. But they gave (used to give) that to the workmen, and repaired (used to repair) therewith the house of the Lord.” The solution of the difficulty may be found in the fact that the writer of Kings is relating what was done with the money so long as the repairs of the Temple were in progress, while the chronicler is accounting for the surplus after the restoration was complete. Still the appearance of curiosity is sufficiently curious, and suggests the influence of the didactic aims of the later historian.

And they offered.—And they were offering, i.e., offered habitually, as a matter of regular observance (the same construction as in verse 12, “they were hiring”). The legal ritual was duly carried out in the Temple so long as the influence of Jehoiada was paramount—a remark peculiar to the chronicler.

On the other hand, the present writer omits what is stated in closing the account of the Temple repairs (2 Kings xii. 15, 16). There we are told that no reckoning was made when the overseers of the workmen in respect of the moneys entrusted to them, “for they dealt faithfully.” It is added that the priests still received the trespass and sin money.


This section is wholly wanting in the Kings. It serves as a moral explanation of the after-history of Joash, recorded there and here (2 Kings xii. 17—21).

(15) But Jehoiada . . . when he died.—Literally, And Jehoiada became old, and was satisfied with days, and he died. The verb “to be satisfied” is only so used here and in 1 Chron. xxiii. 1. (Comp. Ps. xci. 16.) The ancient expression was adjectival, “full of days” (Gen. xxv. 8, xxxv. 29; Job xlii. 17; 1 Chron. xxix. 28, only).

An hundred and thirty years old.—According to some modern physiologists, one hundred and five is the proper limit of human life; that is to say, five times the period usually required for the attainment of full growth. Under favourable conditions it is even supposed that life might extend to half a century longer (M. Flioure, of the French Academy of Sciences). When persons of advanced age (eighty to one hundred) die, it is usually from preventible causes. As a French medical writer has remarked, “Men do not commonly die; they kill themselves.” The age of Jehoiada, then, would seem to be not impossible, although an error of transcription in our text is also not impossible.

(16) Among the kings.—Literally, with. “Because he had done good;” and also, perhaps, as having been regent for so many years, and connected by marriage with the royal house (chap. xxii. 11).

(17) Came the princes . . . and made obeisance to the king.—As asking a boon. What their petition was is evident from the context (verse 18). They sought the royal sanction of the idolatrous forms of worship, after which they hankered.

Then the king hearkened unto them.—Comp. the influence of the young nobles with Rehoboam, chap. x. 8.

(18) And they left the house of the Lord.—They, viz., the apostate princes and their following, ceased to attend the legal worship of the Temple.

And served groves and idols.—Rather, the Asherim and the idols. (See Note on chap. xiv. 3.)

And wrath came.—Chap. xix. 2, 10; 1 Chron. xxvii. 24. In this case the Divine wrath (Num. i. 53) manifested itself in a Syrian invasion (verse 23, seq.). Upon Judah and Jerusalem.—The sin of the nobles, allowed and perhaps imitated by the king, involved the nation in its penal consequences (Comp. 1 Chron. xxii.)
Zechariah is Stoned.

II. CHRONICLES, XXIV. The Syrians Invade Judah.

zeal for this their trespass. (19) Yet he sent prophets to them, to bring them again unto the Lord; and they testified against them; but they would not give ear.

(20) And the Spirit of God 1 came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you. (21) And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the Lord. (22) Thus Joash the king remembered not the kind-

ness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son. And when he died, he said, The Lord look upon it, and require it.

(23) And it came to pass 2 at the end of the year, that the host of Syria came up against him: and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the princes of the people from among the people, and sent all the spoil of them unto the king of 3 Damascus. (24) For the army of the Syrians came with a small company of men, and the Lord delivered a very great host into their hand, because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers. So they executed judgment against Joash.

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(19) Yet.—And.

To them.—Among them.

And they testified against them.—Solemly besought them... exorted them in the name of God (Exod. xx. 21; 2 Kings xvii. 13).

But they would.—And they did.

(20) And the Spirit of God came upon.— Literally, clothed, invested. (See Note on 1 Chron. xii. 18.)

Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest.—“The priest,” i.e., the high priest, is an epithet of Jehoiada, not of Zechariah.

Which stood above the people.—Probably on the steps of the inner court of the Temple, facing the people who were assembled in the outer court.

Why transgress.—Wherefore are ye transgressing? That ye cannot prosper.—Literally, and will not prosper.

Because ye have forsaken... —Rather, for ye have forsaken the Lord, and He hath forsaken you. (Comp. the similar language ascribed to the prophets Shemaiah and Azariah ben Oded, chap. xii. 5, xv. 2).

(21) And they conspired against him.—The conspiracy of verse 25 was the Divine recompense for this one.

And stoned him.—The legal penalty of idolatry (Lev. xx. 2; Deut. xvii. 2–5).

At the commandment of the king.—Probably Zechariah’s words had been represented to Joash as treasonable. The Syrian invasion may have been already threatening, when his prophecy was uttered; and in that case it would be easy to allege against the prophet that his “wish was father to his thought.” (Comp. the similar case of Jeremiah, Jer. xxxii. 1–5; and 1 Kings xii. 5–13.)

In the court of the house of the Lord.—There is little doubt that the allusion of Christ (Matt. xxi. 35; Luke xi. 51) to the death of “Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the Temple and the altar,” refers to this murder. The altar stood in the court, before the Temple. Barachias (Berechiah) may have been Zechariah’s father, and Jehoiada his grandfather. Moreover the Lord appears to be thinking of the honourable burial of Jehoiada, in contrast with the murder of his son, in Matt. xxiii. 29–32. verses which immediately precede the mention of Zacharias.

(25) The Lord look upon it, and require it.—Jehovah behold, and avenge! literally, seek, avenge, vengeance for the crime (Gen. ix. 5; Ps. x. 4). This dying imprecation is in harmony with the spirit of the older dispensation, which exacted blood for blood. Contrast the prayer of St. Stephen, the first of Christian martyrs (Acts vii. 50). The prayer of Zechariah was also a prophecy destined to speedy fulfilment. (See verse 25 seq.)

The Lord’s Vengeance, viz., the Syrian Invasion and Slaughter of the Princes, and the Murder of Joash (verses 23–27). (Comp. 2 Kings xii. 17–21.)

(23) At the end of the year.—At the running out of the year, viz., the year of the murder of Zechariah. (See for the phrase, Exod. xxxiv. 22.)

The host of Syria came up against him.—Comp. 2 Kings xii. 17. Our passage seems to show that a small part (verse 24) of the besieging army was detached, and sent against Jerusalem. (Comp. 2 Kings xvii. 14, 17.) The princes of Judah (verse 17) at the head of a large force met the invaders in the field; but the Syrians routed them, and “destroyed all the princes of the people from among the people.” We may suppose that they made it their special aim to cut off the leaders of the Jewish host. (Comp. chap. xviii. 30.) Thus the apostate princes were overtaken by the prophetic doom. (LXX., “the princes of the people among the people,” Syriac and Vulg. and Arabic omit “from among the people.” But comp. Isa. vii. 8.)

And sent all the spoil of them.—To Hazael, who was probably stillat Gath with the main body of his troops. (24) For the army of the Syrians.—This verse is explanatory of verse 23. Literally, For with fewness of men had the host of Syria come, and Jehovah had given into their hand a host in exceeding abundance. “Fewness of men” (miṣṣar ‘anāshim) is a phrase not found elsewhere. (Comp. Gen. xix. 20.) The parallel account informs us that Hazael had intended to march against Jerusalem in person, as it would seem, after the battle in which the Syrian division had defeated the Jewish princes. Joash, however, bribed his forbearance by a present of the treasures of the Temple and palace (2 Kings xii. 18).

So they executed judgment against Joash.—A phrase always used of Divine requital. (Comp. Exod.
And when they were departed from him, (for they left him in great diseases,) his own servants conspired against him for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest, and slew him on his bed, and he died: and they buried him in the city of David, but they buried him not in the sepulchres of the kings. (26) And these are they that conspired against him; 1Zabad the son of Shimeah an Ammonitess, and Jehozabad the son of Shimrith a Moabitess. (27) Now concerning his sons, and the greatness of the burdens laid upon him, and the repairing of the house of God, behold, they are written in the story of the book of the kings. And Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XXV. Amaziah was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother’s name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem.

The Reign of Amaziah. (Comp. 2 Kings xiv. 1—20.)

Duration and Character of the Reign. Execution of the Murderers of Joash (verses 1—4).

(1, 2) Amaziah . . . the Lord.—So 2 Kings xiv. 2. But not with a perfect heart.—This is a brief equivalent of the words of the older text: “only not like David his father: according to all that Joash his father had done, he did.” The reference to Joash is omitted, perhaps because that king appears to less advantage in the Chronicles than in Kings. In fact, the chronicler’s estimate of both princes is less favour-
And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart. (9) Now it came to pass, when the kingdom was established to him, that he slew his servants that had killed the king his father. (4) But he slew not their children, but did as it is written in the law of Moses, where the Lord commanded, saying, “The fathers shall not die for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers, but every man shall die for his own sin.

Moreover Amaziah gathered Judah together, and made them captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, according to the houses of their fathers, throughout all Judah and Benjamin; and he numbered them from twenty years old and above, and found them three hundred thousand choice men, able to go forth to war, that could handle spear and shield. (6) He hired also an hundred thousand mighty men of valour out of Israel for an hundred talents of silver.

He hired also . . . out of Israel—i.e., from the northern kingdom. The number has probably suffered in transmission. Thenius pronounces the fact historical, although not recorded in Kings.

An hundred talents of silver—Worth about £40,000 of our money, reckoning £400 to the talent. What such a sum would represent in the days of Amaziah cannot be determined with certainty.

The Lord is not with Israel—Comp. chaps. xvi. 9, xx. 37; also chap. xvi. 7.

To wit, with all the children of Ephraim—Added as an explanation of the term Israel. Ephraim was the name of the northern kingdom (Hos. v. 11, 14, vi. 4, and passim).

But if thou wilt go—Rather, But go thyself; in contrast with the prohibition, “Let not the army of Israel go.”

Do it, be strong for the battle.—Compare 1 Chron. xxii. 16: “Arise! act!”

God shall make thee fall.—Before these words, the expression well, “and not,” must have dropped out of the text. “Venture on the expedition by thyself, with a good courage,” says the prophet, “and God will not let thee stumble before the foe.”

For God hath power.—For there is strength in God, to help and to make to stumble. (Comp. chap. xx. 6; 1 Chron. xxix. 12; Ps. ix. 3.) The ancient versions were evidently embarrassed by the passage. The LXX. render: “Because if thou think to prevail through them, then will the Lord rout thee before thy foes; because it is from the Lord both to be strong and to rout.” Vulg.: “But if thou thinkest that war depend on the strength of an army, God will make thee to be overcome by the enemy.” Syr: “Because thou art going to make war, the Lord will cast thee down before thy foes; because thou hast not praised the Lord, who is the helper and uplifter.” It is noticeable that no version inserts the required negative; the omission, therefore, is ancient.

What shall we do?—Literally, What to do? i.e., What is to be done? what must we do?

The army.—The troop (gēdūd) of mercenaries.

To wit, the army.—The troop (îe prefixed, as sign of the accusative).
that they should not go with him to battle, fell upon the cities of Judah, from Samaria even unto Beth-horon, and took much spoil.

(14) Now it came to pass, after that Amaziah was come from the slaughter of the Edomites, that he brought the gods of the children of Seir, and set them up to be his gods, and bowed down himself before them, and burned incense unto them. (15) Wherefore the anger of the Lord was kindled against Amaziah, and he sent unto him a prophet, which said unto him, Why hast thou sought after the gods of the people, which could

1 Heb. to their place.

2 Heb. in heat of anger.

3 Heb. the sons of the band.

To go home again.—To go to their own place.

Home in great anger.—To their own place in a heat of anger (Isa. vi. 4). Obviously the dismissed force would be incensed at treatment which seemed to indicate distrust of their honour, and robbed them of the possible fruits of victory. On their way home they revenged themselves by plundering and slaughtering in the cities of Judah (verse 13).

(11) And Amaziah strengthened himself, and led forth his people, and went to the valley of salt, and smote of the children of Seir ten thousand. (12) And other ten thousand left alive did the children of Judah take away captive, and brought them unto the top of the rock, and cast them down from the top of the rock, that they all were broken in pieces. (13) But the soldiers of the army which Amaziah sent back, to return with him to the war, fell upon him and smote him; and the children of Judah carried away captives, 

1 And Amaziah strengthened himself, and led forth his people, and went to the valley of salt, and smote of the children of Seir ten thousand, and took Sela in the war, and five years previously.

2 Heb., 'I am a head of Sela.' May be the name of a city.

3 And brought them unto the top of the rock. —Or, of Sela. Sela, "the crag," was the Edomite capital, known to after ages as Petra, "the rock." The "Head of Sela" may be the name of a cliff overlooking the town. This savage massacre of prisoners is not mentioned in Kings; but it is quite credible, in view of the well-known atrocities of ancient warfare. (Comp. 1 Chron. xx. 3; Ps. cxxxvii. 9; 2 Kings viii. 12; Amos i. 11, 13; 1 Kings xi. 15, 16: Josh "cut off every male in Edom.") It is, however, remarkable that the chronicler does not mention the capture of Sela itself. Hence, therefore, suppose that the statement of this verse is really the result of an attempt to restore an illegible text of 2 Kings xiv. 7.

(13) But the soldiers of the army.—Literally, "Bow down himself." —Literally, And before them would he bow himself, and to them would he offer incense; relating his habitual practice.

(12) And other ten thousand left alive. —Rather, And ten thousand the sons of Judah took alive. The LXX. renders well: καὶ διὰ χιλίων εἰς πυρπόνες οἱ πολίτες.

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not deliver their own people out of thine hand? (16) And it came to pass, as he talked with him, that the king said unto him, Art thou made of the king's counsel? forbear; why shouldst thou be smitten? Then the prophet forbare, and said, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel.

(17) Then Amaziah king of Judah took advice, and sent to Joash, the son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, Come, let us see one another in the face. (18) And Joash king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, The wild beast that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife; and there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle. (19) Thou sayest, Lo, thou hast smitten the Edomites; and this heart lifteth thee up to boast: abide now at home; why shouldest thou meddle to thine hurt, that thou shouldest fall, even thou, and Judah with thee? (20) But Amaziah would not hear; for it came of God, that he might deliver them into the hand of their enemies, because they sought after the gods of Edom. (21) So Joash the king of Israel went up; and they saw one another in the face, both he and Amaziah king of Judah, at Beth-shemesh, which belongeth to Judah.

(22) And Joash was put to the worse. So 2 Kings xiv. 12. The Syr. and Arab. omit. That he might deliver them into the hand. - Comp. verse 16; and chap. xxiv. 24, x. 15; the Syr. and Arab. omit. For it came of God. - Heb., or, of the holy ones. Some say: because they sought. - Perhaps the original reading was, into his hand, i.e., the hand of Joash. Because they sought. - For they had sought. (23) Jehoahaz. - Several Hebrew MSS. read Ahasiah, as in 2 Kings xiv. 13, with which the rest of the verse agrees: see the Notes there. (See Note on chap. xx. 17.) The corner gate. - So 2 Kings xiv. 13, rightly. Our Hebrew text has, "gate of the turning one," or "gate that turneth," which would require some word indicating the direction of the turning. (Comp. Ezek. vii. 3, "gate that turneth northward.") Some MSS., and all the versions, agree with Kings. It is merely a matter of different points.

(24) And he took. - So 2 Kings xiv. 14. The verb has fallen out here. The omission is ancient, as it appears in the LXX. The Vulg. gives the verb returned at the end of the verse a transitive form, and renders "he carried back to Samaria" all the things enumerated. The Syriac reads, "and he took the silver," &c.

With Obed-edom. - Added by the chronicler, in harmony with what he has stated about the custody of the sacred treasures (1 Chron. xxvi. 15, seq.); but
Azariah is slain.

II. CHRONICLES, XXVI.

Uzziah's Reign.

(25) And Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah lived after the death of Joash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel fifteen years. (26) Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, first and last, behold, are they not written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel? (27) Now after the time that Amaziah did turn away from following the Lord they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem; and he fled to Lachish; but they sent to Lachish after him, and slew him there. (28) And they brought him upon horses, and buried him with his fathers in the city of Judah.

probably derived from an ancient clan. Obed-edom was the name of a Levitical clan.

END OF THE REIGN (verses 25—28.) (Comp. 2 Kings xiv. 17—20.)

(25) And Amaziah.—Identical with 2 Kings xiv. 17. (See Notes there.)

(26) First and last.—The former and the latter. The chronicler adds his usual formula.

Behold, are they not written.—The Hebrew is an expression peculiar to the Chronicles (chaps. xx. 34, xxiv. 27); “are they not written” being that of Kings. In the Hebrew text here the two phrases are blended. Some MSS., and the Syriac, Vulg., and Arabic read, “Behold, they are written.” But it is possible that the latter phrase be a corruption of hem (“they”); and that the reading of Kings should be followed, with other Hebrew MSS. and the Targum.

(27) Now after the time that Amaziah did turn away from following the Lord.—This clause is added by the chronicler, not so much with the aim of assigning a date, as of asserting the real connection between Amaziah’s defection from Jehovah, and the calamities that overtook him. Virtually he calls attention to the fulfilment of the prophecy of verse 16.

(28) Upon horses.—See 2 Kings xiv. 20.

In the city of Judah.—A transcript’s mistake for city of David, as it is in Kings and all the old versions, as well as some Heb. MSS.

XXVI.

REIGN OF UZZIAH-АЗARIAH.

ACCESSION, AGE, AND CONDUCT OF UZZIAH. INFLUENCE OF THE PROPHET ZECHARIAH (verses 1—5). (Comp. 2 Kings xiv. 21, 22; xv. 2, 3.)

(1) Then.—And.

Uzziah.—So the chronicler always names him, except in one place (1 Chron. iii. 12), where the name Azariah appears, as in 2 Kings xiv. 21; xv. 1, 6, &c. In 2 Kings xiv. 13. 30, 32, 34; Uzziah occurs (though there also the LXX. reads Azariah, thus making the usage of Kings uniform); also in the headings of the prophecies of Hosea, Amos, and Isaiah. It is not, therefore, to be regarded either as a popular abbreviation or a transcriber’s blunder, as Schroeder and others suggest. In the Assyrian inscriptions of Tiglath Pileser II. this king is uniformly called Azriyahu, i.e., Azariah. Clearly, therefore, he was known by both names; but to foreigners chiefly by the latter. (Comp. Azareel—Uziel, 1 Chron. xxv. 4, 18.)

(2) He built.—He it was who built.

Eloth.—Kings, Elath. The Idumean port on the Red Sea.

The first four verses are identical with the parallel in Kings. (See the Notes there.)

(3) And he sought God.—And he continued to seek God (the Hebrew is an expression peculiar to the chronicler).

In the days of Zechariah.—An otherwise unknown prophet.

Who had understanding in the visions of God.—Literally, the skilled in seeing God—a surprising epithet, occurring nowhere else. Some Hebrew MSS., and the LXX., Syriac, and Arabic versions, and the Targum, read, “in the fear of God.” This is doubtless correct; and the text should be rendered: “who had understanding (or gave instruction) in the fear of God.” So the famous Rabbis, Rashi and Kimchi, long since suggested. Zechariah was thus the guide and counsellor of king Uzziah, and that not only in religious matters, but in what we should call the political sphere; for in those days the distinction between things sacred and secular, civil and ecclesiastical, between Church and State, religion and common life, was wholly unknown.

And as long as he sought.—Literally, in the days of his seeking.

The Lord, God...—Such a mode of speech reveals the chronicler’s own hand.

Instead of this verse, 2 Kings xv. 4 makes the deduction usual in its estimate of the character of a reign: “Only the high places were not taken away; the people still used to sacrifice and burn incense on the high places.”

The power and prosperity of Uzziah are accounted for by the chronicler on the ground that he sought God during the life of Zechariah; although afterwards he offended by rashly intruding upon the priest’s office, and was punished with leprosy (verses 16—21).

UZZIAH’S CAMPAIGNS, PUBLIC WORKS, AND MILITARY STRENGTH (verses 6—15).

This section is peculiar to the Chronicles. Although the book of Kings passes over the facts recorded here, they are essential to forming a right conception of the strength and importance of the southern kingdom during the age of Uzziah and Jotham; and they are fully corroborated, not only by comparison with the
Uzziah’s Victories

II. CHRONICLES, XXVI.

and Buildings.

days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God: and as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper. (6) And he went forth and warred against the Philistines, and brake down the wall of Gath, and the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod, and built cities about Ashdod, and among the Philistines. (7) And God helped him against the Philistines, and against the Arabs that dwelt in Gurbaal, and the Memonims. (8) And the

Ammonites gave gifts to Uzziah: and his name spread abroad even to the entering in of Egypt; for he strengthened himself exceedingly.

Moreover Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the corner gate, and at the valley gate, and at the turning of the wall, and fortified them. (10) Also he built towers in the desert, and digged many wells; for he had much cattle, both in the low country, and in the plains; husbandmen also, and vine

of Isaiah (Isa. ii.—iv.) upon the same subject, but also by the independent testimony of the cuneiform inscriptions of the period. (See Note on 2 Kings xiv. 28.) Thus we find that the warlike Assyrian Tiglath-Pileser II. fitted Hamath for its alliance with Judah during this reign, but abstained from molesting Uzziah himself—"a telling proof," as Schrader says, "for the accuracy of the Biblical account of Uzziah’s well-founded power." The name of Uzziah is conspicuously absent from the list of western princes who, in B.C. 733, sent tribute to Tiglath-Pileser (Kushshapli), king of Commagene (Kamashaph), Rezin, king of the country of the Damascenes, Menahem, king of the Samaritans, Hiram of the city of the Tyrians, Urikki of Kui, Paisir of Carmelshin, Elieu of Hamath, Pananmu of Sam'al, and nine other sovereigns, including those of Tahal and Arabia. The list thus comprises Hittites and Arameans, princes of Hither Asia, Phoenicia, and Arabia. The omission of Uzziah argues that the king of Judah felt himself strong enough to sustain the shock of collision with Assyria in case of need. He must have reckoned on the support of the surrounding states (also not mentioned in the above list), viz., Ashdod, Ascalon, Gaza, Edom, Ammon, Moab, &c. (Schrader, Keilinschr., p. 252, seq.).

(6) And he went forth and warred against the Philistines.—At the outset of his reign this able prince had given promise of his future by seizing and fortifying the port of Elath, and thus probably completed the subjugation of Edom, which his father had more than begun. Afterwards he assumed the offensive against the Philistines, Arabs, and Moanites, who had invaded the country under his predecessors (chaps. xxi. 16; xx. 1).

Brake down the wall of Gath.—After taking the city. (As to Gath, see 1 Chron. xviii. 1; 2 Chron. xi. 8.)

Jabneh.—The Jamnia of Macabees and Josephus; now the village of Jabnâh, about twelve miles south of Joppa (the same as Jabneel, Josh. xiv. 11).

Ashdod.—Esdud. (Comp. Josh. xii. 3.) Like Gath, one of the five sovereign states of the Philistines. It commanded the great road to Egypt; hence its possession was of first-rate importance to the contending military powers of Egypt and Assyria. Sargon captured it B.C. 719. (Comp. Isa. xx. 1.)

About Ashdod.—In Ashdod, i.e., in the canton so called.

And among the Philistines.—That is, elsewhere in their territory. Uzziah appears to have reduced the Philistines to a state of complete vassalage. They were not, however, annexed to Judah, but ruled by their own kings.

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(7) The Philistines, and . . . the Arabians.—They are named together in chap. xvii. 11 also. Their seat, Gur-Baal, only mentioned here, is unknown. The Targum makes it Geror; the LXX. apparently Petra (or Edom). The reading Geror-Baal has been proposed.

The Meunims (Heb., Me’unim) are the Moanites, or people of Moan (Ma’ân), near Mount Seir. (See Note on chap. xx. 1.)

The Syrian and Arabic omit from “wall of Ashdod,” verse 6, to "gifts to Uzziah," verse 8.)

(8) The Ammonites.—Old enemies of Judah (chap. xx. 1). Gave gifts.—Paid tribute. Literally, gave a present, or offering (min’hâh). His name spread abroad even to the entering in of Egypt.—See margin. His name and influence, like Solomon’s, extended to the Egyptian border.

He strengthened himself exceedingly.—He showed strength, prevailed, made head or people of Maon (Keilinschr., seq.).

Exceedingly.—See the Notes on 1 Chron. xiv. 2, xxix. 25. Syrian, “because he made much war.”

(9) Built towers.—To defend the approaches.

At the corner gate.—Ober, that is, commanding the gate (chap. xxv. 23). Probably the north-west corner of the city wall.

The valley gate.—Syria, “the west gate.” In the western wall, the modern Jaffa gate. These two towers protected the most exposed points of the capital.

At the turning of the wall.—Over the angle (ha-miqdôa), i.e., on the eastern side of Zion, at a bend in the wall. This tower defended both Zion and Moriah against attacks from the south-east. (Neh. iii. 19, 20, 24, 25.)

And fortified them.—Literally, made them (the gates) strong. Or rather, perhaps, he made the towers strong, i.e., put them in a posture of defence. (Comp. chap. xi. 11.) The margin is wrong. Syrian, “girded (or bound) them at their corners with clamps (glîde, i.e., xâ’î) of iron.”

(10) In the desert.—Or, grazing country, i.e., the “wilderness of Judah,” on the west of the Dead Sea. The towers were for the protection of the royal herds against the predatory Bedawin. (Comp. Mic. iv. 8: “And thou, O tower of the flock.”)

Digged many wells.—Heaved out many cisterns; to supply his herds with water.

For he had much cattle.—Sell. there, in the wilderness of Judah. But perhaps we should render thus: “For he had much cattle; and in the lowland and in the plain he had husbandmen; and vine-dressers in the mountains and in the glebe land.” So Syriac.

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dressers in the mountains, and in the Carmel; for he loved his husbandry.
(11) Moreover, Uzziah had an host of fighting men, that went out to war by bands, according to the number of their account by the hand of Jeiel the scribe and Maasioah the ruler, under the hand of Hananiah, one of the king's captains.
(12) The whole number of the chief of the fathers of mighty men of valour were two thousand and six hundred. (13) And under their hand was an army, three hundred thousand and seven thousand, and five hundred, that made war with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy. (14) And Uzziah prepared for them throughout all the host shields, and spears, and helmets, and habergeons, and bows, and slings to cast stones. (15) And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to shoot arrows and great stones withal. And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong.
(16) But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he

Both in the low country.—And in the lowland of Judah; the Shephelah, between the hills and the Mediterranean.

And in the plains.—Plain (mishor). “The Plain,” par excellence, appears to mean the high level east of the Dead Sea and Jordan (Deut. iv. 43; Josh. xii. 8). This was the territory of Reuben, which Uzziah probably recovered from Moab and Ammon (verse 8). (Comp. Isa. xvi. 1, from which it appears that the kings of Judah at this epoch claimed sovereignty over the country on the eastern side of the Jordan.)

And in Carmel.—Or, the fruitful field, the glen land (Isa. xxix. 17; xxiii. 15).

With the whole verse comp. the account of David's agricultural and pastoral wealth (1 Chron. xxvii. 25-31).

He loved husbandry.—A lover of land was he, i.e., of the soil. (Comp. the expression, “man of the land,” i.e., husbandman, Gen. ix. 20.)

(11) Moreover . . . fighting men.—Literally, And Uzziah had a host making war (or, doing battle). That went out to war.—Literally, goeth forth in the host.

By bands.—Or, in troops (hiqdōd)—i.e., in regular array: in organised bodies. Probably each house formed a distinct troop. (See verse 13.)

According to the number of their account.
—In the number of their muster (pēqūdāh, “census”).

By the hand of Jeiel the scribe and Maasioah the ruler. These two royal officials had been entrusted with the draught of the muster rolls. They were “under the hand” —i.e., the direction and superintendence—of Hananiah, who was “one of the king's captains,” or staff officers.

Under the hand.—Or, at the side (‘al yad) (1 Chron. xxv. 2).

Chief of the fathers.—Heads of the families, or father-houses.

Of the mighty men of valour.—To wit, the mighty men of valour, in opposition with the account respecting the total of Amaziah's army (300,000) in chap. xxv. 3.

That made war with mighty power.—Literally, a doer of battle with strength of might (sturdy strength, kōhēn ‘hayil, a unique phrase). Each chief was thus at the head of about a hundred and twenty men, who formed his troop (gedid, verse 11). (Comp. the expression, “captains of hundreds.”) The actual number in each century may have varied, as in the Roman army.

(14) Throughout.—To wit, for all the army, an apposition.

Shields, and spears (rēmēkāh, “lances”), and helmets, and habergeons (shiryonuth, “costs of mail,” “cuirasses”).—For the heavy armed.

“Habergeon” is an old English word, meaning armour for neck and breast.

Bows, and slings . . . stones.—For the light armed. (See margin.)

Engines, invented by cunning men.—The first mention of artillery. Literally, devices, a devising of a deviser. The word “engine” (i.e., ingenium, which is late Latin for ballista) fairly represents 1khishshahōn. LXX., χίλιοι, Vulg., machinas.

Bulwarks.—Pīnōth. Zeph. i. 16, “towers.”

To shoot arrows and great stones.—So that they were like the well-known catapults and ballistae of Roman warfare. An instrument like the ballista is represented on the Assyrian sculptures, and probably both kinds of artillery passed from Assyria to Palestine. And his name spread.—Went forth (verse 8).

He was marvellously helped.—The Hebrew phrase only occurs here.

Till.—So that he became strong.

Uzziah's Presumption Punished by Leprrosy. His Death (verses 16-23).

This section also is mainly peculiar to the chronicler. 2 Kings xv. 5-7 correspond to verses 21-23 only.

(16) But when he was strong.—See verse 15, “till he was strong,” and the same phrase, chap. xii. 1. His heart was lifted up.—With pride.

To his destruction.—Rather, even to dealing corruptly (‘ad lehashkēth).

For he transgressed.—And he was unfaithful to Jehovah (1 Chron. v. 25).

Went into the temple . . . to burn incense. —On the golden altar, in the Holy Place; contrary to the law of Num. xviii. 1-7. Elevated by success,
transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense.

(17) And Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the Lord, that were valiant men: (18) and they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incense, but to the priests the sons of Aaron, that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the sanctuary; for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thee to burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the 1 priests in the house of the Lord, from beside the incense altar. (19) Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a censer in his hand to burn incense: and while he was wroth with the priests, the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the priests in the house of the Lord, from beside the incense altar. (20) And Azariah the chief priest, and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he was leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him out from thence; yea, himself hasted also to go out, because the Lord had smitten him. (21) And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a 1 several house, being a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the Lord: and Jotham his son was over the king's house, judging the people of the land.

(22) Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, did Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, write. (23) So Uzziah slept with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the field of the burial which belonged to the kings; for they said, He is a leper: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XXVII.—(1) Jotham was...
The Reign of Jotham.

II. CHRONICLES, XXVII.

Jerushah, the daughter of Zadok.—Perhaps the high priest Zadok of 1 Chron. vi. 12. (Comp. chap. xxii. 11.)

(2) Howbeit he entered not.—The chronicler adds this reservation upon the preceding general statement. The author of Kings, having said nothing of Uziah's sacrilege, had no need to make such an exception.

And the people did yet corruptly.—Still used to deal corruptly; a paraphrase of what we read in 2 Kings xiv. 35, "the people still used to sacrifice and burn incense on the high places." We know further, from the extant utterances of the prophets of that period, that a deep-seated moral corruption was sapping the strength of the nation. (Comp. Mic. iii. 9-10; Hos. iv. 1, 2.)

(3) He built.—He it was that built (pronoun emphatic). He "built," i.e., restored and beautified. The same statement occurs in 2 Kings xv. 35.

The high gate.—Rather, the upper gate; i.e., the northern gate of the inner or upper court (Ezek. ix. 2). The north being the holy quarter (Isa. xiv. 13; Ps. xlviii. 2), the north gate would be the principal entrance.

And on the wall of Ophel he built much.—The southern slope of the Temple hill was called the Ophel, i.e., "the mound." Its wall would be the line of fortifications connecting Zion with Moriah, on which Uzziah had already laboured (chap. xxvi. 9), with the same object of securing the city against attacks from the south and east. Neither this detail nor the next three verses are found in the parallel account. The style and contents of the passage indicate a good ancient source.

Much.—Lorp, "to much," one of the chronicler's favourite words.

(4) Moreover.—Literally, and cities built he in the hill region of Judah. (Comp. chap. xxvi. 10.)

Castles.—Bir'iniyoth; a term explained at chap. xvi. 12. The contemporary prophets denounced the popular confidence in "fenced cities" as a kind of treason against Jehovah, who was Himself the shield and fortress of His people (Psalm xviii. 1; Isa. xii. 2). "Israel hath forgotten his Maker, and buildeth palaces; and Judah hath multiplied fenced cities: but I will send a fire upon his cities, and it shall devour the palaces thereof" (Hos. viii. 14. Comp. Isa. ii. 15, xvii. 3, 4).

the same year an hundred talents of silver, and ten thousand measures of wheat, and ten thousand of barley. "So much did the children of Ammon pay unto him, both the second year, and the third." (6) So Jotham became mighty, because he prepared his ways before the Lord his God.

(7) Now the rest of the acts of Jotham, and all his wars, and his ways, lo, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah. (8) He was five and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem.

(9) And Jotham slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David; and Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.

(5) He fought also with the king of the Ammonites.—"He also," like his father, "fought with the king of the sons of Ammon." They no doubt had refused the tribute imposed on them by Uzziah; but Jotham quelled their resistance, and they paid him a fixed contribution for three successive years.

The same year.—In that year; the year of the revolt.

Ten thousand measures.—Korim. The kor was perhaps equivalent to our quarter. (Comp. 1 Kings iv. 22; 2 Chron. ii. 10.)

The land of Ammon is fertile of grain even at the present day.

So much . . . and the third.—Rather, This (tribute) did the king of Ammon restore to him (i.e., after withholding it during the year of rebellion); and in the second year, and the third. After three annual payments, the tribute was again suspended, perhaps because the Ammonites took advantage of the outbreak of the Syro-Ephraite war, which took place towards the end of the reign (2 Kings xv. 37). There is no note of time in the text.

(9) So Jotham became mighty.—The chronicler's customary phrase. "Strengthened himself," "gained strength" (chap. xiii. 21).

Because he prepared.—For he directed his ways (Prov. xxi. 29; comp. also chaps. xii. 14, xx. 33). Jotham directed his ways "before," i.e., in the chronicler's usage, "to meet," "towards" Jehovah his God. (Comp. 1 Chron. xii. 17; 1 Sam. vii. 3) "Direct your heart towards Jehovah." Perhaps, however, "before" simply means "as in the sight of" Jehovah. (Comp. Gen. xvii. 1, "walk before me").

The verse is a moral reflection of the writer on the preceding facts.

(7) And all his wars, and his ways.—See 2 Kings xv. 36, "And all that he did." The chronicler seems to have varied the phrase, in order to hint at the Syro-Ephraite war, mentioned in 2 Kings xv. 37.

(8) He was five and twenty years old.—A word for word repetition of 2 Kings xv. 33, omitting the last clause about the queen-mother. Perhaps in one of the chronicler's sources this notice occurred at the beginning, and in another at the end of the reign. This would account for its repetition here, after having been already stated in verse 1.
CHAPTER XXVIII.—(1) Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: but he did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord, like David his father; (2) for he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for Baalim. (3) Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire, after the abominations of the heathen whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel. (4) He sacrificed also and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.

(5) Wherefore the Lord his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria; and they smote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captives, and brought them to Damascus. And he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter. (6) For Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judah an hundred and twenty thousand in one day, which were all valiant men; because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers.

XXVIII.

THE REIGN OF AHAZ. (Comp. 2 Kings xvi.)

PRELIMINARY NOTICES OF THE LENGTH AND CHARACTER OF THE REIGN (verses 1—4).

(1) Ahaz was twenty years old.—The verse is identical with 2 Kings xvi. 2; LXX., Syriac, and Arabic, “twenty and five.” (See chap. xxix. 41.)

The Lord.—Add his God. So some MSS. and Syriac; also Kings. The Assyrian monuments call Azah Yahuhazi, i.e., Jehoahaz, of which Ahaz may be a familiar abridgment. (Comp. Nathan, Jonathan.)

(2) And made also molten images for Baalim.—For the Baals, i.e., Baal worship, side by side with that of Jehovah (chaps. xxi. 26, xxii. 15, xxvi. 16, xxvii. 1—3). This clause is added by the chronicler, in explanation of the former one; “the way of the kings of Israel” was the state recognition of the cultus, which was still in existence.

In the valley of the son of Hinnom.—Also simply called the valley of Hinnom (Jos., xviii. 16), on the west and south of Jerusalem (Jos., xxvi. 16), the scene of the cruel rites in honour of Moloch, horrid king, beameared with blood.”

MILTON.

(3) Moreover he.—“And he (emphatic) burnt incense” to Moloch, the god of Ammon, for whom Solomon had built a high place (1 Kings xi. 5—8), which was still in existence.

In the valley of the son of Hinnom.—Also called simply the valley of Hinnom (Jos., xv. 8), on the west and south of Jerusalem (Jos., xxvi. 16), the scene of the cruel rites in honour of Moloch, horrid king, beameared with blood.”

MILTON.

(4) He sacrificed also and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree. (5) Wherefore the Lord his God delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria; and they smote him, and carried away a great multitude of them captives, and brought them to Damascus. And he was also delivered into the hand of the king of Israel, who smote him with a great slaughter. (6) For Pekah the son of Remaliah slew in Judah an hundred and twenty thousand in one day, which were all valiant men; because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers.

THE WAR WITH REZIN OF SYRIA AND PEKAH OF ISRAEL; OR, THE SYRO-EPHRAITE CAMPAIGN (verses 5—9). (Comp. 2 Kings xvi. 5; Isa. vii. 1.)

(5) Wherefore (and) the Lord his God delivered him.—These opening words help us to understand the ground of the variations of the present account from that of 2 Kings xvi. The chronicler purports, not so much to describe a campaign, as to select those events of it which most conspicuously illustrate God’s chastisements of the apostate Ahaz. Accordingly, throughout the description, the historical is subordinated to the didactic motive. (Comp. the account of the Syrian invasion, chap. xxiv. 23, 24.) Not history for its own sake, but history teaching by example, what the writer desires to present. At the same time, the events here recorded are above critical suspicion. Thenius characterises the whole section (verses 5—15) as “thoroughly historical.”

Into the hand of the king of Syria.—Rezin of Damascus. (Comp. 2 Kings xvi. 5.) Instead of relating the joint attempt against Jerusalem, and the seizure of Elath by Rezin, the chronicler prefers to record two severe defeats suffered by Ahaz in the open field, before his retreat behind the walls of Jerusalem. (See Note on chaps. xvii. 17, xxii. 11.) After these successes the confederates converged upon the capital, and the panic inspired by the news of their coming is finely depicted in Isa. vii. 2. Their attempt proved ineffectual, as the prophet had foretold.

Smote him.—Literally, smote in him, i.e., in his army; defeated him. (A similar remark applies in the next sentence.)

Carried away... captives.—Literally, and led captive from him a great captivity (Deut. xxi. 11).

And he was also delivered.—A second terrible reverse, which took place, perhaps, while Rezin was absent in Idumaa. “At that time Rezin king of Syria recovered Elath to Syria, and drove the Jews out of Elath: and the Arameans (or Edomites) came to Elath, and dwelt there unto this day” (2 Kings xvi. 6).

(6) For.—And, i.e., so.

Pekah... slew in Judah an hundred... in one day.—Details of what is generally stated in the last sentence of verse 5. The totals of slain and of captives (verse 8) are both round numbers. The figures 120,000, if accurate, would show that about a third of the Jewish host (chap. xxvi. 13) had fallen in the battle and pursuit. The ruthlessness of the foe is borne out by the words of the prophet Oded in verse 9: “Ye have
slain them in a rage that reacheth up to heaven.”

Isa. vii. 6 proves that the allies designed to break wholly the independence of Judah, by abolishing the Davidic monarchy, and setting up a Syrian vassal king.

In one day.—In one great engagement. Among the Hebrews and Arabs the word “day” often bears the special force of “day of battle;” e.g., “the day of Midian” (Isa. ix. 4).

Because they had forsaken.—Chap. xxvii. 2

Moreover, the idolatrous example of Ahaz would be eagerly followed by large numbers of the people, whose average religious condition was far below the standard which the prophets of Jehovah demanded. The prophetic writings demonstrate this.

(7) Maaseiah the king’s son—i.e., a prince of the royal house, related to Ahaz, but not his own son; or he would have been too young to be engaged in the battle. (Comp. ch. xviii. 25: “Joash the king’s son.”)

Azrikam the governor of the house—i.e., of the royal house, or palace. Azrikam was nagid, “prince” or superintendent of the palace, a high court official. (Comp. 1 Kings iv. 6, xviii. 3.)

Elkanah . . . next to the king.—See margin. Elkanah was grand vizier. (Comp. 1 Sam. xxiii. 17; Esther x. 3.) The writer mentions the deaths of these three personages, because of their intimate connection with Ahaz, whose punishment he is describing. The blow which struck them struck the king. (Comp. chap. xxiv. 23.)

(8) Of their brethren.—Heightening the barbarity of the deed. So verse 11.

Two hundred thousand, women, sons, and daughters.—See Note on verse 6. Sennacherib boasts that in the war against Hezekiah he took forty-six strong cities of Judah, and carried off 200,150 captives. The number of the text is thus corroborated from a foreign and wholly unrelated source. The thrilling narrative of Kings (2 Kings xviii.—xix) says nothing of the carrying away of all those captives by the Assyrian invader, the interest of the writer being centred on Jerusalem. With this omission that of the facts related in the present section may be compared.

THE PROPHET ODED PROTESTS AGAINST RETENTION OF THE JEWISH CAPTIVES, AND THEY ARE SENT HOME (verses 9—15).

(9) But a prophet of the Lord.—This whole section is peculiar to the chronicler. The author has told the story in his own way; and perhaps the words of the prophet and the chiefs are mainly his. But there was no ground for doubting the general truth of the narrative.

Was there.—In Samaria. It is remarkable that neither here nor in the parallel narrative is any mention made of the great prophet Hosea ben Becri, who must have been active at this epoch in the northern kingdom. Of Oded nothing further is known. He was a “prophet of Jehovah,” not of the Baals.

He went out before.—To meet the hosts, like Azariah ben Oded (chap. xv. 2).

That came.—Was coming in.

Because the Lord . . . was wroth.—Literally, “in the wrath of Jehovah . . . against Judah he gave them into your hand.” Your victory was due to the punitive wrath of Jehovah, not to your own valor or intrinsic superiority. You ought to have considered this, and shown compassion to the victims of divine displeasure; but you have, on the contrary, given full rein to the savage dictates of furious hatred.

Slain them.—Slain among them.

In a rage.—Chap. xxvi. 19 (za’a’af).

That reacheth up unto heaven.—Gen. xxviii. 12: Isa. viii. 8. Literally, which even to the heavens did reach; i.e., a guilty excess of rage, calling to heaven for vengeance, like the blood of Abel (Gen. iv. 10), or the wickedness of Sodom (Gen. xviii. 21). (Comp. also Ezra ix. 6.)

(10) Ye purpose.—Literally, Ye are saying or proposing (chap. i. 18).

To keep under.—Subdue, or reduce to bondmen.

Gen. i. 28 (kabash).

Unto you.—Yourselves.

But are there not with you.—An abrupt question: Are there no trespasses at all with you yourselves? i.e., “Are you yourselves wholly guileless, that your indignation was so hot against your brethren?” (Gen. xx. 11). Or, “Are there no trespasses with you only?” . . . “Are you the only guiltless people, so that you are justified in these severities?” (Job 1. 15). The reference in either case may be to the calves of Bethel and Dan.

(11) Now hear me therefore.—And now hearken to me (chaps. xiii. 4, xv. 2). The “and now” is illustrative, not temporal.

Deliver . . . again.—Cause to return, send back.

Pierce wrath.—Heat of anger, i.e., hot anger.

Lev. xxxv. 39, expressly forbids the permanent enslaving of Israelites by Israelites.

(12) Children of Ephraim.—The ten tribes, as a political whole, are often designated as “Ephraim” by the prophets of that age, e.g., Hosea and Isaiah.
Stood up against.—The Hebrew phrase usually means opposed; here confronted or came before those who were coming from the host.

(13) Ye shall not bring in.—Into the city.

Whereas we ... already.—This is at least a possible rendering. Literally, at or in the trespass of (against) Jehovah (lying) upon us, ye are proposing to add to our sins, &c. Others translate, “so that a trespass against Jehovah come upon us.” (Comp. Lev. iv. 3.) But the elders admit an already existing trespass, when they add, “for our trespass is great, and there is fierce wrath against Israel.” (Comp. 2 Sam. xiv. 2). (Comp. Luke vii. 38.) A different word (mashah) was used to express the ceremonial anointing or consecration.

The princes, “the heads” of verse 12.

The congregation.—The assembly or company of the captives at the gate of Samaria.

(15) The men ... by name.—1 Chron. xxi. 31, xvi. 41. Certain chiefs formally designated for the occasion, perhaps including those of verse 12.

All that were naked.—Literally, and all their nakednesses they clad out of the spoil (ma’arummim, “nakednesses,” here only).

And arrayed ... shod them.—And they clad them, and sandalled them. (For the miserable destitution of captives, see Isa. iii. 24, xx. 2, 4, “naked and barefoot.”)

Anointed them (sab, usually intrinsically, e.g., 2 Sam. xiv. 2). (Comp. Luke vii. 38.) A different word (mashah) was used to express the ceremonial anointing of kings and priests.

Carried all the feeble of them upon asses.—Literally, led them on he-asses, to wit, every stumb­ling one. There would be many such, as the captives were mostly women and children.

To.—Beside.

The writer dwells with manifest pleasure upon the kindness shown by their repentant foes of the northern kingdom to these Jewish captives. He may have intended to inculcate a lesson to the Samaritans of his own age, whose bitter hostility had proved so damaging to the cause of the restored exiles (Neh. iv. 2, 7, 8, vi. 1, 2 eqq.), and who, according to Rabbinical tradition, endeavoured to prejudice Alexander the Great against the commonwealth of Jerusalem (Talmud, Yoma, 69, A).

Some have supposed that our Lord had this passage in His mind when He uttered the parable of the Good Samaritan. The coincidences between the two stories are at any rate curious. (See Luke x. 30, 33, 34.)

The interposition of the Ephraimite prophet Oded between the Ephraimites and their Judæan captives is precisely parallel to that of the Judæan prophet Shemaiah between his people and the Ten Tribes, as recorded in 1 Kings xii. 22—24; and granting the truth of the one account, there can be no ground for suspecting the other.

