

*DILLMANN ON THE TEXT OF JOB.*<sup>1</sup>

IN a back volume of *THE EXPOSITOR* (1886, first part) Professor H. L. Strack informed many English students for the first time of the intended publication of the remains of the Sahidic version of the Septuagint which repose in the library of the Propaganda College at Rome. Sahidic, it may be well to add, is the Coptic of Upper Egypt; and the importance of the publication consists in this, that the version in this dialect represents the Septuagint as it was in that comparatively early time when Origen had not yet produced the Hexapla, or when at any rate his corrections of the text had not yet begun to affect the manuscripts of the common text. In 1885 the first volume of a magnificent edition of the Sahidic fragments appeared under the editorial care of Padre Agostino Ciasca; it contained, besides a description of the fragments and eighteen photographs, the remains of the historical books of the Old Testament. Vol. ii., published in 1889, gave to the world the precious fragments of the prophetic and poetical books in Sahidic, which at once arrested the attention of Bible-critics. The most important of them were those of Job, which cover almost the entire extent of this difficult book. I ventured, in 1887, to express the hope that the early Septuagint text of Job might now be reconstructed through the help of this manuscript, but did not conceive the bolder hope that large spaces of the Hebrew text itself might be corrected by the same means.<sup>2</sup> How greatly the Hebrew text of Job had suffered by corruption and interpolation I well knew; but it seemed to me that there were special reasons for distrusting the accuracy of the Sep-

<sup>1</sup> *Textkritisches zum Buche Jjob.* Von A. Dillmann (Sitzungsberichte der königl. Preuss. Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin. 1890),

<sup>2</sup> *Job and Solomon*, p. 114.

tuagint version, on which even such a critic as Merx had sometimes leaned too confidently, nor did it seem that the omissions of such an unfaithful version could claim much text-critical authority. To all appearance the author of the Septuagint version had before him a very badly written Hebrew MS., and how could we tell that he omitted for any other reason than that he either could not read or could not understand his manuscript? The presumption at any rate would be against the justice of his omissions. I ought, of course, to have made a special examination of the subject in the light of Padre Ciasca's letter to the *Moniteur de Rome*, October, 1883; but unfortunately Lagarde's *Mittheilungen* (1884), in which this letter was quoted, had not reached me in the country. It was reserved first for Dr. Bickell,<sup>1</sup> and then for the lamented Dr. Hatch,<sup>2</sup> to consider the omissions of the Sahidic version of the Septuagint in connexion with the history both of the Septuagint and of the Hebrew text. The former produced a very solid and suggestive work; the latter diminished the value of an acute and vigorous essay by not basing it on a careful study, either of the Massoretic Hebrew text of Job or of the best translations and commentaries. The demand which Dr. Hatch makes at the end of his essay is both unpractical in the extreme and marked by an undue bias in favour of the Septuagint version of Job, and the conclusion that "in the interval between the time of the original translation and that of Theodotion large additions were made to the text by a poet whose imaginative power was at least not inferior to that of the original writer," errs almost equally by excess and defect. One is surprised therefore that so consummate an Old Testament scholar

<sup>1</sup> *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie*, 1886, p. 557, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays in Biblical Greek*, pp. 215-245. Need I add that, however one may differ from the author in points of detail, his grasp of critical method deserves in general the praise bestowed upon it in a kindly notice in the *Revue Critique*?

as Dillmann should have thought it necessary to subject Dr. Hatch's arguments to a detailed examination. It is, at any rate, a proof of the high value which the greatest critical authority in Germany sets upon our never to be forgotten friend, and we are only too thankful for so rich a collection of facts and criticisms as he has here given us. The student of Job will get from this dissertation a lively idea what the criticism of the versions means. Both principles and conclusions are thoroughly sound, and scarcely admit of serious dispute. Nor has Dillmann confined himself to the omissions of the Septuagint treated of by Hatch, but all the other portions omitted, however small, are carefully tested, with a perfect knowledge of the facts, and a sober but not timid criticism.

A few sentences from the closing pages may here be added.

"Certainly there are some of the omissions of the Septuagint which may be of critical importance, and the originality of which may be discussed; but as a rule these consist only of single *στίχοι* or verses: *e.g.* ii. 1c; vii. 8; xii. 8b, 9, 23; xviii. 9b, 10; xx. 23a; xxvii. 22, 23; xxix. 16; xli. 9 (8); and especially xl. 24 (19), xli. 4 (3). Of longer sentences, only xxviii. 14-19, xxxi. 1-4, xxxix. 13-18 can be reckoned in; but even in the case of these it is very doubtful whether they were wanting in the Hebrew text at the time of the Greek translator, and whether their omission in the Septuagint does not arise from other causes."

"In the Elihu-passages, for which Hatch's hypothesis is thought by its author to offer an eminently plausible explanation, this view has shown itself to be altogether inapplicable, especially in the more detailed development which he has given to it."

"It is precisely in the Elihu-speeches, with their lengthy and yet so unclear diction, and their not very correct text, that the free manner of translation adopted throughout the book by the Greek appears in the most pronounced manner. We see that it is not so much a translation as a recast of the text, the object of which is to defend the hero of the book against the evil sayings ascribed to him, to clear away stumbling-blocks of all kinds, to give the whole a shorter form, and to reproduce the general sense approximately as the translator thought that he understood it, or would have his readers understand it."

## But Dillmann does not deny

“ that, in the Elihu-passages as elsewhere, single passages of the book may have been tampered with by the Jewish scribes even after the time of the Greek translator (especially where the traditional text was corrupt, or where the point of too sharp a statement needed to be blunted), and that this or that reading of the Hebrew text can be corrected from the Septuagint, though this is much more seldom the case than in other books. But that after the time of the Septuagint-translation so many and such extensive additions were made to the book must be denied, not on merely Hebraistic grounds, but from an examination of the pre-Hexaplar text of the Septuagint.”

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SURVEY OF RECENT LITERATURE ON THE  
NEW TESTAMENT.

THE past six months have witnessed the publication of several books which either advance or facilitate the study of the New Testament. Perhaps the first place among these is due to Prof. Swete's second volume of *The Old Testament in Greek according to the Septuagint* (Cambridge University Press). This volume includes the *Psalms*, which had previously been published in a separate form. For the rest it embraces the books from 1 *Chronicles* to *Tobit*, that is 1 and 2 *Chronicles*, 1 and 2 *Esdras*, *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*, *The Song*, *Job*, *Wisdom of Solomon*, *Wisdom of Sirach*, *Esther*, *Judith*, and *Tobit*. For the third volume there remain the *Prophets* and some of the apocryphal books. Both for accuracy and convenience this edition now holds the field.

Following rapidly upon the second, there appears a third volume of *Studia Biblica et Ecclesiastica* by members of the University of Oxford (Clarendon Press). The contributors are mainly those whose names are associated with the previous volumes: Messrs. Neubauer, Gwilliam, Woods, Turner, and Prof. Sanday. Mr. Rackham also contributes an essay upon the Text of the Canons of Ancyra. Mr. Neubauer, in his paper on the Introduction of the Square Characters in Biblical MSS., takes occasion to show that as the Assyrians were acquainted with the art of writing