

SINCE WELLHAUSEN.

SYNOPSIS.

COMPARISON OF MASSORETIC AND SEPTUAGINT TEXTS.

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Conclusion: The MT is reliable and the documentary hypothesis is sound.

Article 3. TEXTUAL CRITICISM (*continued*).

Part III. The comparative merits of the MT and the LXX Text. In last month's issue we adduced:

1. Four general considerations (see EXPOSITOR for September).

2. We must now consider the alleged case against the Massoretic Text. No one in England has laboured more wholeheartedly to discredit the MT than Mr. H. M. Wiener.* Prof. Welch speaks of 'his clear cross-exam-

* Mr. Wiener has at times complained that his writings have not been accorded the careful consideration they deserved. I hope that he will

ination of the defence' and 'his convincing insistence on its insufficiency.'*

Let us then see what sort of a case Wiener makes against the MT.

He attacks the MT on the ground that :

i. The existing MSS. (with one exception, of the seventh century) only go back to the ninth or tenth century A.D., and 'with slight exceptions represent but one official recension, the work of certain persons unknown (commonly called Massorettes) at some time unknown on critical principles unknown.' † The steps taken to secure accurate transmission have resulted in an extreme rarity of variants.

[For answer ‡ see Article 3 I (1) The Massoretic text, and (2) the Samaritan text, where we saw that Jerome, Origen, the Targums and Aquila shew that the Hebrew text current in their days was practically identical with the MT, and that the Samaritan text carries the same essentially similar text much further back still.]

ii. The MT was based on a single faulty archetype at a time when critical principles would not be well under-

recognize that I have done my best to consider and weigh the case he has presented. He has so frequently given vigorous expression to his opinions about the critics with whom he has disagreed that I feel sure that he will take in good part the outspoken expression of my opinion about his own arguments, and will welcome an honest effort to arrive at the truth, however much he may disagree with the conclusion arrived at. His studies are often so acute and suggestive, when he is not swayed by the wish to prove that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch, that I cannot but feel that, if only he would abandon the attitude of Advocate for the attitude of Judge, though he might lose some of his present clientèle, he would greatly advance the cause of truth.

* I am not sure what Dr. Welch means by 'the defence' which Wiener cross-examines. If he means Dr. Skinner's *Divine Names in Genesis* Wiener's *Reply* to that book seems to me most unconvincing.

† The passages quoted in this and the following numbered paragraphs are taken from Mr. Wiener's *Essays in Pentateuchal Criticism*, pp. 10-41, and *The Pentateuchal Text, a Reply to Dr. Skinner*, *passim*.

‡ The passages in *square brackets* throughout the whole section are *my comments* on Wiener's arguments.

stood. A story is told in the Talmud (Taanith iv. 2), on the authority of a certain Rabbi, Resh Lakish, that the editors used three codices which were kept in the Temple, adopting in every case of difference the reading of the majority.

[Wiener quotes this story as Gospel Truth and, on the strength of this and similar Rabbinic traditions, mocks at the MT. Is it any more likely to be true than the well-known story as to the way in which the Seventy-two arrived at unanimity in their LXX translation? Wiener tells us himself that only four differences are mentioned in Taanith iv. 2 (only three according to Strack's art. "Text of the Old Testament," *Hastings' Dict.* iv. p. 731), none of any importance (one is seemingly corrupt Greek and, according to Talm. *Meg.* 9a, an alteration made by the Seventy-two). Wiener also quotes one of the 18 'corrections of the scribes,' as traditionally handed down, as shewing that the original text of Gen. 18²² ran: 'And Yahweh stood before Abraham.' This seems to be merely a daring conjecture. It has no single MS., version or quotation in its favour and intrinsic probability is altogether against it. But it serves Wiener's purpose of discrediting the MT, and therefore he quotes it as though it were unassailable.]

iii. "A glance at the margins of Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica* will show that according to such a modern scholar as Kittel the standard Hebrew has to be set aside *time after time on every page.*"* [One is tempted to take Wiener's "a glance" as indicating the kind of treatment which he has himself given to these margins. But the truth is that this is but a typical specimen of Wiener's exaggerated statements. Let us take at random 20 pages in Genesis in Kittel's edition (covering approximately Gen. 25 to 36). Excluding merely vocalic changes, Kittel sets aside the MT in 40 cases and

