

he was summing up the impression which was apt to be left on the mind by the whole movement.

That, I think, is changed or is on the point of being changed. We are seeing the Hebrew faith as a much greater thing and, above all, with its own definite character and its own word to say, its own contribution to make. And even when it borrows, as it frequently does, when it is influenced, as it is in its great and creative period, by the surroundings in which it is placed, it borrows to set its own stamp on everything which it has borrowed. It may take the brass of its neighbours : but it gives them back gold.

Again, it may be necessary to emphasise how all this does not mean, what some one has said, that the Wellhausen theory is so thoroughly exploded that there is nothing left to do except to cart away the fragments to the rubbish-heap. The scheme in its broad features still holds the field, and even many of its detailed results are proved. But what happens to every theory has happened to this one : it must modify itself and remain supple enough to make room for the new facts and the new light on old facts which are being thrust upon our notice.

A. C. WELCH.

THE FORMS OF HEBREW POETRY.

VI. THE BEARING OF CERTAIN METRICAL THEORIES ON CRITICISM AND INTERPRETATION.

HITHERTO throughout this series of articles I have confined my attention to the forms of parallelistic poetry. I have endeavoured to keep, as they should be kept, distinct, the two forms, parallelism and rhythm, while pointing out the intimate connexion that often exists between them. Yet that connexion is not so intimate but that either form *may*

exist apart, even in literatures that employ both. Arabic "rhymed prose," which is not bound by the strict laws of Arabic metre, often employs parallelism as freely as any Hebrew poem¹; on the other hand much of the strictly metrical Arabic poetry is totally lacking or exceedingly deficient in parallelism,¹ and few Hebrew poems maintain complete parallelism throughout.² If it is customary, as it certainly seems to be, for non-parallel couplets in a Hebrew poem to fall into the same rhythm as the parallel couplets, can a Hebrew poem entirely dispense with strict parallelism? We cannot rule this out as impossible, nor should we be wise to treat it as very improbable; but, even if parallelism were entirely absent, a very essential characteristic of the poetry would still remain, if it continued to be parallelistic throughout, in spite of the total absence of parallelism of terms.

But the question has recently been forced to the front: is there a Hebrew rhythmical poetry that dispenses not only with parallelism, but also with the parallelistic structure that is an essential characteristic of all the Hebrew poetry of which we have yet taken account?

Lowth, by his analysis of parallelism, brought to light the fact that this parallelism was as conspicuous in much of the prophetic writings as in Psalms or Job: he thus extended the then recognised boundaries of what is poetry in the Old Testament. By his analysis of rhythm Sievers claims to have carried this extension of the still generally recognised boundaries of Old Testament poetry very much further: what, till the publication of his first work on Hebrew metre,³ had been universally regarded as prose has

¹ EXPOSITOR, May, 1913, pp. 555 ff.

² EXPOSITOR, July, 1913, pp. 45 ff.

³ E. Sievers, *Metrische Studien*, i. *Studien zur hebräischen Metrik in the Abhandlungen der phil. hist. Classe der königlichen sächsischen Gesellschaften der Wissenschaften*, xxi. (1903). See especially ch. x., pp. 371 ff.

under his hands come to wear the appearance of regular metrical composition ; he has detected in it some of the same types of rhythm (yet with a difference) that occur in books or passages of the Old Testament generally recognised to be poetry, and also some types or rather some combinations of types of rhythm that are not found there, but are yet no less strictly rhythmical than the rest.

Lowth's discovery that the prophetic writings were in large part poems could not but have had, and has actually had, a very considerable effect on the criticism, in the broadest sense of that term, of those writings, on our conceptions of their inspiration, origin, composition and interpretation. Just as little, if they succeed in establishing themselves, can Sievers' theories of the rhythmical forms of the books of Genesis and Samuel, two books which he has subjected to an exhaustive metrical analysis,¹ fail to affect the criticism of these books and others of the same general character. For this reason I propose to give some account of Sievers' theory of the metres of Genesis, to suggest certain objections, and to indicate one possible result that follows. After that I will return to the consideration of the parallelistic poetry and consider the legitimacy of certain theories of its rhythm. I refer more particularly to Duhm's theories, which have exercised very considerable influence not only in Germany but also in this country, where the results of the theories are beginning to be presented uncriticised even in books intended for popular use.² Sievers' developed theory of the metrical character of the texts commonly supposed to be prose has not, I think, yet commanded much

¹ E. Sievers, *Metrische Studien*, ii. *Die hebräische Genesis* ; iii. *Samuel (Abhandlungen . . . , xxiii.)*.

² See e.g. Glazebrook, *Studies in the Book of Isaiah* ; B. Duhm, *The Minor Prophets translated in the rhythms [of the original]* (English translation by A. Duff).

assent,¹ but this working out of his theory must obviously affect in some measure any judgment as to the soundness of its fundamental principles. With some examination of these two influential, or potentially influential, theories, I hope to round off and review my own present discussion of the forms of Hebrew poetry in relation to interpretation and criticism.