Under the Pressure of New Enemies, Ahaz asks Help from Assyria, but Receives Hurst (verses 17—21). (Comp. 2 Kings xvi. 7—18.)

At that time.—Apparently after the events above narrated; how soon after we can hardly decide.

The kings of Assyria.—A generalised expression, as in verse 3 (comp. verses 20, 21), where the actual king is named. All the old versions have “king.”

For again.—And moreover.

Smiten Judah.—Smiten in Judah, i.e., inflicted a defeat upon her. After their reduction by Uzziah, the Edomites had probably remained subject to Judah, until Rezin of Syria expelled the Jews from Elath (2 Kings xvi. 6), and restored it to them. After that event, the disasters of Ahaz seem to have encouraged them to make a raid upon his territory.

In invaded,—i.e., “fell upon” (chap. xxv. 13).

The Low country.—The shephelah, or lowland of Judah, between the hill-country and the Mediterranean.

The south.—The Negeb, or southland of Judah, nearly co-extensive with the territory assigned to Simeon (2 Sam. xxiv. 7).

Beshemesh.—See 1 Chron. vi. 59.

Ajalon.—1 Chron. vi. 69.

Gederoth.—In the lowland (Josh. xv. 41).

Shocho.—Rather Socho (chap. xi. 7).

Timnah.—Now Tisbina (Josh. xv. 10).

Gimzo.—Now Gimzu, between Lydda and Bethhoron (Robinson, iii. 271).

And the villages thereof.—And her daughters. (See Note on 1 Chron. vii. 28, “and the towns thereof.”)

And they dwelt there.—Permanently occupied the country. (Comp. 1 Chron. v. 22. See also Isa. xiv. 29, 30.)
Ahaz opposed by

**II. CHRONICLES, XXVIII.**

Tiglath-pileser.

Gimzo also and the villages thereof; and they dwelt there. (19) For the Lord brought Judah low because of Ahaz king of Israel; for he made Judah naked, and transgressed sore against the Lord. (20) And Tilgath-pileser king of Assyria came unto him, and distressed him, but strengthened him not. (21) For Ahaz took away a portion out of the house of the Lord, and out of the house of the king, and of the princes, and gave it unto the king of Assyria: but he helped him not.

(22) And in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the Lord: this is that king Ahaz. (23) For he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him: and he said, Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me. But they were the ruin of him, and of all

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(19) Ahaz king of Israel.—Most commentators see an irony in this expression. But, as has been stated before, the southern kingdom was Israel in the chronicler’s idea; although that of the Ten Tribes was, politically speaking, as much more important, as the cedar of Lebanon was in comparison with the blackthorn growing beside it (chap. xxv. 18. See Note on chaps. xii. 6, xxi. 2). (Some Hebrew MSS., and all ancient versions, read “Judah.” Other Hebrew MSS. remark that in seven places “king of Judah” should be read instead of “king of Israel.”)

He made Judah naked.—Rather, he behaved licentiously in Judah (hiphri’a). The verb is so used here only. (Comp. Exod. v. 4, where it is transitive: “Why loose ye the people from their works?”) (LXX. omits. Authorized version follows the Vulg.)

Transgressed sore.—Done unfaithfulness (1 Chron. x. 13).

(20) Tilgath-pileser (Heb., Pîln’eser). In 2 Kings more correctly called Tiglath-pileser (Pîl’eser). (See Note on 1 Chron. v. 26.) According to the Assyrian Eponym Canon, Tiglath-pileser II. came to the throne B.C. 745, and marched westward against Damascus and Israel, B.C. 734. The importance of these dates for the chronology of the period is obvious.

Came unto him.—Comp. the more detailed narrative in 2 Kings xvi. 7—10; and see Note on verse 16. Tiglath was induced by the message and present of Ahaz to undertake a campaign in the west; he captured Damascus, slew Rezin, and transported the population of the city to Kir (Kings, Lc.). After this, “King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria” (2 Kings xvi. 10). The chronicler, in the words before us, is estimating the results of this expedition as they affected the interests of Judah. At the prayer of Ahaz the Assyrian had indeed “come to him”; but not with any purpose of strengthening the southern kingdom; ‘Glad of a pretext for interference in the affairs of the west, the ambitious usurper was simply bent on the extension of his own empire; and when the more powerful states of Syria and Israel lay at his feet, he naturally proceeded to require a most unequivocal acknowledgment of vassalage from Ahaz. He thus “distressed” or oppressed him by reducing his kingdom to a mere dependency of Assyria; besides impoverishing him of all his treasure, which Ahaz had sent as the price of this ruinous help.

‘Distressed him, but strengthened him not.’—This is correct. A possible rendering is: “and besieged him, and conquered him not”; but the context is against it. (The word ḥāsaq, “strengthened,” everywhere else means to be strong, or, to prevail. LXX. omits the last words, rendering the whole wā‘a Ḫîṣyōn wā‘āb. Syriac and Arabic, “besieged him.”

The Vulg. has: “et affixit eum, et nullo resistente vas­
tavit.” That Judah now became tributary to Assyria is evident from 2 Kings viii. 7, 14, 20.

Taketh away a portion . . . gave it.—Rather, For Ahaz had despoiled the house of the Lord, and the house of the king and the princes, and had given it. (Comp. 2 Kings xvi. 8.)

The princes—i.e., the great courtiers living in the palace, whose valuables as well as those of Ahaz were ransacked to make up the costly bribe. (Syriac and Arabic, “the vessels which were in the house of the Lord, and in the house of the former kings, and in the rich houses.”)

But he helped him not.—And it was not for help (i.e., it resulted not in help) to him. His sub­mission to Tiglath brought him no real advantage, but rather hastened the downfall of his kingdom.

“The Assyrrians had no regard to the welfare of their vassals. The principle of the monarchy was plunder; and Ahaz, whose treasures had been exhausted by his first tribute, was soon driven, by the repeated demands of his masters, to strip the Temple even of its ancient bronze-work and other fixed ornaments (2 Kings xvi. 17, seq.). The time was not far off when the capacity of the Assyrian could no longer be satisfied, and his plundering hordes would be let loose upon the land” (Robertson Smith).

Ahaz adopts the Syrian idolatry, and closes the temple (verses 22—25; comp. 2 Kings xvi. 10—18).

(22) In the time of his distress.—At the time when he (Tiglath) oppressed him, i.e., at the time when Ahaz went to Damascus to do homage to the Assyrian monarch (2 Kings xvi. 10), probably in reluctant obe­dience to a peremptory mandate.

Did he trespass . . . Ahaz.—He dealt yet more unfaithfully towards Jehovah, he, king Ahaz. The subject is emphatically repeated: “he, king Ahaz,” who had already been sorely chastised, sinned yet more. Or “he, king Ahaz,” the notorious apostate.

(23) For (and) he sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus.—The statement of this verse is peculiar to the Chronicle; and the same may be said of the next also. Both here and in the preceding account of the relations of Ahaz to Tiglath-pileser, the writer appears to have drawn upon another source than the book of Kings.

Damascus may, perhaps, be put for the Damascus, though in that case Aram would have been more natural. (Not “at Damascus,” as Thunius renders.)

Which smote him.—Did the chronicler himself believe that the gods of Aram had any power or real
Israel. (24) And Ahaz gathered together the vessels of the house of God, and cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God, and shut up the doors of the house of the Lord, and he made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem. (25) And in every several city of Judah he made high places 1 to burn incense unto other gods, and provoked to anger the Lord God of his fathers.

(26) Now the rest of his acts and of all his ways, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. (27) And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, even in Jerusalem: but they brought him not into the sepulchres of the kings of Israel: and Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XXIX.—(1) Hezekiah began to reign when he was five and twenty years old, and he reigned nine and twenty years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Abijah, the daughter of Zechariah. (2) And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father had done. (3) He in the first year of his reign, in the first month, opened the doors of the house of the Lord, and repaired them. (4) And he brought in fear of the king of Assyria.” It seems probable that the sacrilege described in verse 24 and in 2 Kings xvi. 17, 18, was perpetrated in collecting everything of any value to send to the rapacious Assyrian.

CLOSING NOTICES (verses 26, 27. Comp. 2 Kings xvi. 19, 20).

(26) Now the rest of his acts, and of all his ways.—The chronicle has varied the usual formula. (See chap. xxv. 26, xxvi. 7, &c., and comp. 2 Kings xvi. 18.)

But (for) they brought him not into the sepulchres of the kings of Israel.—Wanting in Kings. (See Note on chaps. xxxi. 20, xxvi. 23.) Thenius supposes that this statement is founded either upon mistake, or upon seal for the Law. But why not upon a written authority?

XXIX.

HEZEKIAH (chaps. xxix.—xxxii.: 2 Kings xviii.—xx.).

CHAP. XXIX. LENGTH AND SPIRIT OF THE REIGN.

THE SOLEMN PURGATION AND HALLOWING OF THE TEMPLE.

(1) Hezekiah.—Heb., Yehizqiyahu, as if “Strong is Jehovah.” 2 Kings writes Hiskiyahu, “My strength is Jehovah.” Isa. xxvii. sqq., Hiskiyahu. The annals of Sennacherib present the form Ḥasakinahu.

Abijah.—2 Kings has the shortened form Abi. (This verse closely corresponds with 2 Kings xvii. 2.)

(3) And he did.—The verse is identical with 2 Kings xviii. 3.


(3) In the first month.—i.e., in the month Nisan, the first month of the sacred year; not in the first month of his reign. (Comp. verse 17 and chap. xxx. 23.)

Open the doors.—Which his father had closed (chap. xxviii. 24).

And repaired them.—By overlazing them with metal—brass or gold-leaf (2 Kings xviii. 18).

(4) Brought in.—Caused to come.

The east street.—The eastern square or open space of the East. (Comp. Ezra x. 9; Neh. viii. 1, 3, 16.) The place of meeting was probably an open area in front of the eastern gate of the sacred enclosure.
the priests and the Levites, and gathered them together into the east street, (8) and said unto them, Hear me, ye Levites, sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the Lord God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place. (9) For our fathers have trespassed, and done that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord our God, and have forsaken him, and have turned away their faces from the habitation of the Lord, and turned their backs, (7) Also they have shut up the doors of the porch, and put out the lamps, and have not burned incense nor offered burnt offerings in the holy place unto the God of Israel. (8) Wherefore the wrath of the Lord was upon Judah and Jerusalem, and he hath delivered them to trouble, to astonishment, and to hissing, as ye see with your eyes. (9) For, lo, our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons and our daughters and our wives are in captivity for this. (10) Now it is in mine heart to make a covenant with the Lord God of Israel, that his fierce wrath may turn away from us.

(11) My sons, be not now negligent: for the Lord hath chosen you to stand before him, to serve him, and that ye should minister unto him, and burn incense.

(12) Then the Levites arose, Mahath the son of Amasai, and Joel the son of Azariah, of the sons of Kohathites; and of the sons of Merari, Kish the son of Abdi, and Azariah the son of Jehalelel; and of the Gershonites, Joah the son of Zimmah, and Eden the son of Joah; (13) and of the sons of Elizaphan; Shimri, and Jeiel; and of the sons of Asaph; Zechariah, and Mattaniah:

(5) Hear me.—Chaps. xv. 2, xx. 15.
Sanctify now yourselves.—See Note on 1 Chron. xv. 12, 13.
Sanctify the house.—By removing all symbols of idolatry.
Carry forth the filthiness.—Niddah denotes personal impurity (Lev. xii. 2; Ezek. xviii. 6); and so anything loathsome (Ezek. vii. 19); here probably idols, and things connected with their worship.
Trespassed.—Dealt unfaithfully.
Turned away their faces from the habitation of the Lord.—Comp. Jer. ii. 27: "They have turned their backs unto me, and not their faces." (Comp. also Ezek. viii. 17.)
Turned their backs.—Literally, gave neck (nathan nech); the word used as equivalent to turned neck (panah 'oreph), Jer. ii. 27, et al. The ordinary meaning is "to put to flight," as in Ps. xviii. 41. It is clear from the next verse that the description is meant to apply to Ahaz and his generation.
The porch.—Of the holy place, or nave of the Temple; the only entrance to the two holy chambers. Put out the lamps.—Of the great golden stand, in the holy place.
Have not burned incense.—On the golden altar. Literally, And incense they have not burned, and burnt offering they have not offered in the sanctuary. The sanctuary is not the holy place, or larger chamber of the Temple, but it includes the whole sacred precincts, courts as well as buildings. The burnt offerings presented on the new Syrian altar of Ahaz (2 Kings xvi. 15) are here counted as offered, because they were irregular. (Comp. also 2 Kings xvi. 14.)
The wrath . . . was (i.e., fell) upon Judah.—The phrase of chap. xxiv. 18. (Comp. chap. xix. 2, 10.)
Delivered them to trouble . . .—Rather, made them a horror, an astonishment, and a hissing. The language is Deuteronomical. (Comp. Deut. xxviii. 25, 37: "Thou shalt become a horror . . . an astonishment." Jer. xxv. 9, 18: "I will make them an astonishment and a hissing," et al.)
As ye see with your (own) eyes.—For ye behold the disastrous results of the invasions of Aram and Israel, of Edom and the Philistines, and of the appeal to Assyria (chap. xxviii.).
(10) Now it is in mine heart. See for this phrase and construction 1 Chron. xxii. 7, xxviii. 2; 2 Chron. vi. 7.
To make a covenant with.—The preposition is for. (See Note on chap. xxii. 7.)
Turn away. Literally, return (Isa. v. 25). "That his fierce wrath may turn away from Israel." (Num. xxv. 4.)
My sons.—A condescending term from the king; just as my father was a term of respect (2 Kings ii. 12, v. 13, xiii. 14).
Be not now negligent. The Niphal form of the verb abalah ("to be at ease") occurs nowhere else. The margin is incorrect.
The Lord hath chosen you. You hath the Lord chosen. The preposition is emphatic. (Comp. the similar words: 1 Chron. xxiii. 13; Deut. x. 8.)
To stand before him, (in order) to serve him, is the construction.
And that ye should minister. Literally, And to become to him ministers and thurifers.
The thoughts and the style of the royal address make it evident enough that it is a free composition, in the well-known manner of ancient historians.
(12-14) The names of the Levites who received the royal charge.
Mahath the son of Amasai. The verse enumerates two members of each of the three great Levitical sub-tribes—Kohath, Merari, and Gershon. Mahath and Eden recur (chap. xxx. 13, 15). Kish ben Abdi and Joah ben Zimmah occurred (1 Chron. vi. 21, 44). They appear to be family rather than personal names.
The sons of Elizaphan. Or, Elizaphan, ben Uziel ben Kohath (Exod. vi. 18), who was prince of the ben Kohath in the time of Moses (Num. iii. 30).
Two of this leading house and two of the Gershonite Asaphites were also present.
made an end. (18) Then they went in to Hezekiah the king, and said, We have cleansed all the house of the Lord, and the altar of burnt offering, with all the vessels thereof, and the shewbread table, with all the vessels thereof. (19) Moreover all the vessels, which king Ahaz in his reign did cast away in his transgression, have we prepared and sanctified, and, behold, they are before the altar of the Lord.

(20) Then Hezekiah the king rose early, and gathered the rulers of the city, and went up to the house of the Lord. (21) And they brought seven bullocks, and seven rams, and seven lambs, and seven he goats, for a sin offering for the kingdom, and for the sanctuary, and for Judah. And he commanded the priests the sons of Aaron to offer them on the altar of the Lord. (22) So they

And of the sons of Heman.—Two Levites of each of the remaining musical guilds—the Kohathite Hemanites and the Merarite bnè Jeduthun (Ethan)—are finally named, making up, with the preceding pairs, a total of seven pairs, or fourteen principal men of the Levitical order. (Comp. 1 Chron. vi. 18—32.)

Jehiel.—Repeated (chap. xxxi. 13).

They gathered their brethren.—As chiefs, or heads of houses, they had the requisite authority. The families mostly concerned would naturally be those residing in Jerusalem.

According to the commandment of the king, by the words of the Lord—i.e., through the words of Jehovah; a mandate based on the words of Jehovah, as recorded in the written Law. Comp. 1 Chron. xxv. 5, and chap. xxx. 12. Also verse 25, below: “For by the hand of Jehovah was the commandment” (Note).

The priests went into the inner part.—Ezek. xli. 3. The interior of the Temple proper is the sacred apparatus; the brazen sea, and the lavers on the stands (1 Kings vi. 14, 17).

In his transgression.—Unfaithfulness, or apostasy.

Have we prepared.—Ordered aright, put to rights. (Hekannu, i.e., hakinonu, 1 Chron. xxix. 16 here only.)

The altar of the Lord.—The brazen altar in the court.

The consecration sacrifices (verses 20—30).

Rose early.—Comp. Ps. v. 3: “Early in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee.”

Gathered the rulers of the city.—Hezekiah assembled the chief men of Jerusalem, because there was no time to send out a general summons to the country, as he wished to proceed at once with the sacrifices of expiation.

Went up to the house.—So 2 Kings xix. 14; chap. ix. 4, and often.

Seven bullocks . . . rams . . . lambs.—For a burnt offering (“olah”). See the legal prescriptions respecting the sin offering (Lev. iv.). On the present extraordinary occasion, an extraordinary sacrifice was offered. Balak and Balaam offered seven bullocks and seven rams as a burnt offering (Num. xxiii.1,2,seq.).

And seven he goats, for a sin offering.—Comp. Ezra vi. 17, viii. 35; and Lev. iv. 23, 28; also verse 23. The reigning house and the sanctuary and the people had all contracted defilement during the late period of idolatry.

The priests the sons of Aaron to offer.—In careful accordance with the rule of the Torah.

Received the blood.—Caught it in bowls of sprinkling (Num. viii. 14).
The Solemn Sacrifices.

II. CHRONICLES, XXIX.

The Work of the Levites.

And sprinkled it on the altar.—Threw it against (literally, towards) the altar (Lev. viii. 19, 24).

Likewise, when.—And they slaughtered the rams . . . and they sacrificed the lambs. The three clauses of the verse are symmetrical. The repetition is a mark of the writer's anxiety to show how carefully the legitimate ritual was observed in ancient Israel.

Killed.—Slaughtered (shaḥat; φαγεῖν, Gen. xxxvii. 31). Specially used of slaying sacrificial victims (Lev. i. 5).

Brought forth.—Rather, brought near—viz., to the altar.

He goats.—Se'irim ("hairy ones"). A different term—ṣeḥārīyim (Lev. viii. 24)—was used in verse 21. This latter is properly an Aramean word, and only found in late Heb., se'irim being the classical term.

Laid their hands upon them.—Comp. Lev. i. 4, iii. 2, iv. 4, from which it appears that the person offering laid his hand upon the head of the victim, whether he were making a burnt offering or a thank-offering or a sin-offering.

The natural fitness of the ceremony in the case of expiatory sacrifices is obvious. "The king and the congregation" performed it, in the present instance, on behalf of the entire nation.

Made reconciliation with their blood upon the altar.—Literally, made sin offering of their blood. (Comp. Lev. ix. 15.) The meaning may be seen by reference to Lev. iv. 30, sqq. The priest dipped his finger in the blood of the victim and touched the horns of the altar with it, and then poured the blood at the base of the altar.

For the king commanded . . . Israel.—For all Israel the king had commanded the burnt offering and the sin offering; or, for "For all Israel," said the king, "is the burnt offering and the sin offering." The expression "all Israel" includes the northern kingdom. (Comp. Hezekiah's invitation to its people to attend the Passover, chap. xxx. 1.)

He set.—Stationed, appointed. Hezekiah restored the ancient choral worship as established by David (1 Chron. xxvii. 5, xxviii.).

Psalters.—Nēḇālām, a kind of harp; Greek, ἄραβα ναβαλαον.

Harps.—Kinnōrīṯ. Greek, κινόρα, a sort of lyre, or cittern, or guitar.

Gad . . . Nathan.—1 Chron. xxix. 29. This is the only place where the institution of the Levitical minstrelsy is ascribed to the injunctions of prophets; but the thing is probable in itself, considering that no important step, whether in civil or ecclesiastical matters, would be likely to be taken by an Israelite king without consulting the Divine will by means of the royal prophets, as we know, from the cuneiform documents, was the uniform practice with the Assyrian and Babylonian sovereigns. Moreover, prophecy was intimately connected with music. (See on 1 Chron. xxv. 1.)

For so was . . . Jehovah was the commandment; i.e., by the hand of his prophets. David's command was obeyed because it was Divine, having emanated from the prophets who represented Jehovah. (Comp. verse 15, supra.)

The instruments of David.—See on 1 Chron. xxvii. 5. The writer's interest in the musical portion of the Temple ritual receives one more illustration in these verses.

Commanded to offer the burnt offering . . . altar.—These words are repeated from verse 21, because all that comes between is descriptive of the preparations made for the due performance of the sacrifice. When the victims had been slain, flayed, and cut up, and the altar had been sprinkled with their blood, and when the Levitical musicians had taken their places, instruments in hand, everything was ready, and the sacrifice was ordered to begin. "And at the time when the burnt offering began, the song of Jehovah" (i.e., the chant of the Levites with its musical accompaniment) "began, and the clarions: and that under the lead of the instruments of David king of Israel," i.e., the harps and lyres were dominant throughout, and the clarions subordinate to their music. Or we may render: "And that at the side of (i.e., along with) the instruments of David king of Israel." The phrase is 'al-ḥad; upon the hands." (Comp. 1 Chron. xxv. 2, 3, 6.) The LXX. omits the needless "and that" (οὐ); the Syriac renders: "And when the burnt offerings began to be offered, Hezekiah began to chant the praises of the Lord, as from the mouth of David king of Israel." The Vulgate also is very free.

Worshipped.—Were worshipping. LXX., ἔρχοντας εἰς τὴν ἱεραρχίαν. The singers.—Heb., the song. So we might say "the music was playing;" or even "the song was singing," i.e., being sung.

The trumpeters sounded.—And the clarions were blowing (literally, clarioning). The participle is

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sang, and the trumpeters sounded: and all this continued until the burnt offering was finished. (32) And when they had made an end of offering, the king and all that were present with him bowed themselves, and worshipped. (33) Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord with the words of David, and of Asaph the seer. And they sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped. (34) Then Hezekiah answered and said, Now ye have consecrated yourselves unto the Lord, come near and bring sacrifices and thank offerings into the house of the Lord. And the congregation brought in sacrifices and thank offerings; and as many as were of a free heart burnt offerings. (35) And the number of the burnt offerings, which the congregation brought, was three score and ten bullocks, an hundred rams, and two hundred lambs: all these were for a burnt offering to the Lord. (36) And the consecrated things were six hundred oxen and three thousand sheep. (37) But the priests were too few, so that they could not lay all the burnt offerings: wherefore their brethren the Levites 3 did help them, till the work was ended, and until the other priests had sanctified themselves: for the Levites were more upright in heart to sanctify themselves than the priests. (38) And also the burnt offerings were in abundance, with the fat of the peace offerings, and the drink offerings for every burnt offering. So the service of the house of the Lord was set in order. (39) And the sacrificial and thank offerings (zebahim shelamim) 2 The first word means “thank-offerings” (= sebahim shelamim); the second, a peculiar species of thank-offering, apparently accompanied by a special kind of psalms called lalith (“thanksgivings”). “Sacrifices and thank-offerings” therefore means “sacrifices, that is, thank-offerings.” (See Lev. vii. 12, 16, for the three kinds of thank-offerings.) As many as were of a free heart.—Literally, “every free-hearted one” (1 Chron. xxix. 6, 9).

Burnt offerings were a token of greater self-denial and disinterestedness than thank-offerings, because they were wholly consumed on the altar, whereas the worshippers feasted upon the latter. The consecrated things.—That is, the victims for the thank-offerings. (Chap. xxxv. 13.) (39) Play all the burnt offerings.—In private offerings this was done by the worshipper himself (Lev. i. 6). In national sacrifices it appears to have been the duty of the priests. Did help them.—See margin; and Ezra vi. 22. Until the other priests had sanctified.—Began to sanctify themselves, as a body. For the Levites . . . in heart.—The priests, as a class, were probably more deeply involved in the corruption of the last reign. And also the burnt offerings were in abundance.—Another reason why the Levites helped the priests: the latter were so much occupied with the actual service of the altar. The fat of the peace (thank) offerings—which had to be burned upon the burnt offerings (Lev. iii. 5, vi. 5). And the drink offerings.—Num. xv. 1-16. (39) And Hezekiah rejoiced.—So of David and his people (1 Chron. xxix. 9, 22). (Comp. also chap. vii. 10.)
Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing was done suddenly.

CHAPTER XXX.—(1) And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel.

(2) For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the passover in the second month. (3) For they could not keep it at that time, because the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem. (4) And the thing pleased the king and all the congregation. (5) So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beer-sheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel at Jerusalem; for they had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written.

(6) So the posts went with the letters that God had prepared.—In the Hebrew the article is used instead of the relative: a construction characteristic of the chronicler (1 Chron. xxvi. 28). Render: "And Hezekiah rejoiced ... over that which God had prepared the people, viz., the long-suspended ordinances of the Temple worship (1 Chron. xii. 39; xv. 1). Perhaps, however, la'dam, "for the people," is the mere accusative after the verb, and the sense is "rejoiced because God had prepared the people" (2 Sam. iii. 30).

For the thing ... suddenly.—Literally, for on a sudden happened the matter. "On a sudden," be-pith'om, here only; elsewhere simply pith'om. Comp. the synonymous ręqa' and be-ręqa' (Ps. vi. 10; Job xxi. 13). The hand of God was seen in the speed with which the revolution was effected, and the sudden turn of the princes and people from indifference to glad alacrity. (Comp. chap. xxx. 12.)

III. CHRONICLES, XXX.

Hezekiah's Passover.—The royal summons to all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba (verses 1-12).

(1) Sent to.—al, i.e., el. (Jer. xxvi. 15; Neh. vi. 3.) Letters.—Iyy'erōth. Apparently a word of Persian origin. (Comp. engärê, "something written;" engärêden, "to paint" or "write;" from which comes the Greek ἔγραφος, a royal messenger; Esth. ix. 26; comp. Matt. v. 41.) Only used in late Hebrew.

To Ephraim and Manasseh.—That is, the northern kingdom. (Comp. verse 10.)

To keep (make) the passover unto the Lord. —Exod. xii. 48 (same phrase); LXX., πάντης τῷ φασίν (Pascha). The first year of Hezekiah was the third of Hosea, the last king of Samaria, who is described as a better king than his predecessors. Doubtless, therefore, Hosea did not actively oppose Hezekiah’s wish for a really national Passover. (See 2 Kings xviii. 1, xvii. 2.)

(2) For the king had taken counsel.—And the king determined (chap. xxv. 17). The resolution was taken by the king in council with his grandees and the popular representatives; apparently before the 14th of Nisan, which was the proper time for keeping the feast.

In the second month.—And not in the first month of the sacred year, as the law prescribes (Num. ix. 1-5). The grounds of the postponement are assigned in the next verse, viz., the legal impurity of many of the priests, and the non-arrival of the people at the proper time. The law permits postponement to the second month in such cases (Num. ix. 6—11). The first month was Nisan; Assyr., Nisēnum: the second, Iyyar; Assyr., Ara.

(3) At that time.—The time when the Temple had just been reopened (chap. xxix. 3), in the first month of Hezekiah’s first year. The purification of the Temple was not completed until the 16th of Nisan (chap. xxi. 17); but perhaps the Passover would have been held, had not the hindrances here mentioned prevented it. (See chap. xxi. 24.)

Sufficiently.—Lemadday. Literally, unto what was enough (lē-mah-dād), an expression only met with here. (Comp. a similar formation, 1 Chron. xv. 13.) The meaning is that a sufficient number of priests had not observed the legal ceremonies of self-purification in time to hold Passover in Nisan.

(4) The thing pleased.—The matter (or proposal) was right in the eyes of the king—i.e., the proposal to keep the Passover in the second month, and to invite the northern tribes.

(5) So they established a decree.—And they decreed a proposal (he'ēmīd dā'bār). (Comp. verse 8; Ps. xvi. 10, "and hath decreed it unto Jacob for a law").

To make proclamation.—Literally, to make a voice pass. (Comp. chap. xxiv. 9, xxxvi. 22.)

From Beer-sheba even to Dan.—Reversing the ancient form of the phrase, to suit the present case. (Comp. Judg. xx. 1; chap. xix. 4.)

For they had not ... written.—Rather, For not in multitude (larob) had they kept it, according to the Scripture. The people had not been in the habit of "coming in their numbers" to the feast. (Comp. the like use of larob in verses 13, 24.) See the Law respecting the Passover, Exod. xii. 1-20; Deut. xvi. 1-8; from which it appears that the obligation to observe it was universal, and according to the latter passage, which is probably referred to in the phrase "according to what is written," Jerusalem was the only legitimate place for the festival. It is implied that ever since the division of the kingdom, and perhaps earlier, the Passover had been inadequately celebrated. (Comp. 2 Kings xxii. 22.) LXX. well, δὲ εἰς τὸν ᾿οἶκον σαράντα τῶν αὐτού; Vulg., "multis enim non fecerunt, sicut lege praeceptum est; Syriac and Arabic, "because their wealth had grown greatly").

(6) The posts.—The runners—i.e., couriers (Σγγός). The Syriac uses the Latin word Tabellorii, "letter-couriers," which the Arabic mistakes for "folk of
Hezekiah sends Letters  

I. CHRONICLES, XXX.  

1 From the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, Ye children of Israel, turn again unto the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you, that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria. (7) And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the Lord God of their fathers, who therefore gave them up to desolation, as ye see. (9) Now be ye not stiff-necked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto the Lord, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever: and serve the Lord your God, that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you. (9) If ye turn again, when ye return unto Jehovah, your brethren and your sons (shall become) objects of pity (raḥāmim, “compassion;” here that which inspires it) before their captors. (Comp. Ps. cv. 46, “And he made them objects of pity before all their captors;” Neh. i. 11.)

2 Kings x. 15). (Comp. Isa. ii. 6.)

3 Kings xv. 29.)

4 Heb., send letters. 

5 Vulg.

6 Exod. xiv. 3.

7) And be not ye like your fathers. —From the days of Jeroboam downwards.

And your brethren. —Of Naphtali and the Trans-Jordan, whom Tiglath-pileser carried captive.

Tirepassed. —Were unfaithful to Jehovah.

Who therefore gave them up to desolation. —And he made them an astonishment (chap. xxix. 8).

8 Be ye not stiff-necked. —Harden ye not your neck like your fathers. 2 Kings xvii. 14, “and they hardened their neck like their fathers’ neck.” (Jer. vii. 26; Ps. xcv. 8, 9.)

But yield yourselves. —Omit but, and place a stop after fathers. “Yield ye a hand to Jehovah,” i.e., submit to Him. So 1 Chron. xxix. 24. The phrase also means “to make an agreement with.” (Ezra x. 19; 2 Kings x. 15.) (Comp. Isa. ii. 6.)

Enter into his sanctuary . . . serve the Lord. —Comp. Ps. c. 1, 4.

With which he hath sanctified for ever. —Chap. vii. 16, 20.

That the fierceness (host) . . . from you. —Chap. xxix. 10. Such resemblances prove the ideal character of these addresses.

8) Nevertheless divers of Asher. —But some men of Asher. —Besides these from Asher, Manasseh, Zebulun, verse 18 mentions others from Ephraim and Issachar. The two and a half tribes of the Trans-Jordan, as well as Naphtali and probably the neighbouring tribe of Dan, had been devastated by Tiglath-pileser; and the couriers went no farther than Zebulun. Part of Asher was contiguous to Zebulun; and the other three tribes mentioned by the chronicler lay south of it, so that the account is self-consistent.

Humbled themselves —i.e., repented. (Comp. chap. xii. 6, 7.)

9) Also in Judah . . . was. —Rather, Moreover upon Judah was the hand of God: a phrase here used of a Divine influence for good. (Comp. Ezra viii. 32.) Elsewhere the phrase has the sense of judicial visitation; e.g., Exod. ix. 3.

The commandment . . . by the word of the Lord. —Comp. the like phrase, chap. xxx. 15. The
Idolatrous Altars Destroyed. II. CHRONICLES, XXX. Hezekiah Prays for the People.

mandment of the king and of the princes, by the word of the Lord.

(13) And there assembled at Jerusalem much people to keep the feast of unleavened bread in the second month, a very great congregation. (14) And they arose and took away the altars that were in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense took they away, and cast them into the brook Kidron. (15) Then they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the second month: and the priests and the Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought in the burnt offerings into the house of the LORD. (16) And they stood in their place after their manner, according to the law of Moses the man of God; the priests sprinkled the blood, which they received of the hand of the Levites. (17) For there were many in the congregation that were not sanctified: therefore the Levites had the charge of the killing of the passovers for every one that was not clean, to sanctify them unto the LORD. (18) For a multitude of the people, even many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the passover otherwise than it was written. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, The good Lord pardon every one (19) that prepareth his heart to seek God, the Lord God of his fathers, though he

The Passover at Jerusalem (verses 13—22).

(13) Much people.—A very great congregation—a congregation in great multitude (lārōb mîʾēḏ). (See on verse 5.)
(14) Took away the altars.—The altars of burnt offering erected by Ahaz “in every corner” of the city (chap. xxviii. 24).
(15) Altars for incense.—Ha-mēgillōʾērōth—literally, the incense-burners. The term occurs here only.
(16) Cast them into the brook Kidron.—See on chap. xxix. 16. Thus the city was purified as well as the Temple.
(17) And the priests and the Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves.—Ashamed of their former reluctance to purify themselves from the defilement contracted by their connection with illegal cults and sanctuaries during the late reign (chap. xxix. 34; and verse 3, supra). In the former passage the Levites are favourably contrasted with the priests; here they are spoken of in the same terms, a verbal inaccuracy apparently due to the writer’s desire to be brief.
(18) In their place.—Omdām. This word is used in this sense only in Daniel, Chronicles, Nehemiah. (Comp. chaps. xxxiv. 31, xxxv. 10.)
After their manner—i.e., “according to their order” (1 Chron. vi. 31).
According to the law . . . of God.—Another reference to the Pentateuchal legislation. (See chaps. xxvii. 18, xxiv. 6, xiv. 4, xvii. 9.)
Sprinkled . . . Levites.—Rather, sprinkling the blood from the hand of the Levites. On this occasion the Levites, and not the laymen who presented the victims, slew the lambs and handed the blood to the priests to be dashed against the altar. The reason of this breach of the ordinary rule is given in next verse.
(19) There were many in the congregation that were not sanctified.—Comp. chap. xxxv. 8, 10, 11, where the Levites are again represented as doing the same work, but not as an exception. The precedent of Hezekiah’s Passover would seem to have become the rule. (Comp. also Ezra vi. 20.)
To sanctify them—i.e., the lambs, which would have been ceremonially unclean if slain by unclean hands. (Comp. chap. ii. 4, “to dedicate it unto Him;” the same verb.)
(20) A multitude.—Marōth (chap. ix. 6; 1 Chron. xii. 39). Only in the Chronicles in this sense. Elsewhere the term means “increase” of children (1 Sam. ii. 33), or of money, i.e., interest (rāʾēs, Lev. xxxv. 37).
Ephraim . . . Zebulun.—The names indicate a documentary source.
Had not cleansed themselves.—As was natural in the case of persons who had long been estranged from the legal religion of Jehovah (ḥiṭ₃ḥāʾāʾī, psalms form of ḥiṭ₃ḥāʾāʾ, Ezra vi. 20, occurs here only).
Yet did they eat . . . written.—But ate the Passover in non-accordance with the Scripture—i.e., in illegal fashion, being themselves unclean. (Comp. Num. ix. 6, seq., according to which unclean persons were bound to abstain from eating the Passover until the fourteenth of the second month.)
But Hezekiah prayed.—For Hezekiah had prayed for them, and therefore their irregularity was condoned.
The good Lord.—Jehovah the good; so only here. (Comp. Ps. xxvi. 8.)
Good—i.e., kind, generous; beneficus, benevolus.
Pardon every one.—Properly, make atonement on behalf of every one (kipper bēʾad); Lev. xvi. 6, 11.
In the sense of forgive the construction is different: Ps. lxxv. 4; Ezek. xvi. 63.
(21) That prepareth.—Hath directed. The division of verses here is obviously incorrect. (The mistake was doubtless caused by the omission of the relative in the Hebrew between kol, “every one,” and lēḇāḇō heḵin, “his heart he hath directed.” The construction is parallel to that in 1 Chron. xv. 12, “unto the place that I have prepared for it;” so LXX.)
The prayer is, “Jehovah the Good atone for every one who hath directed his heart to seek the true God, even Jehovah, the God of his fathers, albeit not (literally, and not) according to the holy purifying”—i.e., although he hath not rigorously observed the law of purification.
Purification of the sanctuary.—Or, holy purification: a phrase only found here (comp. 1 Chron. xxiii. 28).
The prayer evinces a preference of spiritual sincerity to mere literal observance of legal prescriptions, which is all the more remarkable as occurring in a writer whose
be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary. (20) And the Lord hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people.

(21) And the children of Israel that were present at Jerusalem kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with great gladness: and the Levites and the priests praised the Lord day by day, singing with loud instruments unto the Lord.

(22) And Hezekiah spake 3 comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the Lord: and they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace offerings, and making confession to the Lord God of their fathers.

(23) And the whole assembly took counsel to keep other seven days; and they kept other seven days with gladness. (24) For Hezekiah king of Judah did give to the congregation a thousand bullocks and seven thousand sheep; and the princes gave to the congregation a thousand bullocks and ten thousand sheep: and a great number of priests sanctified themselves. (25) And all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the congregation that came out of Israel, and the strangers that came out of the land of Israel, and that dwelt in Judah, rejoiced. (26) So there was great joy in Jerusalem: for since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel there was not the like in Jerusalem.

principal aim is to foster a due reverence for the external ordinances and traditional customs of religion. (20) And the Lord hearkened to Hezekiah.—Comp. Gen. xx. 17. “And Abraham prayed unto God; and God healed Abimelech and his wife, &c.” In the present instance the prayer of Hezekiah is thought of “acknowledging” the Divine goodness, as averting a visitation of Divine wrath in the shape of disease and death. (Comp. Lev. xv. 31, “Thus shall ye confess guilt” ( Neh. ix. 3; Lev. v. 5; Num. v. 7).)

(22) Kept the feast . . . with great gladness.—See 1 Chron. xiii. 8, xv. 16, seq. 28, and similar passages.

(23) And the Levites.—With stringed instruments.

(24) And the priests.—With clarions.

(25) Praised.—Were praising; throughout the seven days’ festival.

(26) Singing.—Omit.

(27) With loud instruments unto the Lord.—With instruments of strength to Jehovah. This curious phrase apparently means instruments with which they ascribed strength to Jehovah; that is to say, with which they accompanied their psalms of praise. (Comp. the many psalms which glorify the strength of the God of Israel—e.g., Ps. xxix. 1, “Ascribe unto Jehovah, ye sons of God, ascribe unto Jehovah glory and strength.”)

There is, however, something to be said for the Authorised Version. (Comp. chap. v. 12, 13; 1 Chron. xv. 28, xvi. 42, from which it appears that the chronicler preferred music that was loud and strong.)

(28) Spake comfortably.—See margin, and comp. Lev. xx. 2.

(29) That taught the good knowledge of the Lord.—Rather, were showing good skill for (in honour of) Jehovah, in their chanting and playing. The king encouraged the musicians with kindly words of praise.

(30) And they did eat throughout the feast.—Literally, they ate the feast, like “they ate the passover.” The meaning is that the assembly ate the sacrificial meals, which were supplied from the flesh of the “peace offerings.” The phrase is peculiar to this passage. The LXX. has καὶ σωτηριάω, “and they finished,” a difference which implies no great change in the Hebrew writing, but is against the context.

(31) Making confession.—LXX. rightly, λαμπροκινο­μενοι. “The meaning is “yielding hearty thanks,” “acknowledging” the Divine goodness. Everywhere else the Hebrew word means “to confess guilt” (Neh. ix. 3; Lev. v. 5; Num. v. 7).

(32) Took counsel.—Determined, the result of taking counsel (verse 2). To keep.—Literally, to do or make.

(33) Other seven days.—As a prolongation of the festivities. (Comp. chap. vii. 9.)

(34) With gladness.—Simhah, an adverbial accusative. But some Hebrew MSS. express the obligation. (Comp. Lev. xv. 28, from which it appears that the chronicler persons took part in the festival—(1) the Judaeans, including the priests and Levites; (2) their Israelite guests; (3) the “strangers” †gerim—i.e., the proselytes, both those who came from the northern kingdom and those who dwelt in Judah. The word †gerim is not the same as †gerim (chap. xv. 9), with which Lange’s comment confuses it. (Comp. Lev. xxvii. 12.)

(35) For since the time of Solomon . . . there was not the like.—The chronicler himselt thus compares this great festival with the twofold Feast of the Dedication of the Temple (chap. vii. 1–10). That festival, like this one, had been prolonged seven days, because the Feast of Tabernacles immediately followed upon it; and “there had been no other since the time
II. CHRONICLES, XXXI.

The Priests and Levites.

The Priests and the Levites arose and blessed the people; and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling place, even unto heaven.

CHAPTER XXXI.—(1) Now when all this was finished, all Israel that were present went out to the cities of Judah, and brake the images in pieces, and cut down the groves, and threw down the high places and the altars out of all Judah and Benjamin, in Ephraim also and Manasseh, until they had utterly destroyed them all. Then all the children of Israel returned, every man to his possession, into their own cities.

(2) And Hezekiah appointed the courses of the priests and the Levites; but comp. chap. xxix., out of his own revenues. See the account of his duration, or abundance of sacrifices, or number of participants, or the joy that distinguished it.

(3) That the prayer was heard on the present occasion, the writer infers from the progress of reform among the people, and the wonderful deliverance from Assyria, as related in the ensuing chapters.

Their prayer came up.—Entered into His holy dwelling (comp. Isa. xvii. 6, xviii. 5) into the heavens. Notice the characteristic omission of the sacred Name.

XXXI.

Progress of the Religious Reformation.

(1) Destruction of the images and high places in both kingdoms. (Comp. 2 Kings xviii. 4.)

Now when all this was finished.—And when they had finished all this—that is, the business of the Passover.

All Israel that were present went out.—Their iconoclastic zeal had been thoroughly roused by the festival in which they had just taken part.

The images.—Mazzeboth, "pillars." (See Hos. iii. 4, and 3 Chron. iv. 2.)

The groves.—The Ashérim. The sacred trunks, emblematic of physical fertility. (Comp. Hos. iv. 13.)

In Ephraim also and Manasseh.—That is, in the territory of the northern kingdom, which was at this time in the last stage of political weakness, and rapidly drifting towards final ruin. The band of Jewish and Israelite zealots would not, therefore, be likely to encounter any serious opposition.

Until they had utterly destroyed.—Ad Wkallech (chap. xxiv. 10). Literally, so far as to finishing.

(4) The courses... their courses. Hezekiah restored the system of service in rotation, ascribed to Solomon that could compare with this in respect of duration, or abundance of sacrifices, or number of participants, or the joy that distinguished it. (Bertheau).

(27) Then the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people; and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling place, even unto heaven.

He appointed also... the Levites. (3) He appointed also the king’s portion of his substance for the burnt offerings, to wält, for the morning and evening burnt offerings, and the burnt offerings for the sabbaths, and for the new moons, and for the set feasts, as it is written in the law of the Lord.

(4) Moreover he commanded the people that dwelt in Jerusalem to give the portion of the priests and the Levites, that they might be encouraged in the law of the Lord.

And as soon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the first-fruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey, and of all the increase of the field; and every man according to his service, the priests and Levites for burnt offerings and for peace offerings, to minister, and to give thanks, and to praise in the gates of the tents of the Lord.

The priests and Levites.—Literally, to the priests and Levites. The words depend upon those which immediately precede. LXX., καὶ τὰ ἑσφαμέα ἑκάστου κατὰ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ λειτουργίαν τοῖς ἱερεῖς καὶ τοῖς λευτέρας.

To minister... praise.—The chronicler’s usual definition of the Levitical functions.

In the gates... Lord.—Literally, in the gates of the camps of Jehovah. Comp. 1 Chron. ix. 18, 19, where the phrase is explained.

The portion of the priests and the Levites. —The firstfruits and tithes, ordained in Exod. xxiii. 19; Lev. xxvii. 35—36; Num. xviii. 22, 24—25; Deut. xvi. 14, 15. That they might be encouraged in the law.

Rather, that they might stick fast unto the law. For this use of ἑκάστα, comp. 2 Sam. xviii. 9, “his head stuck fast in the terebinth.” The meaning is, that they might be enabled to devote themselves wholly and solely to their religious duties, without being distracted by any secular anxieties. (See Neh. xii. 10, “And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given; for the Levites and the singers that did the work were fled every one to his field.”)

(5) And... came abroad.—Literally, And when the word broke forth;—i.e., spread abroad.

The children of Israel. —Here the people of Jerusalem, who in the chronicler’s day had a pro-
be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary. (20) And the Lord hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people.

(21) And the children of Israel that were present at Jerusalem kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with great gladness: and the Levites and the priests praised the Lord day by day, singing with loud instruments unto the Lord. (22) And Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the Lord: and they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace offerings, and making confession to the Lord God of their fathers.

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The Keeping of the Passover.

| II. CHRONICLES, XXX. |

1. Heb., found.
2. Heb., instruments of strength.
3. Heb., in the heart of all, &c.
4. Heb., lifted up, or, offered.
5. Heb., the Lord.

principal aim is to foster a due reverence for the external ordinances and traditional customs of religion.

(20) And the Lord hearkened to Hezekiah, Comp. Gen. xx. 17. "And Jacob prayed unto God; and God healed Abraham and his wife," &c. In the present instance the prayer of Hezekiah is thought of as averting a visitation of Divine wrath in the shape of disease and death. (Comp. Lev. xv. 31, "Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness; that they die not in their uncleanness, when they defile my dwelling-place, that is among them.")

For the word heal in connection with uncleanness comp. Isa. vi. 5, 10. See also chap. vii. 14, supra; Hos. v. 13, xiv. 4.

(23) Kept the feast, . . . with great gladness.

—See 1 Chron. xiii. 8, xv. 16, seq., 28, and similar passages.

And the Levites.—With stringed instruments.

And the priests.—With clarions.

Praised.—Were praising; throughout the seven days' festival.

Singing.—Omit.

With loud instruments unto the Lord.—With instruments of strength to Jehovah. This curious phrase apparently means instruments with which they ascribed strength to Jehovah; that is to say, with which they accompanied their psalms of praise. (Comp. the many psalms which glorify the strength of the God of Israel—e.g., Ps. xxix. 1, "Ascribe unto Jehovah, ye sons of God, ascribe unto Jehovah glory and strength.")