* The italics in the quotation are my own, not the author's.

queries 32 others, i.e. he actually sets aside on an average two readings per page. Many of the alterations are very trivial and are at best the opinion of one man. Kittel registers in the margin many other MS. and versional variants, but does not adopt them. And, be it noted, *not one* of the readings adopted by Kittel affects a Divine Name, although there are 67 such names in the 20 pages which we have examined. This is strong evidence that the Divine Names are a remarkably stable element of the Hebrew Text.]

iv. The Nash Papyrus has shown that Hebrew texts of the Law differing widely from the Hebrew-Samaritan, but strongly resembling the LXX, had currency in Egypt for centuries after the LXX translation was made. This proves that the Egyptian community were quite satisfied with the old Egyptian Hebrew text, the original ancestor of which broke off from the parent Hebrew stem *before* MT and Samaritan.*

[What is this Nash Papyrus? It is a scrap of papyrus, now preserved in Cambridge University Library, which originally contained the Ten Commandments and the Shema ('Hear, O Israel,' etc.), written in cursive Hebrew. It was probably a scapula; it has been folded once from top to bottom and four times across. Twenty-four lines survive. The two expert authorities upon it are Prof. F. C. Burkitt and Dr. S. A. Cook.†

The text of the ten commandments combines those of the MT in Exodus and in Deuteronomy, agreeing sometimes with the one and sometimes with the other. It

* The last point is an assumption, which Wiener has vainly tried to prove. See EXPOSITOR, Sept. 1911, and Skinner's *Divine Names*, pp. 125-135 and 276-281.

† Burkitt, *Jew. Q. Rev.* xv. (1902-3); S. A. Cook, *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* (Jan. 1903); and see Canon Charles, *The Decalogue*, pp. xiii.-xliv.

probably shews the *liturgical* custom of the synagogues in Egypt at the time when the commandments were read daily before the Shema. Most of the agreements with Deuteronomy are also found in the LXX of Exodus, but not all, and the Shema is prefaced by an addition, which is found in the LXX of Deuteronomy 6⁴, but not in the MT.

These agreements with the LXX shew that some things in the Greek also existed in a Hebrew text, but, says Prof. Burkitt, "there remains the more serious question, which is really *the better text*—that of Aquila and the Massorettes, or that of the Nash Papyrus and the LXX? In this case I must vote for the MT. The MT seems to me the more archaic and therefore the more genuine. . . . * MT here is the scholarly reproduction of an old MS., containing no serious errors, while the Nash Papyrus is a monument of popular religion, giving a text of the commandments with the grammatical difficulties smoothed down." The MT is not perfect, but "it does not follow that all the labours of the Sopherim were thrown away, or that every variant is a relic of a purer text. Especially is this the case with the Pentateuch." I have only given a tithe of the points in Prof. Burkitt's article, but I think that I have given enough to shew that the Nash Papyrus text, supported as it is by the LXX in a number of cases, is not the proof of the survival in Egypt of a purer Text than that of the MT, but rather of the reverse.]

v. The Vulgate proves that the MT often differs from the Hebrew text used by Jerome. In justification of this statement Wiener quotes an article by a Roman Catholic writer, Rev. Hugh Pope, O.P., in the *Irish Theological Quarterly* (Oct. 1913, pp. 375-398).†

* Cogent and detailed reasons are given here by Prof. Burkitt, which I reluctantly omit.

† Reply in *Bibl. Sacra*, pp. 241-244.