In his first volume (pp. 397 ff.) Sievers, in order to test the rhythmical character of simple narrative style, examined the inscription of Mesha, selecting this as an ancient text that had not been subjected to accidents of transcription. He analysed it into 37 rhythmical periods, claiming that "the metrical structure" of this poem was all the easier to seize, and the better secured, by the fact that the ends of the verses were marked by a vertical line, which was but rarely used to indicate a mere pause within the verse. If it were certain that the vertical line used in Mesha's inscription was really intended to mark off *metrical* periods, the fact would be of the utmost importance; for, if the Moabite king recorded his exploits in metre, and used this line to make the metre clear, the strongest possible presumption would be created that much of Judges, Samuel and Kings, which closely resemble the Moabite inscription in style, were also originally metrical; and the use of this line might be expected to cast even more direct light on Hebrew than the marking of the scansion in the Assyrian inscription to which I have previously referred.² But that the vertical line in Mesha's inscription has any metrical significance is anything but clear: what is certain is that it occurs at places where *punctuation* is required, generally a full stop, more rarely a semi-colon, or a comma. Thus

¹ Proksoh, however, in his recently published commentary on Genesis gives a general adherence to Sievers' theory, though frequently and greatly differing from him in the detailed application of it.

² EXPOSITOR, Sept. 1913, pp. 234-237.

the line occurs twenty-five times at points where Dr. Cooke¹ in his translation punctuates with a full stop, five times where he punctuates with a semi-colon, three times where he punctuates with a comma: in three other places the line occurs where the inscription cannot be clearly read. Even in the three cases where the line corresponds to a comma, the pause is considerable: e.g. in line 7, "I saw my desire upon him and upon his house, and all Israel perished utterly for ever." We may compare with this the relation of the line to Sievers' metrical periods: it occurs at the end of twenty-eight out of thirty-seven of these, and thrice in the middle of one of them. Inasmuch as Sievers' periods are made to end with a real pause in the sense and are not "run on" lines, it would be inevitable that a mark of punctuation should generally stand at the end of them; but the absence of the mark at the end of nine of his periods is much more unfavourable to the theory that the mark has a metrical significance than its presence at the end of twenty-eight is favourable; for there may well have been difference of opinion among Moabites, as there notoriously is among English writers as to the frequency with which punctuation should be expressed; there could have been none as to the point at which a metrical period ended. It is also to be observed that according to Sievers' metrical analysis, the metrical periods in the inscription are of five different lengths—of three, four, five, six and seven stresses; and that more than two successive periods of the same length never occur, and often immediately contiguous periods are of different lengths.

We pass now to the consideration of the "Hebrew Genesis rhythmically arranged" (1904, 5). As compared with his analysis, contained in the first volume of his metrical studies, of Mesha's inscription and a few specimens of

¹ G. A. Cooke, *A Text-book of North Semitic Inscriptions*, pp. 2-4.

Hebrew narratives, viz. Genesis ii., xli., Judges ix., Ruth i., Job i., ii, Sievers' treatment of Genesis shows two prominent differences: (1) he has abandoned the attempt to make the metrical periods and the sense-periods coincide: if he is correct in regarding Genesis as metrical, then the distinguishing feature of this narrative poetry is that it largely consists of "run-on" lines; (2) the same metre is discovered running uninterruptedly through long consecutive passages.

The rhythms alleged to be of most frequent occurrence are (1) the six-stress period; (2) the seven-stress period—the rhythm which, as we have seen (pp. 315f.), probably occurs in Psalms ix., x., but is rare in what have commonly been regarded as the poetical parts of the Old Testament. With these two simple rhythms, as we may call them, though the term is not employed by Sievers himself, there alternate the more complex rhythms produced by the *constant* alternation with one of these of a shorter period, viz. (3) sevens alternating with a short verse of three or four stresses: e.g. Genesis ix. 1-4 (P), xxvi. 1-13; (4) sixes alternating with a short verse of three or four stresses: e.g. Genesis xxvi. 14, 15.

Of these rhythms the simple sevens is by far the most frequent: long passages in which Sievers discovers it are, for example, Genesis i., i.e. P's account of creation; xi. 1-9, J's account of the building of the tower of Babel; xxiv., J's account of Eliezer's mission to find Isaac a wife.

The same rhythm, it will be seen, occurs in more than one of the main sources discovered by literary criticism. This is not regarded by Sievers as an argument against the general validity of that criticism; quite the reverse: he finds his metrical analysis constantly confirming it, and also furnishing a clue through a labyrinth that criticism has seen but failed to find its way through. The composite-ness of J, E and P has been very commonly admitted,

but the attempt to analyse these sources into yet earlier sources has hitherto led to but relatively meagre or insecure results. Sievers claims through metre to lead us to a detailed and secure analysis of these sources of J, E and P. As this promise of valuable assistance in the analysis of sources is made not by some amateur in the study of metre, but by a great and recognised master of the subject, Sievers' *Genesis*, if for no other reason, might well claim the attention of critical students of the Old Testament.