There is, however, something to be said for the Authorised Version. (Comp. chap. v. 12, 13; 1 Chron. xv. 28, xvi. 42, from which it appears that the chronicler preferred music that was loud and strong.)

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That taught the good knowledge of the Lord.—Rather, were showing good skill for (in honour of) Jehovah, in their chanting and playing. The king encouraged the musicians with kindly words of praise.

They did eat throughout the feast.—Literally, they ate the feast, like "they ate the passover." The meaning is that the assembly ate the sacrificial meals, which were supplied from the flesh of the "passover." The phrase is peculiar to this passage. The LXX. has καὶ συνετέκτεν, "and they finished:" a difference which implies no great change in the Hebrew writing, but is against the context. (23) Took counsel.—Determined, the result of taking counsel (verse 2).

Other seven days.—As a prolongation of the festivities. (Comp. chap. vii. 9.)

With gladness.—Simḥah, an adverbial accusative. But some Hebrew MSS. express the with, as in chap. vii. 10. The chronicler is fond of dwelling upon the joy of the ancient festivals, as though he would suggest greater whole-heartedness and magnificence to the people and princes of his own day.

(24) Did give . . . gave.—Had presented (Exod. xxxiv. 24)—sitl, for sacrifice as a terumah, or "heave offering." The gifts of king and princes for the Mazzoth festival were so abundant that they sufficed not only for the feast itself, but also for an additional week of rejoicing.

And a great number of priests.—Literally, and priests had sanctified themselves in multitude, or to abundance. The priests no longer hung back as they had done previously (verses 3 and 15; chap. xxix. 34). There was now no lack of persons duly purified for the sacrifice of so many victims.

(25) And all the congregation.—Three classes of persons took part in the festival—(1) the Judeans, including the priests and Levites; (2) their Israelite guests; (3) the "strangers"—gārim,—i.e., the proselytes, both those who came from the northern kingdom and those who dwelt in Judah. The word gārim is not the same as qārim (chap. xv. 9), with which Lange's comment confuses it. (Comp. Lev. xvii. 12.)

(26) For since the time of Solomon . . . there was not the like.—The chronicler himself thus compares this great festival with the twofold Feast of the Dedication of the Temple (chap. vii. 1—10). That festival, like this one, had been prolonged seven days, because the Feast of Tabernacles immediately followed upon it; and there had been no other since the time
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(2) And Hezekiah appointed the courses of the priests and the Levites after their courses, every man according to his service, the priests and Levites for burnt offerings, and for peace offerings, to minister, and to give thanks, and to praise in the gates of the tents of the Lord. (3) He appointed also the king’s portion of his substance for the burnt offerings, to wit, for the morning and evening burnt offerings, and the burnt offerings for the sabbaths, and for the new moons, and for the set feasts, as it is written in the law of the Lord. (4) Moreover he commanded the people that dwelt in Jerusalem to give the portion of the priests and the Levites, that they might be encouraged in the law of the Lord. (5) And as soon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the first-fruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey, and of all the increase of the field; and

of Solomon that could compare with this in respect of duration, or abundance of sacrifices, or number of participants, or the joy that distinguished it.” (Bertheau).

(27) Then the priests the Levites.—And the Levitical priests; not any irregular ministers. Some Hebrew MSS., the LXX., Syriac, and the Vulg. read, “And the priests and the Levites”; but comp. chap. xxviii. 18.

And their voice was heard.—The priestly blessing was an prayer that Jehovah would bless. (See Num. vi. 22—27.) That the prayer was heard on the present occasion, the writer infers from the progress of reform among the people, and the wonderful deliverance from Assyria, as related in the ensuing chapters.

Their prayer came up.—Entered into His holy dwelling (comp. Isa. xviii. 6, xxviii. 5) into the heavens. Notice the characteristic omission of the sacred Name.

XXXI.

Progress of the Religious Reformation.

(1) Destruction of the images and high places in both kingdoms. (Comp. 2 Kings xviii. 4.)

Now when all this was finished.—And when they had finished all this—that is, the business of the Passover.

All Israel that were present went out.—Their iconoclastic zeal had been thoroughly roused by the festival in which they had just taken part.

The images.—Maspeborah, “pillars.” (See Hos. iii. 4, and 2 Chron. xiv. 2.)

The groves.—The Asherim. The sacred trunks, emblematic of physical fertility. (Comp. Hos. iv. 13.)

In Ephraim also and Manasseh.—That is, in the territory of the northern kingdom, which was at this time in the last stage of political weakness, and rapidly drifting towards final ruin. The band of Jewish and Israelite zealots would not, therefore, be likely to encounter any serious opposition.

Until they had utterly destroyed.—‘Ad Wallelh (chap. xxiv. 19). Literally, so far as to finishing.

(2) The courses . . . their courses.—Hezekiah restored the system of service in rotation, ascribed to David. (Comp. chap. viii. 14, “according to the order of David.”)

Every man according to his service.—See the same phrase in Num. vii. 5, 7. Literally, after the mouth (i.e., rule, prescription) of his service.

The priests and Levites.—Literally, to the priests and Levites. The words depend upon those which immediately precede. LXX., καὶ τὰς ἐγγέφαμες ἔκθεσιν καὶ τὴν κατὰ τὸν Λοίμον λατρείαν τῶν ἱερέων καὶ τῶν λευκτών.

To minister . . . praise.—The chronicler’s usual definition of the Levitical functions.

In the gates . . . Lord.—Literally, in the gates of the camps of Jehovah. Comp. 1 Chron. ix. 18, 19, where the phrase is explained.

(3) He appointed also . . . set feasts.—Rather, And the king’s portion (i.e., the part he contributed) from his property was for the burnt offerings—viz., for the burnt offerings of the morning and the evening, and the burnt offerings on the Sabbath, and the new moons, and the set feasts. The king gave the victims for the sacrifices prescribed in Num. xxvii., xxviii., out of his own revenues. See the account of his wealth (chap. xxvii. 27—29). The “set feasts” were the three great festivals, &c., enumerated in Num. i.c.

(4) Moreover.—Literally, And he said to the people, to wit, to the dwellers in Jerusalem. (Comp. chap. xxiv. 8; 1 Chron. xvi. 17.)

The portion of the priests and the Levites.—The first-fruits and tithes, ordained in Exod. xxiii. 19; Lev. xxvii. 33—39; Num. xviii. 12, 20—24; Deut. xxvi.

That they might be encouraged in the law.—Rather, that they might stick fast unto the law. For this use of ἐμφασεν, comp. 2 Sam. xviii. 9, “his head stuck fast in the terebinth.” The meaning is, that they might be enabled to devote themselves wholly and solely to their religious duties, without being distracted by any secular anxieties. (See Neh. xii. 10, “And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given; for the Levites and the singers that did the work were fled every one to his field.”)

(5) And . . . came abroad.—Literally, And when the word broke forth—i.e., spread abroad.

The children of Israel.—Here the people of Jerusalem, who in the chronicler’s day had a pre-
The People's Offerings

II. CHRONICLES, XXXI.

The tithe of all things brought they in abundantly. (6) And concerning the children of Israel and Judah, that dwelt in the cities of Judah, they also brought in the tithe of oxen and sheep, and the *tithe of holy things which were consecrated unto the Lord their God, and laid them 1 by heaps. (7) In the third month they began to lay the foundation of the heaps, and finished them in the seventh month. (8) And when Hezekiah and the princes came and saw the heaps, they blessed the Lord, and his people Israel. (9) Then Hezekiah questioned with the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps. (10) And Azariah the chief priest of the house of Zadok answered him, and said, Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the Lord, we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty: for the Lord hath blessed his people; and that which is left is this great store.

1 Heb., heaps. 2 Or, storerooms. 3 Heb., of the head.
hand of Cononiah and Shimei his brother, at the commandment of Hezekiah the king, and Azariah the ruler of the house of God. (14) And Kore the son of Imnah the Levite, the porter toward the east, was over the freewill offerings of God, to distribute the oblations of the Lord, and the most holy things. (15) And next him were Eden, and Miniamin, and Jeshua, and Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah, in the cities of the priests, in their set office, to give to their brethren by courses, as well to the great as to the small; (16) besides their genealogy of males, from three years old and upward, even unto every one that entereth

Ruler (nagid) of the house of God.—Comp. 1 Chron. ix. 11. Azariah was named in verse 10, supra. (14) The porter toward the east.—Comp. 1 Chron. xi. 18. Koré had charge of “the freewill offerings of God,” or voluntary gifts (Deut. xii. 17); and it was his duty “to distribute the oblations of the Lord and the most holy things” to the priests.

To distribute the oblations.—To give the Terumah of Jehovah—i.e., the portion of the offerings which, though consecrated to Jehovah, was transferred by Him the most holy things to the priests.

And the most holy things—i.e., that part of the sin and trespass offerings (Lev. vi. 10, 22, vii. 6) and of the meat offerings (Lev. ii. 3, 10) which were to be eaten by the priests in the sanctuary.

Next him.—By his hand (‘al yadı). (Comp. 1 Chron. xxv. 2, 3.) The meaning is, “subordinate to him.”

The six Levites here named as under the direction of Kore had the duty of distributing a proper share of the first-fruits, tithes, and dedicated things to their brethren, and each of them was assigned to a particular class and to those who were registered among all their little ones, their wives and their sons and their daughters, of the whole corporation” (of priests). The board of Levites had to keep a register of all who had claims on the provisions which they had to distribute. The general sense is the same if, as seems better, we trace the connection thus: “To give to their brethren, and to those who were registered among all their little ones,” &c., explaining ḫithyāhāsh behkol-tappaim as a relative sentence with the relative suppressed. (Comp. chap. xxx. 18, 19, and verse 19, ad fin.)

Through all the congregation.—Or, to a whole assembly—as it, of wives and children of the priests and Levites.

In their set office.—Or trust, or faithfulness (emīnāh). (See Note on 1 Chron. ix. 22.)

They sanctified themselves.—They used to show themselves holy (i.e., behave conscientiously) in regard to the holy (i.e., the hallowed gifts, which they had to distribute). Perhaps, however, the Authorized Version is here substantially correct, the sense being that the Levites fulfilled their trust with perfect good faith.

Also of the sons of Aaron the priests.—Officers were likewise appointed to distribute portions to the priests and Levites who dwelt on their farms outside of the sacerdotal cities. Render, “and for the sons of Aaron the priests, in the farms of the pasturage of their cities, in each several city, there were men who were specified by names, to give portions to every male among the priests, and to every one that was registered among the Levites.”

Fields of the suburbs.—See Lev. xxv. 34; Num. xxxv. 5.

Expressed by name.—See 1 Chron. xii. 31; chap. xxviii. 15.

into the house of the Lord, his daily portion for their service in their charges according to their courses; (17) both to the genealogy of the priests by the house of their fathers, and the Levites from twenty years old and upward, in their charges by their courses; (19) and to the genealogy of all their little ones, their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, through all the congregation: for in their set office they sanctified themselves in holiness; (19) also of the sons of Aaron the priests, which were in the fields of the suburbs of their cities, in every several city, the men that were expressed by name, to give portions to
all the males among the priests, and to all that were reckoned by genealogies among the Levites.

(20) And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and wrought that which was good and right and truth before the Lord his God. (21) And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered.

CHAPTER XXXII.—(1) After these things, and the establishment thereof, Sennacherib king of Assyria came, and entered into Judah, and encamped against the fenced cities, and thought 1 to win them for himself. (2) And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem, (3) he took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains which were without the city: and they did help him. (4) So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ran through the midst of the land, saying, Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water? (5) Also he strengthened himself, and built up all cities of Judah, and took them.” Sennacherib himself boasts as follows: “And Hazakiyahu of the country of the Jews who had not submitted to my yoke, forty-six strong cities of his, fortresses, and the small cities of their neighbourhood, which were without number... I approached, I took.” The chronicler’s object is to relate the mighty deliverance of Hezekiah. Hence he omits such details as would weaken the impression he desires to produce. For the same reason nothing is said here of Hezekiah’s submission and payment of tribute (2 Kings xviii. 14—16); and perhaps for the further reason (as suggested by Keil) that these negotiations had no influence on the after-course and issue of the war, but not because (as Therasius alleges) the chronicler was unwilling to mention Hezekiah’s (forced) sacrifice. They are omitted also in Isaiah, where the account is in other respects abridged as compared with Kings.

To all that were reckoned by genealogies.—Registered. The relative is omitted before the verb kethyahesh, which is here the perfect as in verse 18, not the infinitive as in verse 16.

(20, 21) Conclusion of the account of Hezekiah’s reformation.

(20) Truth (ha’emeth).—Faithfulness, or sincerity.

(20) Commandments.—Heb., commandment.

To seek his God. — In order to seek, or by way of seeking.

He did it with all his heart. — Comp. the frequent phrase, “with a perfect heart” (1 Chron. xxviii. 9, and elsewhere); also “and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart,” &c. (Deut. vi. 5).

XXXII.

THE INVASION OF SENNAKERIB—HEZEKIAH’S RECOVERY FROM DEADLY SICKNESS—HIS PRIDE AND WEALTH—HIS RECESSION OF THE EMBASSY FROM BABYLON—END OF THE REIGN.

The narrative is once more parallel to that of Kings (2 Kings xviii. 13—xx. 21), which is repeated in the Book of Isaiah (chaps. xxxvi,—xxxix.).

(1—23) Invasion and Divine overthrow of Sennacherib. (Comp. 2 Kings xviii. 13—xx. 37.) The Assyrian monarch’s own record of the campaign may be read on his great hexagonal prism of terra-cotta, preserved in the British Museum, containing an inscription in 487 lines of cuneiform writing, which is lithographed in the Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia, III. 38, 39, and printed in G. Smith’s History of Sennacherib.

(1) After these things, and the establishment thereof. — Rather, After these matters, and this faithfulness (chap. xxxi. 20). For the date, see Note on 2 Kings xviii. 13.

Sennacherib.—So the Vulg. The LXX. gives εὐρυθρός or εἶπ; Herodotus, Σουλαχέθος; Josephus, Ἐυρυθρός. The Hebrew is Sannahirib. The real name as given by the Assyrian monuments is Sin-ah-hi-resa, or erib (“Sin,” i.e., the moon-god, “multiplied brothers”).

And thought to win them for himself. — Literally, and said to himself that he would break them open (chap. xxi. 17), or and commanded to break them open for himself. Kings states that he fulfilled his purpose; he “came up against all the fenced

Preparations for the Defence (verses 2—8).

This section is peculiar to the Chronicles. Its contents are “perfectly credible” (Therasius), and are borne out by Isa. xxi. 8—11, and 2 Kings xx. 20, and by the inscription of Sennacherib.

(2) And that he was purposed to fight. — Literally, and his face was for the war. (Comp. chap. xx. 3; Luke ix. 53.)

To stop. — To close in with masonry, so as to conceal. (But comp. 2 Kings iii. 19, 25.) LXX., ἔφερες τὰ ἑδαμονέα. They did help him. — By “gathering much people together” (verse 4).

(4) The fountains. — Ma’anath. Verse 3 has “springs” (daphneth). The brook.—Naḥal. “The wady.” The Gihon is meant, a watercourse in the Valley of Hinnom, supplied with water by the springs which Hezekiah closed in and diverted. See Note on verse 30, and 2 Kings xx. 20; comp. Sirach xlviii. 17, “Hezekiah fortified his city, and brought into their midst the Gog” (LXX., Vas), or, “into its midst water” (LXX., Alex.).

That ran. — That was flowing over (Isa. xxviii. 8). The overflow of the springs formed the stream.

The kings of Assyria. — A vague rhetorical plural, as in chap. xxviii. 16.

Also he strengthened himself. — And he took courage. (Chaps. xv. 8, xviii. 1.)
the wall that was broken, and raised it up to the towers, and another wall without, and repaired Millo in the city of David, and made 4 darts and shields in abundance. 6 And he set captains of war over the people, and gathered them together to him in the street of the gate of the city, and 3 spake comfortably to them, saying, 7 Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him: 8 with him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.

(9) After this did Sennacherib king of Assyria send his servants to Jerusalem, (but he himself laid siege against Lachish, and all his 4 power with him,) unto Hezekiah king of Judah, and unto all Judah that were at Jerusalem, saying, 10 Thus saith Sennacherib king of Assyria, Whereon do ye trust, that ye abide in the siege in Jerusalem? (11) Doth not Hezekiah persuade you to give over yourselves to die by famine and by thirst, saying, The Lord our God shall deliver us out of the hand of the king of Assyria? (12) Hath not the same

Built up all the wall that was broken.—Isa. xxii. 9, 10, where "many breaches" are spoken of, and it is said that "houses were pulled down to fortify arm." (Comp. Isa. xxxi. 3: "Their horses are flesh and not spirit.") His power is human, ours superhuman.

To fight our battles.—1 Sam. viii. 20, "a king ... to fight our battles." (12) The same Hezekiah.—Hezekiah himself.

Rested themselves upon.—Learned on—e.g., a staff, Isa. xxxvi. 6; and so trusted in, Isa. xlvii. 2.

(9-12) A brief summary of what is related in 2 Kings xviii. 17—xix.

(10) After this did Sennacherib send.—See 2 Kings xviii. 17.

But he himself ... Lachish.—The verb nilkham, "fought," has perhaps fallen out. The great inscription of Sennacherib says nothing about the siege of Lachish; but a bas-relief, now in the British Museum, represents him seated on his throne receiving a file of captives who issue from the gate of a city. Over the king's head is written "Sennacherib, the king of multitudes, the king of the land of Asshur, on a raised throne sate, and caused the spoils of the city of Lachish (Lokiam) to pass before him.

His power.—Literally, his dominion or realm. Comp. Jer. xxxiv. 1. "all the kingdoms of the lands of the dominion of his hand." The word hēl, "army," may have fallen out.

(12) Hath not the same

Whereon ... the siege.—Rather, Whereon are ye trusting, and why are ye sitting in distress in Jerusalem? The phrase sitting or abiding in distress occurs in Jer. x. 17. (Comp. also Deut. xxvii. 53.) Verses 10—15 reproduce in brief the leading ideas of 2 Kings xviii. 19—25 and 28—35.

(10) Doth not Hezekiah persuade you.—Is not Hezekiah inciting you (2 Kings xviii. 32; 1 Chron. xxix. 1). The verb recurs in verse 15.

(12) The same Hezekiah.—Hezekiah himself.

Ye shall worship ... upon it.—Literally, before one altar shall ye worship, and thereon shall ye burn incense. Comp. 2 Kings xviii. 22: "Is it not He whose high places and altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, Before
Hezekiah, taking away his high places and his altars, and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall worship before one altar, and burn incense upon it? (13) Know ye not what I and my fathers have done unto all the people of other lands? were the gods of the nations of those lands any ways able to deliver their lands out of mine hand? (14) Who was there among all the gods of those nations that my fathers utterly destroyed, that could deliver his people out of mine hand, that your God should be able to deliver you out of mine hand? (15) Now therefore let not Hezekiah deceive you, nor persuade you on this manner, neither yet believe him: for no god of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people out of mine hand, that your God should destroy all their gods, because of the wrath of the Lord God of Israel, and to speak against him, saying, As the gods of the nations of other lands have not delivered their people out of mine hand, so shall not the God of Hezekiah deliver his people out of mine hand. (16) Then they cried with a loud voice in the Jews' speech unto the people of Jerusalem that were on the wall, to affright them, and to trouble them; that they might take the city. (17) And they spake against the God of Jerusalem, as against the gods of the people of the earth, which were the work of the hands of man. (18) And for this cause Hezekiah the

this altar shall ye worship in Jerusalem?" The chronicler is even more emphatic than Kings in asserting the sole validity of the Brazen Altar in the Temple Court.

(13) What I and my fathers have done.—The Assyrian kings are fond of such references to their predecessors.

The people of other lands.—Rather, the peoples of the countries.

Those lands.—The countries. Their lands.—Their country. The chronicler omits the names of the vanished states given in 2 Kings xviii. 34, some of which had probably become obscure by lapse of time.

Assurbanipal relates that in his eighth campaign he carried off the gods of Elam with the other spoils: “His gods, his goddesses, his furniture, his goods, people small and great, I carried off to Assyria;” and he adds the names of nineteen of these deities.

(14) Who was there among all the gods.—Comp. 2 Kings xviii. 35. Utterly destroyed.—Put under the ban, devoted to destruction.

(15) Neither yet believe him.—And believe him not.

How much less . . . deliver you.—Rather, much less will your gods deliver you; or, much more will your gods not deliver you. (Comp. Isa. xxxvii. 10, 11.) According to ancient conceptions the gods of strong nations were strong gods. Now the Assyrians had vanquished stronger nations than Judah, and therefore, as they ignorantly supposed, stronger deities than the God of Judah. (Some Hebrew MSS. and all the versions have the verb in the singular, which gives the sense, “much less will your god deliver you.”)

(16) Spake yet more.—See the parallel passages in Kings and Isaiah. The verse shows that the chronicler does not profess to give a full report.

Against the Lord God.—Literally, against Jehovah the (true) God. “Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? . . . the Holy One of Israel” (Isa. xxxvii. 23).

(17) He wrote also letters to rail on.—And letters wrote he to reproach (Isa. xxxvii. 23). Sennacherib wrote to Hezekiah demanding submission, after the failure of the mission of the Tartan and his companions (2 Kings xix. 8—14). If, therefore, the chronicler had been careful about the strictly chronological sequence of events, this verse would have followed rather than preceded 18, 19. As it is, the remark is thrown in here as a parenthesis, in the middle of the account of the behaviour of the Assyrian envoys. Something must be allowed for the necessities of abbreviation, which the author has studied in the entire narrative.

As the gods . . . have not delivered.—Literally, Like the gods of the nations of the countries, which have not delivered. (Comp. 2 Kings xix. 10, 12: “Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee,” &c.) “Have the gods of the nations delivered them,” &c.

(18) They cried . . . on the wall.—LXX. and Vulg., “he cried” (i.e., the Rab-sak). (See 2 Kings xviii. 28—29.) To affright them, and to trouble (terrify, scare) them; that they might take the city.—This is the chronicler’s own statement of the purpose of the words of the Rab-sak reported in 2 Kings xviii. 28—35.

To affright.—The pixel of yârâ, “to fear,” occurs besides, thrice in Neh. vi. 9, 14, 19; and once in 2 Sam. xiv. 15.

(19) They spake against.—Or, spake of. Literally, unto. (Comp. Ps. ii. 7, iii. 2.)

People.—Peoples.

The work.—The versions have “works.” Instead of repeating the offers which the Assyrian envoys made to the people of Jerusalem, to induce them to submit, the chronicler dwells on that blasphemy against the God of Israel which was the cause of the Assyrian overthrow.

The work of the hands of man.—A reminiscence of 2 Kings xix. 18: “And they put their gods into the fire; for they were no gods, but the work of human hands, wood and stone” (part of Hezekiah’s prayer).

(20) For this cause.—Upon this (al zoth). The reference is to the Assyrian blasphemies against Jehovah, which Hezekiah urged in his prayer for de-
The Assyrians Slain. II. CHRONICLES, XXXII. Hezekiah’s Sickness.

king, and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, prayed and cried to heaven. (21) And the Lord sent an angel, which cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he was come into the house of his god, they that came forth of his own bowels slew him there with the sword. (22) Thus the Lord saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of all other, and guided them on every side.

liverance (2 Kings xix. 16), and to which Isaiah referred in his prophetic answer (Isa. xxxvii. 23). The prayer of Hezekiah is given in 2 Kings xix. 15–19; Isa. xxxvii. 15–20. The parallel passages do not say that Isaiah also prayed; but 2 Kings xix. 2–4, and Isa. xxxvii. 2–4, report that the king sent a deputation of nobles to the prophet, requesting his prayers “for the remnant that were left.”

Cried to heaven.—Comp. chap. xxx. 27; 1 Sam. v. 12.

(23) And the Lord sent an angel.—See 2 Kings xix. 35, seq.; Isa. xxxvii. 36, seq. Hitzig thinks that Ps. cxlv.—clxviii. were composed by Isaiah to commemorate this great natural miracle, an hypothesis which is born out by the similarity observable between the language and ideas of these psalms and those of Isaiah’s prophecies.

Which cut off . . . valour.—Literally, and he hid (i.e., caused to disappear, destroyed; the Greek ἔκρυσεν, Exod. xxi. 23) every valiant warrior, and leader and captain. (Comp. Ps. lxxv. I, a psalm which in the LXX. bears the title διὰ πρὸς τὸν Ἀσσυρίον.) Kings gives the number of those who perished as 185,000.

With shame of face.—Ps. xlv. 15, “The shame of my face hath covered me.” (Ezra ix. 7.)

And when he was come . . . with the sword.—And he went into the house of his god, and certain of his own offspring there fell him with the sword. 2 Kings xix. 37 gives the names of the paricides—viz., Adrammelech and Sharezer; and the name of the god—viz., Nisroch—which is probably corrupt. It is added that the assassins “escaped into the land of Ararat.” The chronicler as usual suppresses unfamiliar foreign names.

They that came forth.—Some of the issue (γενετος, a verbal noun only found here). (For the whole phrase, comp. Gen. xv. 4; 2 Sam. vii. 12.)

(22) Thus.—And. The whole verse is the chronicler’s own comment on the preceding narrative. (Comp. 2 Kings xviii. 7.)

The hand of all.—Some MSS. appropriately add יִנְשַׁל, an expression which may have appropriately come from the text.

And guided them on every side (round about).—A somewhat unusual phrase. The conjecture, “and gave them rest round about (wayyānāh līhem for wayyānahalēm), appears correct. (See chaps. xiv. 6, xx. 15, xx. 50; 1 Chron. xxvii. 18.) So the LXX. and Vulg.

(23) Brought.—Were bringing—used to bring.

Gifts.—An offering (min‘ah), or tribute.

Presents to Hezekiah.—Among those who brought such were the envoys of Merodach Baladan, king of Babylon (2 Kings xx. 19). Probably also the neighbouring peoples—e.g., the Philistines—relieved from the pressure of the Assyrian invaders, would thus evince their gratitude to the God of Israel. (Comp. chap. xviii. 11.)

So that he was magnified . . . nations.—Literally, and he was lifted up, to the eyes of all the nations.

Hezekiah’s Sickness—His Pride and Wealth.

The Babylonian Embassy—Conclusion (verses 24–33).

(24) In those days Hezekiah was sick.—This single verse epitomizes 2 Kings xx. 1–11; Isa. xxxviii.

To the death.—Unto dying.

He spake unto him.—By the mouth of Isaiah.

And he gave him a sign.—The recession of the shadow on the dial of Ahaz. Literally, and a sign He gave him; the emphatic word first.

(25) But Hezekiah.—For Hezekiah’s pride, see the account of his reception of the Babylonian embassy (2 Kings xx. 12–19; Isa. xxxix.).

According to the benefit done unto him.—In his illness he promised to walk humbly all his days (Isa. xxxviii. 15); but when he had recovered, “his heart was lifted up.”

Therefore there was wrath upon him.—And wrath fell upon him. The token of this was seen in Isaiah’s prophetic rebuke, foretelling that the royal treasures would be carried away to Babylon, and that some of Hezekiah’s sons would be eunuchs in the palace there (2 Kings xx. 16–18; Isa. xxxix. 5–7).

And upon Judah and Jerusalem.—Which shared in the king’s guilty pride and confidence in the arm of flesh. (Comp. 1 Chron. xxvii. 24; chap. xix. 10.)

(26) Notwithstanding.—And.

The wrath of the Lord . . . days of Hezekiah.—(Comp. Isa. xxxix. 8.) On hearing Isaiah’s prophecy of coming evil, Hezekiah humbly acquiesced in the will of Jehovah. “Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken. And he said, There shall be peace and permanence in my own days” (2 Kings xx. 19).
Hezekiah's Wealth

II. CHRONICLES, XXXII.

Hezekiah also stopped the upper water-course of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David. And Hezekiah prospered in all his works. (31) Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart. (32) Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his goodness, behold, they are written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, and in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. (33) And

(27) Had.—Or, got. Riches and honour (or, wealth; kāḇāḏ).—Comp. 1 Chron. xxix. 28 (David); 2 Chron. i. 12 (Solomon), xvii. 5, xviii. 1 (Jehoshaphat).

He made himself treasures.—Comp. 2 Kings xx. 13; Isa. xxxix. 2, where silver and gold and spices are mentioned among the treasures of Hezekiah.

Shields.—Comp. Solomon's golden, and Heboobam's brazen, shields. No doubt the term is here used to suggest arms in general. Kings and Isaiah mention "his armoury."

All manner of pleasant jewels.—Literally, all vessels of desire. (Comp. Nah. ii. 10, "wealth of every vessel of desire.") Costly implements and utensils of all sorts are included.

(28) Storehouses also.—And magazines (chap. viii. 4; Exod. i. 11).

Stalls.—Uṣāwuth (Syriac, ʿuṣāwūṯā). (Comp. ṣūrāṯ, chap. ix. 25; and ṣāwāṯ, "cotes," a word only found here.)

All manner of beasts.—Every kind of cattle.

Cotes for flocks.—Heb., and flocks for folds. The words appear to have been transposed by some抄写ist. (Comp. LXX., καὶ μὴ διὰ τὰ σῶμα, "and for folds for the flocks." So Vulg., "et caulis pecorum." Syriac omits.)

Moreover he provided him cities.—And he made him watch-towers. The word rendered "cities" (ṭōrmāṯ) appears in this connection to mean watch-towers or forts for the protection of the flocks and herds. Isa. i. 8 ("a besieged city"); 2 Kings xvii. 9; chap. xxvi. 10.

Had given.—Gave.

Substance.—Wealth in kind, especially cattle (chap. xxxi. 3).

(30) This same Hezekiah also stopped.—And he, Hezekiah, had closed in the upper outlet of the waters of Gihon. (See verse 3.)

And brought ... city of David.—And conducted them undergound to the west of the city of David. (Comp. 2 Kings xx. 20, where also this great work of Hezekiah is referred to in concluding his history; "He made the pool, and the aqueduct, and brought the waters into the city.") The chronicler gives further details.

Brought it straight.—Directed or conducted them (wāyayashēḥērēn; the form in the Hebrew margin is a peculiar contraction of the ordinary piel form which appears in the text).

And Hezekiah prospered.—Chap. xxxi. 21; 1 Chron. xxix. 23. And his goodness.—His good deeds. So chap. xxxv. 26 (Josiah); Neh. xiii. 14.

And in the book of the kings.—Omit and. The "vision of Isaiah," is referred to as a section of the "book of the kings of Judah and Israel." (See Introduction.) Kings i.c. says, "are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the Kings of Judah?"

(33) And they buried him ... honour at his death.—Statements peculiar to the chronicler. They go to prove an authority besides the canonical books of Kings.
Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the chiefest of the sepulchres of the sons of David: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him honour at his death. And Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—(1) Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem: (2) but did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, like unto the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel. (3) For he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down, and he reared up altars for Baalim, and made groves, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them. (4) Also he built altars in the house of the LORD, whereof the LORD had said, 'In Jerusalem shall my name be for ever.' (5) And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD. (6) And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger. (7) And he set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God, of which God had said to David and to Solomon his son, 'In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen before all the

The chiefest.—Rather, the ascent—i.e., the way up to the royal tombs. (Comp. chap. xx. 16.) “The sons of David” are the kings of the house of David. Hezekiah may have chosen a favourite spot for his burial-place; but, as his successors Manasseh, Amon, and Josiah likewise, were not laid in the tombs of the kings, it would appear that the old royal sepulchres were full.

Did him honour at his death.—The phrase, “did him honour” (ציווהו), occurs here only. (Comp. “give honour to,” 1 Sam. vii. 5; Ps. xxix. 1.) Probably a great burning of spices was made in honour of Hezekiah as of Asa. (See chaps. xvi. 14, xxi. 19.)

XXXIII.

THE REIGNS OF MANASSEH AND AMON.

(1—20) The history of Manasseh. Duration and character of the reign. Restoration of idolatry (verses 1—10). This section is closely parallel with 2 Kings xxi. 1—10. Verses 1, 2, 5 are word for word the same in both.

(3) For.—And. (See margin.)

Broken down.—Chaps. xxii. 17, xxx. 1 (“threw down”). Kings has “destroyed,” (יבד). Baalim.—The Baals—i.e., the different images of Baal. Kings has the singular, both here and in the next word, “groves,” or rather Asheras (‘Ashêrât; Kings, ‘Ashêrah). The latter plural is rhetorical: Manasseh made such things as Asheras. (Comp. also the use of the plural in chap. xxxii. 31, and the passages there referred to.) Kings adds: “as Ahab king of Israel made.”

(4) Also he built . . . In Jerusalem.—Literally as Kings. Manasseh built altars in the Temple, as Ahaz had done (2 Kings xvi. 10, seq.).

Shall my name be for ever.—A heightening of the phrase in Kings, “I will set my name.”

He.—Emphatic. Not in Kings.

Caused his children . . . fire.—The plural, as in chap. xxvii. 3, is rhetorical. Kings, “his son.”

In the valley of the son of Hinnom.—Explanatory addition by the chronicler.

Also he observed times, and used enchantments.—And he practised angery and divination. Forbidden, Lev. xix. 26. The first words seem strictly to mean “observed clouds,” the second, “observed serpents.”

And used witchcraft.—And muttered spells or charms. This word does not occur in the parallel place, but all the offences here ascribed to Manasseh are forbidden in Deut. xviii. 10, 11.

And dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards.—And appointed a necromancer and a wizard. Kings has wizards. The source of all these modes of soothsaying was Babylon. Like the first king of Israel, Manasseh appears to have despaired of help or counsel from Jehovah. (Comp. Jer. xlix. 17, 18.) The heavy yoke of Assyria again weighed the nation down, and the great deliverance under Hezekiah was almost forgotten. “To all the Palestinian nations the Assyrian crisis had made careless confidence in the help of their national deities a thing impossible. As life was embittered by foreign bondage, the darker aspects of heathenism became dominant. The wrath of the gods seemed more real than their favour; stoning ordinances were multiplied, human sacrifices became more frequent, the terror which hung over all the nations that groaned under the Assyrian yoke found habitual expression in the ordinances of worship; and it was this aspect of heathenism that came to the front in Manasseh’s imitations of foreign religion” (Robertson Smith, The Prophets of Israel, p. 396).

He wrought much evil.—Literally, he multiplied doing the evil. He was worse than his evil predecessors.

And he set . . . had made.—And he set the carved image of the idol which he had made. “Idol” (עמל) explains “Asherah,” the term used in Kings. Both “carved image” and “idol” (Authorised Version, figure) occur in Deut. iv. 16.

The house of God.—Chronicles has added, of God, by way of explanation. The Temple proper is meant, as distinct from the courts.

Before all.—Out of all.

For ever.—Le’olam, a form only found here (equivalent to le’olam).
Manasseh's Sin.

II. CHRONICLES, XXXIII.

He is Carried to Babylon.

A Manasseh's Sin.

II. CHRONICLES, XXXIII.

He is Carried to Babylon.

Of Israel. (10) And the LORD spake to Manasseh, and to his people: but they would not hearken. (11) Wherefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the host of Assyria, which took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon. (12) And when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, (13) and prayed unto him: and he was intreated of him in accordance with the prayer which he besought the LORD.

Assurbanipal has left a list which is identical with that of Esarhaddon, except that it gives different names for the kings of Arvad and Ammon. It thus appears that Manasseh paid tribute to him as well as to his father. Schrader (K.A.T., p. 367, seq.) thinks that Manasseh was at least suspected of being implicated along with some of the other princes of Phoenicia-Palestine in the revolt of Assurbanipal's brother Samur-sum-akín (cir. 648-647 B.C.) in which Elam, Gutium, and Meroé also participated; and that he was carried to Babylon, to clear himself of suspicion, and to give assurances of his fidelity to the great king.

Which took Manasseh among the thorns.—And they took Manasseh prisoner with the hooks (ba-bókim). The hooks might be such as the Assyrian kings were wont to pass through the nostrils and lips of their more distinguished prisoners. Comp. Isa. xxxvii. 29, "I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips;” and comp. Amos iv. 2, "He will take you away with hooks, and your posterity with fish-hooks." Comp. also Job xli. 3, "Canst thou bore his jaw with a hook? " [The LXX., Vulg., Targ. render the word "chains." Syriac confuses the word with "kaya'im," "life," and renders "took Manasseh in his life." ] Perhaps, however, the meaning is, and they took Manasseh prisoner at Hohim. There is no reason why Hohim should not be a local name, as well as Cox (1 Chron. iv. 8).

And bound him with fetters.—With the double chain of bronze, as the Philistines bound Samson (Judg. xvi. 21). So Semachibel relates: "Suzubu, king of Babylon, in the battle alive their hands took him; in fetters of bronze they put him, and to my presence brought him. In the great gate in the midst of the city of Nineveh I bound him fast." This happened in 685 B.C., only a few years before the similar captivity of Manasseh.

And carried him.—Caused him to go, or led him away.

To Babylon.—Where Assurbanipal was holding his court at the time, as he appears to have done after achieving the overthrow of his brother the rebellious viceroy, and assuming the title of king of Babylon himself. (12) When he was in affliction.—See this phrase in chap. xxviii. 22.

He besought.—Literally, stroked the face, a curious realistic phrase occurring in Exod. xxxii. 11.

The God of his fathers.—Whom he had forsaken for the gods of aliens. Some MSS., and the Syriac, Targum, and Arabic insert "Jehovah" before this phrase.

(13) He was intreated of him.—1 Chron. v. 20.

And brought him again to Jerusalem.—The Assyrian monarch after a time saw fit to restore Manasseh's captivity and repentance. His restoration and reforms (verses 11—17).

This section is peculiar to the Chronicle, and none has excited more scepticism among modern critics. "The progress of cuneiform research, however, has proved the perfect possibility of the facts most disputed, viz., the captivity and subsequent restoration of Manasseh.

Manasseh's captivity and repentance. His restoration and reforms (verses 11—17).

A Manasseh's Sin.

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And brought him again to Jerusalem.—The Assyrian monarch after a time saw fit to restore manasseh's sin. ii. chronicles, xxxiii.

He is carried to babylon.

a 2 sam. 7, 20.

b c. 687

1 Heb., which were the kings

2 Or, chariot.

(9) Remove.—Kings has a less common expression, "cause to wander." From out of (upon) the land (ground) which I have appointed. —Kings, with which the versions agree, has the certainly original "from the ground which I gave." So that.—If only. And the statutes and the ordinances. —An explanatory addition. Kings has, "And according to all the Torah that Moses my servant commanded them." By the hand.—By the ministry or instrumentality. The phrase is a characteristic interpretation of what we read in 2 Kings xxii. 8; for it carefully notes that the authority of the Lawgiver was not primary but derived.

(9) So Manasseh . . . heathen.—Literally, And Manasseh led Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem astray, to do evil more than the nations. Thenius thinks that the words and Manasseh . . . astray, followed in the primary document immediately upon and he set the graven image in the house; the intermediate words being an addition by the editor of Kings.

(10) And the LORD spake to Manasseh.—"By the hand of his servants the prophets." See 2 Kings xxii. 10—15, where the substance of the prophetic message is given; and it is added (verse 16) that Manasseh also shed very much innocent blood, "till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to the other." The reaction against the reforms of Hezekiah ended in a bloody struggle, in which the party of reform was fiercely suppressed.

Manasseh's captivity and repentance. His restoration and reforms (verses 11—17).

This section is peculiar to the Chronicle, and none has excited more scepticism among modern critics. "The progress of cuneiform research, however, has proved the perfect possibility of the facts most disputed, viz., the captivity and subsequent restoration of Manasseh.

(11) Wherefore.—And.

The captains of the host of the king of Assyria.—The generals of Esarhaddon, or rather, perhaps, of Assurbanipal. The former, who reigned from 681-668 B.C., has recorded the fact that Manasseh was his vassal. He says: "And I assembled the kings of the land of Hatti, and the marge of the sea, Baal king of Tyre, Me-mi-si-e (or Mi-in-si-e) king of Ya-u-di (i.e., Judah), Qa-us-us-gabri, king of Edom," &c. "Altogether, twenty-two kings of the land of Hatti [Syria], the coast of the sea, and the middle of the sea, all of them, I caused to hasten," &c.
Manasseh’s

II. CHRONICLES, XXXIII.

of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord he was God.

(14) Now after this he built a wall without the city of David, on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, even to the entering in at the fish gate, and compassed about 1 Ophel, and raised it up a very great height, and put captains of war in all the fenced cities of Judah. (15) And he took away the strange gods, and the idol out of the house of the Lord, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the Lord, and in Jerusalem, and cast them out of the city. (16) And he repaired the altar of the Lord, and sacrificed thereon peace offerings and thank offerings, and commanded Judah to serve the Lord God of Israel. (17) Nevertheless the people did sacrifice still in the high places, yet unto the Lord their God only. (18) Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and his prayer unto his God, and the words of the seers that spake to him in the name of the Lord God of Israel, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel. (19) His prayer also, and how God was intreated of him, and all his sins, and his trespass, and the places wherein he built high places, and set up groves and graven images, before he was humbled: behold, they are written among the sayings of the seers. (20) So Manasseh slept with his fathers, and they buried him in his own house: and Amon his son reigned in his stead.

Manasseh to his throne as a vassal king. The case is exactly parallel to that of the Egyptian king Nikû (Necho I.), who was bound hand and foot, and sent to Nineveh; after which Assurbanipal extended his clemency to his captive, and restored him to his former state in his own country. (See Schrader, p. 371.)

Then.—And.

That the Lord he was God.—That Jehovah was the true God. (Comp. 1 Kings xviii. 39, where the same Hebrew words occur twice over.)

(14) Now after this . . . valley. — Rather. And afterwards he built an outer wall to the city of David westward unto Gihon in the ravine. Manasseh completed the wall begun by Hezekiah (chap. xxxii. 5). This highly circumstantial account of the public works undertaken by Manasseh after his restoration, is utterly unlike fiction, and almost compels the assumption of a real historical source, no longer extant, from which the whole section has been derived.

Even to the entering in of the fish gate.—The fish-gate lay near the north-east corner of the lower city (Neh. iii. 3). The direction of the outer wall is described first westward, and then eastward.

And compassed about Ophel.—And surrounded the Ophel (mound); seil, with the wall, which he carried on from the north-east to the south-east. Uzziah and Jotham had already worked upon these fortifications (chaps. xxvi. 9, xxvii. 3). Manasseh now finished them, “raising them up to a very great height.”

Rais ed it i.e., the outer wall.

And put captains of war.—(Comp. chaps. xvii. 2, xxxii. 6.) Literally, captains of an army (šārē ha-yāgil).

Of Judah.—Heb., in Judah. Some MSS. and the Vulgate read as the Authorised Version.

(15) Took away the strange gods.—Comp. verses 3–7. For the phrase “strange gods” (Elîthê nekâr, see Gen. xxxv. 2.

The idol.—That is, the Asherah (verses 3, 7; 2 Kings xxii. 7, xvii. 16).

In the mount of the house.—The temple hill. Thenius says: the courts with the altars in them (2 Kings xxii. 4, 5).

Cast them out.—Comp. chap. xxix. 16, xxx. 14. Manasseh’s reform was hardly complete, for some of his altars remained for Josiah to pull down (2 Kings xxiii. 12).

(16) Repaired.—Heb., built, i.e., rebuilt. Ewald concludes from this that Manasseh had removed the altar of burnt offering; and from Jer. iii. 16 that he destroyed the ark of the covenant. (Some Hebrew MSS., and many editions read prepared instead of built; but the Syriac and Arabic have the latter word, which is doubtless right.)

CONCLUSION OF THE REIGN (verses 18–20).

(19) His prayer unto his God.—This prayer may or may not have been the basis of the Apocryphal Prayer of Manasses, preserved in the LXX.

The words of the seers that spake to him.—See Note on verse 10, supra. These “words of the seers” were incorporated in the great history of the kings, which is mentioned at the end of the verse, and which was one of the chronicler’s principal authorities.

Written.—This word, though wanting in our present Hebrew text, is read in some MSS., and in the Syriac, Targum, and Arabic.

The book.—The history, literally, words. 2 Kings xxii. 17 refers, as usual, to the “Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah.”

(19) His prayer also . . . of him.—And his prayer, and the hearing him. Literally, and the being propitious to him (the same verb as in verse 13 and Gen. xxv. 21).

All his sins, and his trespass. — All his sin and his unfaithfulness. 2 Kings xxii. 17 has, “And his sin that he sinned.” The chronicler, as usual, heightens the expression.

Groves.—The Asherēm. (See Note on verse 3.)

Among the sayings of the seers.—In the history of Hozai. This work was, therefore, the source from which the chronicler derived his additional information about the reign of Manasseh. (See Introduction.) The LXX. has “the seers;” but the Vulg., “in sermonebus Hozai,” and the Syriac, “in the story of Hanan the prophet.” It is pretty clear that Hozai is simply a mutilated form of ha-hōzîm, “the seers,” a term which occurred in ver. 17.

(20) In his own house.—2 Kings xxii. 18, “and he was buried in the garden of his house, in the garden
II. CHRONICLES, XXXIV.

Josiah succeeds him.

Amon's reign.

(21) Amon was two and twenty years old when he began to reign, and reigned two years in Jerusalem. (22) But he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, as did Manasseh his father: for Amon sacrificed unto all the carved images which Manasseh his father had made, and served them; (23) and humbled not himself before the Lord, as Manasseh his father had humbled himself; but Amon trespassed more and more. (24) And his servants conspired against him, and slew him in his own house. (25) But the people of the land slew them all that had conspired against of Uzza.” The words, in the garden of, seem to have fallen out of our text. So LXX., εν τω ναοις ουαον ἀνωτεροί; Syriac, “in his house, in the garden of treasure.”

The reign of Amon (verses 21-25. Comp. 2 Kings xxi. 19-26).

(21) Amon was two and twenty years old. —So 2 Kings xxi. 19, which adds his mother's name and parentage.

(22) For Amon sacrificed. —Literally, and to all the carved images which Manasseh his father had made did Amon sacrifice. (Comp. 2 Kings xxi. 21, “and he walked in all the way wherein his father had walked, and served the idols which his father had served, and worshipped them.” Idol in the above passage is gillalim, “dunglings,” a term nowhere used by the chronicler.) The statement of our text seems to imply that the “carved images” made by Manasseh had not been destroyed, but only cast aside. (See Note on verse 15.) It argues a defect of judgment to say with Reuss that the reforms of Manasseh are rendered doubtful by it. The whole history is a succession of reforms followed by relapses; and the words of the sacred writer need not be supposed to mean that the images which Amon worshipped were the very ones which his pious father had discarded, but only images of the same imaginary gods.

(23) And humbled not himself . . . more and more.—This verse is added by the chronicler.

But Amon trespassed more and more.—Literally, for he, Amon, multiplied trespasses.