[Unfortunately for Wiener, when he wrote his *Reply*, Dr. Skinner's articles on *The Divine Names in Genesis* had not been republished in book-form. If they had, he would have realized upon what a broken reed he was leaning. In a supplementary note (pp. 281-288), Skinner shews (1) that 'the proved deviations of the Hebrew basis of the Vulgate from the MT are for the most part well within the limits of probable scribal error subsequent to the fixing of the standard text,' and that such divergence as exists in the highly technical sections which Mr. Pope selects in Exod. 35-40 is chiefly due to 'condensed paraphrase in translation'; (2) 'that Mr. Pope has fallen into the gross error of fancying that in the *Liber Hebraicarum Questionum in Genesim* Jerome is commenting on a Hebrew text,' whereas, 'apart from very rare and exceptional cases, it is as certain as anything can be that the *lemmata* on which he bases his exposition are taken (directly or indirectly) from the LXX; and the only doubtful question is whether he is citing the Old Latin version of the LXX or translating from the LXX itself.' 'Whatever Jerome is doing he is not translating from a Hebrew MS. His *references* to the Hebrew are frequent and detailed, and in no case (except behām for behām in 14^b) do they imply a consonantal text different from our MT'; (3) that Mr. Pope lays stress upon 12 omissions in chapters 1-11 of the Divine Name whereas 'no one with any sense of Hebrew idiom, or who has considered Jerome's practice as a translator, will have any hesitation in saying that the omissions did not occur in the Hebrew text that Jerome was translating.' In, e.g., Gen. 11^a 'the "Yahwe" could not possibly have been absent from the Hebrew and its omission in the Vulgate is due entirely to the substitution of the passive for the active construction.' As to the four cases in these eleven chapters (4¹, 6³, 5, 7⁹) in which the Vulgate (Clementine text) reads a different

name from the MT, in 4¹ and 7⁹ there is strong MS. support for the name which agrees with the MT, and Cardinal Carafa, as we have seen (I 6), in both cases prefers the reading of the MT. 'After all there are only about *three* thoroughly attested variant Divine Names in the Vulgate of Genesis, the omissions being due to reasons of style.' As a matter of fact, 'there are a great many circumstances which conspire to reduce to a minimum the probability that any reading of the Vulgate goes back to a Hebrew independent of the Massoretic recension.']

vi. The MT in certain passages "is on internal grounds demonstrably wrong in its use of the Divine Names and the true reading has been preserved in a small minority of Hebrew or Greek MSS." * The passages adduced by Wiener are Gen. 4¹, 16¹¹, 30^{42, 27}, 48¹⁵, 14²², 15², 31^{42, 53}, Ex. 3¹, Gen. 28¹³.

[It is impossible in this Article to deal with all the passages *seriatim*.

Let us take the first two as they come, and see whether in these cases Wiener has made good his claim.

(a) Gen. 4¹. Wiener argues that the man who wrote 4²⁶, "then began men to call upon the name of Yahweh," could not also have written that Eve said "I have gotten a man with the help of Yahweh." To this there are two answers: (1) There is no necessary contradiction between the two. Wiener says that Eve could not have used the name Yahweh 'before it was known' (*Reply*, p. 266), but 4²⁶ does not say that the name was not *known* before the days of Enosh, but that in his days men began to offer worship in that name. In 4^{4, 5}, however, we have the bringing of offerings to Yahweh by Cain and Abel. The more satisfactory answer is that (2) 'independent narratives

* *Essays in Pentateuchal Criticism*, pp. 17-19. *Reply*, *Bibliotheca Sacra*, pp. 257-264.

have been editorially combined within the group designated as J.' There are indications that 4^{1-16a}, 17-24, 25-26 represent three such narratives * by different writers or at least from different sources. 'On internal grounds' therefore it is impossible to 'demonstrate' that 'Yahweh' in 4¹ is wrong. It may rather be pointed to as shewing how scrupulously the Hebrew copyists adhered to their text, when on superficial grounds a change might have been deemed advisable. As to external grounds, the evidence is conflicting. The LXX unanimously reads *τοῦ Θεοῦ*, but Sam. Pesh. Vulg. agree with the MT. The LXX may here preserve the original name, but it is much more probable that the version, which reads 'God' for 'LORD God' at least five times in chapters 2-3, in chapter 4 reads 'God' in verse 4 unanimously, in verse 16 almost so and inserts it in verse 10, and reads 'LORD God' in 4⁶, 13, 15, 16, may have deliberately or accidentally substituted the reading 'God' in 4¹. There is certainly no demonstrably wrong reading in the MT here.