Briefly stated Sievers' conclusions with reference to the sources are these: J, E and P were not derived direct from free oral tradition, but one and all from *earlier literary sources which were metrical*. These earlier sources can be recovered by observing the changes of metre within the present text. J rests on four principal sources, a source written in seven-stress periods, another in six-stress periods, another in seven-stress periods alternating with a short verse, and a fourth in six-stress periods alternating with a short verse. J also contains fragments of a source written in four-stress periods. E rests on three main sources, one written in sevens, one in sixes, and one in sixes alternating with a short verse. P is analysed into six sources; the main source is written in sevens; the other sources include one written in sixes, one in sevens alternating with a short verse, and another in which every two seven-stress periods are followed by a short verse. The main source in simple sevens admitted of an *occasional* short verse.

It is difficult to judge of this complicated theory from passages where there is much mixture of J, E and P, or of Sievers' sources of these sources. It is better to take what appears even to Sievers to be a long continuous passage from a single source, and to see by what means and with what results the theory is carried through. *Genesis* xxiii., which Sievers with every one else refers to P, and

he in particular to his "sevens" source of P, may serve as the first illustration.

In this chapter Sievers discovers twenty-eight periods of seven stresses and three short verses of three stresses. The three latter are obtained without any textual change from the present Hebrew text; of the twenty-eight longer periods, sixteen are obtained from the present text, the remaining twelve rest on alterations of the Hebrew text which, it is claimed, remove transcriptional error and the results of the more frequent disturbing activity of editors who both changed and added words. In three of these twelve cases the LXX more or less clearly supports the change; in another Sievers makes both an addition and an omission which metrically cancel one another. More or less can doubtless be said for several of the alterations¹ requisite to reduce the remaining eight lines to regularity; but that all the changes are required by anything but the exigences of the metrical theory will seem to most who examine them improbable.

In Genesis xxiv. 1-52 (J) Sievers finds eighty-seven-stress periods interrupted by eight glosses of from three to nine words, and another line of different rhythm. Of the eighty seven-stress lines, twenty-two depend on departures from the present text; but several consecutive seven-stress lines² are discovered without any alteration of the Hebrew text.

As a last example of Sievers' metrical analysis I select Genesis i. on account of the peculiar interest of the recon-

¹ In v. 6 Sievers omits אלהים, regarding נשיא אלהים as an editorial amplification of נשיא: at the end of v. 7 he omits ות בני הת, and in v. 8 מלפני; in v. 9 he substitutes מערת המכפלה אשר לו for המערה; in v. 15 he omits ארץ (with LXX) and שקל; in v. 16 לכחך and שקל; in v. 17 the clause ממרא לפני מכפלה אשר במכפלה אשר במכפלה אשר במכפלה אשר במכפלה, in v. 19 he omits אברהם, and alters המכפלה אשר במכפלה.

² E.g., eight such lines occur in v. 42 (from וישך) to v. 46 (to שתה); seven such lines in v. 47 (from בתמי) to v. 51.

struction of the text involved in it : at the same time it is right to add that Sievers expressly states that his analysis of this particular chapter is one of the most uncertain and tentative of his results. According to the analysis the chapter contained forty-nine seven-stress periods interrupted by one line (in v. 20) of three stresses and by what is regarded as a gloss of two lines in v. 16. Of the forty-nine seven-stress periods no fewer than thirty-two rest on textual alteration—a far larger proportion than in either of the previous examples that have been given here. But a large number of the textual changes are of one type : in order to obtain rhythmical regularity Sievers found that, in every case where אלהים occurred, rhythm required either one word less or one word more : in the former case he omits אלהים, in the latter he prefixes יהוה ; so that in respect of the use of the divine names, Genesis i. would agree with the present text of Genesis ii., iii., though not, according to Sievers, with the original text of all the sources incorporated in ii. and iii.

It would be unwise to condemn the whole of Sievers' analysis of Genesis on account of the improbably large amount of conjectural emendation needed to carry through the rhythmical reconstruction in Genesis i. and some other passages : the strength of his case is seen rather in such facts as that, for example, in chapter xxiv. eight *consecutive* similar rhythmical periods may be found *in the present text*.

Nevertheless Sievers' results in general seem to me insecure, and their insecurity due to these considerations : (1) the vocalisation on which they depend is, as I have pointed out in a previous article,¹ hypothetical, some elements in it being probable, others most uncertain ; (2) the number of conjectural emendations required solely in the interests of the theory is very large ; (3) the analysis of narratives in

¹ EXPOSITOR, Sept., pp. 238-240.