(24) And his servants conspired against him, and slew him in his own house. (Comp. 2 Kings xxi. 24, save that it has “smote” plural instead of singular, which latter is more correct. It may be that the facts thus briefly recorded represent a fierce conflict between the party of religious reform and that of religious reaction, in which the latter was for the time worsted and reduced to a state of suspended activity.

The chronicler has omitted the remarks usual at the end of a reign. See 2 Kings xxi. 25, 26 for a reference to sources, and Amon's burial place (“the garden of Uzza”).

XXXIV.

The reign of Josiah (chaps. xxxiv.—xxxvi.).

The history of Josiah, as related here, is in substantial agreement with the narrative of 2 Kings xxii., xxiii. The main difference lies in the fact that the chronicler assigns the various reforms of this king to his eighth, twelfth, and eighteenth years; whereas the compiler of Kings groups them all together, in connection with the repair of the Temple and finding of the Book of the Law, in the eighteenth year of the reign. Our account, moreover, briefly describes the suppression of idolatry, and dwells at great length on the celebration of the Passover; in Kings the contrary is the case.

(1, 2) Length and character of the reign.

(1) Josiah was eight years old.—So 2 Kings xxi. 7, which adds, “and his mother's name was Jodith, the daughter of Adaliah of Boseth.”

(2) And declined . . . the left.—So Kings. Josiah is the only king upon whom this encomium is pronounced. It is equivalent to saying that he observed the law was perfect. Comp. Deut. v. 32, xvii. 20 (the law of the king), xxviii. 14.

(3-7) Idolatry extirpated. This brief account is parallel to 2 Kings xxiii. 4-20.

(3) For.—Now.

In the eighth year.—The specifications of time in this verse are peculiar to the chronicler.

While he was yet young.—Being about sixteen.

He began to seek. —Chap. xvii. 3, 4; 1 Chron. xii. 3.

And in the twelfth year.—When, perhaps, he began to govern alone.

He began to purge.—It is not said that the whole work was completed in the twelfth year; indeed, verse 33 implies the contrary. But the writer having begun the story of the destruction of idolatrous objects, naturally continues it to its close, though that properly belongs to Josiah's eighteenth year (2 Kings xxii. 3, compared with xxiii. 4 seq.). It is not, therefore, clear (as Thesius asserts) that the chronicler has put the extirpation of idolatry first, simply to show that the pious king needed no special prompting to such a course; or that, as Noldeke supposes, the writer meant to clear this highly-extended king from the reproach of having quietly put up with the abomination for full eighteen years.

The high places.—2 Kings xxiii. 5, 8, 9, 13.

The groves.—The Asherim (2 Kings xxiii. 4, 6, 7, 14). There was an Asherah in the Temple, as well as in the high places which Solomon built for Ashtoreth, Chemosh, and Mylem. The carved and molten images are not mentioned in the parallel passage, which, however, gives a much clearer and more original description of the different kinds of idolatry abolished by Josiah.
Josiah's good works.

II: CHRONICLES, XXXIV. The Repair of the Temple.

Jerusalem from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images. (4) And they brake down the altars of Baalim in his presence; and the images, that were on high above them, he cut down; and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images, he brake in pieces, and made dust of them, and strove it upon the graves of them that had sacrificed unto them. (5) And he burnt the bones of the priests upon their altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem. (6) And so did he in the cities of Manasseh, and Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto Naphtali, with their mattocks round about. (7) And when he had broken down the altars and the groves, and had beaten the graven images into powder, and cut down all the idols throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem. (8) Now in the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had purged the land, and the house, he sent to Shaphan the son of Azaliah, and Maaseiah the governor of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz the recorder, to repair the house of the Lord his God. (9) And when they came to Hilkiah the high priest, they delivered the money that was brought into the house of God, which the Levites that kept the doors had gathered of the hand of Manasseh and Ephraim, and of all the remnant of Israel, and of all Assyria, in 721 B.C., replacing them by foreign colonists. This explains how it was that Josiah was able to desecrate the northern sanctuaries, and slay their priests (2 Kings xxiii. 20). The ordinary Hebrew text divides the word thus: behar bōthōhem, so as to suggest the reading behar bōthāhem, “in the hill of their houses.” The LXX. has “in their places round about”; the Vulg. omits the phrase; and the Syriac reads “in their streets around.” The whole verse should be connected with verse 7, thus: “And in the cities of Manasseh and Ephraim and Simeon, even unto Naphtali, to wit, in their ruins round about, he pulled down the altars and the Asherim; and the carven images he dashed into pieces unto pulverising.” Ἡδακ is an unusual form of the infinitive, not a perfect, as Bertheau supposes.

2. The idols.—Sun-statues (verse 4). The word does not occur in the parallel account; but verse 5 mentions sun-worship.

Josiah sent Shaphan.—Who was secretary of state (2 Kings xxiii. 3, “the ariebe”).

Manasseh . . . Joah.—Kings mentions Shaphan only.

The governor of the city.—Sar ha’ir; praefectus urbis. (Comp. 1 Chron. xi. 6.)

And when they came . . . they delivered.

And they came . . . and they gave. In 2 Kings xxiii. 3—7, the contents of verses 9—12a are given in the form of the king’s instructions to Shaphan. Here we are told that those instructions were carried out. “They delivered (wanniyitānu) is substituted for the difficult wēnatānu of Kings (i.e., “and let him pay out”).

From the hand of Manasseh . . . Benjamin.

Kings, “from the people.” Reuss oddly imagines that these words denote “a kind of organised collection throughout all Palestine,” and then proceeds to draw an inference unfavourable to the chronicler.
Judah and Benjamin; and they returned to Jerusalem. (10) And they put it in the hand of the workmen that had the oversight of the house of the Lord, and they gave it to the workmen that wrought in the house of the Lord, to repair and amend the house: (11) even to the artificers and builders gave they it, to buy hewn stone, and timber for couplings, and 1 to floor the houses which the kings of Judah had destroyed. (12) And the men did the work faithfully: and the overseers of them were Jahah and Obadiah, the Levites, of the sons of Merari; and Zechariah and Meshullam, of the sons of the Kohathites, to set it forward; and other of the Levites, all that could

skill of instruments of music. (13) Also they were over the bearers of burdens, and were overseers of all that wrought the work in any manner of service; and of the Levites there were scribes, and officers, and porters.

(14) And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of the Lord, Hilkiah the priest 3 found a book of the law of the Lord given 2 by Moses. (15) And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord. And Hilkiah delivered the book to Shaphan. (16) And Shaphan carried the book to the king, and brought the king word back again, saying, All that

were over the bearers of burdens.—They probably cheered their labours with song and music; as was the practice in ancient Egypt.

And were overseers.—Leaders, conductors; see Note on verse 12. Not the honourable position here assigned to the musical guilds of Levites.

And of the Levites . . . porters.—In connection, that is, with the work of restoration. But comp. 1 Chron. xxiii. 4, 5. The writer may only intend to say that there were Levitical guilds of “scribes, officers, and porters,” as well as of musicians.

Scribes.—I Chron. ii. 55.

(14—19) Hilkiah finds the Book of the Law, and delivers it to Shaphan, who reads it before the king. (Comp. 2 Kings xxii. 8—11.)

(14) And when they brought out,—This verse is not in Kings. It supplements the older account, by assigning the occasion of the discovery.

Josephus makes Hilkiah find the book in the treasury-chamber of the Temple which he had entered to get gold and silver for making some sacred vessels. According to Rabbinical tradition it was found hidden under a heap of stones, where it had been placed to save it from being burnt by king Ahaz.

A book.—The book.

Given by Moses.—The Hebrew phrase, “by the hand of Moses,” belongs not to “the book,” but to “the Law (or teaching) of Jehovah”; and the meaning of the whole expression is, “the Law of Jehovah communicated through the medium or instrumentality of Moses.” (Comp. chap. xxxii. 8.)

To Shaphan.—Kings adds, “and he read it.” Those words need not mean that Shaphan read the book through, as Thynius suggests. (See Note on 2 Kings xxii. 3.)

(15) Carried.—Brought in.

Again.—Further, besides.

Committed to thy servants.—Given into the hand of thy servants; viz. the overseers of the repairs.

They do it.—They are doing.

“And Shaphan brought the book in unto the king,” is only a different pointing of, “and Shaphan the scribe came in unto the king.” 2 Kings xxii. 9. The rest of the verse is an addition of the chronicler’s. Perhaps the Notes on 2 Kings xii. 11 and chap. xxiv. 11 apply here.
Josiah sends to II. CHRONICLES, XXXIV. enquire of Hilkiah.

was committed to thy servants, they do it. (17) And they have gathered together the money that was found in the house of the LORD, and have delivered it into the hand of the overseers, and to the hand of the workmen. (18) Then Shaphan the scribe told the king saying, Hilkiah the priest hath given me a book. And Shaphan read it before the king. (19) And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the law, that he rent his clothes. (20) And the king commanded Hilkiah, and Ahilkam the son of Shaphan, and Abdon the son of Micah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king’s, saying, (21) Go, enquire of the LORD for me, and for the people and for all Judah, who sent you to enquire of the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the curses that are written in the book which they have read before the king of Judah: (22) because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be poured out upon this place, and shall not be quenched. (23) And as for the king of Judah, who sent you to enquire of the LORD, so shall ye say unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel concerning the words which thou hast heard; (24) because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before God, when thou hearest his words against this

(17) Gathered together.—Poured out from the chest or chests. See 2 Kings xxii. 9, where “the doers of the work” are identified with “the overseers.” And to . . . the workmen.—And to . . . the doers of the work.

Perhaps the and is explanatory (even, or that is).

(18) Then.—Aad. The verse is identical with 2 Kings xxii. 10, save that it substitutes “read in it” for “read it,” which may mean the same thing. It seems too much to assume that the chronicler altered it.

For them that are left . . . Judah.—An alteration of, “and for the people and for all Judah” (Kings). The chronicler thinks of the remnant in the northern kingdom.

Poured out.—Kings, “kindled against.” (So LXX.) This was probably the original reading, as the wrath which Josiah dreaded had not yet been poured out upon Judah. But the chronicler remembered the ruin of the ten tribes.

Kept.—Kings, “heartened to” shanà‘ú, as here, instead of shâmérû; and so LXX. and Syriac.

(20) And they that the king had appointed. The Hebrew text is defective. We may restore it from the LXX., “and they whom the king had commanded”; or better, perhaps, from the Syriac and Vulg., “and all they whom the king sent.” Three MSS. read, “and the king’s princess,” a plausible correction. 2 Kings xxii. 14 adds the names (verse 20 supra).

Son of Tikvath.—Heb., Tekhath. Kings, “Tikvah.” The LXX., Æ‘kwa, the Syriac, Tekvê, and the Vulg., Theuath, show that Tikvah or Tikvah is right. (The final h and th of Chronicles arise from blending these two equivalent spellings.)

Son of Hasrah.—Kings, son of Horhaaz. So the LXX., Apâk; but the Syriac (Haadhê) and Vulg. support Hasrah.

In the college.—In the second quarter; i.e., the lower city.

To that effect.—Chap. xxvii. 15 (“on this manner”). Added by the chronicler. The differences in the text of the oracle which follows are mostly due to alteration of the original, which is more exactly given in Kings.

(24) I will bring.—I am about to bring (participle). All the curses . . . the book. An explanatory paraphrase of “all the words of the book” (Kings). (See Deut. xxvii. 15 seq., xviii. 16 seq., xxix. 20, 21, 27, xxx. 19; and comp. Josh. viii. 34.)

Works.—“Work” (Kings), and some MSS. and the Syriac version here. Poured out.—“Shall be kindled” (Kings), which agrees better with “shall not be quenched.” (See verse 21 for the same alteration. The LXX. here has ἀντέφης) was kindled.

Burned incense.—Hiphil, which is much commoner in the chronicle than piel, the form in Kings (the forms piel and hiphil of this word qatar are about equally used in Kings.)

(25) To enquire of the Lord.—Strictly, through the Lord. Kings has the accusative. Against this place.—Kings adds, “that it should become an astonishment and a curse.”

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place, and against the inhabitants thereof, and humbledst thyself before me, and didst rend thy clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard thee also, saith the Lord. (29) Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes see all the evil that I will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants of the same. So they brought the king word again. (30) Then the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. (30) And the king went up into the house of the Lord, and all the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the Levites, and all the people, both great and small: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of the Lord. (31) And the king stood in his place, and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book. (32) And he caused all that were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers. (33) And Josiah took away all the abominations out of all the countries that pertained to the children of Israel, and made all that were present in Israel to serve, even to serve the Lord their God. And all his days they departed not from following the Lord, the God of their fathers.

CHAPTER XXXV.—(1) Moreover Josiah kept a passover unto the Lord in Jerusalem: and they killed the passover.
Josiah keeps a

II. CHRONICLES, XXXV. Smooth Passover.

the division of the families of the Levites. (6) So kill the passover, and sanctify yourselves, and prepare your brethren, that they may do according to the word of the Lord by the hand of Moses.

(7) And Josiah gave to the people, of the flock, lambs and kids, all for the passover offerings, for all that were present, to the number of thirty thousand, and three thousand bullocks: these were of the king's substance.

(9) And his princes gave willingly unto the people to the priests, and to the Levites: Hilkiah and Zechariah and Jehiel, rulers of the house of God, gave unto the priests for the passover offerings two thousand and six hundred small cattle, and three hundred oxen.

(2) Set the priests in their charges.—Literally, over their wards (chap. viii. 14). The king appointed them to discharge their proper duties in connection with the rite.

Encouraged them.—By exhortation and instruction. (See an instance in chap. xxix. 5 seq.)

(3-6) The king’s charge to the Levites.

(3) The Levites that taught all Israel.—In the law (Neh. viii. 7; comp. also chap. xvii. 8, 9).

Which were holy unto the Lord.—Separated to His service (Exod. xxvii. 36, “Holiness to the Lord,” the inscription on Aaron’s mitre), which Solomon the son of David king of Israel did build; it shall not be a burden upon your shoulders: serve now the Lord your God, and his people Israel, (4) and prepare yourselves by the houses of your fathers, after your courses, according to the writing of David king of Israel, and according to the writing of Solomon his son. (5) And stand in the holy place according to the divisions of the families of the fathers of your brethren the people, and after the division of the families of the Levites. (6) So kill the passover, and sanctify yourselves, and prepare your brethren, that they may do according to the word of the Lord by the hand of Moses.

(7) And Josiah gave to the people, of the flock, lambs and kids, all for the passover offerings, for all that were present, to the number of thirty thousand, and three thousand bullocks: these were of the king’s substance.

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(3-6) The king’s charge to the Levites.

(3) The Levites that taught all Israel.—In the law (Neh. viii. 7; comp. also chap. xvii. 8, 9).

Which were holy unto the Lord.—Separated to His service (Exod. xxvii. 36, “Holiness to the Lord,” the inscription on Aaron’s mitre).

Put the holy ark in the house.—This command implies that the ark had been removed from its place in the inner sanctuary. The removal probably took place under Manasseh or his son, with the object of saving the sacred symbol from profanation. Or perhaps the repair of the Temple under Josiah had necessitated such a step. A third explanation takes the words in the sense of “Let the ark be, where it stands, in its proper place. Do not give a thought to your ancient function of bearing it about; but set your minds upon present duties.” This, however, is too artificial.

It shall not be a burden.—Literally, bearing on the shoulder is not for you. (Comp. the like statement in 1 Chron. xxiii. 26; see also Numb. iv. 15, vii. 9; 1 Chron. xv. 2.)

Serve now the Lord . . . and his people.—In the manner indicated in verses 4—6.

(4) And prepare yourselves.—The pronoun should not be italicised, for the verb is niphal or reflexive, and not hiphil or causative, as the Hebrew vowel points wrongly suggest.

By the houses of your fathers.—According to your father-houses.

After your courses.—In your divisions. (See 1 Chron. xxiii. — xxvi.)

According to the writing of David . . . Solomon his son.—Comp. 1 Chron. xxviii. 19, where David refers to such a writing. The words seem to imply the existence of written memorials of the regulations of public worship, which David and Solomon instituted.
(9) Conaniah also, and Shemaiah and
Nethaniah, his brethren, and Hashabiah
and Jeiel and Joazabad, chief of the
Levites, gave unto the Levites for pass-
over offerings five thousand small cattle,
and five hundred oxen.

(10) So the service was prepared, and
the priests stood in their place, and the
Levites in their courses, according to
the king’s commandment. (11) And they
killed the passover, and the priests
sprinkled the blood from their hands,
and the Levites flayed them. (12) And
they removed the burnt offerings, that
they might give according to the divi-
sions of the families of the people, to
offer unto the Lord, as it is written in
the book of Moses. And so did they
with the oxen. (13) And they roasted
the passover with fire according to the
ordinance: but the other holy offerings
sod they in pots, and in caldrons, and
in pans, and divided them speedily
among all the people. (14) And afterward
they made ready for themselves, and for
the priests, because the priests the sons
of Aaron were busy in offering of burnt
offerings and the fat until night; there-
fore the Levites prepared for themselves,
and for the priests the sons of Aaron.
(15) And the singers of the sons of Asaph
were in their place, according to the
commandment of David, and Asaph,
and Heman, and Jeduthun the king’s
seer; and the porters waited at every
gate; they might not depart from their
service; for their brethren the Levites
prepared for them. (16) So all the ser-

9); Zechariah perhaps his deputy, “the second priest”
(2 Kings xxvii. 18). Jehiel may have been the head
of the line of Ithamar, which still existed even after
the return (Ezra viii. 2).

Oxon, i.e., “bullocks” (verse 7).

(9) Conaniah also . . . Joazabad. — The three
names Conaniah, Shemaiah, and Joazabad, occurred as
belonging to principal Levites under Hezekiah (chap.
xxxi. 12—15). They may be names of leading houses
rather than persons.

(10) So the service was prepared. — The
preparations were completed. (See verses 4 and 16).

In their place. — On their stand (chap. xxx. 16).

(11) The passover. — The paschal victims.

From their hands. — Heb., hand. The hand
of the Levites, who caught the blood when they slaughtered
the victims, and gave it to the priests.

Flayed. — Were flaying. — The exception of chap. xxx.
17 has become the rule here.

(12) They removed. — Cut off those parts of the
victims which had to be consumed on the altar of burnt
offering. (Comp. Lev. iii. 9, iv. 31.) These parts are
naturally called “the burnt offering,” although no special
burnt offering was appointed for the evening of the
Passover.

That they might give. . . . people. — To give
them to the sections of the father-houses of the sons of
the people. After separating the proper pieces, the
Levites gave them to the sections which they were
serving, to be presented in turn to the priests for burning
on the altar.

To offer. — Haqrib; as in Lev. iii. 9, 14.

As it is written. — Referring to the rule that “all
the fat is the Lord’s” (Lev. iii. 16).

And so did they. — And so for the oxen. The
proper portions of these also were separated for con-
sumption on the brazen altar; the rest of the carcases
furnished food for the sacrificial festivities.

(13) According to the ordinance. — Exod. xii.
8, 9.

Roasted with fire. — Cooked in the fire.

But the other holy offerings sod they . . .
pans. — And the consecrated things they cooked in
the pots, and in the caldrons, and in the pans. — “The con-
secrated things” are the oxen (chap. xxi. 38). Their
flesh was boiled or fried, and handed with all due haste
by the Levites to the laity.

The author tells us here not only what was done on
the evening of the fourteenth Nisan, the Passover
proper, but also during the seven following days of the
Feast of Mazzoth, or Unleavened Bread. On the
Passover evening only the paschal lambs and kids would
be eaten; the oxen were slain as peace offerings during
the subsequent festivities (Deut. xvi. 1—8), and fur-
nished forth the sacrificial meals.

And divided them speedily . . . the
people. — And brought them quickly to all the sons
of the people, so that the meat did not get cold. (Comp.
Gen. xii. 14). This little touch of realism calls up a
picture. We see the whole busy scene, the different
groups of the people scattered here and there about the
sacred court, and the Levites bringing them their por-
tions of the savoury meat.

(14) Afterward. — After serving the laity with their
passover.

They made ready. — The Passover (Luke xxii.
8, 9, 13).

Because the priests . . . until night. — The
reason why the Levites prepared the Passover and the
after meals for them.

In offering of burnt offerings and the fat.
— In offering the burnt offering and the pieces of fat.
The second phrase seems to define the first (and, i.e.,
namely). The parts of the sheep, goats, and oxen,
which in case of peace offerings had to be burnt wholly
on the altar were called halabim, “pieces of fat.”

(15) And the singers of the sons of Asaph
were in their place. — “At their post” or station
(1 Chron. xxxii. 28). The “sons” of Heman and
Jeduthun are omitted for brevity.

According to the commandment . . .
king’s seer. — Comp. 1 Chron. xxv. 1—6.

They might not depart. — Rather, they had no
need to depart from their service (i.e., to leave their
posts), in order to prepare their own passover and the
subsequent meals, “for their brethren the Levites
had prepared for them,” and brought it to them at
their several stations.

(16) The same day. — On that day, i.e., “at that
time” (verse 17).
The Sollemn Passover.

II. CHRONICLES, XXXV.

Charchemish Invaded.

The vice of the Lord was prepared the same day; to keep the passover, and to offer burnt offerings upon the altar of the Lord, according to the commandment of king Josiah. (27) And the children of Israel that were present kept the passover at that time, and the feast of unleavened bread seven days. (18) And there was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet; neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept, and the priests, and the Levites, and all Judah and Israel that were present, and the inhabitant of Jerusalem. (19) In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah was this passover kept.

After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against Charchemish by Euphrates: and Josiah went out against him. (22) But he sent ambassadors to him, saying, What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? I come not against thee this day, but against the house wherewith I have war: for God commanded me to make haste: forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy

To offer burnt offerings.—To burn the fat of the Passover victims, and of the peace offerings. The verse summarises the foregoing account. (Comp. verse 10.)

Character of the Passover thus held, and its date (verses 17—19).

At that time.—The Passover was kept on the evening of the 14th Nisan, and the Mazzoth from the 15th to the 21st of the same month. (18) And there was no passover like to that. —2 Kings xxii. 22.

From the days of Samuel the prophet.—Kings, “from the days of the judges that judged Israel,” of whom Samuel was the last and greatest (1 Sam. vii. 15).

Neither did all the kings of Israel.—Kings, “and (from) all the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah.” (Comp. chap. xxx. 26).

And the priests . . . Jerusalem.—Not in Kings. A characteristic addition.

Israel that were present.—Rather, Israel that was present, i.e., the remnant who had come from the ruined kingdom of the ten tribes. (Comp. chap. xxxiv. 33).

In the eighteenth year.—2 Kings xxiii. 23.

Kept.—Mode (nàrûâš). For the date, comp. chap. xxxiv. 8. The religious reformation appropriately culminated in a splendid celebration of the Passover.

Josiah Slain in Battle against Necho King of Egypt (verses 20—27). Comp. 2 Kings xxii. 29, 30, and 3 Ezra i. 23—30.

After all this.—Comp. the similar, “after these matters, and this faithfulness” (chap. xxxii. 1). The phrase calls attention to the difference between the event and what might naturally have been expected. In spite of Josiah’s fidelity to Jehovah, this was his end.

Necho king of Egypt came up.—Kings, “In his days came up Pharaoh Necho, king of Egypt.” So LXX. here. Syriac, “Pharaoh the Lame, king of Egypt.” Pharaoh is simply “the king,” Coptic Pòwro, or Porro (pí “the,” òuro or òro, “king”). The Hebrew spelling Paròb appears to be due to an assimilation of the Egyptian word to the Hebrew períkóth, “leaders” (Judges v. 1). An inscription of Assurbanipal gives a list of twenty subject kings appointed by Esarhaddon his father to bear rule in Egypt, the first name in the list being that of “Níkûs sar ali

Mûmpî u ali Sàa,” i.e., “Necho, king of the city of Memphis, and the city of Sais.” Assurbanipal twice reinstated this Necho (Necho I., circ. 694 B.C.) after vanquishing Tirhakah.

The Necho of our text is Necho II., who reigned circ. 610 B.C. (See the Note on 2 Kings xxiii. 29.)

Against Charchemish.—At Charchemish. Syriac and Arabic, “to assault Mabug,” i.e., Hierapolis. Necho’s enemy was “the king of Assyria” (2 Kings xxiii. 29; so LXX. here), i.e., Esarhaddon II. (Saracus), the last of the rulers of Nineveh; not Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, for the Assyrian empire had not yet fallen before the united assault of the Medes and the Babylonians. Charchemish has been identified with the modern Jribâ, on the western bank of the middle Euphrates.

Its situation, as Schrader observes, suits an intended expedition against Nineveh and Assyria, rather than against Babylon. It was one of the great Hittite capitals, and inscriptions in hieroglyphics, similar to those of Hamath, have recently been disinterred on the site, and brought thence to the British Museum. The name means, “Fortress of Mish.” Comp. “Mesha” (Gen. x. 30), the Assyrian Masu, i.e., the part of the Syran desert which ran along the right bank of the Euphrates. The place was also called Tell-Mish, “mound of Mish;” Greek, Télaçovëh. (Thenius thinks the phrase, “against Charchemish,” was originally a marginal gloss, noting the place of the final and decisive encounter between Necho and the Babylonians).

Josiah went out against him.—To this statement Kings only adds that Necho “slew him at Megiddo, when he saw him,” i.e., at the outset of the encounter. The chronicler, therefore, has derived the details of the following verses from another source (verses 21—25).

But . . . ambassadors.—And . . . messengers.

What have I to do with thee?—Literally, “what to me and to thee! ’î lî bēlî yâyô;” (LXX.; and Mark v. 7; Luke viii. 28).

I come not against thee.—So the old versions. The Hebrew is, “not against thee—thée—to-day.” The versions appear to have read ’attîb, “thée,” with different points as ’Ôthôh, “coming.” (Comp. Syriac, ’ôthâ ’Ôthâ, “come I.”)

But against the house . . . war.—A strange expression. (Comp. 1 Chron xviii. 10.) Probably the reading indicated by 3 Esdr. i. 25 is right (’êlî yâr ’Ôthôh dôs ûlîmûmus ’∏otîlî), “but against the Euphrates is my war” (Perath for bēlî). Josephus supports this,
The second chariot was no doubt a more comfortable one, reserved in case of such an emergency.

In one of the sepulchres.—Omit one of Kings. "in his own sepulchre," which would be a chamber among those of his immediate ancestors, Manasseh and Amon. (See 2 Kings xxii. 18.)

Mourned.—Were mourning.

And Jeremiah lamented —i.e., wrote a dirge. The special mourning of the land over Josiah is not mentioned in Kings.

The singing men ... women.—The LXX. has "the ruling men ... women," reading šārîth ... šārîth, instead of šârîthim ... šârîthim.

Spake of Josiah in their lamentations.—In the dirges which they used to sing on certain anniversaries of disaster.

And made them an ordinance.—And they made them (i.e. the laments for Josiah) a standing custom to Israel.

They are written in the lamentations.—The dirges alluding to Josiah's untimely end, and among them Jeremiah's, were preserved in a Book of Dirges (ginōth), which may have been extant in the chronicler's day. (Comp. the allusions in Jer. xxii. 10, 18; Zech. xii. 11.)

This collection, however, was quite different from the canonical book of Lamentations, the subject of which is the ruin of Judah and Jerusalem by the Chaldeans.

His goodness.—His pious deeds (chap. xxxii. 32).

According to that ... the Lord.—Said of no king besides.

The book ... and Judah.—2 Kings xxii. 28, "the Book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah."

XXXVI.

The reign of Jehoahaz (verses 1–4). (Comp. 2 Kings xxii. 30–35; 3 Esdr. i. 32–36.)

1. Then.—And.

The people of the land took Jehoahaz.—Comp. chap. xxvi. 1; xxviii. 25. Jehoahaz or Shallum was not the firstborn (1 Chron. iii. 15). See Notes on 2 Kings xxii. 30, with which this verses agrees.

2. Jehoahaz was twenty-and-three.—So Kings, adding the mother's name as usual. (So the LXX. here.)
when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. (8) And the king of Egypt put him down at Jerusalem.—Rather, removed him. 3 Esdr. i. 33 adds “from reigning,” which is almost demanded by the context. The LXX. follows the reading of 2 Kings xxiii. 33: “And Pharaoh-necho bound him in Riblah, in the land of Hamath, from reigning (i.e., so that he reigned not) in Jerusalem”; but the Syriac and Vulg. support the existing Hebrew text. The LXX. begins the verse thus: “And he did evil before the Lord, according to all that his fathers had done;” and adds, after the clause about the fine, “and the king took him away to Egypt.”

Condemned the land in.—Fined the land.—So Kings: “laid a fine upon the land.”

Riblah was in Syria, on the river Orontes. Necho may have ordered or enticed Jehoahaz to meet him there.

(8) And the king of Egypt made Eliakim.—The verse agrees with 2 Kings xxiii. 34.

Carried him to Egypt.—Made him come. Kings, “and he came to Egypt, and died there.” Comp. Jeremiah xxii. 10—12. The LXX. adds: “and the silver and the gold he gave to the Pharaoh.” Then the land began to be assessed, in order to give the money into the mouth of Pharaoh. And each according to ability used to demand the silver and the gold from the people of the land to give to Pharaoh-necho.

The Reign of Jehoiakim (verses 5—8). (Comp. 2 Kings xxiii. 36—xxiv. 7; 3 Esdr. i. 37—41; Jer. xv. xvi.)

(9) Jehoiakim . . . in Jerusalem.—2 Kings xxiii. 36, adding the mother’s name. here. So LXX.

And he did . . . the Lord.—2 Kings xxiii. 37, which adds “according to all that his fathers had done.” So LXX.

Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.—Nabû-kudurri-úrûr (“Nebu governed the crown!”) son of Nabopolassar, who had founded this dynasty by successful revolt against Assyria. His extant inscriptions chiefly relate to palace and temple building. Schrader gives a short inscription from a brick now in the Zürich Museum. “Nabû-Kudurri-úrûr, king of Babylon, restorer of Esagili and Ezida [two famous temples], son of Nabû-alula-úrûr, King of Babylon am I.” No really historical inscription is known except a fragment relating to his Egyptian campaign in his 37th year (568 B.C.), and an illegible one on the rocks of Nahr-el-Kelb near Beirut. The LXX. here interpolates the account of Jehoiakim’s three years of vassalage, and his revolt against Nebuchadnezzar, and the other events and reflections contained in 2 Kings xxiv. 1—4. The LXX. makes Jehoiakim, instead of Manasseh, “fill Jerusalem with innocent blood,” contrary to the Hebrew text.

And bound him in feters.—Two bronze chains, as in chap. xxxiii. 11.

To carry him to Babylon.—To make him go. It is not said that this intention was carried out. (Comp. chap. xxxiii. 11, “and carried him to Babylon.”) Nebuchadnezzar, who, according to Jer. xlvii. 2, had defeated Necho in a great battle at Carchemish, in the 4th year of Jehoiakim, appears to have left the king of Judah to reign as a vassal king, after inflicting upon him a severe humiliation. (The LXX., 3 Esdr., Vulg., and Arabic, but not the Syriac, read: “and carried him to Babylon.”) The subject is this must be the right reading, and then denies its claim to credibility. He further asserts that, “in order to allow ample scope for the fulfilment of the prophecy of Jeremiah” (see Note on verse 8), the chronicler has represented Jehoiakim as carried alive to Babylon in the last year of his reign. This statement rests not upon objective historical grounds, but upon subjective prejudices against the chronicler.

Dan. i. 1, by a transcriber’s error, puts this first capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in the third year of Jehoiakim; whereas Nebuchadnezzar only became king in the fourth of Jehoiakim. (2 Kings xxv. 8; Jer. xxv. 1.)

(7) Nebuchadnezzar also carried.—And of the vessels of the house . . . did Nebuchadnezzar bring. Not mentioned in Kings, but confirmed by Dan. i. 2.

In his temple.—The temple of “Merodach, my Lord” (Bišu, i.e., Bel), whom his inscriptions so frequently mention. The great temple of Belus (Bel Merodach), which Nebuchadnezzar built, was one of the wonders of the world to Herodotus (Herod. i. 181 seq.)

(8) Now the rest of the acts.—(Comp. 2 Kings xxiv. 5.)

And his abominations which he did.—His crimes against God and man, i.e., probably acts of idolatry and tyranny. (Comp. Jer. xxv. 6, vii. 5—11, xxii. 13—19; covetousness, shedding innocent blood. &c., charged against him.)

That which was found in him.—Chap. xix. 3. His general character and conduct.

As in the case of Ammon (chap. xxxiii. 25), the last particulars about Jehoiakim are omitted in this flying notice of his reign, which was only memorable because of the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar. The LXX., however, gives instead of this verse 2 Kings xxiv. 5—6, in-
The Wickedness

II. CHRONICLES, XXXVI. of Zedekiah.

and Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead.

(9) "Jehoiachin was eight years old
when he began to reign, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jeru-
usalem: and he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord.

(10) And when the year was expired, king Nebu-
chadnezzar sent, and brought him to Babylon, with the 3 goodly vessels of
the house of the Lord, and made Zedekiah his brother king over Judah and Jeru-
usalem.

(11) Zedekiah was one and twenty years
old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem.

(12) And he did that which was evil in the

3 interpolating in the latter "and was buried with his
fathers in the garden of Uzza" (אָרָר הָעַצָּו גָּרָי; see 2 Kings xxii. 26). Themius says "these words
"certainly (9) stood in the original text," but were omitted by the chronicler and the editor of Kings,
because they conflict with the prophecy of Jeremiah (chaps. xxii. 18, 19, xxxvi. 30)—which is apparently
the reason why he is so sure of their genuineness.

Jehoiachin (verses 9–10). (Comp. 2 Kings xxiv.
8–17; 3 Esdr. i. 41–44; Jer. xxii. 24–30; Ezek. xix. 5–9.)

(9) Jehoiachin was eight years old.—2 Kings
xxiv. 8 has correctly (16) "eighteen; " and so some MSS.,
LXX. (Alex.), Syriac, Arabic. What the prophet Ezekiel
says of him could not apply to a boy of eight. (The
difference turns on the omission of the smallest Hebrew
letter, namely, yod, which as a numeral represents ten.)

Three months and ten days.—Kings, "three
months;" Syriac and Arabic here have "one hundred
days," i.e., three months and ten days. Themius thinks
the ten days were added, in order that the catastrophe
of Jehoiachin's reign might fall on a tenth day of the month,
like the investment of Jerusalem and the fall of the
city under Zedekiah (chap. xxv. 1, 8).

He did that which was evil.—2 Kings xxiv. 9.
(See also the above-cited passages of Jeremiah and Ezekiel.) According to the latter prophet, Jehoiachin
"devoured men, and forced widows, and wasted
cities."

(10) And when the year was expired.—See
margin. "At the return of the year" means in spring,
when kings usually went forth to war. (2 Sam. xi. 1;
1 Kings xx. 22.) Kings gives a full account of the
siege and surrender of Jerusalem, and the deportation
to Babylon of the king and all his princes and men of
war, by "the servants of Nebuchadnezzar."

With the goodly vessels.— Chap. xxxii. 27.
"Some of the vessels" had already been carried off
(verse 7). (See 2 Kings xxiv. 13 and Jer. xxvii. 18—)

Zedekiah his brother.—Zedekiah was uncle of
Jehoiachin, being a son of Josiah, and brother of
Jehoiakim. Perhaps "brother" is equivalent to "kins-
man" here, as elsewhere. (Comp. 1 Chron. iii. 15,
where Zedekiah appears as a son of Josiah; and 2
Kings xxiv. 17.) The versions read "his father's
brother"—a correction. Themius thinks the word for
"uncle" had become illegible in the MS. here used by
the chronicler.

Zedekiah and the Final Catastrophe (verses
11–21). (Comp. 2 Kings xxiv. 18–xxv. 21; Jer.
xxxix. iii.; 3 Esdr. i. 44–55.)

(12) Zedekiah was one and twenty.—So 2 Kings
xxiv. 18, adding his mother's name (Hamutal, who was
also mother of Jehoahaz).

Before Jeremiah . . . mouth of the Lord.—
Not in Kings. (Comp. Jer. xii. xxii. 1–10, xxvii.
xxviii., xxxii.—xxxiv., xxxvi., xxxviii.)

Two special sins of Zedekiah are mentioned in this
and the next verse—viz., his disregard of Jeremiah's
counsel, and his perjury to Nebuchadnezzar.

(13) And he also rebelled.—2 Kings xxiv. 20.

Who had made him swear by God.—When
Nebuchadnezzar appointed Zedekiah vassal-king of
Judah, he would naturally make him swear fealty to
himself by the God of his fathers. The fact is not
spatially recorded in Kings; but the prophet Ezekiel
makes it the point of a prophecy against the king and
his grandees (Ezek. xvii. 11–21; comp. especially
verse 17, "mine oath that he hath despised.")

But (and) stiffened his neck and hardened
his heart.—(Comp. the like expression in Deut. ii. 30;
2 Kings xvii. 14; Jer. xix. 15.) Zedekiah was not per-
sonally unfavourable to the prophet Jeremiah, and
consulted him more than once; but he was too weak
and timorous to stand by the prophetic counsel, in de-
fiance of his princes who were intriguing with Egypt.

Sins of the Ruling Classes which Brought
Down the Judgment of God (verses 14–16).
(Comp. with this passage 2 Kings xvii. 7–23.)

(14) The chiefs.—The princes.

Transgressed very much.—Committed mani-
fold unfaithfulness.

After all the abominations . . .—See Ezek.
vii. 5–18; where "the princes of the priests and the
people" are specially singled out in verses 11 and
16. The twenty-five men of the latter verse are the
High Priest and the heads of the twenty-four courses
of priests. (Comp. also Jer. xxxii. 32, seq.)

His Messengers.—The prophets (2 Kings xvii. 13).

(15) Rising up betimes and sending.—i.e., con-
sistently and earnestly. Jer. xxv. 3, 4: "The Lord hath
Judah Spoiled

II. CHRONICLES, XXXVI. by the Chaldeans.

and on his dwelling place: (16) but they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy. (17) Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldeees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age; he gave them all into his hand. (18) And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon. (19) And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof. (20) And they that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: (21) to fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil three score and ten years. (22) Now in the first year of Cyrus king

correcting Nebuchadnezzar: “And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son’s son, until the time of his own land come” (Jer. xxvii. 7). Comp. also Isaiah’s word to Hezekiah (2 Kings xx. 18). (21) To fulfill. —Imnathith (an Aramaised form).

The word . . . Jeremiah. —The seventy years of Babylonian exile are predicted in Jer. xxv. 11-12. (Comp. also Jer. xxix. 10: “Thus saith the Lord. After seventy years be accomplished for Babylon, I will visit you.”)

Until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths.— “Enjoyed” is ra’ath, which Gesenius renders persoleit, “made good,” “discharged,” as a debt. The meaning is that during the long years of the exile, the land would enjoy that rest of which it had been de-fruad ed by the neglect of the law concerning the sabbatical years (Lev. xxv. 1-7.). The following words, “as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath” (literally, all the days of the desolation she rested) are taken from Lev. xxvi. 34, 35.

To fulfil three score and ten years.—i.e., in order to fulfil the seventy years of exile foretold by Jeremiah.

We have no right whatever to press the words of the sacred writer, in the sense of assuming that he means to say that when Jerusalem was taken by the Chaldeans exactly seventy sabbatical years had been neglected—that is, that the law in this respect had not been observed for 490 years (70 × 7), or ever since the institution of monarchy in Israel (480 + 688 = 1,078).

The seventy years are reckoned from the 4th of Jehoiakim, when the prophecy was uttered (Jer. xxv. 1, 12), to the first year of Cyrus, and the return under Zerubbabel, 536 B.C.

The Edict of Cyrus, Authorising the Return (verses 22, 23). (Comp. Ezra i. 1-3; 3 Esdr. ii. 1-5; Isa. xlv. 28; xlv. —xlvii.)

(22) Now in the first year of Cyrus.—This verse is the same as Ezra 1. 1, save that it has “by the mouth” instead of “from the mouth.” The latter is probably correct. (Comp. verse 12 supra.) So some MSS. here also.

That the word . . . Jeremiah.—Concerning the seventy years.

Stirred up the spirit.—1 Chron. v. 26; 2 Chron. xx. 16.

That he made a proclamation.—And he made a voice pass (chap. xxx. 5).
of Persia, that the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, (23) Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up.

Throughout all his kingdom... and put it also in writing.—Into all... and also into a writing.

Writing.—Miktaḥ (chap. xxxv. 4.)
The Lord.—Iahweh. Instead of this Ezra i. 3 has, Iesh, “He;” so also 3 Esdr. ii. 5. “The Lord—with him!” (Iahweh ḳimmō) is a frequent formula in the chronicle, and is probably correct here. (Some Hebrew MSS. and the Vulg. unite the readings.)

And let him go up.—Whither? The sentence is abruptly broken off here, but continued in Ezra i. 3. As to the relation between the Chronicles and Ezra, see Introduction.

Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia.—Comp. the words of Darius Hystaspes on the famous Behistun Inscription, which begins “I am Darius, the great king, the king of kings, the king of Persia;” while every paragraph opens with “Saith Darius the king.”

All the kingdoms... given me.—Comp. the words of Darius: “Saith Darius the king:—By the grace of Ormazd I am king; Ormazd has granted me the empire.”

The Lord God of heaven.—Jehovah, the God of heaven. “The god of heaven” was a title of Ormazd or Ahuramazda, the Supreme Being according to Persian belief, which was Zoroastrianism. It is not at all wonderful that Cyrus should have identified the God of Israel with his own deity, especially if he had heard of the prophecies Isa. xlv. 28, &c. Such a politic syncretism was the settled practice of the Roman empire in a later age.
Ezra
GENERAL INTRODUCTION
TO
EZRA AND NEHEMIAH.

Although these two books have distinct authors, they describe consecutive periods of the same general stage of Jewish history, and in many respects are closely linked. Hence much of the matter introductory to their exposition must necessarily be common to the two, and equally applicable to both.

I. The names of Ezra and Nehemiah are combined in revelation after a manner of which Moses and Aaron furnish the only parallel. The analogy, though not perfect, will bear to be followed out to a certain extent. Strictly speaking, Zerubbabel and Joshua were the Moses and Aaron of the new Israel redeemed from captivity in Babylon. But these two names fade in the presence of their greater successors, who finished the work they only began. This has been the view of Jewish tradition; and Christian sentiment agrees with Jewish tradition. Here, however, the analogy begins to fail. Judaism has always regarded the priest Ezra alone as the restorer of the law and the polity, making Nehemiah with his book merely an adjunct; just as the Pentateuch was “the book of the law of Moses,” Aaron being altogether or almost kept out of view. When we go to the Scriptures themselves, Ezra and Nehemiah, the spiritual and the civil rulers of the new constitution, have an equal dignity, and both are very subordinate characters in comparison with those first organs of Divine revelation. They introduce nothing really original; they bring no new tables from the Mount; they have no Urim and Thummim; and are rather administrators of a revived law than legislators themselves. A few minor institutions owe their origin to Nehemiah. But neither he nor Ezra was directly the founder of the synagogue and other great additions to the Mosaic economy. The greatness of these two names is, in fact, very much the result of wonderful traditions which have been most prodigal in their honour, and especially in the glorification of Ezra.

II. Ezra and Nehemiah are both, though in different ways, connected by Jewish tradition with the final settlement of the Old Testament canon. Among the early Fathers an opinion was current that, when the originals of Scripture were burned with the Temple, Ezra, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, restored the Law and the Prophets, adding or authenticating the books which were afterwards written. Another tradition is preserved in the Mishna, and has found more favour, that Ezra, or Ezra and Nehemiah, instituted the Great Synagogue, numbering 120 associates, and in conjunction with them settled the limits of the canon. In many parts of the Talmud such a college is referred to; but neither the canonical nor the apocryphal scriptures yield this tradition any real support. The “company of scribes” of 1 Macc. vii. 12 has been supposed to refer to this body. But 2 Macc. ii. 13 gives the tradition a different form. It alludes to a and quotes certain

“writings and commentaries” of Nehemiah, and describes him as having “established a library” or collection of holy documents, including historical and prophetic books and writings of David, thus not obscurely pointing to the threefold conventional order of our present canonical volume. If we understand the “letters of kings concerning offerings” to mean the decrees of the Persian monarchs that make up a large part of our two books, the tradition may be understood to embrace the whole canon. It will be seen that there are traces in Nehemiah of interpolation as late as the days of Alexander the Great; and the question of the final ratification of the Hebrew canon is still involved in obscurity.

III. The relation of these two to the other historical books of the canon has been matter of some controversy. Without any support from subsequent Jewish literature, a certain class of critics have invented a later editor, who, living in the time of the Greek Dominions, constructed the Chronicles. Ezra, and Nehemiah as one series of historical works. Agreeing in this, the hypotheses then differ; and their differences are of such a character as to confirm our confidence in the traditional view that the three books are distinct, that their true common editor was Ezra, and that only a very few additions were left for aftertimes. While the end of Chronicles is the beginning of Ezra, a long and unrecorded period comes between; Ezra and Nehemiah give the history of a totally different century of the national life; and they close the inspired historical records of the ancient nation. Malachi alone comes after them; while Haggai and Zechariah immediately precede, or rather they delivered their predictions in the days which the former part of Ezra describes. The last historical books of the Old Testament are works of which the authors were to a great extent editors also; and there is every reason to think that the chief of these editors was Ezra, who put the finishing touches on all that preceded his own annals. It can hardly be maintained that his editorship included the book of Nehemiah, seeing that this contains a long list of names almost entirely coinciding with a similar list in his predecessor.

IV. The authenticity of these two records cannot be reasonably called in question: the only attacks proceed from that style of criticism which makes the entire history of the Old Testament a series of inventions based on but a slight substratum of actual events. There is nothing here but a series of plain statements concerning a great historical fact which cannot be called in question. We observe the same use of public documents and genealogical lists with which the rest of the Bible makes us familiar. The sources are never referred to as such; for both writers, from their position, were above the necessity of giving their
authorities. But we may be sure that the history of the first return under Zerubbabel had been preserved, and only required Ezra's abridgment. The Persian documents quoted were in public archives. There is not an incident recorded, nor a character introduced, which is out of keeping with internal probability or external independent vouchers. The simplicity of the narrative and its utter absence of disguise, when recording the humble estate and deep unworldliness of a people rescued, pleads irresistibly for the truth of the whole. The very dislocations of the narratives, with the repetition of lists, are in favour of the trustworthiness of the narrators. The want of strict agreement is not in a perfect state. It must be admitted that the discrepancies between the two books themselves, as also between both and the Chronicles, are very numerous: no two lists perfectly agree either in order of names or amount of numbers. But a careful and dispassionate examination of the differences will lead to the conclusion that the text of one or the other or of both has suffered through transcription. Besides what has been said on this subject in former Introductions, something in the nature of historical vindication will be found in the course of the exposition itself.