(b) Gen. 16¹¹. The MT explains the name Yishma'el (i.e. may El hear!) by the words: 'for Yahweh has heard.' This Wiener says is impossible. The original word must have been Elohim. When it is pointed out that Sam. Pesh. Vulg. and LXX (all 3 extant uncials, 19 cursives and 4 daughter-versions, as noted in the Cambridge Edition) agree with the MT, he replies that *one* Hebrew MS. reads Elohim and that the Old Latin and 2 cursives (bw) of the LXX support it, while 3 cursives (fir) read 'LORD God,' and that one Hebrew MS. reads El, corrected by the same first hand to YHWH. Truly a touching belief in minorities! The whole contention 'on internal grounds' (as well as on external) breaks down, when it is realized that El and Elohim are not convertible terms. El is an

* See Carpenter and Harford, *Hexateuch*, vol. ii., pp. 5-6.

archaic name, which had ceased to be used in ordinary speech. The explanation therefore had to be made by using one of the two current Divine Names, and a writer would naturally use that name which it was his habit to employ. 16¹¹ occurs in a Yahwistic context and therefore Yahweh is used. In 21¹⁷, where there is an apparent allusion to the same name, Yishma'el, the narrative is Elohistic and Elohim is used. The explanation of the name Samuel in 1 Sam. 1²⁰, where the MT is supported by Pesh. Vulg. and LXX (there are a good many MS. variants, but not one omits the *Kυρ(ου)*), is an almost exact parallel.*

(c) I have not space to deal with the other passages. Dr. Skinner deals with 30^{24, 27} and 48¹⁵ (*D.N.*, pp. 54 f., 107). On external grounds we may conclude that Yahweh in 14²² is a gloss. The Samaritan Pentateuch reads Elohim, which may equally be a gloss. LXX and Peshitta omit. But on internal grounds alone it cannot be said that Yahweh in the mouth of Abram is demonstrably wrong. The other supposed demonstrable inferiorities of the MT prove on examination to be equally inconclusive.]

vii. The LXX "has preserved a very large number of readings that differ greatly from the MT. There is a preliminary question to be asked in using versions: does the text really represent a different Hebrew? If it is due to mistranslation or to desire to make the meaning clearer or to internal corruption, it is of no value for the criticism of the MT." [This is quite true, but Wiener goes on to say:] "This is not the case with at any rate the majority of the readings to be considered, for (a) support for renderings of the versions often comes from one or more Hebrew MSS. or from the Samaritan, or from both. [The answer to this has

* See Driver's note in his *Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Books of Samuel*, pp. 13-15.

been given already in this Article, I 1 and 2, and III 1 iv.] (b) Extant notes as to various readings have come down to us, showing that LXX readings were supported by other authorities." [Wiener here refers to the fact that Origen on Gen. 4¹ & 2⁰ quotes 'the Hebrew' and in 4¹ and 12⁸ quotes 'the Syrian' as agreeing with the LXX reading (see Field's *Hexapla*, p. lxxvii.). It is generally supposed that two unknown translators or commentators are referred to, but the reference is too obscure to be of any serious value. Wiener also points to Gen. 30²⁴ where Aquila, Symmachus and the Syriac version agree with the LXX in reading 'God.' This is the one passage out of thirty-two, where Aquila deserts the MT in regard to the Divine Names. It seems to be a case of assimilation of the Divine Name to the 6 Elohim in the preceding seven verses.]

"For these reasons" (Wiener proceeds) "it is *certain* that the Versions do, at any rate in the *great majority* of cases where they differ from the MT, provide us with genuine Jewish variant readings, and this opens up the question as to the soundness of the MT with regard to the appellations of God."

[I have italicized three words in the above quotation from Wiener (*Essays*, p. 16). If Wiener here arrives so confidently at 'certainty' on such inadequate grounds, and if he jumps from a few questionable instances to 'the great majority of cases,' how can we put any dependence on his confident statements in other respects?]

Wiener goes on (*Essays*, pp. 17-19) to set forth cases in which, according to him, the Versional variant is on internal grounds demonstrably superior to the MT. [These I have dealt with under § vi. above], and he proceeds: "The LXX has also in a number of cases preserved readings demonstrably inferior, but in the great majority of cases the difference to the sense is nil. It is therefore only

necessary to show that these variants are extraordinarily numerous to cut away the ground from under the feet of the documentary critics."

[In *Essays*, pp. 24, 25 and 35, Wiener lays down Principles of Textual Criticism. Dr. Skinner has dealt with these in *Divine Names* (pp. 160-2 and 244 f.) and, to save space here, I must refer the reader to that book. But, in a word, one may say that the so-called 'principles' are so laid down as to 'load the dice' against the MT.]