Genesis and Samuel requires a constant recurrence of "non-stop" lines and enjambed clauses. Not only are the lines "non-stopped," so that, e.g., a verb may stand at the end of one, its accusative at the beginning of the next line, but the well-marked cæsuras within the lines, so prominent in the parallelistic poetry, frequently disappear, while in others a full-stop may appear at the cæsura and virtually no stop at all at the end of the line. Sievers, it is true, still points his "sevens" with spaces for the two cæsuras, but the space frequently divides construct and genitive, or other words as closely connected with one another. Two lines at the beginning of Genesis xxiii. may serve as examples of the points just referred to :—

ויהיו שני דיי שרה מאה ועשרים שנה
ושבע שנים ותמת שרה בקרית ארבע היא חברון

And in the following lines from Genesis i. a full-stop occurs in the middle of the first line, though the same line ends with a verb the accusative to which begins the second line :—

יהי אור ויהי אור וירא יהוה אלהים
את־האור כי־טוב ויבדל יהוה אלהים בין־האור ובין־החשך

Now no doubt there can be found analogies to most of these phenomena in English blank verse : but there remains this surely relevant and fundamental difference between English and Hebrew poetry : the foot in Hebrew, according to Sievers' theory, is much more elastic than the foot in English blank verse : the Hebrew foot, it will be remembered, consists, according to the theory, of a stressed syllable either by itself, or preceded by one to three unstressed syllables, and in certain cases followed by one but not more than one unstressed syllable ; briefly, whereas the foot in English blank verse is dissyllabic, or by resolution trisyllabic, the foot in Hebrew may consist of one, two, three, four or five syllables. There is a further point : Hebrew, as con-

trasted with English, has far fewer prepositions, conjunctions and other short independent words unlikely to be stressed: the consequence is that any passage in Hebrew must consist most largely of words that can quite appropriately receive a stress: if then a rhythmical line consists of so many stressed syllables combined with a very elastic number of unstressed syllables, and is subject to no other law such as that of the stopped lines and the distich, it becomes almost impossible for any passage not to be rhythmical. For the number of the words in any or almost any passage will divide either by 3, 4, 5, 6, or 7 with, if necessary, a few words at the end, to appear as a broken line. To what other law, then, does Sievers conceive his lines to be subjected? It is difficult to discover any, though it is obvious that he still *prefers* that his cæsuras and line-ends should coincide with some sense pause if possible, and this apparently is why he distributes his texts among several metres, though if we utterly disregard sense-pauses, and allow ourselves an equal liberty of textual emendation, most of the lines could be redivided into blocks of a different number of feet. It appears to me, therefore, that the analogy of English blank verse with its freedom from line-bondage is a bad ground for assuming a similar free epic or narrative verse in Hebrew: the analogy of Semitic poetry is against the assumption: and we seem driven back on to the stopped line and the distich as the normal basis of Hebrew poetry of all kinds.

There remains one further consideration: it is brought forward by Sievers himself, and he attempts to turn the force of it: the redactors and interpolators who often, by their additions, destroyed the metre of their sources, themselves wrote in metre; the glosses attributed to them are for the most part "metrical." "I cannot," writes Sievers,¹

¹ *Die hebräische Genesis*, p. 216.

“otherwise account for this than by the supposition that in a period not yet accustomed to free prose the tendency to bring everything that had to be said into verse form may have been so strong that such redactors involuntarily composed verses when the extent and substance of what they wanted to say in any way permitted of this. At the same time they had so little artistic intelligence or experience that they thrust their own products of a moment unconcerned into the older texts without troubling much about the mess (*Unheil*) they thus made of them.”

In view of the various considerations which I have now brought forward I am not prepared, on the one hand, to admit the metrical analysis of Genesis as confirming the analysis into J, E and P, nor, on the other hand, out of regard for hypothetical metrical requirements, to insert Yahweh in Genesis i., and thereby abandon the well-grounded conclusion that P made no use of the divine name Yahweh in his narrative, till he reached the point at which he records the revelation of the name to Moses.

But though the theory that the *whole* of Genesis is derived from metrical sources must be dismissed as unproved, the question yet remains whether *any* metrical sources lie behind any of the narratives proper of Genesis. Here and there in the narratives, passages, other than such obvious poems as Lamech's Song and Jacob's Blessing, occur which have been regarded by some scholars as poetical in form; such a passage is the altercation between Jacob and Laban in Genesis xxxi., or the curse on the serpent in Genesis iii. 14, 15. These particular examples might be merely instances of the same writer passing from the prose of narrative to poetical form in the speeches of the persons of his story—a transition which is clearly marked and obvious in the book of Job, unless prologue and speeches are there attributed to different writers. But a more interesting question arises

with regard to the narratives of Creation : are these in their present form, and do they rest on sources that were, entirely prose ? If so, while the Hebrew *story* would show the well-known resemblances to the Babylonian *story*, it was cast in an entirely different form—in prose, whereas the Babylonian story is a poem. Even if Sievers were right and the whole of the Creation narratives in Genesis were metrical, there would still be a difference ; the Babylonian poems are cast in the old parallelistic 4 : 4 rhythm, the Hebrew narratives, according to the hypothesis, mainly in Sievers' non-parallelistic "sevens." But Sievers has also drawn attention, and this time I think rightly, to the appearance in small quantity of the 4 : 4 rhythm in Genesis ii. : he recognised more of it in the first volume of his metrical studies than in the Hebrew Genesis, and his earlier is perhaps preferable to his later view. Delete the superfluous אלהים after יהוה in Genesis ii. 4b, and it is a fact that ii. 4b-6 can easily, and most of it must, be read as periods of four stresses equally divided by a slight cæsura, as follows :—

ארץ ושמים
 טרם יהיה-בארץ
 טרם יצמח
 יהוה על-הארץ
 לעבד את-האדמה

ביום עשות-יהוה
 וכל שיח-השדה
 וכל עשב-השדה
 כִּי-לֹא הִמְטִיר
 ואדם אין

In the day when Yahweh made	heaven and earth,
No plant of the field	was yet in the earth,
And no herb of the field	had yet sprung up ;
For Yahweh had not sent	rain upon the earth,
And man there was none	to till the ground.