V. As these two books give the history of the return from the Captivity, they cannot be understood without some knowledge of the character of that Captivity. In the last words of inspiration before our history commences the prophecies of Jeremiah are put into a historical form: the people were to be servants in Babylon until the reign of the kingdom of Persia; and the emptied land was to enjoy her Sabbaths, in sad vindication of ages of Sabbath neglect, "to fulfil three score and ten years." But there was mercy in the great visitation. Though the bondmen were sometimes made to howl (Isa. li. 5), they were also to have peace in the peace of the place of their captivity for which they prayed (Jer. xxxix. 5–7). They rose to wealth in the enjoyment of civil rights; they occupied places of high trust in the courts of their oppressors; they maintained their religious customs as far as they might do so in a strange land; above all, they kept alive their hope of restoration, and the nation was to be a means of keeping up the knowledge of God and the hope of His Kingdom in the present, and as part of the great preparation for the supreme future of finished redemption—these three in one—then scarcely any detail in these narratives will be thought to be without its meaning. Nothing is more needful as a preparation for the study of our history than the deep conviction of this principle.

VI. It follows that the events of which Ezra and Nehemiah are the historians must be studied in the light of the purposes of God in regard to His ancient people, and can be understood only in that light. In other words, they form a chapter in the history of redemption. It must needs be that the "holy seed"—holy because of it Christ was to come according to the flesh—should be kept unspotted among the nations, and the "holy land" should be kept undefiled among the nations. And this purpose was to be accomplished both by the "holy city" which should both welcome and reject Him as its king, and that the "holy place" should receive the true High Priest, and be closed by His voice. Generally speaking, it was necessary, for the fulfilment of prophecy, for the maintenance of true religion in the world, for the preparation of the earthly sphere of the Incarnate Son, that the ancient polity should be renewed and kept up until the "fullness of time." Their relation to the future Saviour of the world—it's present Saviour not yet revealed—gave to the Jewish remnant, and to everything connected with their history, an incomparable importance. We may not be able to see the precise bearing on this of many details in these books and that of Esther; nor is it necessary to believe that many of them—in a certain sense the greater part of the minute narrative, with its genealogical and other lists—had any such precise bearing. Granted the general necessity for the new creation of the people, as witnesses of the past and the future, the particulars of its new history become on that account important. To sum up, if we consider the re-establishment of the people and the revival of the worship of Zion as a record of past prophecy fulfilled, as a means of keeping up the knowledge of God and the hope of His Kingdom in the present, and as part of the great preparation for the supreme future of finished redemption—these three in one—then scarcely any detail in these narratives will be thought to be without its meaning. Nothing is more needful as a preparation for the study of our history than the deep conviction of this principle.

VII. It is a narrower view of the same subject that sees in these histories the foundation of that Judaism of the interval with which the Gospel narrative and the Christian Church are so intimately bound up. To understand this we must remember that with Ezra and Nehemiah and Esther are to be connected the final post-exile prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. The entire cycle, taken as a whole, reveals the tendencies of the Judaism which grew up after prophetic inspiration had ceased, and the finished development of which our Saviour found so utterly wanting. But in the process we must distinguish between the good and the evil. The good elements were many: the ancient Scriptures were restored to their place in the popular heart; Ezra was the first of an order of scribes entirely devoted to its exposition; and the synagogue worship, unknown in the Old Testament, was based on a revival of Sabbath devotion throughout the land. And the dispersion soon began to claim its rights beyond the land itself. Though Ezra and Nehemiah rebuilt the Temple and threw walls around Jerusalem—giving no hint themselves that the kingdom of God was on its way to the Gentiles—the prophets of their new economy were less restricted. And when the intermediate "fulness of time" came, Greek Scriptures and a Jewish service in Egypt and other lands paved the way for the Gospel. The evil elements were also very many. An internal, hard, ceremonial religion became, after four centuries, what the Lord found in Pharisaism; the scepticism which Malachi rebuked developed into Sadduceism; and the descendants of the "perfect scribe" laid more than the foundation of Talmudical Rabbinism.

VIII. Out of this arises another canon, namely, that this portion of the history of the one CIVITAS DER which runs through all ages has, like every other, its lessons to teach the Christian Church. Indeed, to this expositors have run into the usual opposite extremes. Some have gone so far as to find in Ezra and Nehemiah types of Christ; and their several and combined work has been made to prefigure the relations of Church and State for ever. It is easy to trace and condemn the error here. But we should be on our guard against the notion that the books contain only old history that has passed away. Devotion to the kingdom of God on the part of His servants, its grace and its dignity and its reward; opposition to that kingdom,
EZRA AND NEHEMIAH.

its low endeavours, its futility, and its condemnation—these are lessons taught in every chapter. The everlasting distinction between the saints and the children of this world, and the importance of remembering this under all circumstances, is also taught. They who condemn the intolerance of Ezra and Nehemiah, and think the rigorous separation of the ancient people from their foreign wives a great mistake of these new legislators, altogether miss the lesson the books were intended to convey. The providence of God in the world, which is now the government of His Son the Head over all things to the Church, has no sublimer illustration than they present.—It may be added that the two writers, who are also the two main actors, are noble examples of the passive and active virtues of religion. Though their writings are not quoted in the New Testament, they contain a fair proportion of those precious apophthegms and watchwords of devotion that are the heritage of God's people in every age.

IX. It is of great importance to fix in the mind, before entering on the study of our two historians, a clear idea of the relation of the events they record to profane history and secular chronology. On one or two points opinions are divided; but the following may on the whole be relied on as most probably satisfying all demands:—

B.C. 558—529. Cyrus becomes king of the Medes and Persians, on the defeat of Astyages.
541. Belshazzar, vice-king of Babylon (Daniel's vision, chapter vii.).
538. Babylonian empire subverted, and Medo-Persian empire established by Cyrus. Darius the Mede made king of Babylon.
536. First year of Cyrus. Return under Zerubbabel (Ezra 1).
535. Second Temple founded (Ezra iii. 8).
529. Opposition of Samaritans (Ezra iv. 6). Cambyses (Ahasuerus of Ezra iv. 6).
522. Building of Temple stopped. Gomates or pseudo-Smerdis (Artaxerxes of Ezra iv. 7).
521—486. Darius I., son of Hystaspes, king of Persia, having slain Gomates (Ezra iv. 5—24, v. 5, vi. 1). Haggai and Zechariah begin their prophecies.
515. Second Temple completed (Ezra vi. 15).
486—465. Xerxes (Ahasuerus of Esther).
433. Nehemiah's return to Jerusalem (Neh. xiii. 6).
401—339. Malachi's last predictions. Death of Cyrus the Younger (also of Thucydides and Socrates).

X. The two books are the centre of what may be called the EsDRAS CYCLE of Biblical literature, the details of which are complicated, and must be studied in special works on the canon. The ancient Jews regarded the two canonical works as one, and in this they were followed by the early Fathers of the Christian Church. In the catalogues handed down to us they are distinguished as I. and II. Ezra or Esdras: so the Vulgate, Origen, and the Council of Laodicea. In the Alexandrine version, however, first comes our book of Ezra, with enlargements of various kinds; then, secondly, the genuine book itself; Nehemiah is there III. Esdras; and to these is added the later apocryphal IV. Esdras, containing certain final accretions to the Ezra literature. In the Vulgate the two added books, the enlarged translation and the apocryphal, are III. and IV. Ezra. At the close of the fourth century Jerome calls II. Ezra by the name of Nehemiah; and gradually its thoroughly independent character became generally recognised. For the character of the two apocryphal books—the latter of which has very little connection with the Biblical Ezra—works on the Apocrypha must be consulted. Suffice it to say here that what may be called—following the Greek style—I. Esdras is subordinately useful in some points of the textual criticism of our book of Ezra, especially where its numbers differ from those of Nehemiah.
INTRODUCTION
TO
EZRA.

I. All that is certainly known concerning Ezra is found in his own narrative as continued in Nehemiah. He was a priest, descended, through Seraiah, from Eleazar the son of Aaron; and also a scribe, devoted to the exposition of the Law of Moses. In the seventh year of Artaxerxes Longimanus, B.C. 458, he went from Babylon to Jerusalem at the head of a second company of the children of the Captivity, and with an ample commission for the restoration of the Temple and the reform of religion. After a rigorous inquisition into the abuses connected with mixed marriages, he is lost sight of, re-appearing afterwards in Nehemiah, with whom or under whom he takes part in the dedication of the wall and the conduct of religious service generally. He then finally disappears from the sacred history. Jewish tradition glorified his memory as second only to that of Moses. He is regarded as having been the first president of the "Great Synagogue," to which is attributed the settlement of the Jewish canon; to have instituted the synagogue service; to have been the organiser of much authoritative tradition traced down from Moses; to have introduced the present Hebrew type; and done other service to Jewish literature. Josephus says that he lived to a great age, and was buried in Jerusalem. Other traditions assign him a grave near Samara, after returning to Persia, and dying there aged 120.—There is no character in the Old Testament more perfect and complete than that of Ezra. We see him as a servant and as a master, as a student of the law and as its administrator, as supreme in authority and as subordinate, in public and private, uniformly and always the same devout, disinterested, patriotic lover of his people and friend of God.

II. The question of Ezra's authorship is closely connected with an analysis of the book. It contains two distinct records: one, of the first return from the Captivity under Zerubbabel, occupying six chapters; and the other, of the second detachment, under Ezra himself, occupying the remaining four. Between the two there is a chasm of fifty-seven years passed over in total silence. The former part, embracing a period of twenty-two years, from the memorable first year of Cyrus, B.C. 538, is mainly made up of extracts from archives which Ezra has woven into a narrative. Certain portions of this, as of the second part, are written in Chaldee: the documents, namely, are given in their original, and the writer, equally familiar with both forms of the Hebrew, does not quite limit himself to the documents themselves, the Chaldee overflowing here and there. Certainly the first six chapters may be regarded as Ezra's own compilation, and therefore as his own work. The second part gives the history of twelve months, being the record as it were of the discharge of a commission, narrating that in full and then abruptly breaking off. A close examination of the four chapters shows the same hand; the peculiar phrases—such as the "Lord God of Israel" and many others—are similar, with just those variations in uniformity which might be expected in one who had several languages at command. But there is one remarkable anomaly, that sometimes the first and sometimes the third person is used—an anomaly, however, that equally occurs in Daniel. It is to be explained at the outset by the humility of the writer, who introduces himself and his own character in the third person before he uses the direct style of narrative; and afterwards by the fact that public and great events are incorporated in the very style in which they were from time to time recorded. On the whole there is no reason to distrust the uniform tradition that has ascribed the whole book to Ezra.
CHAPTER 1.—(1) Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,

(2) Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia,

The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. (3) Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem.

(4) And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem.

(5) Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem.

(6) And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods,

I. THE FIRST RETURN UNDER ZERUBBABEL.

(1) The first year.—Cyrus became king of Persia in B.C. 559. Twenty years afterwards he took Babylon from Belshazzar; and this first year of his rule in Babylon was his beginning as an agent in Jewish affairs and for the Kingdom of God.

(2) Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia.—In the interpretation of this decree two courses are open. We may suppose that “the spirit of Cyrus was so stirred up” by the Spirit of God, through the prophecies of Isaiah, as to send out a written proclamation avowing his faith in Jehovah-Elohim, and thus publicly accepting the prediction: “He hath charged me to build.” In this case the parenthesis of verse 3 (He is the God) may be compared with the confession of his father-in-law, Darius the Mede: “He is the living God” (Dan. vi. 26). Or we may assume that “Ormazd” in the original was reproduced in the Hebrew version that accompanied it by its equivalent, “Jehovah.” The latter supposition avoids the difficulty involved in making Cyrus disavow the national faith in the presence of his empire. The decree itself runs much in the style of those found in the majority of Persian inscriptions, such as “By the grace of Ormazd is Darius king;” and the spirit of tolerance and piety in it is perfectly in harmony with all ancient testimonies to the character of Cyrus.

(3) Whosoever remaineth.—As to all the Remnant in all places. There is a singular correspondence between this and the beginning of Nehemiah; but there this familiar name for the survivors of the great national catastrophe is used of those who had returned to Jerusalem, while here it is used for the dispersion in all the provinces of the empire (Neh. i. 3).

Where he sojourneth.—Every individual Jew is thus significantly supposed to be only an exile.

Let the men of his place help him.—The heathen subjects of Cyrus are required to assist the departing sojourner, and expected also to send freewill offerings to the Temple. Note that in all these terms the spirit and phrase of the Hebrew people are used; and that there was more in the decree than is here given, as appears in the sequel. Cyrus was under strong influence, both human and Divine.

(5-1) Immediate result of the decree.
and with beasts, and with precious things, beside all that was willingly offered.

(7) Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods; (8) even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah. (9) And this is the number of them; thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine and twenty knives, (10) thirty basons of gold, silver basons of a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand. (11) All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem.

CHAPTER II.—(1) Now these are the children of the province that went up out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away out of Babylon, and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city; (2) which came with Zerubbabel; Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mizpar, Bigvai, Rehum, Baanah. The number of the men of the people of Israel:

The Number of the Priests.

EZRA, II.

The Levites and the Nethinim.


only one, as if the “other” had slipped in from what in Nehemiah is found in the next verse. In a few cases all the authorities differ, but the differences are not important.

(36) The priests : the children of Jedaiah.—The priests are then given by family names, their numbers being very large in proportion to each of the other classes. Three only of David’s priestly courses are represented (1 Chron. xxiv. 7, 8, 14) ; Pashur, a name mentioned elsewhere as the name of a priestly race, not being among the twenty-four in the Chronicles.

Of the house of Jeshua.—A peculiar expression, seeming to indicate merely that the present high priest belonged to the race of Jedaiah, who, in that case, is not the same as the head of the second order in the Chronicles, unless indeed he sprang from the high-priestly family of Eleazar.

(40) The Levites : the children of Jeshua.—Then follow the Levitical families, not priests : that is, the Levites proper, the singers, the doorkeepers or porters. Of the first there were only two families, and these are both traced up to one, that of Hodaviah or Judah (ch. iii. 9) or Hodevah (Neh. vii. 43). The hereditary choristers are also few : of the families of Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun the first alone is represented. Nehemiah makes their number twenty more ; but 1 Esdras agrees with the text of Ezra.

(43) The children of the porters.—The porters, or gatekeepers, number six families, three of which appear in the old Jerusalem (1 Chron. ix. 17).
the children of Sotai, the children of Sophereth, the children of 
1Peruda, (56) the children of Jaalah, the children of 
Darkon, the children of Giddel, (57) the children of Shephathiah, the children of 
Hattil, the children of Pochereth of Zebam, the children of 
2 Ami. (58) All the 
Nethinims, and the children of 
Solomon's servants, were three hundred ninety and two. 
(59) And these were they which went up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsa, Cherub, 
Addan, and Immer: but they could not shew their father's house, and their 
seed, whether they were of Israel: (60) the children of Delaiah, the children of 
Tobiah, the children of Nehoda, six hundred fifty and two. (61) And of the 
children of the priests: the children of Koz, the children of 
Habaiah, the children of Barzillai the Gileadite, 
and was called after their name: (62) these sought their register among those that 
were reckoned by genealogy; but they were not found: therefore *were they, as 
polluted, put from the priesthood. 

names—Akkub, Hagab, and Asnah—have dropped from 
Nehemiah's list, which gives also some unimportant 
changes in the spelling of the names. 
(55) The children of Solomon's servants.— 
These are mentioned in 1 Kings ix. as a servile class, 
formed of the residue of the Canaanites. They were 
probably inferior to the Nethinims, but are generally 
classed with them, as in the general enumeration here. 
Both these classes retained during their captivity their 
attribution, or (63) Finally, those who had lost the records of their 
lineage are mentioned. Of the people, the children of 
three families from Tel-melah, Hill of salt, Tel-harsa, 
Hill of the wood, and a few other places, are mentioned. 
Of the priests, there are also three families without their 
genealogy. 

(63) Barzillai the Gileadite.—See the well-known 
history in 2 Sam. xvii. 27. 
After their name.—Rather, after her name, she 
having been probably an heiress. 
(62) their register among those that were 
reckoned by genealogy.—Better, their record, or 
the record of the Enregistered. 
Polluted.—Levitically disqualified. 
(63) Tirshatha.—Interchangeable with Pechah, or 
governor, as Zerubbabel is called in chapter v. 14 and 
always in Haggai. It is probably an old Persian term, signifying "The Feared." 
With Urim and with Thummim.—See Exod. 
xxviii. 30. They were pronounced to be excluded 
from priestly functions. Without ark or temple, the 
people had not as yet that special presence of Jehovah 
before which the high priest could "inquire of the 
Lord by Urim and Thummim." Zerubbabel might 
hope that this privilege would return, and thought the 
oficial purity of the priestly line of sufficient 
importance for such an inquiry. But the holy of holies in 
the new temple never had in it the ancient "tokens"; 
and by Urim and Thummim Jehovah was never again 
inquired of. 
(64) This sum total is the same in Nehemiah; but the 
several sums in Ezra make 29,818, and in Nehemiah 
31,089. The apocryphal Esdras agrees in the total, 
but makes in the particulars 33,850, adding that 
children below twelve were not reckoned. Many expen-
dents of reconciliation have been adopted; but it is 
better to suppose that errors had crept into the original 
documents. 
(65) The Rabbis accounted for these "ut latior esset 
Israelitarum reditus," in order that the return of the 
Israelites might be more joyful; but they were hired 
for lamentation as well as joy; and here, possibly, to 
supply the defect of Levites. In Nehemiah (chap. vii. 67) 
there are 245: see for the probable reason of the 
transcription the 245 of the next verse in that chapter. 
(66) The asses, as throughout earlier Hebrew history, 
are the chief and most numerous beasts of burden. 
(67) They came to the site of the house not yet 
built, and offered for the building. 
(68) The dram being a daric of a little more than our 
guinea, and the pound, or maneh, a little more than £4, 
the whole would be nearly £20,000, and not an exorbitant 
sum for a community far from poor. But Nehemiah's 
statement is smaller, and probably more correct. 
One hundred priests' garments.—An almost 
necessary correction or supply in the defective text of
CHAPTER III.—(1) And when the seventh month was come, and the children of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem. (2) Then stood up 1 Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests, and 2Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and his brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God. (3) And they set the altar upon his bases; for fear was upon them because of the people of those countries: and they offered burnt offerings thereon unto the Lord, even burnt offerings morning and evening. (4) They kept also the feast of tabernacles, as it is written, and offered the daily burnt offerings by number, according to the custom, as the duty of every day required; (5) and afterward offered the continual burnt offering, both of the new moons, and of all the set feasts of the Lord that were consecrated, and of every one that willingly offered a freewill offering unto the Lord. (6) From the first day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt offerings unto the Lord. But the foundation of the temple of the Lord was not yet laid. (7) They gave money also unto the masons, and to the carpenters; and meat, and drink, and oil, unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre, to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa, according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia.

(8) Now in the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, began Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and the remnant of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all they that were come out of the captivity unto Jerusalem; and appointed the Levites, from twenty

Nehemiah (chap. vii. 70) makes his “four hundred and thirty priests’ garments,” as contributed by the Tirshatha, “five hundred pounds of silver and thirty priests’ garments.” This being so, the two accounts agree, always allowing that Ezra’s 61,000 is a corrupttion of 41,000 in the gold, and his 5,000 pounds of silver and 100 priests’ garments round numbers.

(70) Some of the people; placed by Nehemiah after all the others. All Israel in their cities. The emphasis lies in the fact that, though Judah and Benjamin contributed the largest part, it was a national revival; and the constant repetition of “in their cities” has in it the same note of triumph.

III.

(1—13) The altar set up, and the feasts established.

(1) The seventh month was come.—Rather, approached. Tisri, answering to our September, was the most solemn month of the year, including the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles, afterwards distinguished as “the feast” pre-eminently.

As one man.—Not all, but with one consent.

(2) Builded the altar.—Only as the beginning of their work. The Temple was, as it were, built around the altar, as the centre of all.

Moses the man of God.—Like David, Neh. xii. 24, 36.

(3) Upon his bases.—Upon its old site, or its place, discovered among the ruins. Thus was it signified that all the new was to be only a restoration of the old.

For fear they should not.—Until their offerings went up, they did not feel sure of the Divine protection. This was their first act of defiance in the presence of the nations around: near the altar they were strong.

(4) According to the custom.—It is necessary here to read Deut. xvi., Lev. xxiii., Num. xxix. The intention obviously is to lay stress on the provision made for an entire renewal of the Mosaic economy of service, as appears in the next verse.

(5) Both of the new moons.—And of the new moons. The whole verse is general and anticipatory. The new moons, the three feasts, and the constant presentation of freewill offerings, added to the daily sacrifice, made up the essentials of ritual; all being, like the arrangements in the Book of Leviticus, fixed before the Temple was built, and afterwards observed.

(6) From the first day.—The notes of time demand notice. The altar was raised before the month came; from the first until the fifteenth, when the Feast of Tabernacles began, the daily sacrifice was offered. The whole verse recapitulates, and its latter part is the transition to what follows.

(7) They gave money.—Their own workmen were paid in money; the Phoenicians, as in Solomon’s days (1 Kings v.; 2 Chron. ii.), were paid in kind. This illustrates and is illustrated by Acts xii. 20.

The sea of Joppa.—The Jewish port to which the cedar-trees were sent by sea, and thence thirty-five miles inland to Jerusalem.

The grant.—The authority of Cyrus over Phoenicia seems not to have been doubtful.

(8) In the second year.—The second year of Cyrus, B.C. 537, was their second year in the holy place.

In the second month.—Tisri, chosen apparently because it was the same month in which Solomon laid the first foundation (1 Kings vi).

Appointed the Levites, from twenty years.—Their appointment to superintend, and their specified age, are in strict harmony with the original ordinances of David (1 Chron. xxiii.).
years old and upward, to set forward the work of the house of the Lord. (9) Then
stood Jeshua with his sons and his brethren, Kadmiel and his sons, the sons of
Judah, together, to set forward the workmen in the house of God: the sons of
Henadad, with their sons and their brethren the Levites. (10) And when the
builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, they set the priests
in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals,
to praise the Lord, after the 4 ordinance of David king of Israel. (11) And they
sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord: because
he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people
of the house of the Lord was laid. (12) But many of the priests and Levites
and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when
the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice;
and many shouted aloud for joy: (13) so that the people could not discern the
noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people: for the
people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off.

CHAPTER IV.—(1) Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin
heard that the children of the captivity built the temple unto the Lord God
of Israel; (2) then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers,
and said unto them, Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do;
and we do sacrifice unto Him since the days of Esar-haddon king of Assur,
which brought us up hither. (3) But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of
the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with
us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto
the Lord God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us.
(4) Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of
Judah, and troubled them in building,
(5) and hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia. And in the reign of Ahazieerus, at the beginning of his reign, wrote they unto him an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

(7) And in the days of Artaxerxes wrote Bishlam, Mishredath, Tabeeel, and the rest of their companions, unto Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the writing of the letter was written in the Syrian tongue, and interpreted in the Syrian tongue. Rehum the chancellor, and Shimshai the scribe, wrote a letter against Jerusalem to Artaxerxes the king in this sort: then wrote Rehum the chancellor, and Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their companions; the Dinaites, the Apharsachthites, the Tarpelites, the Apharsites, the Archevites, the Babylonians, the Susanchites, the Dehavites, and the Elamites, and the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Asnapper brought over, and set in the cities of Samaria, and the rest that are on this side the river, and at such a time.

(11) This is the copy of the letter that they sent unto him, even unto Artaxeres the king; Thy servants the men on this side the river, and at such a time. Be it known unto the king, that the Jews which came up from thee to us are come unto Jerusalem, building the rebellious and the bad city, and have set up the walls thereof, and joined the foundations. Be it known now unto the king, that, if this city be built, and the walls set up again, then will they not pay toll, tribute, and custom, and so thou shalt endamage the revenue of the kings. Now because we have maintenance from the king's palace, and it was not meet for us to see the king's dishonour, therefore have we sent and certified the king; that search may be made in the book of the records of thy fathers: so shalt thou

(6) And hired counsellors against them.—They adopted a systematic course of employing paid agents at the court: continued for eight years, till b.c. 529. Cambyses, his son, succeeded Cyrus; he died b.c. 522; then followed the pseudo-Smerdis, a usurper, whose short reign Darius did not reckon, but dated his own reign from b.c. 522. A comparison of dates shows that this was the first Darius, the son of Hystaspes.

(8) In the beginning of his reign.—This Ahaseurus, another name for Cambyses, reigned seven years; and his accession to the throne was the time seized by the Samaritans for their accusation, of which we hear nothing more; suffice that the building languished.

(10) In the days of Artaxerxes.—This must be Gomates, the Magian priest who personated Smerdis, the dead son of Cyrus, and reigned only seven months; note that the expression used is "days," and not "reign" as in the previous verse. This Artaxerxes has been thought by many commentators to be the Longimanus of the sequel of this book and of Nehemiah, and they have identified the Ahaseurus of Ezra and Esther with Xerxes. This would explain the reference to "the walls" in verse 12; but in verses 23 and 24 the sequence of events is strict, and the word "ceased" links the parts of the narrative into unity. Moreover, the Persian princes had often more than one name. At the same time, there is nothing to make such an anticipatory and parenthetical insertion impossible.

In the Syrian tongue.—The characters and the words were Syrian or Aramaic; this explains the transition to another language at this point.

(9) Rehum the chancellor.—The lord of judgement, the counsellor of the Persian king, a conventional title of the civil governor.

Shimshai the scribe.—The royal secretary.

The Copy of the Letter

EZRA, IV.

sent to Artaxerxes.
find in the book of the records, and know that this city is a rebellious city, and hurtful unto kings and provinces, and that they have moved sedition within the same of old time: for which cause was this city destroyed.

(16) We certify the king that, if this city be built again, and the walls thereof set up, by this means thou shalt have no portion on this side the river.

(17) Then sent the king an answer unto Rehum the chancellor, and to Shimshai the scribe, and to the rest of their companions that dwell in Samaria, and unto the rest beyond the river, Peace, and at such a time. (18) The letter which ye sent unto us hath been plainly read before me. (19) And I commanded, and search hath been made, and it is found that this city of old time hath made insurrection against kings, and that rebellion and sedition have been made therein.

(20) There have been mighty kings also over Jerusalem, which have ruled over all countries beyond the river; and toll, tribute, and custom, was paid unto them. (21) Give ye now commandment to cause these men to cease, and that this city be not built, until another commandment shall be given from me.

(22) Take heed now that ye fail not to do this: why should damage grow to the hurt of the kings?

(23) Now when the copy of king Artaxerxes' letter was read before Rehum, and Shimshai the scribe, and their companions, they went up in haste to Jerusalem unto the Jews, and made them to cease by force and power. (24) Then ceased the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem. So it ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

CHAPTER V.—(1) Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, even unto them. (2) Then rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem: and with them were the prophets of God helping them.

(3) At the same time came to them Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shethar-boznai, and their companions, and said thus unto them, Who

This extended beyond his own fathers back to the times of the predecessors of the Median dynasty.

Of old time.—From the days of eternity, or time immemorial. The spirit of exaggeration if not of falsehood appears in every word here.

(10) No portion on this side the river.—The same unscrupulous use of language; that is, if the river Euphrates is meant. In the days of Solomon, and once or twice subsequently, the Israelites had advanced towards the river, but it was not likely that they would ever do so again. The letter may, however, have been intended to suggest loosely that Jerusalem might become a centre of general disaffection.

(17) Peace, and at such a time.—Salutation, and so forth. The account of the reply and the beginning of it are strangely blended, as before.

(19) Insurrection.—Never against Persia; but such as are alluded to in 2 Kings xxiv.

(20) Mighty kings.—David and Solomon, and some few kings down to Josiah, had extended their sway and made nations tributary (2 Sam. viii.; 1 Kings x.). The earlier kings' names would perhaps be referred to historically, though not immediately connected with Persian annals.

(22) Take heed now that ye fail not to do this: why should damage grow to the hurt of the kings?

(23) Now when the copy of king Artaxerxes' letter was read before Rehum, and Shimshai the scribe, and their companions, they went up in haste to Jerusalem unto the Jews, and made them to cease by force and power. (24) Then ceased the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem. So it ceased unto the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.
Tatnai and Shethar-boznai

EZRA, V.

send a Letter unto Darius.

hath commanded you to build this house, and to make up this wall? (4) Then said we unto them after this manner, What are the names of the men that make this building? (5) But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease, till the matter came to Darius; and then they returned answer by letter concerning this matter.

(6) The copy of the letter that Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shethar-boznai, and his companions the Apharsachites, which were on this side the river, sent unto Darius the king:

(7) they sent a letter unto him, wherein was written thus; Unto Darius the king, all peace.
(8) Be it known unto the king, that we went into the province of Judea, to the house of the great God, which is builded with great stones, and timber is laid in the walls, and this work goeth fast on, and prospereth in their hands.
(9) Then asked we those elders, and said unto them thus, Who commanded you to build this house, and to make up these walls? (10) We asked their names also, to certify thee, that we might write the names of the men that were the chief of them. (11) And thus they returned us answer, saying, We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and build the house that was builded these many years ago, which a great king of Israel builded and set up. (12) But after that our fathers had provoked the God of heaven unto wrath, he gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house, and carried the people away into Babylon. (13) But in the first year of Cyrus the king of Babylon the same king Cyrus made a decree to build this house of God. (14) And the vessels also of gold and silver of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple that was in Jerusalem, and brought them into the temple of Babylon, those did Cyrus the king take out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered unto one, whose name was Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor; (15) and said unto him, Take these vessels, go, carry them into the temple that is in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be builded in his place. (16) Then came the same Sheshbazzar, and laid the foundation of the house of God which is in Jerusalem:

Zoroastrianism and destroyer of temples, had encouraged the builders to go on without fearing molestation from the Court of Darius. Moreover, the two prophets had made their duty too plain to be deferred. Still, the decree of the preceding chapter had never been expressly revoked.

Then said we.—The LXX. must here have read, elders of the Jews take the Syrian satrap into their hands.
and since that time even until now hath it been in building; and yet it is not finished. (17) Now therefore, if it seem good to the king, let there be search made in the king's treasure house, which is there at Babylon, whether it be so, that a decree was made of Cyrus the king to build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter.

CHAPTER VI.—(1) Then Darius the king made a decree, and search was made in the house of the rolls, where the treasures were laid up in Babylon. (2) And there was found at Achmetha, in the palace that is in the province of the Medes, a roll, and therein was a record thus written: (3) In the first year of Cyrus the king the same Cyrus the king made a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, Let the house be built, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid: the height thereof threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof threescore cubits; (4) with three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber: and let the expenses be given out of the king's house: (5) and also let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which is at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored, and brought again unto the temple which is at Jerusalem, every one to his place, and place them in the house of God. (6) Now therefore, Tatnai, governor beyond the river, Shethar-boznai, and your companions the Aphasaraeites, which are beyond the river, be ye far from thence: (7) let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God in his place. (8) Moreover I make a decree what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews for the building of this house of God: that of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not hindered. (9) And that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests which are at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail: (10) that they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons. (11) Also I have made a decree, that whosoever shall...
The Temple is Finished.

EZRA, VI.

The Feast of the Dedication.

alter this word, let timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up, let him be hanged thereon; and let his house be made a dunghill for this. And the God that hath caused his name to dwell there destroy all kings and people, that shall put to their hand to alter and to destroy this house of God which is at Jerusalem. 1 Darius had made a decree; let it be done with speed.

Then Tatnai, governor on this side the river, Shethar-boznai, and their companions, according to that which Darius the king had sent, so they did speedily. And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia. And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king.

And the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy, and offered at the dedication of this house of God an hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs; and for a sin offering for all Israel, twelve he goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of God, which is at Jerusalem; as it is written in the book of Moses.

(10) And the children of the captivity kept the passover upon the fourteenth day of the first month. For the priests and the Levites were purified together, all of them were pure, and killed the passover for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves. And the children of Israel, which were come again out of captivity, and all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land, to seek the Lord God of Israel, did eat, and kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy: for

Hanged is literally crucified. Among the Persians crucifixion was generally the nailing of a body to a post or cross after decapitation; among the Assyrians it was transfixion or impalement. Here the "being set up" refers of course to the man, and not to the beam.

Cyprus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.—Evidently the Artaxerxes Longimanus of the sequel, whose contributions and help did so much toward the perfecting of the general design, though the "finishing" here mentioned took place fifty years before his reign. Observe that he alone is called "king of Persia," which shows that Ezra is writing in his time, and adds his name to the original record. Just as the later Artaxerxes is introduced, so the earlier Cyrus is, in this comprehensive review.

The third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year.—The event around which this part of the history revolves is dated with due care; it was on the third day of the last month of the ecclesiastical year, B.C. 516–515. Haggai (chap. i. 15) gives the exact date of the re-commencement: the time therefore was four years five months and ten days. But, dating from the first foundation (Ezra iii. 10), no less than twenty-one years had elapsed.

(16–22) The dedication of the second Temple.

Children of the captivity.—This designation is peculiarly appropriate here, as in verse 20. "All Israel" soon follows.

Twelve he goats.—The people are not now "Juda" or "Judah and Benjamin," but "all Israel." On the Day of Atonement, on the new moons, and on all the great feasts the kid was the sin-offering for the people. But only here is one offered for each tribe.

In the book of Moses.—The general arrangements only were given in the Pentateuch. The "courses" were of David's time; and their restoration must have been imperfect, as neither were the twenty-four courses of priests complete nor were the Levites in full force.

Upon the fourteenth day of the first month.—Recording the special celebration of the Passover—after the precedent of Hezekiah and Josiah—Ezra returns to the Hebrew language. The occasion was, as it were, a renewal of the redemption from Egypt, and another wilderness had been passed.

Purified together.—This verse should be translated as follows, contrary to the present accentuation: "The priests were purified; and the Levites were purified as one man: all were pure; and killed." In this fact the present Levitical and official purity of both orders surpassed that of Hezekiah's celebration (2 Chron. xxix. 34, xxx. 3). It had come to be the practice that the Levites slaughtered all the paschal lambs.

Separated themselves...—Not proselytes from the heathen are intended, but the remnant of the Jews in the land who had consorted with the foreign populations introduced by the conquerors. Their intermarriages and other acts of conformity are constantly referred to throughout Ezra and Nehemiah.

And kept the feast.—The Mazzoth, or week
the Lord had made them joyful, and turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.

CHAPTER VII.—(1) Now after these things, in the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra the son of Seraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah, (2) the son of Shallum, the son of Zadok, the son of Ahitub, (3) the son of Amariah, the son of Azariah, the son of Meraioth, (4) the son of Zerahiah, the son of Uzzi, the son of Bukki, (5) the son of Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the chief priest: (6) this Ezra went up from Babylon; and he was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given: and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him. (7) And there went up some of the children of Israel, and of the priests, and of the Levites, and the singers, and of unleavened bread, was the symbol of entire separation from evil, to the service of that God whom on the Passover they accepted as their God. The special joy of this feast was the feeling that the Lord had "turned the heart of the king of Assyria." The King of Persia is so called as a remembrancer of their oppression by his forerunners.

II.—THE SECOND RETURN UNDER EZRA.

VII.

(1—10) A general summary of Ezra's expedition under Divine guidance.

(1) After these things.—Fifty-seven years after: this special phrase is here alone used. During the interval we must place the events of the Book of Esther.

Ezra the son of Seraiah.—His lineage is given, as frequently in Scripture, compendiously, and according to the genealogical law which makes every ancestor a "father" and every descendant a "son". We know not the reason why certain names supplied in 1 Chron. vi. are here omitted; but Seraiah is claimed as the father of Ezra because he was the eminent high priest who last ministered in Solomon's function of scribe, and was slain at Riblah (2 Kings xxv. 18). The links wanting in the lineage are easily supplied.

(6) A ready scribe.—The "ready writer" of Ps. cxlv. 1. Ezra was a priest, and this title is rightly placed before that of scribe in what follows; but here at the outset, when he first appears in history, the title is used which expressed his pre-eminent function, that of guarding and interpreting the law (verse 10).

All his request.—This anticipates the letter of verse 11; a series of supplementary notes intervenes.

According to the hand of the Lord his God upon him.—The full formula for that special providence over God's servants which both Ezra and Nehemiah recognised.

In the seventh year.—The repeated notes of time must be marked. The journey itself comes afterwards; it is here indicated as having occupied four months. Ezra's company also is summarised beforehand, according to the manner of this book.

(10) For Ezra had prepared his heart.—It must be remembered that the providence of God over him immediately precedes—not as the reward of his preparing his heart, but as the reason of it. First, he gave himself to study the law, then to practise it himself, and lastly to teach its positive statutes or ordinances and its moral judgments or precepts—a perfect description of a teacher in the congregation. There is nothing discordant in Ezra saying of himself that he had thus "set his heart."

(11—29) Credentials and commission of Ezra. After the general statement the particulars are given, beginning with the letter of authorisation, in which we discern throughout the hand of Ezra.

(11) Even a scribe.—In the case of Ezra the function of scribe was more important than that of priest. The word scribe originally meant the writer or copyer of the law; but now it meant the expositor of its general moral commandments and of its special ceremonial statutes. It is with the latter more especially that the commission of Ezra had to do.

Artaxerxes, king of kings.—Artaxshasta in Persian, Artachashata in Hebrew. The Persian monarchs inherited the title here given from the Babylonians (Dan. ii. 37). It is not used by the historian, only by the king himself.
Perfect peace, and at such a time.—Literally, perfect, and so forth. The expression occurs only here, and is a difficult one. Our translation follows the apocryphal Esdras, and is on the whole to be accepted, a salutation being implied.

Seven counsellors.—These are mentioned in Esther i. 14, and were probably the heads of those families who aided Darius Hystaspis against the pseudo-Smerdis, as mentioned by Herodotus. According to the law of thy God.—Ezra's commission was first to enquire into the condition of the city and province, with regard to the relation of both to the Divine law.

Which is in Jerusalem.—The repetition of this and similar phrases is after the manner of the literature of this period; but here, as in some other places, it implies deep reverence.

Buy speedily.—Provide first of all for the sacrificial ceremonial. Every sacrifice had its own meat-offerings and drink-offerings (Num. xv.). These phrases in the commission of course Ezra dictated. The vessels also that are given thee for the service of the house of thy God, those deliver thou before the God of Jerusalem. And whatsoever more shall be needful for the house of thy God, which thou shalt have occasion to bestow, bestow it out of the king's treasure house. And I, even I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which are beyond the river, that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done speedily, unto an hundred talents of silver, and to an hundred measures of wheat, and to an hundred baths of wine, and to an hundred baths of oil, and salt without prescribing how much. Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven: for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons? Also we certify you, that touching any of the priests and Levites, singers, porters, Nethinims, or ministers of this house of God, it shall not be lawful to impose toll, tribute, or custom, upon them. And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and teach ye them that know them not. And whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily upon him,

(Jerusalem)
CHAPTER VIII. — (1) These are now the chief of their fathers, and this is the genealogy of them that went up with me from Babylon, in the reign of Artaxerxes the king. (2) Of the sons of Phinehas; Gershom: of the sons of Ithamar; Daniel: of the sons of David; Hattush. (3) Of the sons of Shechaniah, of the sons of Pharoosh; Zechariah: and with him were reckoned by genealogy of the males an hundred and fifty. (4) Of the sons of Pahath-Moab; Eliehoenai the son of Zerahiah, and with him two hundred males. (5) Of the sons of Shechaniah; the son of Jahaziel, and with him three hundred males. (6) Of the sons also of Adin; Ebed the son of Jonathan, and with him fifty males. (7) And of the sons of Elam; Jeshaiah the son of Athaliah, and with him seventy males. (8) And of the sons of Shephatiah; Zebadiah the son of Michael, and with him fourscore males. (9) Of the sons of Joab; Obadiah the son of Jehiel, and with him two hundred and eighteen males. (10) And of the sons of Shelomith; the son of Josephiah, and with him an hundred and three-score males. (11) And of the sons of Bebai; Zechariah the son of Bebai, and with him twenty and eight males. (12) And of the sons of Azgad; Johanan the son of Hakatan, and with him an hundred and ten males. (13) And of the last sons of Adonikam, whose names are these, Eliphelet, Jeiel, and Shemaiah, and with them three-score males. (14) Of the sons also of Bigvai; Uthai, and Zabbud, and with them seventy males. (15) And I gathered them together to the river that runneth to Ahava; and there we abide in tents three days: and I viewed the people, and the priests, and found there none of the sons of Levi. (16) Then sent I for Eliezer, for Ariel, for Shemaiah, and for Elnathan, and for Jarib, and for Elnathan, and for Nathan, and for Zechariah, and for Meshullam, chief men; also for Joiarib, and for Elnathan, men of understanding. (17) And I sent them with commandment unto Iddo the chief at the place Casiphia. — Evidently near Ahavah, and a colony of Jews presided over by Iddo. 

The difficulty of the text therefore may probably be best solved by punctuating thus: "Of the sons of David, Hattush of the sons of Shechaniah. Of the sons of Pharoosh, Zechariah."

(6) The son of Jahaziel. — Obviously a name is wanting. The LXX. have, "of the sons of Zattu, Shechaniah," before Jahaziel.

(10) Here also a name is wanting. The LXX. have, "of the sons of Bani, Shelomith, the son of Josephiah." (11) And of the last sons. — The younger branches, the elder being reported in chap. ii. 13.

(15-31). The journey through Ahava to Jerusalem. (19) Ahava. — Both river and town. Nine days' journey brought them thither; and there is a place now called Hit, about eighty miles from Babylon, which has been identified with it.

None of the sons of Levi. — Only seventy-four had returned with Zerubbabel (chap. ii. 40); and here we have evidence that the disinclination continued. The importance of Levitical service in the Temple accounts for the anxiety of Ezra.

Men of understanding. — Teachers, and perhaps priests. These were joined with nine chief men as a deputation to Iddo.

(17) The place Casiphia.
place Casiphia, and I told them what they should say unto Iddo, and to his brethren the Nethinims, at the place Casiphia, that they should bring unto us ministers for the house of our God.

(18) And by the good hand of our God upon us they brought us a man of understanding, of the sons of Mahli, the son of Levi, the son of Israel; and Sherebiah, and his brethren, and with him Jeshuaiah of the sons of Merari, his brethren and their sons, twenty; (19) and Hasha­­biah, and with him Ishmain, whom David and the princes had appointed for the service of the Levites, two hundred and twenty Nethinims: all of them were expressed by name.

(20) Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance. (21) For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way: because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him. (22) So we fasted and besought our God for this; and he was intreated of us.

one of the humble race of the Nethinims, but at present chief under the Persians. Ezra was aware of their existence in these parts.

Ministers.—A term obviously including Levites and Nethinims.

(18) A man of understanding. — Probably a proper name, Ishsekel. This is required by the “and” before “Sherebiah,” who was a Levite, referred to by Nehemiah (chap. viii. 7).

(19) The Nethinims. — It is here alone recorded that David appointed these to aid the Levites.

All of them were expressed by name.—Not, as some think, that they were all famous, but that Iddo sent their names in a list not given. The relief of their coming is gratefully ascribed to the “good hand of our God upon us.”

(20) To seek of him a right way for us.—The wilderness was now before them, and an enemy, indefinitely referred to, was in the way: probably desert tribes, always lying in wait for unprotected caravans.

Our little ones.—An intimation that whole households went up.

Our substance.—Chiefly the treasures for the Temple, though the term signifies cattle and other goods, with an undertone of abundance.

(22) Because we had spoken unto the king. — The whole verse goes back to the past. Ezra had magnified God’s providence before the king: His “hand” upon his own “for good”—the habitual tribute to Providence in this book and Nehemiah—and His power “against.” His enemies “for evil” not being expressed. This sublime testimony made the “seeking” God a condition of safety. Hence the solemn fasting and prayer, following many precedents (Judges xx. 26; 1 Sam. vii. 6).

Sherebiah. — Rather, to Sherebiah—that is, these two Levites, alone mentioned, with ten others, were associated with an equal number of priests in the charge of the Temple treasure.

And weighed. — The gold and silver were in bars. According to the best computation, the silver would amount to a quarter of a million of our money, and the gold to about three-quarters of a million.

A thousand drams.—Darics, and therefore the whole worth rather more than a thousand guineas. Fine copper. — Probably the Roman Orichalcum, a metal very highly valued.

(24) Then I separated twelve of the chief of the priests, Sherebiah, Hasha­­biah, and ten of their brethren with them, (25) and weighed unto them the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, even the offering of the house of our God, which the king, and his counsellors, and his lords, and all Israel there present, had offered: (26) I even weighed unto their hand six hundred and fifty talents of silver, and silver vessels an hundred talents, and of gold an hundred talents; (27) also twenty basons of gold, of a thousand drams; and two vessels of fine copper, precious as gold. (28) And I said unto them, Ye are holy unto the Lord; the vessels are holy also; and the silver and the gold are a freewill offering unto the Lord God of your fathers. (29) Watch ye, and keep them, until ye weigh them before the chief of the priests and the Levites, and chief of the fathers of Israel, at Jerusalem, in the chambers of the house of the Lord. (30) So took the priests and the Levites the weight of the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, to bring them to Jerusalem unto the house of our God.

(31) Then we departed from the river of Ahava on the twelfth day of the first month, to go unto Jerusalem: and the hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and of such as lay in wait by the
way. (32) And we came to Jerusalem, and abode there three days. (33) Now on the fourth day was the silver and the gold and the vessels weighed in the house of our God by the hand of Meremoth the son of Uriah the priest; and with him was Eleazar the son of Phinehas; and with them was Jozabad the son of Jeshua, and Noadiah the son of Binnui, Levites; (34) by number and by weight of every one: and all the weight was written at that time. (35) Also the children of those that had been carried away, which were come out of the captivity, offered burnt offerings unto the God of Israel, twelve bullocks for all Israel, ninety and six rams, seventy and seven lambs, twelve he goats for a sin offering: all this was a burnt offering unto the Lord. (36) And they delivered the king’s commissions unto the king’s lieutenants, and to the governors on this side the river: and they furthered the people, and the house of God.

CHAPTER IX.—(1) Now when these things were done, the princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, doing according to their abominations, even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. (2) For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands: yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass. (3) And when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat down astonished. (4) Then were assembled unto me every one that trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the transgression of those that had been carried away; and I sat astonished until

IX.

(1) Now when these things were done.—The arrival in Jerusalem, and first proceedings there.

(32-35) The princes expressed rather their eminence than their authority, which had been powerless to check the abuses they complain of.

Doing according to their abominations.—Rather, as it regards their abominations. They are not charged with abandonment to idolatry, but with that peculiar laxity which appears in the sequel.

The Ammonites.—It is remarkable that all the ancient proscribed races are mentioned, and not the specific nations by the names of which the Samaritans were known, as if to make the case as hateful as possible. At the same time, many of these races still lingered in the neighborhood of Judah, and were known, as if to make the case as hateful as possible.