Wiener in his *Essays* (pp. 26-40) gives a series of *five Tables*, purporting to set forth the 'extraordinarily numerous' variants above mentioned. [I propose to comment on these Tables as briefly as is possible.]

TABLE I (p. 26) gives a list of seven readings in Gen. 2-3, where we know the readings of Origen's *Hexapla*. [Wiener in his *Reply* to Dr. Skinner acknowledges frankly that one of these readings (3²³) is non-existent. He had mis-read Field's *Hexapla* and had neglected to consult the Greek text, which would have speedily revealed his error.]

In 3¹ Origen found 'LORD God' in the LXX text he used, and in this reading the MT and all other authorities agree. In the other five Origen seems to have found God and to have added LORD, but Lucian (according to Lagarde) read 'LORD God' in two out of the five, and codex A did the same in three. Wiener concludes this section with the question: What do higher critics say to this? [We have already hinted at what one higher critic has said as to the 'colossal blunder' in 3²³. As to 3¹ MT and LXX agree. In the other five cases the Hexaplaric marks are good evidence as to the unrevised LXX text in Alexandria and Palestine, but the Lucianic and codex A readings shew that other readings may have co-existed in Syria and elsewhere, and at best the Hexapla only takes us back to A.D. 200 (i.e. 400 to 500 years later than the original LXX), and

at best only gives us the LXX text. It remains to be proved that it is superior to the MT. In every one of these six cases the Samaritan supports the MT.]

TABLE II gives the remaining cases in Gen. 2-3 where the MT has 'LORD God.' Wiener concludes that in four out of the thirteen [rather 'fourteen,' as 3²³ was wrongly inserted in Table I] "it is absolutely clear that the original LXX text read 'God' alone." [I agree as to 2⁹, 1⁹, 2¹, but in 3¹³ the evidence is fairly evenly divided between LORD God (= MT) and God. That leaves *ten* passages where LXX and MT agree, the variants in each case being negligible.]

TABLE III gives a select list of variants from Gen. 4 onwards. At its close Wiener remarks: "Probably few will doubt that in the great majority of the passages cited in this Table the LXX originally had a reading different from our present MT. [In estimating the significance of this Table it is important to keep in mind that the total separate uses of the Divine Names as proper nouns in the MT of Genesis and Exodus to 3¹⁴ are 324, and that the total *selected* examples in this Table amount to 43, i.e. just over one eighth. Of these I agree that 29, i.e. two-thirds, are clear LXX readings; 10 more are doubtful; the remaining four ought not to have been included at all, for one (15²) is an Adonai Yahweh passage, and in three (31^{42 & 53}, 48¹⁵) Elohim is used appellatively.]

TABLE IV gives twenty-one cases where LXX variants with very little authority in Greek are supported by Hebrew MSS. [Four of these should be eliminated. 15^{2 & 8} are both Adonai Yahweh passages, which, as we have seen (Art. 3 I 1), are notoriously liable to error. 6¹³ and 7¹⁸ are mere scribal errors.] "These coincidences," says Wiener, "are too numerous to be due to chance. In every case where any LXX authority presents a reading that differs from the

MT without any reason for supposing that the variant reading originated in the Greek, there is *primâ facie* evidence for suspecting a Hebrew variant." [We have already seen that coincidences were bound to occur when the possible variations were so extremely limited (III 1 iv above), and also that, except in the passages where Adonai or Adonai Yahweh occur, no single Hebrew variant is supported by more than three Hebrew MSS. (Art. 3 I 1). As a matter of fact in Wiener's Table only three Hebrew variants (after eliminating 15², 8) are read by as many as two Hebrew MSS.

But the most important criticism of Wiener's contention is that if the same Hebrew MS. (or MSS.) presented a series of variant readings and was (were) supported by at least one or two LXX MSS. consistently, the coincidence would certainly point to an independent recension, but as a matter of fact the very opposite is the case. Eliminating the four passages, 6¹³, 7¹⁶, 15², 8 (as above), 18 Hebrew MSS. are left. Only one of these appears more than once in the remaining list and, in the three variants this one shews, it never has support from more than one LXX cursive and in each case a different one. The LXX MSS. are almost equally various.