Not only is this *possibly* metrical, but (1) the second and third, and in some measure the fourth and fifth lines, are certainly parallels ; (2) the hypothetically metrical periods are certainly sense-periods ; (3) the anarthrous ארץ ושמים without את stands in striking contrast to the את השמים

וְאֵת הָאֵרֶץ of Genesis i. 1. Not only, then, have the lines of the Hebrew—

No plant of the field was yet in the earth,
And no herb of the field had yet sprung up,

a close material parallel in the Babylonian—

No reed had sprung up, no tree had been created,

but the rhythm of the Hebrew, if correctly seized as 4 : 4 (= 2 + 2 : 2 + 2) is identical with the rhythm of the Babylonian.

I cannot here pursue the remaining traces, for the most part less clear, of the same rhythm in subsequent parts of the chapter, and still less the various interesting questions which are raised by this apparent formal as well as material resemblance of some of the Hebrew with some of the Babylonian stories of Creation ; but the probability that behind Genesis ii. lay at least one metrical story of Creation seems to me sufficiently strong to be worth consideration.

If Genesis ii. 4b-6 is metrical, it is an example not of the hypothetical non-parallelistic metrical poetry which Sievers finds everywhere in Genesis and Samuel, but of that same parallelistic poetry which has so long been recognised in Psalms and Job and much of the prophetic books. But if Sievers' theory that the narratives of Genesis are metrical is rightly judged to be unproven and improbable, ought we at this end of our discussion to question the *metrical* character even of parallelistic poetry ; was Hebrew poetry of any kind subject to metrical laws ? Have we a right to adopt such a system as Sievers' to explain the metre of parallelistic poetry, and then to deny the soundness of his application of his system to Hebrew narratives ?

It must suffice at this point to recall some positions previously reached : in parallelistic poetry the lines are in general well defined, and where there is much parallelism of terms the limits of the lines are certain ; to secure a

rhythmical balance, or other relation, which would be immediately perceived between these parallel lines a far greater elasticity could safely be given to the rhythmical foot than if a really perceptible rhythm were to be imparted to a long passage in which there were no regularly recurring pauses. Even after an examination of Sievers' attempt to extend so greatly the amount of metrical composition in the Old Testament, it seems to me possible and useful to return to parallelistic poetry and to insist (1) that this consists primarily of distichs ; (2) that these distichs fall into two broad classes according as the second line balances or echoes the first ; and (3) that the lines of these distichs can also be more accurately classified according to the number of the stressed words that they contain.

The uncertainties in dealing with parallelistic poetry arise rather when we raise these questions : Must a single type of distich be maintained throughout the same poem ? if not, what types and what extent of variation are permitted ? Again, are all poems strophically arranged, and are all strophes of equal length ? I have already given my reasons for answering these questions in the sense that the laws of Hebrew poetry did not require either that a single type of distich must be used throughout the same poem, or that all poems must be divided into equal strophes : and that as a matter of fact some Hebrew poems are perfectly, or nearly, consistent in the use of a single type of distich and strophes of the same length, and that others are not. But the contrary opinion is held and enforced with far-reaching critical results : single words are rejected from lines in order to reduce all the distichs to a single type, and whole distichs in order to reduce all the strophes to the same length. More rarely equality is restored or invented by addition of words or distichs. Dr. Briggs in his commentary on the Psalms so emended the text that most of the Psalms divide

into exactly equal strophes, strophes that each contain exactly the same number of lines, distichs or tristichs as the case may be. Duhm has done much the same for Isaiah, Jeremiah and the Twelve Prophets, not to speak of his work on Psalms and Job. I am, of course, far from maintaining that either these scholars, or others with the same devotion to regularity, have failed to put forward many valuable suggestions: if some poems, though not all, were regular, a scholar who attempts to make all regular may succeed in divining the real regularity of those that were regular at the same time that he is imposing an unreal regularity on a poem that never was actually regular.

In illustration of the far-reaching effects of the determination to impose regularity at all hazards on all poems, I will now confine myself to some examples of Duhm's methods and results. I premise that there is a far stronger *prima facie* case for questioning the originality of the text of the books with which Duhm deals than that of the book of Genesis; and that there is far more reason in the case of these books than in Samuel for suspecting that even the LXX fails as a sufficient corrective of the Hebrew text; so far then an editor of the prophets or of Job or of many of the Psalms ought to suspect more corruption which must be treated, if treated at all, by conjecture, than an editor of Genesis or Samuel. But there is need for the greatest possible caution in using a metrical theory as the sole reason for emendation; for one Hebrew metre can be changed into another with fatal ease; drop the verb, or some other parallel term that the sense will spare from the second line of a 3 : 3 distich, and the result is the very dissimilar 3 : 2; and, conversely, in a 3 : 2 distich prefix an infinitive absolute to the verb of the second line, and a distich 3 : 3 is the result.