The holy seed.—The “holy nation” or “peculiar people” of Exod. xix. 6 is called the “holy seed” by Isaiah (chap. vi. 13), with reference to its being preserved and kept holy amidst judgments; and here the same term is used with reference to its desecration by being made common among the nations.

The princes and rulers.—The upper classes, whether priests and Levites or laymen.

This trespass.—There is no question as to the unlawfulness of these intermarriages, nor any palliation on account of necessity. The rulers report it, and Ezra receives the report as evidence that the whole purpose of God with regard to the people was, at the very outset of their new economy, in course of being defeated by the guilt of the heads of Israel. Their delinquency as such is admitted on all hands.

(9) I rent my garment and my mantle.—The actions of Ezra betoken his horror and grief. But both the rending of the outer and inner garment and the plucking the hair were symbolical acts, teaching their lesson to the people who witnessed, and, as we see, were deeply impressed.

(4) Trembled.—In fear of the Divine judgments. Transgression of those that had been carried away.—The usual name of the people at this time. During their captivity, they had
Ezra Prayeth unto God

EZRA, IX. with Confession of Sins.

Judah and in Jerusalem. (10) And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments, (11) which thou hast commanded 6 by thy servants the prophets, saying, 7 The land unto which ye go to possess it, is an unclean land with the filthiness of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have filled it 7 from one end to another with their uncleanness. (12) Now therefore give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters unto your sons, nor seek their peace or their wealth for ever: that ye may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children for ever. (13) And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this; (14) should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? wouldest not thou be angry with us until thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping? (15) O Lord God of Israel, thou art righteous: for we remain yet escaped, as it is this day:

not been thus guilty. It was the aggravation of their guilt that they committed the trespass now.

(5—15) Ezra's prayer of confession and deprecation.

(5) And at the evening sacrifice I arose up.—Until the afternoon Ezra had sat silent and in grief before the Temple, and in presence of the people. Then, amid the solemnities of the sacrifice, he uttered the prayer which he had been meditating.

(6) And said, O my God.—The confession begins with “O my God,” but Ezra is the representative of the people, and it proceeds “O our God” (verse 10), without once returning to the first person.

(7) Since the days of our fathers have been in a great trespass.—In these Common Prayers of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel, the race of Israel is regarded as one, and national sins as one “great trespass.” The repetition of “this day” at the beginning and at the end of the verse is to be observed: in the former place in reference to the sin; in the latter in reference to the punishment.

(8) A little space.—The “little” here and at the close of the sentence are emphatic. All the present tokens of mercy are said at the conclusion of the prayer (verse 14) to be conditional in their continuance. The little space from the time of Cyrus was nearly two generations; but it was a moment only in relation to the past and the possible future. The idea is inverted in Isa. liv. 7: “For a small moment have I forsaken thee.”

Nail in his holy place.—The Temple was itself the sure nail on which all their hopes hung.

A little reviving.—Literally, make us a little life. The present revival was but the beginning, and still by manifold tokens precarious.

(9) We were bondmen.—Better, we are bondmen. In this lies the emphasis of the appeal.

A wall.—Like “the nail,” a figurative expression for security. The literal wall was not yet rebuilt.

(11) After this.—But all was a mercy for which there had been no adequate return.

Saying.—In the later Old Testament Scriptures the quotation of the earlier is often of this character, giving the substance of many passages. The same style is observable in the New Testament.

(12) Give not your daughters.—See Deut. vii. 3, the only place where the interdict includes both daughters and sons. It is observable that the giving of daughters in marriage to heathens is not mentioned either in Ezra or in Nehemiah.

Nor seek their peace.—An evident echo of that stern injunction in Deut. xxiii. 6.

(15) O Lord God of Israel, thou art righteous.—The solemn invocation shows that this is a summary of the whole prayer: God's righteousness is magnified, as accompanied by the grace which had preserved them, although as only a remnant; and as such covered with their trespasses; and especially with “this” the present trespass, the guilt of which underlies all.

the evening sacrifice. (5) And at the evening sacrifice I arose up from my knees, and spread out my hands unto the Lord my God, (6) and said,

O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens. (7) Since the days of our fathers have we been in a great trespass unto this day; and for our iniquities have we our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is this day. (8) And now for a little space have we been in a great trespass unto this day; and for our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is this day. (9) And now for a little space have we been in a great trespass unto this day; and for our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is this day.
CHAPTER X.—(1) Now when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confessed, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, there assembled unto him out of Israel a very great congregation of men and women and children: for the people 1 wept very sore. (2) And Shechaniah the son of Jehiel, one of the sons of Elam, answered and said unto Ezra, We have trespassed against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land: yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing. (3) Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God 2 to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them, according to the counsel of my lord, and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God; and let it be done according to the law. (4) Arise; for this matter belongeth unto thee: we also will be with thee: be of good courage, and do it. (5) Then arose Ezra, and made the publican a proclamation throughout Judah and Benjamin, and all the people made answer by saying, 1We have done according to the law." Then arose Ezra, and made the people sorrowful, so their vigour made him overawed. (6) He asked the people, and the whole strain of the narrative, bear witness to the veracity of an eye-witness. (7) The commission given to Ezra (chap. vii. 11 seq.) seems specially referred to, and the deep prostration of chief priests, the Levites, and all Israel, to swear that they should do according to the counsel of my lord, nor drink water: for he mourned because of the transgression of them that had been carried away. (8) And they made proclamation throughout Judah and Jerusalem unto all the children of the captivity, that they should gather themselves together unto Jerusalem; and that whosoever would not come within three days, according to the counsel of the princes and the elders, all his substance should be forfeited, and himself separated from the congregation of those that had been carried away. (9) Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered themselves together unto Jerusalem within three days. It was the ninth month, on the twentieth day of the month; and all the people sat in the street of the house of God, trembling because of this matter, and his spirit renders the encouragement here given very appropriate. It had its effect: as Ezra's grief had made the people sorrowful, so their vigour made him energetic. (1) **According to this word.**—"According to" occurs three times, and each instance must be noted. First, it was "in the counsel of the Lord" as God's law, rightly interpreted, demanded this measure, however seemingly harsh; secondly, it was to be done "according to the law," and, thirdly, according to the present covenant, which went beyond the law of Moses. (2) The chamber of Johanan the son of Eliashib.—Ezra retired for fasting and prayer into one of the chambers opening on the court. It seems impossible to identify these names with the Eliashib of Nehemiah xii. 10 and his grandson. Both names were common. (3) The summons. No town was more than forty miles distant; and of course only those would come that were able, and who came within the scope of the proclamation, the precise terms of which are not given. They were not more than could assemble "in the street," or open court of the Temple. The minute specifications of date, and the two reasons for the trembling of the people, and the whole strain of the narrative, bear witness to the veracity of an eye-witness.
for the great rain. (10) And Ezra the priest stood up, and said unto them, Ye have transgressed, and have taken strange wives, to increase the trespass of Israel. (11) Now therefore make confession unto the Lord God of your fathers, and do his pleasure: and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives.

(12) Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice, As thou hast said, so must we do. (13) But the people are many, and it is a time of much rain, and we are not able to stand without, neither is this a work of one day or two: for we are many that have transgressed in this thing. (14) Let now our rulers of all the congregation stand, and let all them which have taken strange wives in our cities come at appointed times, and with them the elders of every city, and the judges thereof, until the fierce wrath of our God for this matter be turned from us.

(15) Only Jonathan the son of Asahel and Jahaziah the son of Tikvah were employed about this matter: and Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite helped them. (16) And the children of the captivity did so.

And Ezra the priest, with certain chief of the fathers, after the house of their fathers, and all of them by their names, were separated, and sat down in the first day of the tenth month to examine the matter. (17) And they made an end with all the men that had taken strange wives by the first day of the first month.

(18) And among the sons of the priests there were found that had taken strange wives: namely, of the sons of Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren; Maaseiah, and Eliezer, and Jarib, and Gedaliah. (19) And they gave their hands that they would put away their wives; and being guilty, they offered a ram of the flock for their trespass.

(20) And of the sons of Immer; Hanani, and Zebediah. (21) And of the sons of Harim; Maaseiah, and Elijah, and Shemaiah, and Jehiel, and Uzziah.

(22) And of the sons of Pashur; Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nehaneel, Jozabad, and Elasah.

(23) Also of the Levites; Jozabad, and Shimie, and Kelah, (the same is Kelita,) Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.

(24) Of the singers also; Eliashib: and of the porters; Shallum, and Telem, and Uri.

(25) Moreover of Israel: of the sons of Parosh; Ramiah, and Jeziah, and Malchijah, and Miamin, and Eleazar, and Malchijah, and Benaijah.

(26) And of the sons of Elam; Mattaniah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, and Abdi, and Jeremoth, and Eliash. (27) And of the sons of

It was the ninth month.—Chisleu, our December, the rainy month in Palestine.

Ezra the priest.—He stood up, not as the commissioner of Artaxerxes, not at this moment as the scribe, but as the representative of God.

Do his pleasure.—This procedure, humanly severe, is connected with the Divine will.

From the people of the land, and from the strange wives.—The marriages were but a subordinate branch, though a very important one, of the wider sin: that of confederacy.

We are many.—Better, we have greatly offended in this thing. The greatness of the offence of course implied the number of the offenders.

Stand.—As a representative body in session.

Until the fierce wrath of our God for this matter be turned from us.—A difficult verse, owing to a slight peculiarity in the original. The meaning seems to be: until the fierce wrath of our God—fierce while this matter lasts—be turned away from us.

Were employed about.—Ratlier, stood against. Nothing is said as to the reason for opposition on the part of these and the two who abetted them. But the reason is obvious enough. Some modern expositors regard the act of Ezra as remedying one sin by another still greater. They bring Malachi (chap. ii. 15) to their support; but nothing in his prediction about “the wife of thy youth,” rightly understood, tends to condemn the conduct here described.

By their names.—As in chap. viii. 20, the names were before the writer, but are not given. And sat down.—That is, held a session. This was ten days after the general assembly.

And they made an end.—Though the number of transgressors was only one hundred and thirteen, two months were occupied, which shows the care taken to do justice, especially to the claims of the women put away.

List of the transgressors.

They gave their hands.—The four members of the high priest’s family were peculiarly dealt with. They gave their distinct pledge, and offered each a special trespass offering. It is one among a multitude of similar tokens of authenticity in the history; an inventor would have given some reason for the peculiarity.

Pashur.—Comparing chap. ii. 36—39, we find that all the priestly families that returned with Zerubbabel were implicated in the national offence.

Of Israel.—Of the thirty-eight are mentioned, belonging to ten races which returned with Zerubbabel.
Zattu; Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, and Jeremoth, and Zabud, and Aziza. (28) Of the sons also of Bebai; Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai. (29) And of the sons of Bani; Meshullam, Malluch, and Adaiah, Jashub, and Sheal, and Ramoth. (30) And of the sons of Pahath- moab; Adna, and Chelal, Benaijah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezaleel, and Binnui, and Manasseh. (31) And of the sons of Harim; Eliezer, Ishijah, Malchiah, Shemaiah, Shimeon, (32) Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah. (33) Of the sons of Hashum; Mattenai, Mattathah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei. (34) Of the sons of Bani; Maadai, Amram, and Uel, (35) Benaiah, Bedeiah, Chelluh, (36) Yaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib, (37) Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasau, (38) and Bani, and Binnui, Shime, (39) and Shelemiah, and Nathan, and Adaiah, (40) Hamnadebai, Shashai, Sharai, (41) Azareel, and Shelemiah, Shemariah, (42) Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph. (43) Of the sons of Nebo; Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, and Joel, Benaiah. (44) All these had taken strange wives: and some of them had wives by whom they had children.

(34) Bani.—Probably this should be some other name, as Bani occurs before. The peculiarly large number of the representatives of his race suggests that there is some confusion in the present text.

(44) All these had taken strange wives. —Though the numbers are not summed up and distributed, it is evident that this closing sentence is emphatic. Ezra ends his history with a catalogue of the delinquents—strong testimony to the importance he attached to the reformation. The last words—literally, and there were of them wives who had brought forth children—tend in the same direction. Not even this pathetic fact restrained the thoroughness of the excision. But the Book of Nehemiah (chap. xiii. 23 seq.) will show that it was thorough only for a time.
THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.
INTRODUCTION

TO

THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.

I. Of Nehemiah's personal history we know little beyond the few facts preserved in this book. He was of the tribe of Judah; and probably, like Zerubbabel his predecessor, of the royal stock. He was one of the "children of the captivity"; and, through circumstances of which we know nothing, rose to eminence in the Persian court. As cupbearer of Artaxerxes he was in a position of wealth and influence; the history shows how important both were in his vocation, and how nobly he used both in the service of his country. The events recorded furnish only a scanty memorial of Nehemiah's life; but they paint his character to perfection. He was a man of profound piety, connecting everything, great or small, with the will of God, in whose presence he lived and moved and had his being: this is attested by the interjectional prayers which habitually recur. His prudence was equally marked; and there is no better example of constant dependence on God united with practical forethought. He was disinterested and unselfish; his wealth was used for public ends, and there is not the slightest reference to self apart from the common good. This set the crown on his public administration, the energy, sagacity, and even severity of which were guided solely by the demands of his vocation. He always appeals to the judgment of a merciful God; and that appeal avails against much hard modern criticism which dwells on his alleged asperity, self-confidence and self-assertion. Ancient Jewish tradition gave his name a high place, not a whit below that of Ezra.

II. Passing from the book to the writer, we have the long-contested question as to the nature and extent of his authorship. It is generally admitted that the first seven chapters, as also the greater part of the last three, were Nehemiah's own composition. But a glance at the three intermediate chapters shows that he was not the author of these in the same sense; and this is confirmed by a minute comparison of the style and phraseology of the different portions. Those in which the writer appears in the first person, and which bear the peculiar stamp of his devotion, seem to have been extracts from his personal diary; while the others seem to have been incorporated from some public account authoritatively drawn up under the direction of Ezra and himself. But, though several hands contributed to the compilation of this middle section, it is easy to see that Nehemiah made the whole his own. For instance: the prayer in ch. ix. was probably Ezra's, but in the history surrounding the prayer there is no special mark of his style; and the remarkable transition to the "we" in ch. x., the sealing of the covenant, hardly allows either Nehemiah or Ezra to be the immediate author, but is rather like a free rendering of the very terms of the vow as written in a permanent document. The dedication of the wall is vividly described in the first person; and so is the energetic administration of reform after his return from Susa. But between these there are a few verses which seem to be derived from a national record. The six lists which are interwoven in this middle section were of course extracts from public archives. Those of ch. xi. fall appropriately into the narrative. The other lists have all the appearance of being inserted on account of their importance to the future commonwealth: one of them, that of the high priests from Joshua to Jaddua, having been retouched at a later period. The interpolator probably added also verses 22 and 23 of the same chapter; as the notes will explain.
CHAPTER I.—(1) The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah.

And it came to pass in the month Chisleu, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace, (2) that Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. (3) And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity, and concerning the Jews that had escaped, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace, were burned with fire.

(4) And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven, and said, I beseech thee, O Lord God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments: let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father’s house have sinned. (6) We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou

(1) The words of Nehemiah.—Rather, The narrative or record. Both as referring to his affairs and as written by him.

(2—3) Introductory: tidings brought to Nehemiah concerning the sad estate of Jerusalem and the people.

(1) In the month Chisleu.—The names rather than the numbers of the months are generally employed after the captivity: Nisan, Iyar, Sivan, Tamuz, Av, Elul, Tishri, Marchesvan, Chisleu, Tebeth, Shevat, Adar; with an intercalary month, that the walls were still “broken down,” lying prostrate, of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments: (6) let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father’s house have sinned. (7) We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou

(4—11) Nehemiah’s appeal to God. The prayer is a perfect example of the private and individual devotion with which the later Hebrew Scriptures abound. It begins with formal and appropriate invocation (verse 5—8), flows into earnest confession (verses 6, 7), pleads the covenant promises (verses 8—10), and, moreover, what had not been recorded, “the gates thereof burned with fire.” Though the Temple had been rebuilt, there is no valid reason for supposing that the walls of the city had been in part restored and again demolished.

(4—11) Nehemiah’s appeal to God. The prayer is a perfect example of the private and individual devotion with which the later Hebrew Scriptures abound. It begins with formal and appropriate invocation (verse 5—8), flows into earnest confession (verses 6, 7), pleads the covenant promises (verses 8—10), and suplicates a present answer (verse 11). The extant Scriptures, freely used, are the foundation of all.

(4) Fasted.—Like Daniel, Esther, and Ezra, Nehemiah fasted: fasting appears in later Judaism a prominent part of individual devotion, as it is in the New Testament.

(6) Both I and my father’s house have sinned.—The suplication was for the nation; and in such cases of personal intercession the individual assumes the sin of all the past.
commandest thy servant Moses. (8) Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandest thy servant Moses, saying, "If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations: (9) but if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven; yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there. (10) Now these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand. (11) O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to feast thy countenance, and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For I was the king's cupbearer.

CHAPTER II.—(1) And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him; and I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence. (2) Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid, (3) and said unto the king, Let the king live for ever; why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?

(4) Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven. (5) And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it. (6) And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time. (7) Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah; (8) and a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

(8) The spirit of many threatenings and promises is summed up, as in the prayer of ch. ix., 

(11) This day . . . this man.—During his "certain days" of mourning Nehemiah had fixed upon his plan, suggested by his God. "This day" is "this occasion": the appeal itself was deferred for some months. The king becomes "this man" in the presence of the "God of heaven."

For I was the king's cupbearer.—One of his cupbearers, therefore in high authority, having confidential access to him.

II.

(1) Nisan.—The old Abib, the first month of the Jewish year, following the vernal equinox. As we are still in the twentieth year of the king, the beginning of his reign must be dated before Chisleu. The record adopts Persian dates, and the two months fell in one year.

(2) Then I was very sore afraid.—Waiting on Providence, Nehemiah had discharged his duties for three months without being sad in the king's presence; but on this day his sorrow could not be repressed. His fear sprung from the king's abrupt inquiry. A sad countenance was never tolerated in the royal presence; and, though Artaxerxes was of a milder character than any other Persian monarch, the tone of his question showed that in this respect he was not an exception.

(3) Nehemiah's family was of Jerusalem. He does not as yet betray to the king the deepest desire of his heart, but simply refers to the desecration of his fathers' sepulchres, an appeal which had great force with the Persians, who respected the tomb.

(4) So I prayed to the God of heaven.—The first note of that habit of ejaculatory prayer which is a characteristic of this book.

(6) The queen also sitting by him.—Probably Damasapia, the one legitimate queen: Shegal, as in Ps. lxi. 13, where, however, she stands as in the presence of her Divine-human Lord. This was not a public feast, as in that case the queen would not be present (Esther i. 9-12).

I set him a time.—Whatever that was, circumstances afterwards prolonged it.

(7) To the governors beyond the river.—Between the Euphrates and Susa protection was not needed.

(9) Keeper of the king's forest.—Asaph, a Jew, was keeper of an artificial park or pleasure ground near Jerusalem: the Persian pārzh, whence our "paradise." It was well planted with trees, as timber was to be supplied from it "for the gates of the palace," rather the fortress, which protected "the house," or temple, and was known in Roman times as Antonia: also for the city walls; also "for the house that I shall enter into," that is, Nehemiah's own house, for his being appointed governor is pre-supposed.
Then I came to the governors beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me. When Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, heard of it, they grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel.

So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days. And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem: neither was there any beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon. And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well, and to the dung port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire. Then I went on to the gate of the fountain, and to the king's pool: but there was no place for the beast that was under me to pass. Then went I up in the night by the brook, and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by the gate of the valley, and so returned. And the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did; neither had I as yet told it to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers, nor to the rest that did the work. Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach. Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work.

But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard it, they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, What is this thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the king? Then answered I them, and said unto them, The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build: but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem.

CHAPTER III.—Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests, and they builded the sheep...
The Building of NEHEMIAH, III.

the Gates of the City.

gate; they sanctified it and set up the doors of it; even unto the town of Meah they sanctified it, unto the tower of Hananeel. (2) And next unto him builded the men of Jericho. And next to them builded Zaccur the son of Imri.

(3) But the fish gate did the sons of Hassenaah build, who also laid the beams thereof, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof. (4) And next unto them repaired Meroth the son of Urijah, the son of Koz. And next unto them repaired Meshullam the son of Berechiah, the son of Meshezabeel. And next unto them repaired Zadok the son of Baana. (5) And next unto them the Tekoites repaired; but their nobles put not their necks to the work of their Lord.

(6) Moreover the old gate repaired Jehoiada the son of Paseah, and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah; they laid the beams thereof, and set up the doors thereof, and the locks thereof, and the bars thereof. (7) And next unto them repaired Melatiah the Gibeonite, and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon, and of Mizpah, unto the throne of the governor on this side the river.

(8) Next unto him repaired Uzziel the son of Harhaiah, of the goldsmiths. Next unto him also repaired Hananiah the son of one of the apothecaries, and they fortified Jerusalem unto the broad wall. (9) And next unto them repaired Rephaiah the son of Hur, the ruler of the half part of Jerusalem. (10) And next unto them repaired Hattush the son of Haashabniah.

(11) Malchijah the son of Harim, and Hashub the son of Pahath-moab, repaired the "other piece," and the tower of the furnaces. (12) And next unto him repaired Shallum the son of Halohesh, the ruler of the half part of Jerusalem, he and his daughters.

(13) The valley gate repaired Hanun, and the inhabitants of Zanoah; they

destroyed. But no amount of ingenuity will avail to remove every difficulty. The text is in some places defective. It must, further, be remembered that the record does not so much describe the process as sum up the result. Much of the work of the gates must have required time, but all is described here as if everything was finished at once.

(1) Then Eliashib.—The account begins with due honour to the high priest and the priesthood.

The sheep gate was in the neighbourhood of the priests' quarter. Through it the victors passed for sacrifice, first being washed in the neighbouring pool of Bethesda. This being built, "they sanctified it," as an earnest of the subsequent consecration of the entire wall. Their work and the sanctification of it extended to two towns near each other at the north-east corner.

(2) Next unto him.—At his hand, the customary phrase throughout the chapter, indicating the order of the building, which, however, involves some difficulty towards the close. The phrase, as first used, does honour to the high priest, who must be supposed to have presided only over the religious ceremonial.

The men of Jericho.—At the point, it will be observed, opposite their own city.

(3) The fish gate.—Through which fish entered from the Jordan and Galilee.

The sons of Hassenaah.—Contrary to custom, their names are not mentioned.

The locks thereof, and the bars thereof.—The crossbars thereof, and the catches thereof, the latter holding the former at the two ends. Similarly in several other verses.

(4) Repaired.—Literally, strengthened; as before it was built.

(5) The Tekoites.—This verse is remarkable, as introducing men of Tekoa, not mentioned among Zerubbabel's Return, who furnish the solitary instance of internal opposition to the building; and as terming the common work "the work of the Lord." The ordinary people of the place, however, did double duty. (See verse 27.)

(6) The old gate.—Not mentioned elsewhere; probably that of Damascus; but (by a conjectural addition to the text,) it has been translated the gate of the old wall, as it distinguished from "the broad wall."

(7) Unto the throne.—Unto the seat of the pechah of the whole district, this side the Euphrates; his residence when he came to Jerusalem.

(8) And they fortified Jerusalem unto the broad wall.—The word translated "fortified" means literally left, and this yields a good sense: they left Jerusalem untouched as far as a certain portion of the wall extended which needed no restoration. The gate of Ephraim was in this (see chapter xii. 38, 39); and it is significant that nothing is said about the rebuilding of this important gate.

(9) The half part of Jerusalem.—Of the district belonging to Jerusalem.

(10) The other piece.—This expression occurs a few times when the repairers have been mentioned as having repaired a first piece. But it occurs several times when there is no such mention; and in these cases, as here, must mean only what the margin indicates, a second measure, in relation to what had just been referred to.

(11) He and his daughters.—Shallum was governor of the second half-district around Jerusalem; and it has been thought that the "daughters" here are the villages of the district. But needlessly: the women of Jerusalem might do voluntarily what as females they were not pressed to do.

A thousand cubits.—Not so much "built" as "strengthened." This comparatively large space—mentioned in round numbers—had probably suffered less damage, and therefore needed less repairing.
built it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof, and a thousand cubits on the wall unto the dung gate.

(14) But the dung gate repaired Malchiah the son of Rechab, the ruler of part of Beth-haccerem; he built it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof.

(15) But the gate of the fountain repaired Shallun the son of Col-hozeh, the ruler of the half part of Keilah; he built it, and covered it, and set up the doors thereof, the locks thereof, and the bars thereof, and the wall of the pool of Siloah by the king's garden, and unto the stairs that go down from the city of David.

(16) After him repaired Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, the ruler of the half part of Beth-zur, unto the place over against the sepulchres of David, and to the pool that was made, and unto the house of the mighty.

(17) After him repaired the Levites, Rehum the son of Bani. Next unto him repaired Hashabiah, the ruler of the half part of Keilah, in his part.

(18) And next to him repaired Ezer the son of Jeshua, the ruler of Mizpah, another piece over against the going up to the armoury at the turning of the wall.

(19) And those about them were Shallum the son of Henadad, another piece, from the turning of the wall unto the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest.

(20) After him repaired Meremoth the son of Urijah the son of Koze another piece, from the door of the house of Eliashib even to the end of the house of Eliashib. And after him repaired the priests, the men of the plain.

(21) After him repaired Benjamin and Hashub over against their house.

(22) And after him repaired Azariah the son of Maaseiah the son of Ananiah by his house.

(23) After him repaired Binnui the son of Henadad another piece, from the house of Azariah unto the turning of the wall, even unto the corner.

(24) Palal the son of Uzai, over against the turning of the wall, and the tower which lieth out from the king's high house, that was by the court of the prison. After him repaired the son of Parosh.

(25) Meremoth added to his other piece, over against the great tower that lieth out, even unto the wall of Ophel.

(26) From above the horse gate repaired the priests, every one over against his part of the Keilah district.
Opposition stirred up

NEHEMIAH, IV.

by Sanballat and his Friends.

(39) After them repaired Zadok, the son of Immer over against his house. After him repaired also Shemaiah the son of Shechaniah, the keeper of the east gate. (40) After him repaired Hananiah the son of Zephaniah, and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, another piece. After him repaired Meshullam the son of Berechiah over against his chamber. (41) After him repaired Malchiah the goldsmith's son unto the place of the Nethinims, and of the merchants, over against the gate Miphkad, and to the going up of the corner. (42) And between the going up of the corner unto the sheep gate repaired the goldsmiths and the merchants.

CHAPTER IV.—(1) But it came to pass, that when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews. (2) And he spake before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, What do these feeble Jews? will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned? (3) Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him, and he said, Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall. (4) Hear, O our God; for we are despised: and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them for a prey in the land of captivity: (5) and cover not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from before thee: for they have provoked thee to anger before the builders. (6) So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof; for the people had a mind to work.

(7) But it came to pass, that when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up, and that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth, (8) and conspired all of them together to come and to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it. (9) Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them. (10) And Judah said, the strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall. (11) And our adversaries said, They shall not know, neither see, till we come in the midst among them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease.

(39) Shemaiah the son of Shechaniah.—The name in 1 Chron. iii. 22 of a descendant of David.

(40) The place of the Nethinims.—Rather, the house.

And of the merchants.—Possibly there is some connection between the traders, who brought their doves and so forth for the worshippers, and the Nethinim to whose house or depot they brought them. Near the sheep gate was the “going up of the corner,” or an ascent to the gate Miphkad, about which nothing is known.

(41) Unto the sheep gate.—It appears that the “goldsmiths and the merchants” undertook the small space necessary to complete the circuit.

IV.

0—23. The opposition of the enemies, and Nehemiah’s plans of defence.

(1) Mocked the Jews.—The mockery comes afterwards. Here, as often in Nehemiah, a general statement is made which is afterwards expanded.

(2) His brethren and the army of Samaria.—The councillors and body-guard of Sanballat.

Will they fortify themselves?—Rather, will they leave them to themselves? The nations are referred to; but contempt is not scrupulous or precise.

Will they sacrifice?—This is the provocation of God mentioned in verse 5.

(4) Hear, O our God.—The habit of Nehemiah is to turn everything to devotion as he goes on. This prayer is full of an angry jealousy for the honour of a jealous God.

They have provoked thee.—The tone of its holy revenge pervades the Old Testament, and has not altogether departed in the New.

(6) Unto the half.—Up to half the height the wall was now continuous.

(7) We were made up.—Arose to the height before mentioned.

Began to be stopped.—The wall, they heard, was continuous. The tribes here enumerated were only small parties under the immediate influence of Sanballat: nothing beyond that would have been likely to occur among subjects in common of Persia.

And conspired.—Not fearing the Persian authority, they resolved to attack the city; but it will be seen that they soon abandoned that project.

To hinder it.—Rather, to do it hurt.

(9) Because of them.—Rather, over against them: opposite to each point of their encampment. The setting watch was accompanied by solemn and united prayer.

(10) And Judah said.—As hereafter, in the case of the complaints of the people (chap. v.), the writer gives a summary of difficulties. The Jews, or “Judah”—a significant term—complained of their growing feebleness, especially as so many were diverted to the watches.

(11) They shall not know.—As to the adversaries, their plan was evidently to watch and surprise, instead of making the threatened attack.
CHAPTER V.—(1) And there was a great cry of the people and of their wives against their brethren the Jews. (2) For there were that said, We, our sons, and our daughters, are many: therefore we take up corn for them, that we may eat, and live. (3) Some also there were that said, We have mortgaged our lands, vineyards, and houses, that we might buy corn, because of the dearth. (4) There were also that said, We have borrowed

(12) And it came to pass, that when the Jews which dwelt by them came, they said unto us ten times, 1 From all places whence ye shall return unto us they will be upon you. (13) Therefore set I 2 in the lower places behind the wall, and on the higher places, I even set the people after their families with their swords, their spears, and their bows. (14) And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.

(15) And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one unto his work. (16) And it came to pass from that time forth, that the half of my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah. (17) Which they built on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon. (18) For the builders, every one had his sword girded 3 by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me. (19) And I said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, The work is great and large, and we are separated upon the wall, one far from another. (20) In what place therefore ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us: our God shall fight for us.

(21) So we laboured in the work: and half of them held the spears from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared. (22) Likewise at the same time said I unto the people, Let every one with his servant lodge within Jerusalem, that in the night they may be a guard to us, and labour on the day. (23) So neither I, nor my brethren, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard which followed me, none of us put off our clothes; saving that every one put them off for washing.

V.

(1-10) Internal difficulties, springing from usury and oppression.

(1) Their brethren the Jews.—Nehemiah’s other troubles had come from the enemies without: he begins this account by laying emphasis on the hard treatment of Jews by Jews. (2) We take up.—Let us receive. This is a general appeal for the governor’s help. (3) Because of the dearth.—Not any particular famine, strictly speaking, but their present hunger. The past mortgages had straitened their resources. (4) We have borrowed money for the king’s tribute.—Literally, we have made our fields and
money for the king's tribute, and that upon our lands and vineyards. (5) Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children: and, lo, we bring into bondage our sons and our daughters to be servants, and some of our daughters are brought into bondage already: neither is it in our power to redeem them; for other men have our lands and vineyards.

(6) And I was very angry when I heard their cry and these words. (7) Then I consulted with myself, and I rebuked the nobles, and the rulers, and said unto them, Ye exact usury, every one of his brother. And I set a great assembly against them. (8) And I said unto them, We after our ability have redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the heathen; and will ye even sell your brethren? or shall they be sold unto us? Then held they their peace, and found nothing to answer. (9) Also I said, it is not good that ye do; ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies? (10) I likewise, and my brethren, and my servants, might exact of them money and corn: I pray you, let us leave off this usury. (11) Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their oliveyards, and their houses, also the hundredth part of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them.

(12) Then said they, We will restore them, and will require nothing of them; so will we do as thou sayest. Then I called the priests, and took an oath of them, that they should do according to this promise. (12) Also I shook my lap, and said, So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out, and emptied. And all the congregation said, Amen, and praised the Lord. And the people did according to this promise.

(14) Moreover from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even unto the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that is, twelve years, I and my brethren have not eaten the bread of the governor. (15) But the former governors that had been before

vineyards answerable for the payment of the Persian tribute. They had pledged the coming produce. (5) We bring into bondage.—But the climax of the cry was the bondage of their children, especially of the daughters, whom they had been obliged to sell until the Jubilee for money: children as precious to parents as were the children of the rulers to them.

(6) And I was very angry.—Nehemiah, recently arrived, had not known this state of things. The common wailing and the three complaints in which it found expression were distinct.

(7) I consulted.—But he mastered himself, and studied his plan of operation. The matter was complicated, as the transgressors had violated rather the spirit than the letter of the law. Hence the rebuke, that they exacted usury each of his brother, failed in its object; and the governor called a general assembly, not "against them," but "concerning them."

(8) Will ye even sell your brethren?—The appeal is a strong one. Nehemiah and his friends had redeemed Jews from the heathen with money; these men had caused Jews to be sold to Jews.

Nothing to answer.—They might have replied had the letter of the law been urged; but this argument puts them to shame.

Because of the reproach.—The text of another strong argument used in the assembly. We learn in chap. vi. how watchful the heathen were: all matters were reported to them, and every act of oppression would become a reproach against the God of the Jews.

Might exact.—We have lent them money and corn. By his own example the governor pleads with them; not "let us leave off this usury," but let us all and together "remit the loans."

(11) Also the hundredth part of the money.—The monthly payment of one per cent. per month, twelve per cent. in the year, they were required to give up for the future.

(12) We will restore.—The promise was given to restore the mortgaged property and to require no more interest. But Nehemiah required an oath to give legal validity to the procedure, and the priests' presence gave it the highest religious sanction.

(13) Shook my lap.—This symbolical act impressed on every man who broke this covenant an appropriate penalty; that he be emptied of all his possessions, even as the fold of Nehemiah's garment was emptied. And it is observable that the iniquity thus stopped is not referred to in the subsequent covenant (chap. x.), nor is it one of the offences which the governor found on his second return (chap. xiii.).

(14) Nehemiah's vindication of his own conduct.

(15) I was appointed.—That he appointed me, viz., Artaxerxes.

Twelve years.—The whole narrative, thus far, was written after his return from Jerusalem, and on a review of his governorship; hence, "their governor in the land of Judah." Of his second appointment the same thing might have been said: but that, at the time of writing, was in the future.

I and my brethren have not eaten the bread of the governor.—At the close of the twelve years' term, Nehemiah could say that he and his official attendants had not drawn the customary allowances from the people.

Besides forty shekels of silver.—Either in bread and wine over forty shekels, or, received in bread
NEHEMIAH, VI.

Sanballat’s Message.

The doors upon the gates.—Within the gates. This parenthesis is a note of historical accuracy, and intimates what had been before said as to the setting up of the doors (see chap. ii.) was by way of anticipation.

Sanballat and Geshem.—In the original of verse 1, Tobiah is not distinguished from Sanballat by another preposition, as Geshem is; and here he is omitted, as not to appear in the conference otherwise than as Sanballat’s secretary.

In some one of the villages in the plain of Ono.—Probably, in Bakkephirem, the name of a village in the plain of Ono, which was on the borders of Philistia, more than twenty miles from Jerusalem.

The fifth time with an open letter in his hand.—Four times they strive to induce Nehemiah to take the part of the king. And the words of the prophets concerning the future King are referred to as likely to be attributed to Nehemiah’s ambition.

The enemies, whose wrath had been before so much mingled with mockery, now resort to stratagem.

CHAPTER VI.—(1) Now it came to pass, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and that there was no breach left therein; (though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates;) (2) that Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief. (3) And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you? (4) Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner.

(5) Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner the fifth time with an open letter in his hand; (6) Wherein was written, It is reported among the heathen, and Gashmu saith it, that thou and the Jews think to rebel: for which cause thou buildest the wall, that thou mayest be their king, according to these words. (7) And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, There is a king in Judah: and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. Come now

and wine, and beyond that, forty shekels. The latter, on the whole, is to be preferred; it would amount to about four pounds from the entire people daily.

So did not I, because of the fear of God.—Nehemiah contrasts his forbearance with the conduct of former governors; we cannot suppose him to mean Zerubbabel, but some of his successors. The practice he condemns was common among the satraps of the Persian princes. Note that usury and rigour were sanction, “Fear thy God.”

I continued.—I repaired: that is, as superintendent. His servants and himself did not take advantage of the people’s poverty to acquire their land by mortgage; they were, on the contrary, absorbed in the common work.

At my table.—The charge on the governor’s free hospitality was heavy: “of the Jews a hundred and fifty rulers, besides those that came unto us from among the heathen that are about us.” (18) Now that which was prepared for me daily was one ox and six choice sheep; also fowls were prepared for me, and once in ten days store of all sorts of wine: yet for all this required not I the bread of the governor, because the bondage was heavy upon this people.

CHAPTER VI.—(1) Now it came to pass, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had built the wall, and that there was no breach left therein; (though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates;) (2) that Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief. (3) And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you? (4) Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner.

(5) Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner the fifth time with an open letter in his hand; (6) Wherein was written, It is reported among the heathen, and Gashmu saith it, that thou and the Jews think to rebel: for which cause thou buildest the wall, that thou mayest be their king, according to these words. (7) And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, There is a king in Judah: and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. Come now

and wine, and beyond that, forty shekels. The latter, on the whole, is to be preferred; it would amount to about four pounds from the entire people daily.

So did not I, because of the fear of God.—Nehemiah contrasts his forbearance with the conduct of former governors; we cannot suppose him to mean Zerubbabel, but some of his successors. The practice he condemns was common among the satraps of the Persian princes. Note that usury and rigour were sanction, “Fear thy God.”

I continued.—I repaired: that is, as superintendent. His servants and himself did not take advantage of the people’s poverty to acquire their land by mortgage; they were, on the contrary, absorbed in the common work.

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Therefore, and let us take counsel together. (8) Then I sent unto him, saying, There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest them out of thine own heart. (9) For they all made us afraid, saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done. Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.

(10) Afterward I came unto the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah the son of Mehetabeel, who was shut up; and he said, Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of the temple: for they will come to slay thee; yea, in the night will they come to slay thee. (11) And I said, should such a man as I flee? and who is there, that, being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in. (12) And, lo, I perceived that God had not sent him; but that he pronounced this prophecy against me: for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. (13) Therefore was he hired, that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin, and that they might have matter for an evil report, that they might reproach me.

(14) My God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat according to these their works, and on the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, that would have put me in fear.

(15) So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty and two days. (16) And it came to pass, that when all our enemies heard thereof, and all the heathen that were about us saw these things, they were much cast down in their own eyes: for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God.

(17) Moreover in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters unto Tobiah, and the letters of Tobiah came unto them. (18) For there were many in Judah sworn unto him, because he was the son in law of Shechaniah the son of Arahi; and his son Johanan had taken the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah.

Finally, the letter suggests the desirability of friendly counsel to avert the danger.

Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.—The answer sent was that the thing was not true, and that the report itself did not exist. The reflection in Nehemiah's journal was that they sought to make him afraid. Quoting this, he adds the prayer that he recorded when he wrote it. It is one of those sudden, interjectional petitions which abound in the narrative, and is all the more remarkable from the absence of the words “O God,” which are here inserted.

I came unto the house.—As a specimen of another kind of attack, through false prophets, Shemaiah's plot is mentioned. This man—probably a priest—Nehemiah found shut up in his house: probably he sent for the governor, and represented himself as being in danger from the common enemy. He predicted that on the night ensuing an attempt would be made on Nehemiah's life, and proposed that they should meet “within the Temple”—that is, in the holy place, between the Holiest and the outer court—for security.

Should such a man as I flee?—First, the expression of personal dignity. Then of fear: “Who, being as I am” (a layman), “would go into the Temple to save his life?” Rather, and live? (Numb. xviii. 7).

An evil report.—Nehemiah perceived that not God, but Shemaiah himself, had uttered the prophecy “against me,” and that he was hired to bring the governor into discredit as a violator of law.

Think thou upon Tobiah.—This appeal to God is to be understood as an official prophetic prayer. Nehemiah puts God's own cause into God's own hands. The mention of the name of Noadiah, nowhere else referred to, shows the circumstantial nature of the narrative, and is an indirect evidence of its truth.

The finishing of the wall is recorded in the simplest manner: first, with a formal specification of the date and time; then in its effect upon the enemies, and as redounding to the glory of God.

In fifty and two days.—The twenty-fifth day of Elul answers to about our September 15th; and, dating back, the wall began in the latter part of July, soon after Nehemiah's arrival. If we bear in mind that the wall was only partially overthrown, that the materials for restoration were at hand, and that the utmost skill had been shown in organising the bands of workmen, the time will not appear too short. There is no need to adopt the suggestion of Josephus, that the rebuilding occupied two years and four months.

They perceived that this work was wrought of our God.—Not miraculously, but under the Divine sanction and help. By this expression Nehemiah at once triumphs over his foes, and gives the glory where it was due. His own heroic part in the work is utterly forgotten.

The enemies heard of it, and saw the result, and were ashamed.

A supplementary account is here introduced, explaining the intrigues within Jerusalem to which reference has been made.

Many letters.—There was a large correspondence between Tobiah and the nobles of Judah.

Sworn unto him.—Shechaniah was of the family of Arahi, which had come over with Zerubbabel (Ezra ii. 5). Tobiah had married his daughter, and Tobiah's son had married a daughter of Meshullam, one of the builders of the wall (chap. iii. 4, 30). This family connection led to a conspiracy by oath to thwart the governor. The names of Tobiah and his son are Hebrew; and it is probable that, though naturalised Ammonites, they were of Hebrew extraction. This renders it easier to understand the facility with which the affinity was contracted.
(15) Also they reported his good deeds before me, and uttered my words to him. And Tobiah sent letters to put me in fear.

CHAPTER VII.—(1) Now it came to pass, when the wall was built, and I had set up the doors, and the porters and the singers and the Levites were appointed, (2) that I gave my brother Hanani, and Hananiah the ruler of the palace, charge over Jerusalem: for he was a faithful man, and feared God above many. (3) And I said unto them, Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun be hot; and while they stand by, let them shut the doors, and bar them: and appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, every one in his watch, and every one to be over against his house. (4) Now the city was large and great: but the people were few therein, and the houses were not builded.

(5) And my God put into mine heart to gather together the nobles, and the rulers, and the people, that they might be reckoned by genealogy. And I found a register of the genealogy of them which were carried away, and came again to Jerusalem and to Judah, every one unto his city; (7) who came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Misipereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah. The number, I say, of the men of the people of Israel was this:

(8) The children of Parosh, two thousand and one hundred seventy and two.

(9) The children of Shephatiah, three hundred seventy and two.

(10) The children of Arach, six hundred fifty and two.

(11) The children of Pahath-moab, of the children of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand and eight hundred and eighteen.

(12) The children of Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and two.

(13) The children of Zattu, eight hundred forty and five.

(14) The children of Zareah, seven hundred and three.

(15) The children of Zimmah, six hundred twenty and two.

(16) The children of Zattu, four hundred thirty and seven.

(17) The children of Zattu, six hundred seventy and two.

(18) The children of Zimmah, five hundred three.

(19) The children of Zattu, three hundred and one.

(20) The children of Adonikam, six hundred two.

(21) The children of Bigvai, two thousand three score and seven.

(22) The children of Ater of Hezekiah, ninety and eight.

(23) The children of Hashum, three hundred twenty and eight.

(24) The children of Bebai, three hundred twenty and four.

(25) The children of Hariph, an hundred
and twelve. (29) The children of Gibeon, ninety and five. (30) The men of Bethlehem and Netophah, an hundred four score and eight. (27) The men of Anathoth, an hundred twenty and eight. (28) The men of Beth-azmaveth, forty and two. (29) The men of Kirjath-jearim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, seven hundred forty and three. (39) The men of Ramah and Gaba, six hundred twenty and one. (31) The men of Michmas, an hundred and twenty and two. (32) The men of Bethel and Ai, an hundred twenty and three. (33) The men of the other Beeroth, fifty and two. (34) The children of the other * Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty and four. (35) The children of Harim, three hundred and twenty. (36) The children of Jericho, three hundred forty and five. (37) The children of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, seven hundred twenty and one. (38) The children of Senaah, three thousand nine hundred and thirty. (39) The priests: the children of Jedaidah, of the house of Jeshaiah, nine hundred seventy and three. (40) The children of Meimram, a thousand fifty and two. (41) The children of Pashhur, a thousand and thirty. (42) The children of Harim, a thousand and seventy. (43) The Levites: the children of Jeshua, of Kadmiel, and of the children of Hodevah, seventy and three. (44) The singers: the children of Asaph, an hundred forty and eight. (45) The porters: the children of Shallum, the children of Ater, the children of Talmon, the children of Akkub, the children of Hatita, the children of Shobai, an hundred thirty and eight. (46) The Nethinims: the children of Zia, the children of Hashupha, the children of Tabbaoth, (47) the children of Keros, the children of Sia, the children of Padon, (48) the children of Libnah, the children of Hagaba, the children of Shalmai, (49) the children of Hanan, the children of Giddel, the children of Galhar, (50) the children of Reiah, the children of Rezin, the children of Nekoda. (51) The children of Gazzam, the children of Uzza, the children of Phaseah, (52) the children of Besai, the children of Meunim, the children of Nephelesim, (53) the children of Bakbuk, the children of Harkapha, the children of Harhur, (54) the children of Bazlith, the children of Mehid, the children of Harsha, (55) the children of Barkos, the children of Sisera, the children of Tamah, (56) the children of Neziah, the children of Hatipha. (57) The children of Solomon’s servants: the children of Sotaai, the children of Sophereth, the children of Porida, (58) the children of Jaalah, the children of Darkon, the children of Giddel, (59) the children of Shephatiah, the children of Hattil, the children of Pochereth of Zebaim, the children of Amon. (60) All the Nethinims, and the children of Solomon’s servants, were three hundred thirty and two. (61) And these were they which went up also from Tel-melah, Tel-haresha, Cheruh, Addon, and Immer; but they could not shew their father’s house, nor their *seed, whether they were of Israel. (62) The children of Delaiah, the children of Tobiah, the children of Nekoda, six hundred forty and two. (63) And of the priests: the children of Habaiah, the children of Koz, the children of Barzillai, which took one of the daughters of Barzillum the Gileadite to wife, and was called after their name. (64) These sought their register among those that were reckoned by genealogy, but it was not found: therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood. (65) And 7 the Tirshatha said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with Urim and Thummim. (66) The whole congregation together was forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore, (67) beside their manservants and their maidservants, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven: and they had two hundred forty and five singing men and singing women. (68) Their horses, seven hundred thirty and six: their mules, two hundred forty and five: (69) their camels, four hundred thirty and five: six thousand seven hundred and twenty asses. (70) And 8 some of the chief of the fathers gave unto the work. The Tirshatha gave to the treasure a thousand drams of gold, fifty basons, five hundred and thirty priests’ garments. (71) And some of the chief of the fathers gave to the treasure of the work twenty thousand drams of gold, and two thousand
CHAPTER VII.—(1) And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel. (2) And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month. (3) And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law. (4) And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, and Anaiah, and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malchiah, and Hashum, and Hashab-dana, Zechariah, and Meshullam. (5) And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it all the people stood up: (6) and Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground. (7) Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, caused the people to understand the law: and the people stood in their place. (8) So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. (9) And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the Lord your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law. (10) Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength.
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So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day is holy; neither be ye grieved. (12) And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them. 