The verdict of impartial minds must surely be that the coincidences are due to chance. The two cases (3²² and 19²⁹) in which one Hebrew MS. (a different one in each case) coincides with a well-supported LXX reading are far too few to justify any conclusion to the contrary, and the sweeping generalization which Wiener deduces from his Table IV is seen to be built on the sand.]

TABLE V presents "all the variants of any consequence in a couple of selected passages" "in order to make it quite clear how frequently the reading is precarious." [The first passage is Gen. 6⁹-9¹⁷. Wiener gives 17 variants.

Wiener omits 6⁹, 8^{1a,b}, 9⁶, because there are no variants in these cases, MT and LXX both reading 'God' unanimously, but by including them we get a more complete understanding of the whole case. This makes the total uses 21. Of these 21, 16 LXX readings are clear (eight agreeing with the MT, three adding LORD to the MT God, and five adding God to the MT LORD). It will be noted that out of these sixteen clear readings eight agree with the MT and the other eight are readings of LORD God. Now on p. 35 Wiener tells us that "LORD God in an enormous number of passages is a conflate reading." If that be true, then the conclusion seems obvious that the latter readings do not give the readings of the original and that in these cases also the MT readings have at least a very strong presumption in their favour. The remaining five LXX readings are doubtful, the variants equivalent to the MT being strongly supported, but balanced by other authorities in favour of one or other or both of the possible alternatives.

The second passage selected by Wiener is chapter 17. Here his singling out 'all the variants of any consequence' is arbitrarily applied and can only mislead anyone who does not carefully compare his presentation with the chapter itself. He omits verses 3, 9 and 22^b because there are practically no variants, but verses 22^a and 23 should be mentioned alongside 18 and 19. Verse 16 has already appeared under Table IV. But the outstanding fact is that throughout the whole chapter the overwhelming majority of LXX authorities are in agreement with the MT, and the evidence for the four variants tabled is so flimsy as to be not worth notice. The conclusion seems obvious that the MT throughout preserves the original text. But not so Wiener. Let him but find one Hebrew and one LXX cursive, even sometimes one alone (as in 17¹⁸) and he is at once convinced that here is at least sufficient evidence to render the MT quite 'pre-

carious.' What he has unintentionally shewn is that, if any Text is precarious, it is the LXX Text. It in no way follows that therefore the MT is precarious. But now, fresh from our study of Table V, let us listen to Wiener's summing up of the argument, as given in his *Essays* (pp. 40-41).

"For sheer worthlessness as a test of authorship the use of the Divine Appellations by the MT would be difficult to surpass." "The MT is in some cases demonstrably wrong ; in an enormous proportion of other cases it is quite uncertain."

A writer who, after setting forth textual evidence after the manner of Table V, could append the above, can hardly be said to exhibit that 'accuracy, care, thoroughness and impartiality' which he himself declares to be 'essential elements in scholarship,' and for the asserted absence of which he sets down all the critics with whom he disagrees as 'not scholars.'*

When one looks at the record of the witness upon which, in the main, Wiener so touchingly relies and observes how constantly its own text is unreliable or, on his principles, precarious and open to doubt, one is tempted to reply : "for sheer worthlessness as a witness to the original Hebrew Text of Genesis, where it differs from the MT, the LXX would be difficult to surpass. The LXX is in some cases demonstrably wrong ; in a large number of other cases it is quite uncertain." But there is no need to use exaggerated language. Let us rather recognize that in some 266 passages in Gen. 1-Ex. 3¹⁵ the LXX clearly confirms the MT.† Here we have a broad basis of agreement. What about the remaining 78 or (if we include the 9 (? 11) additional Divine Names in the LXX) 87 (? 89) passages ? Certainly we cannot accept them in bulk. "It is no part

* *Essays*, p. 1.

† See above (September No.), II 2.

of my contention," writes Wiener, "that the LXX is always right and the MT always wrong. . . . Neither line of transmission is infallible." * The LXX variant readings are certainly not better *per se*.