If the ease with which every Hebrew text can in some manner be adapted to Sievers' anapæstic system should

make us slow to accept such applications of it as his metrical analysis of Genesis, the ease with which, if we treat the rhythm merely as so many stresses to a line, one metre can be converted to another should warn us against the seductive regularity which Duhm places, for example, upon Isaiah xiii. This chapter, says Mr. Box, who, in common with some other English scholars, reproduces Duhm's assertions, consists of seven-lined strophes in the rhythm of the Hebrew *Dirge*; and in this resembles the poem in chap. xiv. Yet it is really difficult to believe that any one could have reached this conclusion except under the dominance of a theory of regularity or the spell of a great master; and the false conclusion here happens to be of some critical significance, for if Isaiah xiii. consists of six seven-lined strophes in *kinah* rhythm, and chapter xiv. contains a poem consisting of five exactly similar strophes confidence in the unity of xiii., xiv. may receive an utterly untrustworthy support. The actual fact with regard to Isaiah xiii., as I have shown elsewhere,¹ is that the *kinah* rhythm is all but confined to the first eight verses of the chapter, and in the remaining fourteen verses, which contain twenty-five distichs, there are but three or four distichs at most of the *kinah* type: the rest are 3 : 3; Duhm reduces these 3 : 3 distichs to 3 : 2 by two exceedingly simple devices; either a word is arbitrarily dropped from the second line of the distich, or, if this is not convenient, it is *assumed* that the second and shorter line of a 3 : 2 distich has dropped out. Corruptions of both kinds certainly occur; but it is exceedingly improbable that the same kind of accidents happened several times over within a few verses and yet so as to leave excellent 3 : 3 rhythm.

Another passage where difficult critical questions arise has been similarly treated by Duhm. He asserts that in

¹ *Isaiah*, pp. 234 ff.

Isaiah xxxiv., xxxv. the same metre is maintained throughout, and he represents the whole as disposed in four-lined strophes ; but he also makes this significant remark : “ The text has suffered a remarkable number of mutilations, especially at the ends of the *stichoi*.” Yet as a matter of fact the metre is not the same throughout : some of the distichs are certainly 3 : 2, most are certainly 3 : 3, but, just as in xiii., xiv., the 3 : 2 distichs are massed together ; they are almost confined to xxxiv. 1–10. A difference between the rhythm of xxxiv. 1–10 and 11–17 is, I believe, certain : and, if so, it is critically important ; for the arguments which have led many scholars to abandon the earlier view that Isaiah xxxiv. and xxxv. were written in the exilic period in favour of the view that they are a late post-exilic prophecy rest mainly on xxxiv. 11–17—which is metrically different from xxxiv. 1–10. The critical questions are complicated and difficult, and cannot be discussed here : but Duhm’s judgment on these chapters seems to me to illustrate a second unfortunate result of the theory that Hebrew poetry was absolutely regular : on the one hand it leads to much unnecessary correction of the text ; and, on the other, to a certain obtuseness to real difference of rhythm. The 3 : 2 distich is something really different from a 3 : 3 distich, even though both occur in the same poem : and if one type of distich is exclusively used or dominant in one part of a passage, and another in another, a question may always arise whether the two parts are of the same origin : that even such a change as this *necessarily* implies difference of origin in all cases I am not prepared to assert : as a matter of fact, though I pointed out the difference of rhythm between Isaiah xiii. 1–8 and 9–22, which Duhm and others had attempted to conceal by groundless emendations, I refrained from asserting that the two parts in question were of different origin.

But it is in his criticism of the Book of Jeremiah that Duhm's rhythmical principles have proved most dangerous ; here, as is well known, he works with the principle not only of regularity of distich and strophe, but also of one man, one metre. Though we owe to Duhm himself one of the warmest appreciations of Jeremiah as prophet and poet, we are yet asked to believe that this great prophet and poet confined himself throughout his long career to one metre ! Working on this principle Duhm not only rejects the larger part of the poems attributed to Jeremiah, but he violates parallelism and shows obtuseness to rhythmical differences in order to retain much even of what he does retain, but which, if his critical theory that Jeremiah wrote only in " *kinah* " rhythm were correct, ought to be rejected. I have shown elsewhere ¹ with what violence, and even with what ridiculous results at times, as in his strophic division of Isaiah xi. 1-8, Duhm tears asunder the things that parallelism most evidently intended to be kept together. I must here confine myself to two examples of Duhm's treatment of the text of Jeremiah. The first example is Jeremiah iv. 3, 4 : the present Hebrew text reads, and may be divided, as follows :—