(13) And on the second day were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites, unto Ezra the scribe, even to understand the words that were declared by the Lord to the children of Israel. (14) And they found written in the law which the Lord had commanded Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month: (15) And they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written. (16) So the people went forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water gate, and in the street of the gate of Ephraim. 

(17) And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness. (18) Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, according unto the manner.

CHAPTER IX.—(1) Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them. (2) And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers. (3) And they stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law of the Lord their God one fourth part of the day; and another fourth part they confessed, and worshipped the Lord their God. (4) Then stood up upon the stairs, of the Levites, Jeshua, and Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, is a strong refuge. It is capable of unlimited application in preaching and devotion. 

So the Levites.—As before, what Ezra said was repeated to the people in various directions by the Levites. But there was evidently an almost irrepressible emotion. 

The chief of the fathers.—Not the vast multitude now, as the great feast was not yet. 

Even to understand.—To consider, or give attention to: that is, to learn the full meaning of the almost forgotten festival. The dwelling in booths had fallen into disuse. 

Saying.—There is no such command in Leviticus; the Septuagint inserts, "And Ezra spake." But it is better to adopt Houbigant's slight emendation of the text, which thus runs: "And when they heard it, they proclaimed," etc. The command, then, is to go out to the Mount of Olives, and gather, not precisely the branches which the ancient law required, but such as circumstances allowed. 

And in their courts.—Not only on the roofs, but in the internal courtyards. 

Of the house of God.—The ministers of the Temple made those; and strangers to Jerusalem made them in the streets or open spaces near the gates. 

The children of the captivity.—The pathos of this designation is evident here.

CHAPTER IX. The Fast and Confession.

IX. 

1—38 The Fast, the Confession, and the Covenant. 

(1) In the twenty and fourth day.—After one day of rest, the people assembled with all the tokens of sorrow, even to dust on the head (1 Sam. iv. 12); the external signs and the internal spirit were one. 

(2) The seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers.—The change to "seed" has here a deep propriety. They carefully avoided the many aliens among them throughout this fast. 

(3) One fourth part.—Both day and night were divided into four parts. All orders standing in their respective place, the reading occupied the morning and the worship the afternoon. It is the latter which is now made prominent, as the former had been prominent in the preceding chapter. 

(4) Stairs, of the Levites.—The scaffold of the Levites, without the comma: the steps of ascent to the pulpit of Ezra (chap. viii. 2). 

Done so.—Though the feast had been kept (1 Kings viii.; Ezra iii.), it had never thus been kept with universal dwelling in booths. 

According unto the manner.—For the Azethoth, or supplementary feast day, see Lev. xxiii. 39.
Bani, and Chenani, and cried with a loud voice unto the Lord their God. Then the Levites, Jeshua, and Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah, said, Stand up and bless the Lord your God for ever and ever: and blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.

(6) Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.

(7) Thou art the Lord the God who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham; and foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a covenant with him to give the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give it, I say, to his seed, and hast performed thy words; for thou art righteous: and didst see the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and hasterd their cry by the Red sea; and shewedst signs and wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his servants, and on all the people of his land: for thou knewest that they dealt proudly against them. So didst thou get thee a name, as it is this day. (11) And thou didst divide the sea before them, that they went through the midst of the sea on the dry land; and their persecutors thou threwest into the deeps, as a stone into the mighty waters. Moreover thou leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar; and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light in the way wherein they should go. (13) Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments: and madest known unto them thy holy sabbath, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant: and gavest them bread from heaven for their hunger, and broughtest forth water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and promisedest them that they should go in to possess the land which thou hast sworn to give them.

(16) But they and our fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks, and refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not. (19) Yea, when they had made as a stone into the mighty waters.—Compare the Song of Moses, and mark in the Hebrew both the identity and the variation.

(13) Right judgements.—Five of the names given to the law of God in Ps. cxix. are singled out and applied to the Sinaitic legislation first, and then to the subsequent ordinances of Moses generally. But the emphasis here is on the adjectives “right,” “true,” “good,” as belonging rather to the eternal principles of the Decalogue. (14) Madest known unto them thy holy sabbath.—Every word here, as well as the prominence given to this among the other “commandments,” must be noted as illustrating the importance of this ordinance in the covenant of chapter x. and throughout the book.

(15) Bread from heaven.—A change of phrase, which our Lord consecrated for ever (John vi.). (16) Dealt proudly.—Like the Egyptians themselves (verse 10). It is remarkable that the same word is used as in the Hebrew of Exod. xviii. 11 and Deut. i. 40.

(17) In their rebellion.—Rather, appointed a captain to return to their bondage in Egypt. This is the reading of some MSS., followed by the Septuagint,
them a molten calf, and said, This is thy God that brought thee up out of Egypt, and had wrought great provocations; yet thou in thy manifold mercies forsookest them not in the wilderness: the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to shew them light, and the way wherein they should go.

(20) Thou gavest also a good spirit to instruct them, and withheldst not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst. (21) Yea, forty years didst thou sustain them in the wilderness, so that they lacked nothing; their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not. (22) Moreover thou gavest them kingdoms and nations, and didst divide them into corners: so they possessed the land of Sihon, and the land of the king of Heshbon, and the land of Og king of Bashan. (23) Their children also multipliedst thou as the stars of heaven, and broughtest them into the land, concerning which thou hadst promised to their fathers, that they should go in to possess it. (24) So the children went in and possessed the land, and thou subduedst before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, and gavest them into their hands, with their kings, and the people of the land, that they might do with them as they would. (25) And they took strong cities, and a fat land, and possessed houses full of all goods, wells digged, vineyards, and oliveyards, and fruit trees in abundance: so they did eat, and were filled, and became fat, and de…
our kings, our princes, our priests, nor our fathers, kept thy law, nor hearkened unto thy commandments and thy testimonies, wherewith thou didst testify against them. (35) For they have not served thee in their kingdom, and in thy great goodness that thou gavest them, and in the large and fat land which thou gavest before them, neither turned they from their wicked works. (36) Behold, we are servants this day, and for the land that thou gavest unto our fathers to eat the fruit thereof and the good thereof, behold, we are servants in it; (37) and it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom thou hast set over us because of our sins: also they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we are in great distress. (38) And because of all this we make a sure covenant, and write it; and our princes, Levites, and priests, seal unto it.


(35) Yieldeth much increase.—In money and kind a very large amount was sent by Syria to the Persian treasures. (36) Over our bodies, and over our cattle.—For military service; but the priests do not omit themselves. (37) In great distress.—Not so much under the Persian yoke as in the remembrance of God's judgments. The pathetic comparison between the Divine purpose in giving the land originally and their present bondage in it extends almost to every word. (38) Because of all this.—On the ground of this confession, and to prove our sincerity. Seal unto it.—On the sealed [document]. Each party impressed his seal on moist clay, which was then hardened. Sometimes these seals were attached to the document by separate strings. In chap. xi., “those who sealed” is, literally, “those on the sealed [document], in the plural.

(1)—(28) The sealers of the covenant. (1) Zidkijah.—Probably, Zadok the scribe (chap. xiii. 13), Nehemiah's secretary. (Comp. Ezra iv. 8.) (2) Seraiah.—The family name of the high-priestly house to which Ezra and Eliashib belonged, one of whom—probably Ezra—affixed its seal. (8) These were the priests.—That is, the names of the priestly families. (Comp. chap. xii. 1—6.) (9) And the Levites.—Five of these family names are traceable (Ezra ii. 40, viii. 19; Neh. vii. 43). (14) The chief of the people.—Some of the names are personal, some belong to families, some represent places, and some are independent. Comparing the list with Ezra ii., we find that years had added to the number of the houses.

(28—39) The points of the covenant. (28) All they that had separated themselves.—If these meant proselytes from heathenism, this verse would be a perfect description of the constituents of the people. But we have no record as yet of a recognised body of such proselytes; and the word “separated” is the same as we find, with another meaning, in chap. ix. 2. Moreover, the following verses show that the covenant bears specially in mind the danger to God's law arising out of commerce with the heathen. Having understanding.—Children who could intelligently take the oath were included. (29) They clave to their brethren.—It was a union of the people as such, and sprung from a deep national conviction. Entered into a curse, and into an oath.—The oath assumed the obligation; the curse impregnated the penalty of violation. (Comp. Deut. xxix. 12.)
The points of

NEHEMIAH, XI.

the Covenant.

of the Lord; also the firstborn of our sons, and of our cattle, as it is written in the law, and the firstlings of our herds and of our flocks, to bring to the house of our God, unto the priests that minister in the house of our God; (37) and that we should bring the firstfruits of our dough, and our offerings, and the fruit of all manner of trees, of wine and of oil, unto the priests, to the chambers of the house of our God; and the tithes of our ground unto the Levites, that the same Levites might have the tithes in all the cities of our tillage. (38) And the priest the son of Aaron shall be with the Levites, when the Levites take tithes: and the Levites shall bring up the tithe of the tithes unto the house of our God, to the chambers, into the treasure house. (39) For the children of Israel and the children of Levi shall bring the offering of the corn, of the new wine, and the oil, unto the chambers, where are the vessels of the sanctuary, and the priests that minister, and the porters, and the singers: and we will not forsake the house of our God.

CHAPTER XI.—(1) And the rulers of the people dwelt at Jerusalem: the rest

(31) Or on the holy day.—On the great festivals, equally with the Sabbath days of rest.

(32) Leave the seventh year.—The Sabbatical year naturally follows; in it the ground should be left un­tilled.

The exaction of every debt.—The “Lord’s release” of the seventh year (Deut. xv. 2).

(33) Also we made ordinances for us.—The covenant proceeds now to certain new regulations and resumption of neglected duties.

To charge ourselves.—Origin of that annual rate for the general service of the Temple which afterwards was raised to a half shekel (Matt. xvii. 24). The more ancient half shekel of the law was only an occasional tax (Exod. xxx. 13).

(34) As it is written in the law.—Lev. vi. 12 prescribes that the fire on the altar should be kept burning by wood. But here we have the origin of the “feast of the wood-offering”—a special day, subsequently substituted for the “times appointed year by year.” The lot determined the order in which the various classes should supply the wood.

(35) And to bring.—Following “we made ordinances” (verse 32). The various firstfruits are specified according to the Mosaic law, which made this expression of natural piety an obligation; and the minuteness of the specification implies that neglect had crept in.

(36) The firstborn of our sons, and of our cattle.—Similarly collocated in Num. xvi. 15, 16: but there the cattle are defined as “unclean beasts,” thus distinguished from “the firstlings of our herds and of our flocks.” The latter were to be brought to “the priests that minister” for sacrifice; the former were, with the sons, to be redeemed by money, according to the priests’ valuation.

(37) To the chambers of the house of our God.—To the store-chambers, minutely described as they were of old in 1 Kings vi., Hezekiah appears to have added formerly a treasure-house for the tithes, referred to in the next verse (2 Chron. xxxi. 11).

In all the cities of our tillage.—Agricultural towns, so called here with reference to the fruits of the earth, which were deposited first in certain selected places.

(38) The son of Aaron.—Consult Num. xviii. 22–26, which gives the reason for the distinction, here so marked, between the priest, the son of Aaron, and the Levites, the children of Levi. A priest was present when the tithes were gathered in the Levitical cities, to secure their own “tithe of the tithe,” which then the Levites carried to Jerusalem.

(39) Shall bring.—The priests themselves were exempted from the care of gathering the tithes.

We will not forsake the house of our God.—Both the pledge and the violation of it in the sequel are explained by chap. xiii. 11–14.
of the people also cast lots, to bring one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem the holy city, and nine parts to dwell in other cities. (2) And the people blessed all the men, that willingly offered themselves to dwell at Jerusalem.

(3) Now these are the chief of the province that dwelt in Jerusalem: but in the cities of Judah dwelt every one in his possession in their cities, to wit, Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the Nethinims, and the children of Solomon's servants. (4) And at Jerusalem dwelt certain of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin.

Of the children of Judah; Athaiah the son of Uziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahalaaleel, of the children of Perez; (5) and Maaseiah the son of Baruch, the son of Colbozeh, the son of Hazaziah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah, the son of Shiloni. (6) All the sons of Perez that dwelt at Jerusalem were four hundred three score and eight valiant men.

(7) And these are the sons of Benjamin; Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedahzur, the son of Koliah, the son of Meseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jesaiah. (8) And after him Gabbai, Sallai, nine hundred twenty and eight. (9) And Joel the son of Zichri was their overseer: and Judah the son of Senuah was second over the city.

(10) Of the priests: Jedediah the son of Joiarib, Jachin. (11) Seraiah the son of Hilkiah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, was the ruler of the house of God. (12) And their brethren that did the work of the house were eight hundred twenty and two: and Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashur, the son of Malchiah, (13) and his brethren, chief of the fathers, two hundred forty and two: and Amashai the son of Azareel, the son of Hashaiah, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer, (14) and their brethren, mighty men of valour, an hundred twenty and eight: and their overseer was Zabdiel, the son of one of the great men.

(15) Also of the Levites: Shemaiah the son of Hashub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni; (16) and Shubbethai and Jozabad, of the chief of the Levites, had the oversight of the outward business of the house of God. (17) And Mattaniah the son of Micha, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph, was the principal to begin the thanksgiving in prayer: and Bambukiah the second among his brethren, and Abda the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun. (18) All the Levites in the holy city were two hun-

The rest of the people.—The rulers being already in the capital, Nehemiah ordered that one man in ten should be chosen by lot to transfer his family.

Jerusalem the holy city.—Remembering the “separation” that had taken place (chap. ix.), and the recent covenant (chap. x.), we see the solemnity of this epithet, now first used, and repeated in verse 18. “Then shall Jerusalem be holy, and no strangers shall pass through her any more” (Joel iii. 17). But the New Testament brings another comment on the phrase.

The people blessed all the men that willingly offered themselves.—We are not told that any compensation was made to them; and these words seem to indicate that the chosen ones freely submitted, their patriotism being applauded by all.—Jerusalem was the post of danger, and in any case it was a hard-ship to leave their country possessions (verse 3).

Of the province.—This betrays the hand of Nehemiah, who was still a Persian official as well as a governor of Judah; and it shows that here we have a general heading for the rest of the chapter. Both city and country are included in the rest of the verse.

Israel.—The two Israelith tribes were represented, but, like Judah before, this has become a generic name.

(4-19) The heads in Jerusalem; as compared with 1 Chron. ix., by no means complete. Judah and Benjamin are represented, with priests and Levites and porters.

Perez.—In 1 Chron. ix. the descendants of Perez (or Phares) are not given; but the descendants of Zerah, present there, are absent here. This may be a question of the right reading of the text.

The son of Shiloni.—Better, the Shilonite, or descendants of Shelah, youngest son of Judah.

The Benjamites were represented by two families, and gave the city two prefects (verse 9).

This should be read Jedediah, Joiarib, Jachin, three priestly families (1 Chron. ix. 10).

Seraiah.—The high-priestly family name. Elia-shib was the present occupant.

Of valour.—Able for the service of God’s house: men of ability, therefore.

The son of one of the great men.—Rather, son of Haggedolim.

Outward business.—This is a remarkable specification of the functions of the Levites, parallel with the “valour” of the priests just before. The preceding chapter explains the “outward business.”
dred fourscore and four. (19) Moreover the porters, Akkub, Talmon, and their brethren that kept the gates, were an hundred seventy and two.

(20) And the residue of Israel, of the priests, and the Levites, were in all the cities of Judah, every one in his inheritance. (21) But the Nethinims dwelt in Ophel: and Zilia and Gispa were over the Nethinims.

(22) The overseer also of the Levites at Jerusalem was Uzzi the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micha. Of the sons of Asaph, the singers were over the business of the house of God. (23) For it was the king's commandment concerning them, that a certain portion should be for the singers, due for every day.

(24) And Pethahiah the son of Meshezabeel, of the children of Zerah the son of Judah, was at the king's hand in all matters concerning the people.

(25) And for the villages, with their fields, some of the children of Judah dwelt at Kirjath-arba, and in the villages thereof, and at dibon, and in the villages thereof, and at Jeakabzeel, and in the villages thereof, (26) and at Jeshua, and at Molaadah, and at Beth-pheleth, (27) and at Hazar-shual, and at Beer-sheba, and in the villages thereof, (28) and at Ziklag, and at Mekonah, and in the villages thereof, (29) and at En-irimmon, and at Zareah, and at Jarmuth, (30) Zanoah, Adullam, and in their villages, at Lachish, and the fields thereof, at Azekah, and in the villages thereof. And they dwelt from Beer-sheba unto the valley of Hinnom.

(31) The children also of Benjamin from Geba dwelt at Michmash, and Aija, and Beth-el, and in their villages, (32) and at Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah, (33) Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim, (34) Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat, (35) Lod, and Ono, the valley of craftsmen.

(36) And of the Levites were divisions in Judah, and in Benjamin.


(19) An hundred seventy and two.—In 1 Chron. ix. the number is 212. The difference between the two accounts may partly be explained by the fact that in the Chronicles the list is confined to those who came with Zerubbabel, while here addition is made of those who came with Ezra. But see the commentary on 1 Chron. ix.

(20—36) The heads in the country.

(21) Ophel.—The Nethinims on the promontory of Ophel were either within or without the city, according as the one wall or the other was taken. Here they are regarded as outside.

(22) The overseer.—Pakid, or visitor.

Of the sons of Asaph.—It requires no disturbance of the original to read the whole of Uzzi's pedigree: “the son of Micha, of the sons of Asaph, the singers in the service of the house of God.” Thus with the prayer of verse 17 there is a parallel.

(23) The king's commandments.—It seems that Artaxerxes had gone beyond the exemption of Ezra vii. 24, and given them a daily allowance, which it was the business of Uzzi to see to.

(24) Of the children of Zerah.—This makes the absence of Zerah in the beginning of the chapter very remarkable, and suggests some accidental omission.

At the king's hand.—Pethahiah was the king's agent in all the country matters of the “province.”

(25) The children of Judah are now described very generally with respect to their distribution.

Kirjath-arba.—Hebron no longer, the ancient name being now recovered.

In the villages thereof.—Literally, the daughters thereof; being a different word from the “villages” at the beginning.

From Beer-sheba unto the valley of Hinnom.—The men of Judah spread from the extreme south to the extreme north of Judah, an extent of some fifty miles.

(31) From Geba.—This verse should read: the children also of Benjamin dwelt from Geba to Michmash.

(36) And of the Levites.—The fewness of the Levites in the country warranted their summary notice in this way.

XII.

(1—9) The priests and Levites of the First Return.

(10) Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra.—The first is the family name, represented by Jeshua. Of the two others we know nothing more than this record gives.

(11) Joiarib.—The “and” begins the list of those who did not seal the covenant. See a like “and” in verse 19.

(7) These were the chief.—Genealogically, but not according to the courses, which are in none of the lists complete.
The Dedication of the Walls.

The Levites. NEHEMIAH, XII.

Bakbukiah and Unmi, their brethren, were over against them in the watches.

(10) And Joshua begat Joiakim, Joiakim also begat Eliashib, and Eliashib begat Joiada, (11) and Joiada begat Jonathan, and Jonathan begat Jaddua.

(12) And in the days of Joiakim were priests, the chief of the fathers: of Seraijah, Meraiah, of Jeremiah, Hananiah; (13) of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan; (14) of Melchon, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph; (15) of Harim, Adna; of Meraioth, Helkai; (16) of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam; (17) of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moadiah, Piltai; (18) of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan; (19) and of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedediah, Uzzi; (20) of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber; (21) of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethaneel.

(22) The Levites in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, and Johanan, and Jaddua, were recorded chief of the fathers: also the priests, to the reign of Darius the Persian. (23) The sons of Levi, the chief of the fathers, were written in the book of the chronicles, even until the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib. (24) And the chief of the Levites; Hashabiah, Sherebiah, and Joshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brethren over against them, to praise and to give thanks, according to the commandment of David, man of God, ward over against ward.

(25) Mattaniah, and Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, Akkub, were porters keeping the ward at the thresholds of the gates. (26) These were in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor, and of Ezra the priest, the scribe.

(27) And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the Levites out of all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgivings, and with singing, with cymbals, psalteries, and with harps. (28) And the sons of the singers gathered themselves together, both out of the plain country round about Jerusalem, and from the villages of Netophathi; (29) also from the house of Gilgal, and out of the fields of Geba and Azmaveth: for the singers had builded them villages round about Jerusalem. (30) And the priests and the Levites purified themselves, and purified the people, and the gates, and the wall.

(31) Then I brought up the princes of Judah upon the wall, and appointed two great companies of them that gave thanks, whereof one went on the right hand upon the wall toward the dung gate: (32) and after them went Hoshiaiah, and half of the princes of Judah, (33) and Azariah, Ezra, and Meshullam, (34) Judah, and Benjamin, and Shemariah, and Jeremiah, (35) and certain of the priests' sons with...
trumpets; namely, Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Michaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph: 

(30) and his brethren, Shemaiah, and Azarael, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nathanuel, and Judah, Hanami, with the musical instruments of David the man of God, and Ezra the scribe before them. 

(37) And at the fountain gate, which was over against them, they went up by the stairs of the city of David, at the going up of the wall, above the house of David, even unto the water gate eastward.

(39) And the other company of them that gave thanks went over against them, and I after them, and the half of the people upon the wall, from beyond the tower of the furnaces even unto the broad wall; 

(30) and from above the gate of Ephraim, and above the old gate, and above the fish gate, and the tower of Hanameel, and the tower of Meah, even unto the sheep gate: and they stood still in the prison gate.

(40) So stood the two companies of them that gave thanks in the house of God, and I, and the half of the rulers with me: 

(41) and the priests; Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Michaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, with trumpets; 

(42) and Maaseiah, and Shemaiah, and Eleazar, and Uzzi, and Jehohanan, and Malchijah, and Elam, and Ezer. And

the singers sang loud, with Zechariah their overseer. 

(48) Also that day they offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced: for God had made them rejoice with great joy: the wives also and the children rejoiced: so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off.

(44) And at that time were some appointed over the chambers for the treasures, for the offerings, for the firstfruits, and for the tithes, to gather into them out of the fields of the cities the portions of the law for the priests and Levites: 

(45) for Judah rejoiced for the priests and for the Levites that waited. 

(46) And both the singers and the porters kept the ward of their God, and the ward of the purification, according to the commandment of David, and of Solomon his son. 

(47) For in the days of David and Asaph of old there were chief of the singers, and songs of praise and thanksgiving unto God. 

(48) And all Israel in the days of Zerubbabel, and in the days of Nehemiah, gave the portions of the singers and the porters, every day his portion: and they sanctified holy things unto the Levites; 

(49) and the Levites appointed in the temple of the Lord were to sanctify themselves together.

CHAPTER XIII.—(1) On that day they read in the book of Moses in the audience of the people; and therein

(36) With the musical instruments of David the man of God. — No part of the service deviated from sacred precedents (comp. verse 27).

Ezra the scribe before them. — Between the singers and the princes came he who was the greatest in dignity, though the second in office.

(38) The other company. — Comparing the order with chap. iii., the reader will have a clear view of the second company. They had the longer route, proceeding to the left, rounding the north “broad wall,” passing the sheep-gate, and so meeting the priestly company near the prison-gate. The space where they met had the appearance of the chambers for the treasures, for the offerings, for the firstfruits, and for the tithes, to gather into them out of the fields of the cities the portions of the law for the priests and Levites: for Judah rejoiced for the priests and for the Levites that waited. And both the singers and the porters kept the ward of their God, and the ward of the purification, according to the commandment of David, and of Solomon his son. For in the days of David and Asaph of old there were chief of the singers, and songs of praise and thanksgiving unto God. And all Israel in the days of Zerubbabel, and in the days of Nehemiah, gave the portions of the singers and the porters, every day his portion: and they sanctified holy things unto the Levites; and the Levites appointed in the temple of the Lord were to sanctify themselves together.

(47) Keep the ward. — This should be read differently, the priests and Levites kept the ward of their God, and the ward of purification, and the singers and porters, &c. To “keep the ward” is to observe the regular times and seasons of sacrifice and thanksgiving.

(48) Of old. — Always there is a reverence shown for the old precedents.

(49) The Levites. — Between the people and the priests came the Levites, who received the tithe and gave the priests their “tithe of the tithe” (Num. xviii. 26).

(50) And the priests. — Like the names of the priests and Levites in verse 35, these are personal; not to be found in the former lists.

(51) Rejoiced. — This verse is full of joy; but before the rejoicing comes the abundant offering of sacrifices.

XIII.

(1-3) Reform as to mixed marriages.

(1) On that day. — Probably the season of the Feast of Tabernacles, as before. But portions were selected to be read.

(44-47) Economical arrangements.

(44) For Judah rejoiced. — Not only was the Temple service restored to something like the completeness of the Davidical period, the people also everywhere took pleasure in the ministrations of the Temple, and provided amplly for them. Hence the need of men to take charge of the treasures of the firstfruits and tithes.

(45) Kept the ward. — This should be read differently, the priests and Levites kept the ward of their God, and the ward of purification, and the singers and porters, &c. To “keep the ward” is to observe the regular times and seasons of sacrifice and thanksgiving.

(46) Of old. — Always there is a reverence shown for the old precedents.

(47) The Levites. — Between the people and the priests came the Levites, who received the tithe and gave the priests their “tithe of the tithe” (Num. xviii. 26).
was found written, that the Ammonite and the Moabite should not come into the congregation of God for ever; (3) a because they met not the children of Israel with bread and with water, but hired Balaam against them, that he should curse them: howbeit our God turned the curse into a blessing. (4) Now it came to pass, when they had heard the law, that they separated from Israel all the mixed multitude.

(4) And before this, Eliashib the priest, having the oversight of the chamber of the house of God, was allied unto Tobiah (5) and he had prepared for him a great chamber, where afterforetime they laid the meat offerings, the frankincense, and the vessels, and the tithes of the corn, the new wine, and the oil, which was commanded to be given to the Levites, and the singers, and the porters; and the offerings of the priests. (6) But in all this time was not I at Jerusalem: for in the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon came I unto the king, and after certain days I obtained leave of the king; (7) and I came to Jerusalem, and understood of the evil that Eliashib did for Tobiah, in preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of God. (8) And it grieved me sore; therefore I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber. (9) Then I commanded, and they cleansed the chambers: and thither brought I again the vessels of the house of God, with the meat offering and the frankincense.

(10) And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them: for the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one to his field. (11) Then contended I with the rulers, and said, Why is the house of God forsaken? And I gathered them together, and set them in their place. (12) Then brought all Judah the tithe of the corn and the new wine and the oil unto the treasuries. (13) And I made treasurers over the treasuries, Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe, and of the Levites, Pedaiah: and next to them was Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of the king; (14) and I came to Jerusalem, and understood of the evil that Eliashib did for Tobiah, in preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of God.

**They read in the book of Moses.—** "It was read" in the Pentateuch, and specially Deut. xxiii. This is introduced for the sake of the action taken, and the history is given in brief, with a striking and characteristic parenthesis of Nehemiah's own concerning the curse turned into a blessing.

**Therein was found written.**—What to the people generally was not known.

**For ever.**—No Ammonite or Ammonite family could have legal standing in the congregation, "even to their tenth generation;" and this interdict was to last "for ever." It virtually though not actually amounted to absolute exclusion.

**The mixed multitude.**—For the "mixed multitude," or Erech, which plays so prominent a part in Jewish history, see on Exod. xii. 38. The process here was that of shuttling out heathens who were in the habit of mingling with the people in the services. In chap. ix. it was, as we saw, the people's separation from the practices and spirit of the heathen.

(4-9) The scandal of the high priest.

(4) Eliashib the priest, having the oversight. Probably the high priest of chap. iii. 1, whose office alone would not have given him control over "the chamber:" that is, the series of chambers running round three walls of the Temple. He "was allied unto Tobiah," but in what way is not stated.

(5) Before this.—That is, before the return of Nehemiah; indeed, there is a suspicious absence of Eliashib's name throughout the high religious festivities of the preceding chapters.

(6) A great chamber.—The sequel shows that many small chambers had been thrown into one.

(7) Was not I at Jerusalem.—Parenthetical explanation of this disorderly state of things.
Mattaniah: for they were counted faithful, and their office was to distribute unto their brethren.

(14) *Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the offices thereof.

(15) In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath: and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals. (16) There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem. (17) Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day? (18) Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath.

(19) And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should be no burden be brought in on the sabbath day. (20) So the merchants and sellers of all kind of ware lodged without Jerusalem once or twice. (21) Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? if ye do so again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no more on the sabbath. (22) And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath day.

Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy.

(23) In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab: (24) and their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people. (25) And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters...
Mixed Marriages.

NEHEMIAH, XIII.

The final Prayer.

unto your sons, or for yourselves. (26) Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things? yet among many nations there was no king like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: *nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin. (27) Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great evil, to transgress against our God in marrying strange wives? (28) And one of the sons of Jochad, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was son in law to Sanballat the Horonite: therefore I chased him from me. (29) Remember them, O my God, 1 because they have defiled the priesthood, and the covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites. (30) Thus cleansed I them from all strangers, and appointed the wards of the priests and the Levites, every one in his business; (31) and for the wood offering, at times appointed, and for the firstfruits.

Remember me, O my God, for good.

(36) Did not Solomon . . .—Here it is implied that the language of Scripture concerning Solomon was familiar both to Nehemiah and to these transgressors. It is a remarkable instance of the faithful application of their own chronicles.

(28) I chased him from me.—Eliashib himself was allied by marriage to Tobiah, and one of his grandsons was now brought into prominence as married to Sanballat. Him Nehemiah drove into exile.

(29) Remember them.—This priestly violation of law is committed to God alone for punishment.

And of the Levites.—God chose the tribe of Levi for Himself, specially the house of Aaron, and every priest was to be "holy to the Lord" (Lev. xxii. 6, 8). This was "the covenant of the priesthood;" though there may be an undertone of reference to the great covenant in chap. x.

(30, 31) Conclusion.

(30) This is a brief recapitulation of the special work of Nehemiah after his return.

Thus cleansed I them.—After the acts of discipline described above, there was doubtless some formal service of expiation.

(31) Remember me, O my God, for good.—With these words Nehemiah leaves the scene, committing himself and his discharge of duty to the Righteous Judge. His conscientious fidelity had brought him into collision not only with external enemies but with many of his own brethren. His rigorous reformation has been assailed by many moralists and commentators in every age. But in these words he commits all to God, as it were by anticipation.—It may be added that with these words end the annals of Old Testament history.

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THE BOOK OF ESTHER.
INTRODUCTION

TO

THE BOOK OF ESTHER.

I. Contents.—The Book of Esther opens with the account of the feast given by King Ahasuerus at the end of the 180 days during which he had entertained the lords and princes of the kingdom at his palace in the city of Shushan. On the seventh day of the feast, the king, excited with wine, sends for his queen Vashti "to show the people and the princes her beauty;" with which unseemly request Vashti naturally refuses to comply. The enraged king takes counsel with his "wise men," and by a decree deposes Vashti from her place both as queen and wife, ordering that "all wives should give to their husbands honour," and that "every man should bear rule in his own house."

After this a number of maidens were selected, that from them Ahasuerus might choose the one who pleased him best. His choice fell upon Esther, a Jewish orphan girl, who had been brought up by her cousin Mordecai, at whose command she did not at first disclose her nationality to the king. About this time Mordecai was the means of frustrating an attempt made on the life of Ahasuerus; the plotters were hanged, but the discoverer of the plot was for the time forgotten.

A certain Haman now occupied the chief place in the king's favour, and Mordecai incurred his bitter enmity by his refusal to pay him the reverence yielded by others. Not content with the personal hatred, he sought the downfall of the whole Jewish race, and obtained from the king a decree, by virtue of which all the Jews throughout the empire were to be massacred. The terror such an edict would produce among the Jews can well be imagined, and the news at length reaches Esther in the palace, and she is bidden by her kinsman to use her influence with the king to obtain a reversal of the decree. To her objection that to venture uncalled into the king's presence is punishable with death, it is answered that, if her race are to perish, she must not think to purchase safety by a cowardly silence; "but," adds Mordecai, unwilling that his adopted child should lose so great an opportunity, "who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" The queen at last determines to make the effort, bidding her countrymen to join her in observing a three days' fast. The fast over, Esther, clad in her royal robes, but standing in the court as a suppliant, appeared before the king, who held out to her the golden sceptre in token that she had "obtained favour in his sight." She is bidden to proffer her request, but, evidently temporising, she merely asks that the king and Haman should come that day to the banquet which she had prepared. The repetition of the king's promise only leads to a fresh invitation to a second banquet on the following day, while Haman returns home proud at the honour done him, but with fresh exasperation against Mordecai, who remained sitting as he passed.

At home Haman discloses his grievance to his wife and his friends, and by their advice it is decided that a gallows of exceptional height should be made, and that on the morrow the king's leave should be got to hang Mordecai—far too unimportant a matter to be worth/gainsaying. That very night God's providence interposes to save His people in an unlooked-for way. The king, unable to sleep, commands the book of the Chronicles of the kingdom to be read to him, and thus hears of the unrewarded service which Mordecai had done him, by the discovery of the plot. Thus in the morning he suddenly greets his minister with the question, "What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour?" The favourite, unable to see the possibility of any one being intended save himself, suggests the bestowal of the most extravagant honours. How the answer he received must have seemed the precursor of the end, when he hears that it is for Mordecai that he has planned this triumph, and is bidden, as himself the chief noble in the realm, to see that the whole is carried into execution! The pageant is soon over; Mordecai returns to his station by the king's gate, and Haman to his home, to find how truly the dismal comments of his wife and friends echoed his own and forebodings. The morrow comes and the second banquet; and Esther now feels that the need for temporising has passed, and prays for the life of herself and her people, and directly charges Haman with his nefarious scheme. Ahasuerus orders at once Haman's execution, which is done without delay, his property being given to the queen, and by her to Mordecai. But though the author of the decree had fallen, the decree itself still held good. It had been written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's seal, and no man might reverse it. In this dilemma, largely due to his own folly, the king issues another mandate empowering the Jews to stand on their defence, sparing no pains to spread this throughout the whole empire, thereby showing clearly how completely a change had taken place in the royal favour. The day of slaughter came, and not only did the Jews show themselves able to defend themselves, but they took a terrible vengeance on their enemies; five hundred men were slain by them in Shushan alone, including the ten sons of Haman. At Esther's further request, the king extended the time of the feast given by King Ahasuerus; the provinces 75,000 of the Jews' enemies perished. The fast over, Esther, clad in her royal robes, but standing in the court as a suppliant, appeared before the king, who held out to her the golden sceptre in token that she had "obtained favour in his sight." She is bidden to proffer her request, but, evidently temporising, she merely asks that the king and Haman should come that day to the banquet which she had prepared. The repetition of the king's promise only leads to a fresh invitation to a second banquet on the following day, while Haman returns home proud at the honour done him, but with fresh exasperation against Mordecai, who remained sitting as he passed.

II. Date of the Events recorded.—This simply resolves itself into the question, who is Ahasuerus? and there can be little doubt that we must identify him with the king known to the Greeks as Xerxes, and that for the following reasons:

(1) The name Xerxes is a Greek reproduction of the Persian name Khasayarsa (meaning, according to
Canon Rawlinson, "the ruling eye"), and when Ahasuerus is transliterated more strictly according to the Hebrew spelling Ahasheeroth, it will be seen that the essential elements of the word are almost exactly reproduced, the letter aleph being prefixed to facilitate the difficult pronunciation.

(2) The character of Ahasuerus as shown in this book presents a striking parallel with that of Xerxes. Ahasuerus is an ordinary specimen of an Eastern despot, who knows no law save the gratification of his own passions, and of the passing caprice of the moment. He sends for his queen in defiance of decency and courtesy, to grace a revel, and deposes her for a refusal simply indicative of self-respect; he is willing to order the destruction of a whole people throughout his empire, at the request of the favourite of the time; when the tide of fortune turns, the favourite is not only disgraced, but he and all his family are ruthlessly destroyed, and Mordecai rises from a humble position to be the new vizer. Thus, though God shapes all this for good, the instrument is distinctly evil. How similar is the picture shown in the unifying story of Herodotus, of the king who, reckless of the overthrow of his father's armies at Marathon ten short years before, will make a fresh attempt to crush the nation on whose success the freedom of the world was to hinge; who comes with a host so vast that, in the poet's hyperbole, they drink the rivers dry (Juv. x. 177); who has a throne erected to view the slaughter of Leonidas and his three hundred; who gazes from mount Ægaleos at the vast fleet in the bay of Salamis, soon to be routed and broken by Themistocles! The king, who a few weeks before has the Hellespont scourged because it presumes to stormy and break his bridges, now flies away in panic, leaving his fleet to its fate. (See Herod. vii. 35; Aesch. Pers. 467, seq.; Juv. x. 174—187.)

(3) The extent of his empire. He rules "from India even unto Ethiopia" (chap. i. 1). India was not included in the empire of the early Persian kings, and therefore, though Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, is called Ahasuerus in Ezra iv. 6, he is excluded by the above consideration.

If then, we can hardly doubt, Ahasuerus and Xerxes are the same, we can at once fix the date of the events recorded in the Book of Esther. Ahasuerus makes the great feast in the third year of his reign (chap. i. 3), Esther is taken into the royal palace in the seventh year (chap. ii. 16), the fasts lots before Haman in the twelfth year (chap. iii. 7), and in the thirteenth year the plan of destruction is broached. Now the reign of Xerxes lasted from 485-464 B.C., therefore the events recorded in Esther range from 483-470 B.C.

III. Author, and Date of Composition.—A number of guesses, for they cannot be called anything more, have been put forward as to the author of this book, and of the best of these we can only say that it is possible. Some, as Clement of Alexandria, and Aben Ezra (Comm. in Esther, Int.), have assigned it to Mordecai; others, as Augustine (de Civ. Del. i. xviii. c. 36), with much less show of probability, refer it to Ezra, the Talmud (Tal. Babli, Baba Bathra, f. 15a) gives the "men of the great synagogue; " and yet other theories are current.

In all this uncertainty we may as well at once confess our inability to settle who the author was, though we may perhaps obtain a fair notion of the conditions under which he composed it. It may probably be inferred from such passages as chaps. ix. 32, x. 2, &c., that the writer had access to the documents to which he refers, so that the book must have been written in Persia.

This is further confirmed by traits that suggest that the writer is speaking as an eye-witness (for example, chaps. i. 6, vii. 10, 14, 15, &c.). Possibly too, even if Mordecai were not the author, matter directly derived from him may be seen in chap. ii. 5, 10, &c.

Again, it must be noticed that the name of God in every form is entirely absent from the book, that there is no allusion whatever to the Jewish nation as one except from the list of the names of the two hundred and eighty-five provinces, or to the newly rebuilt Temple, or, in fact, to any Jewish institution whatsoever. Whether this reserve is to be explained by the writer's long residence in Persia having blunted the edge of his national feelings, or whether he may have thought it safer to keep his feelings and opinions in the background, it is impossible to say: very possibly both causes may have acted.

As regards the date, some of the foregoing considerations, if allowed, would weigh strongly in favour of a comparatively early date, inasmuch as they would make the writer more or less contemporaneous with the events he records—a view which the graphic style strongly supports. But it is obvious, from the way in which the book opens, that Ahasuerus or Xerxes was no longer king. Combining these two considerations, we should prefer to fix the composition of the book not long after the death of Xerxes (464 B.C.), say 450 B.C., a time when Athens was at the height of its power and fame, and Rome was merely a second-rate Italian commonwealth.

The above view, or something like it, is held by most sober critics, a common form of the view being to assign the book to the reign of the successor of Xerxes, Artaxerxes Longimanus (464-425 B.C.), and it may be noted that there can be little doubt that the Books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles are to be assigned to that reign, and that the style of those books closely resembles that of Esther. Some have advocated a distinctly late date for Esther, assigning it to the period of the Greek régime, but the arguments brought forward seem to us of little weight.

IV. Canonicity, and Place in Canon.—In the Hebrew Bible, Esther stands as the last of the five Megilloth, or rolls, the others being Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, and Ecclesiastes, and it is read through in the synagogue at the Feast of Purim. Among the Jews there can be no doubt that its canonicity was universally acknowledged, for in the earliest statement we have as to the contents of the Jewish Canon (Josephus, contr. Apion. i. 8), Esther is distinctly included by the mention of Artaxerxes. Here and there in early Christian lists of the books of the Old Testament Canon in its Palestinian form, as opposed to the longer and was included by the mention of Artaxerxes. Here and there in early Christian lists of the books of the Old Testament Canon in its Palestinian form, as opposed to the longer Canon of the Alexandrianian, the Book of Esther is not mentioned. This is the case, for example, in the list given by Melito, Bishop of Sardis in the second century (Euseb. Hist. Eccl. iv. 26). Dr. Westcott (Smith's Bible Dict., art. "Canon") suggests that this may be due to Esther having been viewed as a part of Ezra representing a general collection of post-exilic records. Whatever may be the true explanation, at any rate Esther is an integral part of the pure Hebrew Canon, and as such is mentioned by the Talmud; it was included, though with considerable addition, to which we refer below, in the Greco-Alexandrian Canon, and was received, while the Greek accretions were rejected, by Jerome into his Vulgate translation.

The position of Esther in the Hebrew Bible is an artificial one, clearly due to Liturgical reasons, the
ESTHER.

Megilloth being read, each at one of the Feasts. In the LXX. and Vulgate, as well as in the English Bible, Esther comes at the end of the historical books. In the two former, Tobit and Judith intervene between Nehemiah and Esther; in the latter, those two books are relegated to the Apocrypha.

V. Apocryphal Additions to Esther.—In the text of Esther, as given by the LXX., we find large interpolations interspersed throughout the book. The chief of them are:

(1) Mordecai’s lineage, dream, and reward, forming a prelude to the whole book (chaps. xi. 2—xii. 6, English Version).

(2) A copy of the king’s letters to destroy the Jews, inserted in chap. iii. (chap. xiii. 1-7, English Version).


(4) Amplification of Esther’s visit to the king, in chap. v. (chap. xv., English Version).


(6) An exposition of Mordecai’s dream; after which comes a statement, evidently intended to imply that the whole book was translated from the Hebrew (chaps. x. 4—xiii. xi. 1, English Version).

Thus in the LXX. the book with its additions makes a continuous narrative. But when Jerome set forth his new Latin Version based on the Hebrew, he naturally rejected those portions not found in the Hebrew, placing them at the end of the book, noting the cause of the rejection and the place of the insertion.

In the English Bible, however, while the position of the extracts is as it is in the Latin Vulgate, Jerome’s notes are omitted, making the whole almost unintelligible. It is curious to note that chap. xi. 2 of the English Version forms the first verse in the Greek of Esther, and chap. xi. 1 the last verse.
CHAPTER I.—(1) Now it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus, (this is Ahasuerus which reigned, from India even unto Ethiopia, over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces;) (2) that in those days, when the king Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom, which was in Shushan the palace, (3) in the third year of his reign, he made a feast unto all his princes and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, being before him; (4) when he shewed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent majesty many days, even an hundred and fourscore days.

(5) And when these days were expired, the king made a feast unto all the people that were present in Shushan the palace, both unto great and small, seven days, in the court of the garden of the king’s palace; (6) where were white, green, and blue, hangings, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and liberal in numbers is quite accidental. There seem to have been a gradually increasing number of satrapies in the kingdom of Darius—20, 21, 23, 29 (Herod. iii. 80–94), and the nations in the empire of Xerxes are said to be sixty (2, vii. 61—95). Thus the provinces here mentioned must include subdivisions of these.

(2) Shushan.—Susa. Mentioned also in Neh. i. 1. It was the general abode of the Persian kings. (See Herod. vii. 6.)

(3) In the third year of his reign.—Assuming, as we do, the identity of Ahasuerus and Xerxes, this will be 483 B.C., when Xerxes held a meeting at Susa of his princes to make arrangements for invading Greece. At so important a gathering, the feasting was a very obvious adjunct; and besides the coming campaign, a successful war had just been concluded in Egypt, and rejoicings for the past might have mingled with high hopes for the future, when the whole strength of the empire should be put forth to crush the presumptuous foe who had dared to measure swords with the “king of kings.”

Nobles.—The word in the Hebrew, partemim, occurs here, in chap. vi. 9, and Dan. i. 3. is a Persian word, literally meaning “first.” The Greek protos and Latin primus are evidently akin to it.

(4) An hundred and fourscore days.—As a period of mere feasting, this long time (half a year) is simply incredible, but we must understand it as a time during which troops were collected, and the plan of invasion settled.

(5) All the people.—So we find Cyrus feasting “all the Persians” (Herod. i. 126).

(6) Where were white . . . .—This should be [hangings of] “white cotton and blue.” The word translated “cotton” (Heb., carpaz) occurs only here. Canon Rawlinson remarks that “white and blue (or violet) were the royal colours of Persia.”

Linens.—White linen; so the word is used, e.g., in 2 Chron. v. 12.

Marble.—White marble, as in the last clause of the verse.

Beds.—That is, the couches. The gold is not to be referred simply to the gold-embroidered coverings, but to the framework of the couch.
pillars of marble: the beds were of gold and silver, upon a pavement 1 of red, and blue, and white, and black, marble. (7) And they gave them drink in vessels of gold, (the vessels being diverse one from another,) and 2 royal wine in abundance, according to the state of the king. (8) And the drinking was according to the law; none did compel: for so the king had appointed to all the officers of his house, that they should do according to every man's pleasure. (9) Also Vashti the queen made a feast for the women in the royal house which belonged to king Ahasuerus. (10) On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven 4 chamberlains that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king, to bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to show the people and the princes her beauty: for she was 5 fair to look on. (12) But the queen Vashti refused to come at the king's commandment 6 by his chamberlains; therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him. (13) Then the king said to the wise men, which knew the times, (for so was the king's manner toward all that knew law and judgment:) (14) and the next unto him was Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media, which saw the king's face, and which sat the first in the kingdom;) (15) What shall we do unto the queen Vashti according to law, because she hath not performed the commandment of the king Ahasuerus by the chamberlains?