It is indeed notorious that the LXX contains many readings which presuppose a quite impossible Hebrew Text. In such books as Samuel, Kings and Ezekiel, the MT of which is in a far less perfect state than in the Pentateuch, emendations are frequently made from the LXX, but only when some superiority, real or fancied, attaches to the Text which appears to underlie the LXX reading. Unfortunately in the case of the Divine Names the test of intrinsic value in the ordinary sense fails us. Neither sense nor grammar is affected by the substitution of one name for another. The attempt to bolster up the witness of the LXX by adducing coincidences with stray variants in Hebrew MSS. completely breaks down.† Even in particular chosen cases, the LXX readings are not demonstrably better on internal grounds.‡ And when we examine the 87 passages in detail we find Wiener's "enormous proportion of cases" in which the MT is "quite uncertain" shrinks to very small proportions indeed. Mr. Wiener has given us five Tables. Let me give one in their place.

TABLE OF LXX VARIATIONS FROM THE MT. §

5 *omissions*. These do not affect the analysis at all.

25 *doubtful*. In 24 of these there is a well-supported variant agreeing with the MT. In the 25th (4^o) the LXX authorities are divided between LORD God and God, the double name suggesting an original LORD as in the MT.

20 *LORD God*, 16 times for MT Yahweh, 4 for Elohim. It is practically certain that all these readings are due to editors

* *Reply* to Dr. Skinner, p. 39.

† See Part III l iv at the end of the September instalment.

‡ See § vi, above.

§ References to chapter and verses will be found in the footnotes to the Table in the first part of this Article, II 3 (September, p. 180).

or copyists, and the strong probability is that in all these cases the MT gives us the earlier text.

- 4 *LORD* for MT Elohim. All 4 occur in passages in which the two Divine Names are commingled. In all 4, if we may judge by phraseological links with JE on the one hand and with P on the other, the probability is that the editor who combined JE and P retained the Divine Names as used in these documents (so MT), and that Greek translators or copyists, consciously or unconsciously, assimilated the names in these 4 cases to that which was prevalent in the context.
- 24 *God* (a) in 5 cases for MT *LORD* God. Why in Gen. 2⁵, 7, 9, 10, 21 the LXX reads *God* and, side by side with these, reads *LORD* God in 2⁸, 15, 16, 18, 22 no one, so far as I know, has ever been able to explain on any rational ground. The MT at least is consistent, the LXX is not. (b) In 19 cases for *Yahweh*. Prof. Welch early in his article of May, 1923, quoted the second Book of Psalms as a proof that an editor or editors had deliberately changed *Yahweh* into *Elohim* in at least some of the Psalms in that Book (see Art. 3, p. 165). "Now," he went on, "since we do not know when the change was made and have no certain clue to the reasons which led to the change, it is impossible to say that such an alteration of the Divine Names could only be expected in the Psalter. It may have influenced, if not the writers, at least the copyists, of the stories in Genesis." By 'It' I suppose Welch means: 'The same tendency.' If so, what he says is quite true. It may have. But, if so, what follows? Where do we find a similar tendency to change *Yahweh* into *Elohim*? Not in the MT of Gen. 1¹-Ex. 3¹⁵, but in the LXX. In the MT there are 146 occurrences of *Yahweh*. In the same passages we find in the LXX 93 occurrences of *Κύριος*, 16 of *Κύριος ὁ Θεός*, 19 of *ὁ Θεός*, 17 doubtful and 1 omission. It is clear that, if the Second Book of Psalms is to be our guide, so far from pointing to the MT, it points to the LXX, as the document in which the changes have been made.

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- 9 *additions* * (7 of *Θεός*, 2 of *Κύριος*). These leave the analysis practically unaffected. Eight of the names are similar to

* Gen. 17⁸, 4¹⁰, 31^{44b}, 35⁹, 43²⁶, 50^{24c} (2² and Ex. 3^{12a} are also possible); 16⁸, 19^{24d}.

those which prevail in the passages in which they occur. The ninth (*Κύριον* in Gen. 19²⁴) harmonizes with the LXX reading in 19²². The two stand or fall together.