כִּי־כֹחַ אָמַר יְהוָה | לְאִישׁ יְהוּדָה וּלְיְרוּשָׁלַם
 נִירוּ לָכֶם נִיר | וְאֵל תִּזְרְעוּ אֶל־קִצִּים
 הַמְלֹו לַיהוָה | וְהִסִּירוּ עֵרְלַת לִבְבְּכֶם
 אִישׁ יְהוּדָה | וְיֹשְׁבֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם
 פְּרִתְצָא כֹאשׁ חֲמַתִּי | וּבַעֲרָה וְאִין כִּכְבָּה

If we approach this passage without a theoretical prejudice, is it not obvious that the marked tendency of the clauses is to balance one another, not to echo one another, as, according to Duhm, if genuine, they should do ? A further feature of the passage is the prominence of parallelism :—

¹ *Isaiah*, pp. 211 ff., and *Zeitschrift für die A.T. Wissenschaft*, 1912, pp. 193-198.

For thus saith Yahweh
 To the men of Judah and Jerusalem,
 Break up your fallow ground,
 And sow not among thorns ;
 Circumcise yourselves to Yahweh,
 And take away the foreskin of your heart,
 Men of Judah,
 And inhabitants of Jerusalem ;
 Lest my fury go forth like fire,
 And burn with none to quench it.

The rhythm for the most part is actually 3 : 3 ; I will not stay to inquire how strong are the grounds for believing that that rhythm was originally maintained throughout : what I have to do is note how Duhm turns it into 3 : 2 and with what results :—

(1) He rejects the words “ to the men of Judah and Jerusalem ” in v. 3 (line 2 of the above translation) and also the similar words (lines 7 and 8 above) of v. 4 ; the latter omission is, perhaps, right.

(2) Having rejected line 2 above, he has to tear asunder lines 3 and 4 which are most obviously parallel to one another : line 3 is tacked on to line 1 to form a distich, and it is then assumed that the first line of the distich, of which line 4 above is the second line, has disappeared.

(3) Very interesting and specious is the treatment of the first part of v. 4 : Duhm divides as follows :—

המלו ליהוה והסירו | ערלת לבבכם

Now there is no doubt that the object of a verb may form the second part of a 3 : 2 line (or distich) : I recall as examples two lines in Lamentations ii. 6 :—

שכה יהוה ביציון | מועד ושבת
 וינאץ בועם אפו | מלך וכהן

Judge the line from a grammatical point of view only, and Duhm's division of Jeremiah iv. 4 seems to be at least a legitimate alternative to the division of the line after יהוה ; but once the sense and parallelism are considered, how im-

probable does such a division appear. הסרו ערלת and המלו together are parallel terms, a clause of two terms being parallel to a single term, according to a practice which I have abundantly illustrated in a previous article¹: what Duhm does is to chop this second parallel into two, giving one half to the line that has already expressed the whole idea, and leaving to the second line a mere lifeless fragment.

My other example of Duhm's methods is taken from the fine apocalyptic vision in Jeremiah iv. 23-26. I give it first exactly as it stands in the Hebrew text, the divisions of the text being of course my own:—

23 ראייתי את הארץ | והנה תהו ובהו | ואל השמים ואין אורם

24 ראייתי ההרים | והנה רעשים | וכל הנבעות התקלקלו

25 ראייתי והנה | אין האדם | וכל עוף השמים נדרו

26 ראייתי והנה | הכרמל המדבר | וכל עריו נתצו מפני יהוה

Two emendations suggested by Duhm and essential to his rhythmical scheme, though they are not *essential* to what I believe to be the correct view of the rhythm of the passage, seem to me probable: he reads האדמה after ראייתי in v. 25, and transposes והנה and הכרמל in v. 27: this gives an exact similarity of structure to all four verses.

Once again, if any one will read these verses, whether emended as just suggested or not, without any prepossession as to what metre Jeremiah must have used, or as to the general desirability of attaching the term *kinah* to as much prophetic poetry as possible, he cannot, I believe, feel that they have any real rhythmical resemblance to the prevailing rhythm in Lamentations i.-iv.: these four similar periods are neither *four kinah-like* lines as Cornill² describes them; nor *eight* lines of alternately three and two stresses, i.e. strict *kinah* lines, as Duhm will have it: they are four periods of the rarer rhythm 4:3. What Cornill says is

¹ EXPOSITOR, July, 1913, pp. 50 ff.

² Cf. the note in *The Century Commentary* (A. S. Peake) on Jeremiah.

worth quoting : “ The metre here assumes a somewhat different form. The characteristic of the *kinah* strophe, the short second member, to be sure remains ; but the whole is weightier and tends more towards the gigantic : the first members have mostly four, the second three full stresses.” The last remark is correct so far as it goes, but omits the very important additional fact that the first members are equally divided by a strongly marked cæsura : this cæsura gives to the entire period the rhythmical value 2 : 2 : 3 rather than 4 : 3, and an effect which is the very opposite of the *kinah* : there is no rhythmical echo, but two short balanced clauses are rounded off with a longer clause ; the period swells out to its close instead of echoing off.

Thus Cornill’s remarks seem to me an apt illustration of the disadvantages and the risk of confusion involved in working with too restricted a rhythmical nomenclature.