Red and blue . . .—These words are not names of colours, but of actual stones, although the meaning of most is doubtful enough. The first (bahat) is rendered by the LXX. as a stone of emerald colour, and may perhaps be malachite. The second (shesh) is white marble, the third (dar) is pearly, and the last (sochereth) black.

(7) In vessels of gold.—This shows the immense treasures in the hand of the Persian king, when the whole population of Susa could be thus accommodated.

Royal wine.—Perhaps wine of Helbon (Ezek. xxvii. 18); the original seems to imply more than wine from the royal cellars: as the king was feasting temporarily one.

State.—Literally, hand.

Law.—Rather ordinance or decree, that is, specially put forth for this occasion. What this means is shown by what follows, namely, that the king had issued special orders to allow all to do as they pleased in the matter of drinking, instead of as usual compelling them to drink. This degrading habit is the more noticeable because the Persians were at first a nation of exceptionally temperate habits.

Vashti.—According to Gesenius, the name Vashti means beautiful. Among the Persians it was customary that one wife of the sovereign should be supreme over the rest, and her we sometimes find exercising an authority which contrasts strangely with the degraded position of women generally. Such a one was Atossa, the mother of Xerxes. Vashti, too, before her deposition, was evidently the queen par excellence. We find, however, that the name given by the Greek writers to the queen of Xerxes was Amestris, of whose cruelty and dissolute life numerous details are given us by Herodotus and others. There seem good grounds for believing that she was the wife of Xerxes before he became king, and that her establishment would of itself be sufficient to disprove the theory of some who would identify Esther and Amestris. Moreover, Herodotus tells us (vii. 200) that Amestris was the cousin of Xerxes, the daughter of his father's brother; and although we cannot view Esther as of a specially high type of womanhood, still it would be most unjust to identify her with one whose character is presented to us in most unlovely guise. Bishop Wordsworth suggests that Amestris was a wife who had great influence with Xerxes between the fall of Vashti and the rise of Esther. If, however, Amestris was really the chief wife before Xerxes came to the throne, this could hardly be, and the time allowed seems much too scanty, seeing that in it falls the invasion of Greece. Or, lastly, we may with Canon Rawlinson say that Vashti is Amestris (the two names being different reproductions of the Persian, or Vashti being a sort of title) and that the deposition was a temporary one.

The women.—There should be no article.

(11) To bring Vashti.—It is evident from the way in which the incident is introduced that had Ahasuerus been sober he would not have asked such a thing. Vashti naturally sends a refusal.

Crown royal.—If this were like that worn by a king, it would be a tall cap decked with gems, and with a linen fillet of blue and white; this last was the diadem. (See Trench, New Testament Synonyms, § 23.)

(13) Which knew the times.—That is, who were skilled in precedents, and could advise accordingly.

For so . . .—Translate, for so was the king's business laid before . . .

(14) Marsena.—It has been suggested that we may possibly recognise here Mardonius, the commander at Marathon; and in Admatha, Artabanus, the uncle of Xerxes.

The seven princes.—There were seven leading families in Persia, the heads of which were the king's chief advisers, the "seven counsellors." Ezek. vii. 14. Herodotus (iii. 84) speaks of the seven nobles who rose against the Pseudo-Smerdis as chief in the nation.
And Memucan answered before the king and the princes, Vashti the queen hath not done wrong to the king only, but also to all the princes, and to all the people that are in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus. (17) For this deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, so that they shall despise their husbands in their eyes, when it shall be reported. The king Ahasuerus commanded Vashti the queen to be brought in before him, but she came not. (18) Likewise shall the ladies of Persia and Media say this day unto all the king's princes, which have heard of the deed of the queen. Thus shall there arise too much contempt and wrath. (19) If it please the king, let there go a royal commandment from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, that it be not altered. That Vashti come no more before king Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal estate unto another that is better than she. (20) And when the king's decree which he shall make shall be published throughout all his empire, (for it is great,) all the wives shall give to their husbands honour, both to great and small.

(16) Answered before the king.—Memucan, like a true courtier, gives palatable advice to his master, by counsel which is the true echo of the king's angry question. Done wrong.—Literally, dealt unfairly. (18) Translate, and this day shall the princesses of Persia and Media, which heard the affair of the queen, say . . . Contempt and wrath.—Presumably, contemptuous defiance on the part of the wives, and anger on the part of the husbands. That it be not altered.—Literally, that it pass not away. The order having been committed to writing was, in theory at any rate, immutable. The best illustration is the well-known case of Daniel; see also below (chap. viii. 8). Probably a strong-willed monarch would interpret this inviolability rather freely. That every man should . . .—The following words are, literally, be ruling in his own house, and speaking according to the language of his own people. The former clause may probably be taken as a proof of the existence of an undue amount of female influence generally in Persia; the second clause is more doubtful. The English Version does distinct violence to the Hebrew, perhaps because the literal rendering yielded a somewhat peculiar sense. Taking the words exactly as they stand, they can only mean that in a house where two or more languages are used, from the presence of foreign wives, the husband is to take care that his own language is not supplanted by any of theirs. This is intelligible enough, but is perhaps rather irrelevant to what goes before.

II.

(1) After these things.—We have seen that the great feast at Susa was in the year 483 B.C. and that in the spring of 481 B.C. Xerxes set out for Greece. At some unspecified time, then, between these limits the proposal now started is to be placed. The marriage of Esther, however (verse 16), did not come about till after the return from Greece, the king's long absence explaining the otherwise curious delay, and moreover, even in this interval, he was entangled in more than one illicit connection.

(9) The house of the women.—The harem, then as now, a prominent feature in the establishment of an Eastern king. Heg. — Called Hegai in verse 8; a eunuch whose special charge seems to have been the virgins, while another, named Shaashgaz (verse 14), had the custody of the concubines. The whole verse shows, as conclusively as anything could do, in how degrading an aspect Eastern women were, as a whole, viewed. It was reserved for Christianity to indicate the true position of woman, not man's plaything, but the help meet for him, able to aid him in his spiritual and intellectual progress, yielding him intelligent obedience, not slavery.

(5) Mordecai.—Canon Rawlinson is disposed to identify Mordecai with Matalas, who was the most powerful of the eunuchs in the reign of Xerxes. It
was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite; who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captivity which had been carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away. And he brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter: for she had neither father nor mother, and the maid was fair and beautiful; whom Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead, took for his own daughter.

So it came to pass, when the king's commandment and his decree was heard, and when many maidens were gathered together unto Shushan the palace, to the custody of Hegai, that Esther was brought also unto the king's house, to the custody of Hegai, keeper of the women. And the maiden pleased him, and she obtained kindness of him; and he speedily gave her her things for purification, with such things as belonged daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai; and he preferred her and her maids unto the best place of the house of the women. (Esther had not shewed her people nor her kindred: for Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite, was of the family of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away. And Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite, should become of her.) Then thus came every maiden unto the king; whatsoever she desired was given her to go out of the house of the women and to the women's maids. And Esther was brought also unto the king's house, to the custody of Shaashgaz, the king's chamberlain, which kept the concubines: she came in unto the king no more, except the king delighted in her, and that she was called by name.

Now when the turn of Esther, the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her for his daughter, was come to go in unto the king, she required nothing but what Hegai the king's chamberlain, the keeper of the women, appointed. And Esther obtained favour in the sight of all them that looked upon her. So Esther was taken unto king Ahasuerus into his house royal in the before the court of the women's house, to know how Esther did, and what should become of her.

Now when every maid's turn was come to go in to king Ahasuerus, after that she had been twelve months, according to the manner of the women, (for so were the days of their purifications accomplished, to wit, six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with sweet odours, and with other things for the purifying of the women;) then thus came every maiden unto the king; whatsoever she desired was given her to go with her out of the house of the women unto the king's house. In the evening she went, and on the morrow she returned into the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz, the king's chamberlain, which kept the concubines: she came in unto the king no more, except the king delighted in her, and that she was called by name.

Now when the turn of Esther, the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her for his daughter, was come to go in unto the king, she required nothing but what Hegai the king's chamberlain, the keeper of the women, appointed. And Esther obtained favour in the sight of all them that looked upon her. So Esther was taken unto king Ahasuerus into his house royal in the
Esther made Queen.

IN THE SEVENTH YEAR OF HIS REIGN. (17) And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti. (18) Then the king made a great feast unto all his princes and his servants, even Esther's feast; and he made a release to the provinces, and gave gifts, according to the state of the king.

(19) And when the virgins were gathered together the second time, then Mordecai sat in the king's gate. (20) Esther had not yet shewed her kindred nor her people; as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up with him.

(21) In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate, two of the king's chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, of those which kept the door, were wroth, and sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus. (22) And the thing was known to Mordecai, who told it unto Esther the queen; and Esther certified the king thereof in Mordecai's name. (23) And when inquisition was made of the matter, it was found out; therefore they were both hanged on a tree: and it was written in the book of the chronicles before the king.

CHAPTER III. — (1) After these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him. (2) And all the king's servants, that were in the king's gate, bowed, and reverenced Haman; for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence. (3) Then the king's servants, which were in the king's gate, said unto Mordecai, Why transgressest thou the king's commandment?

(4) And Mordecai said unto them, I will not and king.

time referred to in the verse will be the January or February of the year 478 B.C., and must have been very shortly after Xerxes' return to Susa from the West. The long delay in replacing Vashti is simply to be explained by the long absence of Xerxes in Greece.

(18) Release. — Literally, rest. The word only occurs here: it may refer either to a release from tribute or from military service, probably the former. Esther, however, would have been consistent with Persian usage. (See Herod. iii. 67, vi. 59.)

(19) And when the virgins . . . — Here begins a fresh incident in the history, whose date we cannot fix precisely, save that it falls between the marriage of Esther and the twelfth year of Ahasuerus (chap. iii. 7). The king "loved Esther above all the women," but how the word "love" is degraded in this connection is Persian; and it is thus difficult to see the meaning of "the king's gate." Herodotus refers (i. 20, 25, 159, &c.) The dead body of Leonidas was crucified by Xerxes' orders after the desperate stand at Thermopylae.

Book of the chronicles. — A sleepless night of Xerxes accidentally brought this matter, after it had been forgotten, before the king's mind. Herodotus often refers to these Persian Chronicles (vii. 100; viii. 85, 90).

III.

(1) Haman . . . the Agagite. — Nothing appears to be known of Haman save from this book. His name, as well as that of his father and his sons, is Persian; and it is thus difficult to see the meaning of the name Agagite, which has generally been assumed to imply descent from Agag, king of the Amalekites, with whom the name Agag may have been dynastic (Num. xxiv. 7; 1 Sam. xv. 8). Thus Josephus (Ant. xi. 6. 5) and the Chaldee Targum call him an Amalekite. But apart from the difficulty of the name being Persian, it is hard to see how, after the wholesale destruction of Amalek recorded in 1 Sam. xv., any members should have been left of the kingly family, maintaining a distinct tribal name for so many centuries. In one of the Greek Apocryphal additions to Esther (after chap. ix. 24) Haman is called a Macedonian.

(2) Bowed not. — Perhaps, rather, did not prostrate himself, for such was the ordinary Eastern practice (see Herod. iii. 86, vii. 134, 136, viii. 118). The objection on Mordecai's part was evidently mainly on religious grounds, as giving to a man Divine honours (Josephus l.c.), for it elicits from him the fact that he was a Jew (verse 4), to whom such an act of obeisance would be abhorrent. Whether Mordecai also rebelled against the ignominious character of the obeisance, we cannot say.
Haman's Plot against the Jews.

ESTHER, III.

He obtains a Decree.

A certain people scattered abroad...—A certain part of the nation had returned with Zerubbabel, but (Ezra ii. 64) these only amounted to 42,360, so that the great majority of the nation had preferred to stay comfortably where they were in the various districts of the Persian Empire.

Neither keep they...—The charge of disloyalty has been a favourite weapon in the hands of persecutors. Haman was not the first who had brought this charge against the Jews (see Ezra iv. 13, 16). Our Lord's accusers were those who knew no king but Caesar. The early Christians found to their cost how deadly was the accusation of disloyalty to the Empire.

Ten thousand talents of silver—This would be about two and a half millions sterling, being indeed more than two-thirds of the whole annual revenue of the Empire (Herod. iii. 85). Haman may have been a man of excessive wealth (like the Pythius who offered Xerxes four millions of gold darics (Herod. vii. 28), or he probably may have hoped to draw the money from the spoils of the Jews.

And the king said...—With indifference which seems incredible, but which is quite in accordance with what we otherwise know of Xerxes, the king simply hands over to his minister the whole nation and their possessions to do with as he will. The king perhaps was glad to throw the cares of government on his minister, and, too indolent to form an opinion for himself, was content to believe that the Jews were a worthless, disloyal people.

On the thirteenth day of the first month—From the next verse we see that the thirteenth of Adar was to be the lucky day for Haman's purpose, which may have suggested the thirteenth of Nisan as a suitable day for this preliminary step. Bishop Wordsworth reminds us that this day was the eve of the Passover, so that Haman's plot against the Jews strangely coincides in time with one five hundred

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(4) Whether Mordecai's matters would stand.—This should be, his words: whether his statement that he belonged to a nation who might only pay homage to a certain god, would hold good.

(5) Now it came to pass, when they spake daily unto him, and he hearkened not unto them, that they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand: for he had told them that he was a Jew.

(6) And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath. And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai; wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai.

(7) In the first month, that is, the month Nisan, in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus, they cast Pur, that is, the lot, before Haman from day to day, and from month to month, to the twelfth month, that is, the month Adar. And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their lives are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them.

(8) If it please the king, let it be written 2 that they may be destroyed: and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring it into the king's treasuries. And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' enemy. And the king said unto Haman, The silver is given to thee, the people also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee.

(9) Then were the king's scribes called on the thirteenth day of the first month, and there was written according to all that Haman had commanded unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that were over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language; in the first month... the thirteenth.

(10) And the king's scribes were called, and charged with a matter; and they wrote in this manner and said, From the king's commandment and from the word of the king, two edicts were made in the name of the king and of Haman the Agagite, the Jew's enemy.

(11) From the first month, and there was written...

(12) And the king said...

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name of king Ahasuerus was it written, and sealed with the king’s ring. (13) And the letters were sent by posts into all the king’s provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, and to take the spoil of them for a prey. (14) The copy of the writing for a commandment to be given in every province was published unto all people, that they should be ready against that day. (15) The posts went out, being hastened by the king’s commandment, and the decree was given in Shushan the palace. And the king and Haman sat down to drink; but the city Shushan was perplexed.

CHAPTER IV.—(1) When Mordecai perceived all that was done, Mordecai rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry; (2) and came even before the king’s gate: for none might enter into the king’s gate clothed with sackcloth. (3) And in every province, whithersoever the king’s commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

years later, when the Jews themselves, aided by heathen hands and the powers of darkness, sought to vanquish the Saviour; and as the trembling Jews of Persia were delivered by God’s goodness, so too by His goodness Satan himself was overthrown and the Lamb is simply an attempt to transiterate the Persian *khshatripa*, whence the Greek *satrapes*, and so the English word. The word occurs several times in this book and in Ezra and Daniel.

(13) Posts.—Literally, the runners. (See Note on chap. i. 22.)

(14) Copy.—Heb., Pathhegen. A Persian word, only occurring here and in chaps. iv. 8, viii. 13.

(15) Perplexed.—The inhabitants of the capital were puzzled and alarmed, as well they might be, at so marvellously reckless an order. Their sympathies, too, were clearly with the Jews and against Haman. (See chap. viii. 15.)

IV.

(1) Mordecai rent his clothes.—This was a common sign of sorrow among Eastern nations generally. It will be noticed that the sorrow both of Mordecai and of the Jews generally (verse 3) is described by external manifestations solely. There is rending of garments, putting on of sackcloth and ashes, fasting and weeping and wailing: there is nothing said of prayer and entreaty to God of Israel, and strong crying to Him who is able to save. Daniel and Ezra and Nehemiah are all Jews, who, like Mordecai and Esther, have to submit to the rule of the alien, though, unlike them, they, when the danger threatened, besought, and not in vain, the help of their God. (See Dan. vi. 10; Ezra viii. 23; Neh. i. 4, &c.)

(2) None might enter . . .—That nothing sad or ill-omened might meet the monarch’s gaze, as though by shutting his eyes, as it were, to the presence of sorrow, or sickness, or death, he might suppose that he was successfully evading them.

(3) So Esther’s maids . . .—It is perhaps fair to infer from this, that Esther’s connection with Mordecai was known to those about her, though as yet not to the king.

(6) Street.—The square or wide open place. (Heb., ’r’rob.)

(10) Again.—There is nothing for this in the original, and it would be better to put and, as the statement of verse 10 is clearly continuous with verse 9.

(11) There is one law of his . . .—Literally, one is his law, that is, there is one unvarying rule for such. No one who had not been summoned might enter the king’s presence under pain of death.

The golden sceptre.—We are told that in the representations of Persian kings at Persepolis, in every
the people of the king's provinces, do you know, that whereas, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live: but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days. (12) And they told to Mordecai Esther's words.

(13) Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. (14) For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there be enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

(15) Then Esther bade them return Mordecai this answer, (16) Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish. (17) So Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.

CHAPTER V.—(1) Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house; and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house. (2) And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, that she obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre. (3) Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request? it shall be given to thee from the half of the kingdom. (4) And Esther answered, If it seem good unto you, let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him. (5) Then the king said, Cause Haman to make haste, that he may do as Esther hath said. So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

case the monarch holds a long staff or sceptre in his right hand. How forcibly, after reading this verse, the contrast strikes us between the self-styled king of kings, to enter into whose presence even as a suppliant for help and protection was to risk death, and the King of Kings, who has Himself instructed man to say, “Let us go into His tabernacle and fall low on our knees before His footstool.”

(14) Enlargement.—Literally, a breathing-space. From another place.—Although he does not explain his meaning, and, indeed, seems to be speaking with studied reserve, still we may suppose that Mordecai here refers to Divine help, which he asserts will be vouchsafed in this extremity. It does not necessarily follow that we are to see in this declaration a proof of the earnestness of Mordecai's faith; probably he had been his faith been like that of many of his countrymen to him in the court. —Thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed.—That is, by the hand of God, who having raised thee to this pitch of glory and power will require it from thee, if thou fail in that which it plainly devolves upon thee to do. It is clear there is a good deal of force in these last words of Mordecai. Esther's rise had been so marvellous that one might well see in it the hand of God, and if so there was clearly a very special object in view, which it must be her anxious care to work for. In the whole tone of the conversation, however, there seems a lack of higher and more noble feelings, an absence of any suggestion of turning for aid to God; and thus in return, when God carries out His purpose, and grants deliverance, it seems done indirectly, without the conferring of any special blessing on the human instruments.

V.

(1) The third day.—That is, of the fast. (See above, chap. iv. 16.)

Royal apparel.—Literally, royalty.

(2) To the half of the kingdom.—This tremendous offer occurs in further promises of Ahasuerus (chaps. v. 6, vii. 2). The same reckless promise is made by Herod Antipas to the daughter of Herodias (St. Mark vi. 23).

(3) Let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet.—It was natural enough that, with so much depending on her request, the queen should show some hesitation; if anything took an untoward turn (for, in spite of the king's promise, she evidently felt uneasy) it might mean total ruin. She therefore temporizes; she at any rate gains time, she secures a breathing-space. But I have not been called to come in unto the king; however, there seems a lack of higher and more
(9) And the king said unto Esther at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be performed. (7) Then answered Esther, and said, My petition and my request is; (6) if I have found favour in the sight of the king, and if it please the king to grant my petition, and to perform my request, let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them, and I will do to morrow as the king hath said.

(9) Then went Haman forth that day joyful and with a glad heart: but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, he stood not up, nor moved for him, he was full of indignation against Mordecai. (10) Nevertheless Haman restrained himself: and when he came home, he sent and called for his friends, and Zeresh his wife. (11) And Haman told them of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king. (12) Haman said moreover, Yea, Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet that she had prepared but myself; and to morrow am I invited unto her also with the king. (13) Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate.

CHAPTER VI.—(1) On that night could not the king sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king. (2) And it was found written, that Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the 6 door, who sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus. (3) And the king said, What honour

(6) The banquet of wine.—The continuation of the banquet of verse 5: the dessert, so to speak.
(9) He stood not up.—In chap. iii. 2 we saw that Mordecai refused to bow or prostrate himself to Haman, here he refuses even the slightest sign of respect. The honourable independence of the former case here becomes indefensible rudeness.
(10) Zeresh.—A name probably derived from an old Persian word for "gold." According to the Targum she was the daughter of Tatan, "the governor on this side the river," i.e., of that part of the Persian Empire which lay beyond the Euphrates (Ezra v. 3).
(11) Told them . . . .—As all this was of necessity sufficiently well known to his hearers, this was simply a piece of vain-glorious boasting, the pride that "goeth before destruction."

The multitude of his children.—He had ten sons (chap. ix. 10).
(14) Gallows.—Literally, tree; the Hebrew word, as well as the corresponding Greek word used by the LXX., standing both for the living tree and the artificial structure. Doubtless the punishment intended for Mordecai was crucifixion, for hanging, in the common sense of the term, does not seem to have been in use among the Persians. The same Hebrew word occurring above (chap. iii. 23) is rendered tree. The Greek word employed is the same as that used in the New Testament for our Saviour's cross (Acts v. 30, x. 39, &C.). The Latin Vulgate here actually renders the word on its last occurrence by crucem.

Fifty cubits high.—That is, about seventy-five feet; the great height being to call as much attention as possible to the execution, that thereby Haman's glory might be proportionately increased.

VI.

(1) Could not the king sleep.—Literally, the king's sleep fled away. Here, in the most striking way in the whole book, the workings of God's providence on behalf of His people are shown. "God Himself is here, though His name be absent." The king's sleepless night falls after the day when Haman has resolved to ask on the morrow for Mordecai's execution, a foretaste of the richer vengeance he hopes to wreak on the whole nation of the Jews. It is by a mere chance, one would say, looking at the matter simply in its human aspect, that the king should call for the book of the royal chronicles, and not for music. It was by a mere chance too, it might seem, that the reader should happen to light upon the record of Mordecai's services; and yet when all these apparent accidents are wrought up into the coincidence they make, how completely is the providence visible, the power that will use men as the instruments of its work, whether they know it, or know it not, whether they be willing or unwilling, whether the glory of God is to be manifested in and by and through them, or manifested on them only.

They were read before the king.—Canon Rawlinson remarks that there is reason to think that the Persian kings were in most cases unable to read.
(2) It was found written.—See chap. ii. 21—23.

What honour and dignity hath been done.—The names of those who were thought worthy of being accounted "royal benefactors" were enrolled on a special list, and they were supposed to be suitably rewarded, though not necessarily at the time. The reward
and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, There is nothing done for him. (4) And the kind said, Who is in the court? Now Haman was come into the outward court of the king's house, to speak unto the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him. (5) And the king's servants said unto him, Behold, Haman standeth in the court. And the king said, Let him come in.
(6) So Haman came in. And the king said unto him, What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour? Now Haman thought in his heart, To whom would the king delight to do honour more than to myself? (7) And Haman answered the king, For the man whom the king delighteth to honour, (8) let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head: (9) and let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man whom the king delighteth to honour, and (10) bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour.
(11) Then the king said to Haman, Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate: (12) let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken. (13) Then took Haman the apparel and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and brought him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour.
(12) And Mordecai came again to the king's gate. But Haman hasted to his house mourning, and having his head covered. (15) And Haman told Zeresh his wife and all his friends every thing

However was, in theory at any rate, a thing to which the "benefactor" had a distinct claim, and an almost legal right.
(4) Haman was come.—It being at length morning, Haman had come to the palace in due course, and was waiting in the outer court till the king should call for him. The king in the inner court ponders what recompense to bestow upon Mordecai; Haman in the outer court stands ready primed with a request that he may be hanged.
(6) Whom the king delighteth . . .—Literally, in whose honour the king delighteth.
(7) Let the royal apparel be brought . . .—These exceedingly great distinctions Haman suggests, thinking with unaccountable vanity (for nothing is said or implied as to any service rendered by him to the king) that the king must necessarily have been referring to him, and in a moment he is irretrievably committed. Whether Haman's character had at its best estate much discretion, or whether he rose to his high position, not by the qualities that should commend a statesman to a king, but, like many another Eastern Vizier, had by flattery and base arts gained the royal favour, we cannot say; here he shows the lack of the most ordinary discretion, his vanity is so inordinate that he cannot see the possibility of any one's merits save his own. The request which Haman made may be illustrated by the permission granted by Xerxes to Artabanus to put on the royal robes and ride in his chariot (Herod. vii. 15-17).
The horse that the king rideth upon.—Thus Pharaoh, desiring to honour Joseph, made him ride in his chariot (Gen. xii. 14): Daniel, wishing to show that Solomon had really become king in his father's lifetime, commands that he should ride on the king's mule (1 Kings i. 33, 44).
And the crown which is set upon his head.—If we take the Hebrew here quite literally, the meaning must be and on whose (i.e., the horse's) head a royal crown is set. The only objection to this view is, that there appears to be no evidence of such a custom among the Persians. Some render, and that a (or the: the Hebrew is necessarily ambiguous in such a case) royal crown be set, but this we consider does violence to the Hebrew. It must be noted that both the king in his reply, and the writer in describing what actually took place, make no mention of a crown as worn by Mordecai, nor does Haman in the following verse.
(9) Noble.—See above, chap. i. 3, Note. _Street._—See above, chap. iv. 6, Note.
(10) The Jew.—Mordecai's nationality is doubtless be given in the book of records. Thus Esther, in urging her petition by-and-by, has already on her side the king's good-will to one prominent member of the proscribed race.
(11) Then took Haman . . .—It would be a grim and curious study to analyse Haman's feelings at this juncture. Various thoughts were mingled there. Self-reproach, perhaps, that he had so thoughtlessly been the cause of the present display, bitter hatred of his rival now multiplied a thousandfold, and the evident knowledge that the game was played out, and that he was ruined. The more subtle the brain, the more truly must he have known this.
(12) Mordecai came again to the king's gate.—He had received his reward, and to the Eastern, who sees continually the Vizier and the poor man exchange places, there would be nothing startling in this resumption of the former humble post.
His head covered.—In token of mourning.
(13) Told.—The same word as on a former occasion, chap. v. 11. Then the tale was one of boastful pride in what he had, and no less boastful pride in what he hoped to be; now it is of bitter disappointment and bitter anticipation, not brightened by any of the thoughts which blunt the keenness of many a sorrow,
that had befallen him. Then said his wise men and Zeresh his wife unto him, If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him. (21) And while they were yet talking with him, came the king's chamberlains, and hasted to bring Haman unto the banquet that Esther had prepared.

CHAPTER VII. — (1) So the king and Haman came 1 to banquet with Esther the queen. (2) And the king said again unto Esther on the second day at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? and it shall be performed, even to the half of the kingdom. (3) Then Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request: (4) for we are sold, I and my people, 2 to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not counter-vail the king's damage.

(5) Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, Who is he, and where is he, 3 that durst presume in his heart to do so? (6) And Esther said, 4 The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid 5 before the king and the queen.

(7) And the king arising from the banquet of wine in his wrath went into the palace garden: and Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen; for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king.

(8) Then the king returned out of the palace garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and Haman was fallen upon the bed whereon Esther was. Then said the king, Will he force the queen also 6 before me in the house? As the word went out of the king's mouth, they

as when men have nobly done their duty, though it is not God's will that their efforts should succeed for the time, and when the hope could be cherished that a brighter time must dawn before long. Nothing of this comfort could be Haman's. He had not failed in an honest discharge of his duty, but in a cruel and unjust scheme (not that the king can be called a whit better in this matter); he knew the usages of his country far too well to suppose for a moment that, after having made such an attempt, and having failed, he would be allowed to try a second time.

If Mordecai . . . before whom thou hast begun . . . —Poor comfort does the unfortunate schemer get from his household; he knew too well already that he had begun to fall, his heart must have told him all too truly that it was but the beginning: what then could he expect from this communication to his family? Had he been the representative of a fallen cause, fallen but not discredited, despairing even of his cause, yet not ashamed of the course that had resulted thus, he might have been helped with counsel and cheering and sympathy. Contrast Zeresh's perhaps last words to her husband with those, for example, of the wife of good John Rogers, or of Rowland Taylor, on their way to the stake, in the days of the Marian persecution.

VII.

(2) What is thy petition? — The king takes for granted that Esther's invitations to her banquets do not constitute her real request, but merely prepare the way for it.

(4) We are sold. — See above, chap. iii. 9.

To be destroyed . . . — Literally, to destroy and to kill, and to cause to perish. The identical words used in the king's proclamation for the destruction of the Jews. Herein Esther at once makes confession of her nationality, and relying on the king's still recent gratitude to one of the race, aided by his present cordiality to herself, she risks, as indeed she can no longer help doing, the fate of herself and her race on the momentary impulse of her fickle lord. Happily for her, God has willed that these, perhaps at any other time untrustworthy grounds of reliance, shall suffice. The "hearts of kings are in His rule and governance," and now the heart of one is "disposed and turned, as it seemeth best to His godly wisdom."

Although the enemy . . . . . — The meaning of this clause is not quite clear. The literal translation is, although (or because) the enemy is not equal to (i.e., does not make up for) the king's hurt. This may mean (a) that Haman, though willing to pay a large sum into the royal treasury, cannot thereby make up for the loss which the king must incur by wholesale massacre being carried on in his realm; or (b) "were we merely to be sold into slavery, instead of being killed outright, I should have said nothing, because the enemy was not one worth the king's while to trouble himself about." We prefer the former view. The word "enemy" is that translated adversary, in verse 6, and properly means one who oppresses, afflicts, distresses. The word which is, literally, equal to, comparable with, has already occurred in chaps. iii. 8, v. 13.

(6) Was afraid . . . . — Shrank back in terror before . . . See the use of the word in 1 Chron. xxii. 39; Dan. viii. 17.

(7) Evil. — Heb., the evil, the doom.

(8) The bed — i.e., the couch on which she had been reclining at the banquet. This was the customary posture at meals, not only of the Persians, but also of the Greeks and Romans, and of the later Jews. The Last Supper was thus eaten. Haman had obviously thrown himself at the queen's feet to ask for mercy. The king on his return was evidently full of wrath against Haman, and though he was for the time God's instrument in averting Haman's wicked design, his own
and besought him with tears to put away the mischief of Haman the Agagite, and his device that he had devised against the Jews. (4) Then the king held out the golden sceptre toward Esther. So Esther arose, and stood before the king, (5) and said, If it please the king, and if I have found favour in his sight, and if I have found grace in his eyes, let it be written to reverse the letters devised by Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to destroy the Jews which are in all the king’s provinces: (6) for how can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?

(7) Then the king Ahasuerus said unto Esther the queen and to Mordecai the Jew, Behold, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and him they have hanged upon the gallows, because he laid his hand upon the Jews.

VIII.

(1) Did ... give the house of Haman.—Conscionable character is none the less conspicuous. The attempted massacre had been authorised with the full knowledge and consent of the king, who, yet ignores utterly his own share of the responsibility. Great and noble ends are at times brought about by the instrumentality of unholy men, blind instruments in a purpose whose end they understand not. What greater blessing, for example, did God vouchsafe to England than the Reformation, whose foremost agent was a bloody and unholy king?

(2) Will he force ... Ahasuerus must have known perfectly well that Haman’s position was that of a suppliant; his words do but indicate his utter anger, as the attendants clearly perceive, for they immediately covered Haman’s face—he must not see the king’s face again. (See above, chap. i. 13.)

(3) One of the chamberlains ... Translate, one of the chamberlains [who stood, or served] before the king, said.

Hang him.—In the LXX., let him be crucified. The climax of the story is now reached in the pitiful words, “They hanged Haman upon the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai.” In his own house (verse 9), that is, in some court or garden belonging to it, in the sight doubtless of his own children and his own servants, and the wife who had given him such cold comfort, did the unfortunate man meet his fate. Thus not only does God vouchsafe to deliver his people, but He brings on the enemy the very destruction he had devised for his adversary: “He hath fallen himself into the pit that he digged for other.” Our Saviour has rescued us from our enemy who was too mighty for us, and has trodden down our foes, to be destroyed for ever in His own good time. So may we Christians see in the dangers threatening the Jews throughout this book a picture of our own, and in Haman’s discomfiture a type of the victory of the Lamb over sin and Satan.

1 Heb., bare.

2 Heb., and she trept and besought him.

3 Heb., the device.

4 Or, who wrote.

5 Heb., be able that I may see.
(8) Write ye also for the Jews, as it liketh you, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring: for the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse.

(9) Then were the king's scribes called at that time in the third month, that is, the month Sivan, on the three and twentieth day thereof; and it was written according to all that Mordecai commanded unto the Jews, and to the lieutenants, and the deputies and rulers of the provinces which are from India unto Ethiopia, an hundred twenty and seven provinces, unto every province according to the writing thereof, and unto every people after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language. (10) And he wrote in the king Ahasuerus' name, and sealed it with the king's ring, and sent letters by posts on horseback, and riders on mules, camels, and young dromedaries; (11) wherein the king granted the Jews which were in every city to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them, both little ones and women, and to take the spoil of them for a prey, upon one day in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, namely, upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar. (12) The copy of the writing for a commandment to be given in every province was published unto all people, and that the Jews should be ready against that day to avenge themselves on their enemies. (13) So the posts that rode upon mules and camels went out, being hastened and pressed on by the king's commandment. And the decree was given at Shushan the palace.

(13) Then were the king's scribes called at that time in the third month, that is, the month Sivan, on the three and twentieth day thereof; and it was written according to all that Mordecai commanded unto the Jews, and to the lieutenants, and the deputies and rulers of the provinces which are from India unto Ethiopia, an hundred twenty and seven provinces, unto every province according to the writing thereof, and unto every people after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language. (10) And he wrote in the king Ahasuerus' name, and sealed it with the king's ring, and sent letters by posts on horseback, and riders on mules, camels, and young dromedaries; (11) wherein the king granted the Jews which were in every city to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them, both little ones and women, and to take the spoil of them for a prey, upon one day in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, namely, upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar. (12) The copy of the writing for a commandment to be given in every province was published unto all people, and that the Jews should be ready against that day to avenge themselves on their enemies. (13) So the posts that rode upon mules and camels went out, being hastened and pressed on by the king's commandment. And the decree was given at Shushan the palace.

(14) And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple: and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad. (15) The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honour. (17) And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, the Jews gathered themselves together, and gathered strength against the Jews, and giving his property to Esther, became Jews, for the fear of the Jews came upon all the tale.
Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day. And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.

CHAPTER IX. — (1) Now in the twelfth month, that is, the month Adar, on the thirteenth day of the same, when the king's commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have power over them, (though it was turned to the contrary, that the Jews had rule over them that hated them;) (2) the Jews gathered themselves together in their cities throughout all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, to lay hand on such as sought their hurt: and no man could withstand them; for the fear of them fell upon all people. (3) And all the rulers of the provinces, and the lieutenants, and the deputies, and officers of the king, helped the Jews; because the fear of Mordecai fell upon them. (4) For Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame went out throughout all the provinces: for this man Mordecai waxed greater and greater.

(5) Thus the Jews smote all their enemies with the stroke of the sword, and

slaughter, and destruction, and did what they would unto those that hated them. (6) And in Shushan the palace the Jews slew and destroyed five hundred men. (7) And Parshandatha, and Dalphon, and Aspatha, and Poratha, and Adalia, and Aridatha, (8) and Parmashta, and Arisai, and Aridai, and Vajezatha, (9) the ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews, slew they; but on the spoil laid they not their hand.

(10) On that day the number of those that were slain in Shushan the palace 3 was brought before the king. (12) And the king said unto Esther the queen, The Jews have slain and destroyed five hundred men in Shushan the palace, and the ten sons of Haman; what have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? now what is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: or what is thy request further? and it shall be done.

(13) Then said Esther, If it please the king, let it be granted to the Jews which are in Shushan to do to morrow also according unto this day's decree, and let Haman's ten sons be hanged upon the gallows. (14) And the king commanded it so to be done: and the decree was given at Shushan; and they hanged
ESTHER, VIII. for the Massacre of the Jews.

(8) Write ye also for the Jews, as it liketh you, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring: for the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse.

(9) Then were the king's scribes called at that time in the third month, that is, the month Sivan, on the three and twentieth day thereof; and it was written according to all that Mordecai commanded unto the Jews, and to the lieutenants, and the deputies and rulers of the provinces which are from India unto Ethiopia, an hundred twenty and seven provinces, unto every province according to the writing thereof, and unto every people after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language. (10) And he wrote in the king Ahasuerus' name, and sealed it with the king's ring, and sent letters by posts on horseback, and riders on mules, camels, and young dromedaries; (11) wherein the king granted the Jews which were in every city to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them, both little ones and women, and to take the spoil of them for a prey, (12) upon one day in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, namely, upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar. (13) The copy of the writing for a commandment to be given in every province was published unto all people, and that the Jews should be ready against that day to avenge themselves on their enemies. (14) So the posts that rode upon mules and camels went out, being hastened and pressed on by the king's commandment. And the decree was given at Shushan the palace.

(15) And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple; and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad. (16) The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honour. (17) And in every province, and in every city, whithsoever the king's commandment and his decree came, the
The Jews Rise against their Foes

ESTHER, IX.

The Jews had joy and gladness, a feast and a good day. And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews fell upon them.

CHAPTER IX. — (1) Now in the twelfth month, that is, the month Adar, on the thirteenth day of the same, when the king's commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have power over them, (though it was turned to the contrary, that the Jews had rule over them that hated them;) the Jews gathered themselves together in their cities throughout all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, to lay hand on such as sought their hurt: and no man could withstand them; for the fear of them fell upon all people. (2) And all the rulers of the provinces, and the lieutenants, and the deputies, and officers of the king, helped the Jews; because the fear of Mordecai fell upon them. (4) For Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame went out throughout all the provinces: for this man Mordecai waxed greater and greater.

Thus the Jews smote all their enemies with the stroke of the sword, and slaughter, and destruction, and did what they would unto those that hated them. (6) And in Shushan the palace the Jews slew and destroyed five hundred men. (7) And Parshandatha, and Dalphon, and Aspashtha, (8) and Poratha, and Adalia, and Aridatha, (9) and Parmashta, and Arisai, and Aridai, and Vasetha, (10) the ten sons of Haman the son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews, slew they; but on the spoil laid they not their hand.

On that day the number of those that were slain in Shushan the palace was brought before the king. (12) And the king said unto Esther the queen, The Jews have slain and destroyed five hundred men in Shushan the palace, and the ten sons of Haman; what have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? now what is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: or what is thy request further? and it shall be done.

Then said Esther, If it please the king, let it be granted to the Jews which are in Shushan to do to morrow also according unto this day's decree, and let Haman's ten sons be hanged upon the gallows. (14) And the king commanded it so to be done: and the decree was given at Shushan; and they hanged

Linen.—White linen.

The city of Shushan rejoiced.—The tide of royal favour had changed, and the people of Shushan were evidently not very different from the mass of the populace of the king Ahasuerus, to lay hand on such as sought their hurt: and no man could withstand them; for the fear of them fell upon all people. Nothing succeeds like success, and the populace of the present day, who shout with the enthusiasm die away—"Hosanna!" now; to-morrow, "Crucify!"

The same names are written vertically, one under the other, in a column; and the Targum or Chaldee paraphrase says that the ten sons were hanged one above the other at fixed distances.

On the spoil laid they not their hand.—This they might have done, according to the strict letter of the edict, and "stood for their lives." If so, who could object so long as they did nothing against the authorities? and they, we have seen, were on their side.

That they did make a bloody use of their opportunity is shown clearly by verse 16.

3 Helped.—Literally, lifted up. The same Hebrew verb is rendered furthered (Ezra viii. 36). The palace.—Doubtless the whole royal city, rather than the palace strictly so called. It is obvious that even Xerxes would hardly have allowed bloodshed, otherwise than by his direct orders, within the precincts of the palace.

The names of the ten sons of Haman are, except Adalia, all readily traceable to old Persian roots. It may be noted that in a Hebrew Bible the ten names are written vertically, one under the other, in a column; and the Targum or Chaldee paraphrase says that the ten sons were hanged one above the other at fixed distances. The names of the ten sons of Haman are, except Adalia, all readily traceable to old Persian roots. It may be noted that in a Hebrew Bible the ten names are written vertically, one under the other, in a column; and the Targum or Chaldee paraphrase says that the ten sons were hanged one above the other at fixed distances.

On the spoil laid they not their hand.—This they might have done, according to the edict (chap. viii. 11).

Then said Esther . . .—In the terse words of the heading, "Ahasuerus, at the request of Esther, granted another day of slaughter, and Haman's sons to be hanged." It seems impossible here to acquit Esther of simple blood-thirstiness. Before the slaughter of the 13th of Adar was actually over, it is obvious that the Jews were no longer in any danger. It was known that the sympathies of the Court were entirely with the Jews, and the officers of the king consequently took their part. After one day's slaughter, in which in the capital alone 500 men were killed,
Haman’s Sons Hanged. 

ESTHER, IX. 

Feast of Purim Ordained.

Haman’s ten sons. (19) For the Jews that were in Shushan gathered themselves together on the fourteenth day also of the month Adar, and slew three hundred men at Shushan; but on the prey they laid not their hand.

(20) But the other Jews that were in the king’s provinces gathered themselves together, and stood for their lives, and had rest from their enemies, and slew of their foes seventy and five thousand, but they laid not their hands on the prey, (21) on the thirteenth day of the month Adar; and on the fourteenth day of the same rested they, and made it a day of feasting and gladness. (22) But the Jews that were at Shushan assembled together on the thirteenth day thereof, and on the fourteenth thereof; and on the fifteenth day of the same they rested, and made it a day of feasting and gladness. (23) Therefore the Jews of the villages, that dwelt in the unwalled towns, made the fourteenth day of the month Adar, a day of gladness and feasting, and a good day, and of sending portions one to another.

(24) And Mordecai wrote these things, and sent letters unto all the Jews that were in all the provinces of the king's provinces, that they should gather together, and stand for the lives of their enemies, and the lives of all Jews, that were in the king's provinces, upon the fourteenth day of every month; and on the fifteenth day of the same should be a day of gladness and feasting, and a solemn observance, and a morrow there of; and the matter of the letters was joined thereunto.

(25) And Mordecai wrote these things, and sent letters unto all the Jews that were in all the king’s provinces, every province according to the writing thereof, and every people according to their writing, and a letter was sent unto each and all, and unto Ahasuerus, both nigh and far. (26) To establish this among them, that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same, yearly, (27) as the days wherein the Jews rested from their enemies, and the month which was turned unto them from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day: that they should make them days of feasting and joy, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor. (28) And the Jews undertook to do as they had begun, and as Mordecai had written unto them; (29) because Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had devised against the Jews to destroy them, and had cast Pur, that is, the lot, to consume them, and to destroy them; (30) but when Esther came before the king, he commanded by letters that his wicked device, which he devised against the Jews, should return upon his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows. (31) Wherefore they called these days Purim after the name of Pur. Therefore for all the words of this letter, and of that which they had seen concerning this

we may be quite certain that the Jews were masters of the situation, and therefore we do not hesitate to call Esther's fresh action needless butchery. Were anything needed to bring out the matter in its true light, it might be seen in the request that the sons of Haman might be hanged. They had already been killed (verse 10), doubtless among the first, and Esther, therefore, asks for the dead bodies to be crushed, a gratuitous outrage on the dead. Because Esther was a person whom God made use of as an agent for a great purpose, we are not called upon to tone down and shatter the teaching of the New Testament to bring out the matter in its true light; but in the matter of that which we had seen concerning this...
Esther Confirms the Feast of Purim.

Purim in their times appointed, according as Mordecai the Jew and Esther the queen had enjoined them, and as they had decreed for themselves and for their seed, the matters of the fastings and their cry. (32) And the decree of Esther confirmed these matters of Purim; and it was written in the book.

CHAPTER X. — (1) And the king Ahasuerus laid a tribute upon the land, and upon the isles of the sea. (2) And all the acts of his power and of his might, and the declaration of the greatness of Mordecai, whereunto the king advanced him, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia? (3) For Mordecai the Jew was next unto king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed.

Through the service in the synagogues, a custom that can be traced back at any rate to the Christians (2 Macc. xv. 36; Josephus, Ant. xi. 6. 13; Mishna, Rosh ha-Shanah, iii. 7).

(29) This second letter.—It seems to us that the first letter must be that extracted from the king by Esther (chap. viii. 8), and consequently this "second letter" is Mordecai’s (chap. ix. 20), which is now confirmed in a more authoritative way.

(30) The letters.—Omit the article.

(31) To confirm ... enjoined ... decreed.—The same Hebrew verb stands for the three different English verbs; it is also the establish of verse 21. To fix or settle represents the meaning.

The matters of the fastings and their cry.—These words come in rather awkwardly, and hence, and because they are passed over by the LXX., some have doubted their genuineness here. All Hebrew MSS., however, and all the other ancient versions, retain the words, and we must, therefore, suppose that the Jews throughout the empire had instituted fasts and lamentations, in addition to what Mordecai’s letter had enjoined. Thus we may probably connect this with the fast now observed on Adar 13.

(32) In the book.—It is doubtful what “the book” here means. The Vulgate explains it of the Book of Esther itself, and so many modern scholars. Still “the book” hardly seems a natural Hebrew way of referring to a work on the part of its author as he writes it, and no similar case is admissible. Others think it must have been a book written at the time on the subject of the festival, which is, perhaps, possible. Canon Rawlinson identifies it with “the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Media and Persia,” because such is the use of the word book elsewhere in Esther.

X.

(1) Laid a tribute.—The disastrous expedition to Greece must have taxed the resources of the empire to the utmost, and fresh tribute would therefore be requisite to fill the exhausted coffers. Besides this, a harassing war was still going on, even ten years after the battle of Salamis, on the coasts of Asia Minor, and this would require fresh supplies.

The isles of the sea.—The chief island yet remaining to the Persian Empire was Cyprus. Those in the Aegean Sea were now free from Persian rule, but possibly, even after the loss, the old phrase may have been retained; just as in modern times we have Kings of “England, France, and Ireland,” and of “the two Sicilies, and Jerusalem,” &c.

(2) Power.—The same word as that translated authority in chap. ix. 29.

(3) Mordecai the Jew was next unto king Ahasuerus.—We have seen that the events recorded in this book carry us to the year 470 B.C., at which time Mordecai was at the zenith of his greatness. How long he kept it, whether death or disgrace brought it to a close, and if the latter, from what cause, we cannot say. All we know is, that near the end of Xerxes’ reign his favourite and chief adviser was Artabazus, the captain of the guard, by whom he was murdered in B.C. 464. The last we hear of Mordecai, whatever was his afterfate, is that he was loyal to his people, and approved himself their benefactor, “seeking the wealth (i.e., wealth—literally, good), and speaking peace to all his seed,” all of the stock of Israel.