Instead of trying to compress the four periods into four *kinah* lines or distichs, Duhm goes to the opposite extreme and endeavours to squeeze eight *kinah* lines (or distichs) out of the present text amplified by a few additions which are really far too slight for the purpose. It is a question whether here the textual changes, or the rhythmical results, due to the necessity of making everything attributed to Jeremiah *kinah* rhythm are the more improbable ; of the *kinah* (!) lines that result this is one—

ואת כל הנבעת | התקלקלו

and the additions to the text, besides that already mentioned (*האדמה* in v. 25), are these : four times over, in order to convert two stresses into three, Duhm inserts *את* ! and that in a poetical passage ! and in another place (v. 25) he resorts to the favourite device of inserting an infinitive absolute—*נודד*. These five changes represent a hypothetical loss of eleven letters : how often does the text of a short passage accidentally lose in transcription eleven letters dis-

tributed over five places without the sense being in the slightest degree affected ?

It is by such methods as these, which could be illustrated by an abundance of other examples, that Duhm succeeds in imposing regularity of line and strophe on Old Testament poetry. And it is on results so obtained that Duhm and others build up far-reaching critical and exegetical conclusions.

I will in conclusion briefly summarise some of the facts and inferences drawn from them to which I have endeavoured to draw attention in this series of articles, and briefly refer to one or two points which I have found no opportunity for discussing more fully.

The main forms of Hebrew poetry are two—parallelism and rhythm, to which, as a third and occasional form, we may add strophe. Rhyme, so common in many languages, and a constant and necessary form of all strictly metrical poetry in Arabic, as well as a characteristic of that other type of composition in Arabic known as *saʿ* ("rhymed prose"), is in Hebrew, as in Assyrian, merely occasional. Curiously enough it is conspicuous in one of the earliest existing fragments of Hebrew poetry, the song of Lamech (Gen. iv.), and yet it never developed into a form of Hebrew poetry till poetry of the Old Testament, or parallelistic, type had long become extinct, and there came, under the influence of the Moslem culture and Arabic poetry, a renaissance of Hebrew poetry in the Middle Ages.

Of the two main forms of Hebrew poetry, parallelism and rhythm, parallelism is most intimately associated with the sense and can and should be represented in translation. In its broader aspects and general differences of types it was analysed once for all by Lowth: but a more accurate and detailed measurement of parallelism is required. Such

a more exact measurement of parallelism enables us more readily to classify actual differences in different poems and different writers ; and in particular to disentangle the very different types of incomplete parallelisms and merely parallelistic distichs grouped by Lowth under the single term "synthetic parallelism." A study, more especially of the different incomplete parallelisms, also affords an opportunity of watching the intimate connexion between parallelism and at least a certain approximation to rhythm.

Merely judged from the standpoint of parallelism rhythms fall into the two broad classes of balanced and echoing rhythms. Further metrical analysis is in detail frequently most uncertain : but while recognising this uncertainty, it is important, in order to avoid confusion, to adopt a method of measurement that is capable of giving us a clear and sufficient nomenclature. This is to be found in defining lines or distichs by the number of the stressed syllables in them. The exact number of unstressed syllables that may accompany a stressed syllable may be uncertain, but is certainly not unlimited.

A single rhythm need not be maintained throughout a poem, though there were probably limits to the degree of mixture that was tolerated. But in particular the elegy, though it commonly consisted of 3 : 2 distichs, was not limited to these : it certainly admitted along with these in the same poem 2 : 2. Mere change from a longer to a shorter distich of the same class, or even occasionally from a balanced to an echoing rhythm, is no conclusive evidence, and in many poems (for poems differ in the degree to which they are regular) is scarcely even a ground for suspecting corruption of text or change of source. On the other hand, a change in the dominant rhythm should raise a question whether or not a new poem has begun.

Finally the question remains whether, though parallelism

in Hebrew seems commonly to have concurred with certain rhythmical forms, it may not in some cases, as in the Arabic *saḡ*, have been used in a freer style more closely allied to ordinary prose.

Of the history of parallelism and rhythm I have been able to say little. Did parallelism in Hebrew create rhythm, or was it added to an existing type of rhythm? This is an interesting if an obscure question of origins. As to the lifetime of parallelism, we saw that it runs back to the earliest poetry preserved in the Old Testament, and that it was still a form of Hebrew poetry in the second century A.D., but was not to be clearly traced later: nor did it wake to new life with the revival of Hebrew poetry in the Middle Ages. An interesting episode is the transference of Hebrew parallelism to poetry composed by Jews in Greek, as e.g. in the Book of Wisdom.

If we speculate as to the historical development of rhythms, we shall perhaps most safely select as the earliest the 4 : 4 (or 2 : 2) rhythm, which Hebrew has in common with Assyrian, but which at a later time in Hebrew was outstripped by 3 : 3 and 3 : 2.

The best service to the future of Old Testament studies, so far as these can be affected by the study of those formal elements with which alone these articles have attempted to deal will be rendered, I believe, by those who combine with a study of rhythm an unswerving loyalty to the demands of parallelism.

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