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The above detailed examination of the whole number of clear and doubtful divergencies from the MT readings shews how unsatisfactory "an enormous proportion" of them are, if the aim is to recover the original Hebrew Text. I submit that on "cross-examination" (to use Welch's word) the case against the MT, based on the LXX evidence, has broken down. I now propose to adduce :

3. Some positive evidence in favour of the MT.

A good deal has been done in the last twenty years to demonstrate the reliability of the MT.

i. For example, Joh. Herrmann has written a very interesting paper on the Divine Names in the Book of Ezekiel, in which he has shewn that Ezekiel's usage can be reduced to a few simple and easily intelligible rules, and that with insignificant exceptions these rules are strictly observed in the MT.* The few exceptions (17 out of 447) clearly are transcriptional errors. On the other hand the LXX renders Adonai Yahweh in 5 different ways, including 143 *Κύριος* only. Clearly the art has strictly adhered to the usage of Ezekiel and the LXX has not.

ii. The usage of the Divine Names in Job is equally in favour of the MT.* In the MT the name Yahweh in the Dialogue is carefully avoided (the only exception, 12⁹, occurs in a probable interpolation) and archaic names for God are almost exclusively employed, whereas in the prose introduction and epilogue and in the headings of speeches Yahweh is employed 30 times. In the LXX on the other hand the distinction of usage between the two parts is

* See Dr. Skinner's *Divine Names in Genesis*, notes on pp. 174-176 and 292-293.

obliterated and *Kúpioç* is used 102 times in an indiscriminate manner.

iii. Baumgärtel (for whom see Art. 1, Supplementary note) draws attention to "one point to which too little attention is paid by those who put forward 'text-critical' misgivings: viz. that from inner-Massoretic observations it is possible to draw conclusions as to the textual certainty or uncertainty of the MT. And inner-Massoretic investigations must be undertaken. I would refer to the . . . irrefutable thesis of Herrmann regarding the Divine Names in Ezekiel. On inner-Massoretic grounds he has convincingly shewn the originality of the MT in the Adonai Yahweh passages." I think all competent scholars will agree with Baumgärtel in this. Nothing exposes the shallowness of Wiener's and Dahse's judgment more clearly than the way in which they set aside Herrmann's cogent arguments and facts and substitute a theory that the Hebrew editor of Ezekiel decided to use an almost equal number of Adonai Yahweh (217 and 218 respectively). It is true that no one could possibly have realized this, who didn't actually connect the names, and that no motive is conceivable which could have led any sane man to propose to himself so futile an artificiality, but that does not prevent their jumping at any theory which will give a semblance of excuse for preferring the LXX to the MT.

iv. In exactly the same way these two men take their stand upon Hontheim's arithmetical calculations in Genesis.* Anything more absolutely artificial and motiveless than the supposed methods of the Hebrew editor it would be impossible to imagine, and yet Wiener, while not accepting all Hontheim's calculations, declares that in his opinion the theory as a whole accounts for the difference between

* For Hontheim's theory see Skinner's *Divine Names*, pp. 292-294.

the MT and the LXX.* This judgment carries its own condemnation on the face of it.

v. Let me quote Baumgärtel again. "Looking back on the foregoing investigation as a whole, it can safely be affirmed that the use of Elohim in the present MT is not irregular or planless—that on the contrary it has been possible to establish a certain *normality* (Gesetzmässigkeit) in the use of Elohim (although I would not press the expression 'normality'): here and there it may be questionable, but in the main it exists beyond a doubt. This normality however can only be recognized, if the MT has not arisen through alterations, but lies before us as original text. If the MT were the result of alterations, this normality must be ascribed to the alterations, which in that case must have been systematic, extending over all the books passed under review. That is impossible. The normality can only be established on the assumption that the MT has not effaced the fact by alterations, but has faithfully transmitted the Divine Names. Thus for the trustworthiness of the MT in regard to the Divine Names we obtain a general point of view of essential importance: that this result is not to be mechanically applied to individual passages goes without saying."

vi. This normality in the use of the Divine Names in the MT does not stand alone. In both the first and second of these Articles we have noted the very significant fact that in Gen. 1¹-Ex. 6² the names Yahweh and Elohim closely coincide with the passages which on grounds of dual narrative, style and outlook have been grouped together into the three series known as J, E and P. This can be seen even in the LXX text from Gen. 12 onwards. It comes out more clearly and consistently in the MT. This coincidence speaks volumes for the trustworthiness of

* Wiener's *Reply*, *Bibliotheca Sacra*, p. 255.

the MT and the soundness of the documentary theory.

vii. It is equally significant that the Samaritan Pentateuch, Aquila, the Peshitta and the Vulgate (see Part I of this article) support the MT almost unanimously, shewing such a mere handful of divergencies that the only wonder is that, during such centuries of transcription, the number of them is so small.

viii. It remains to ask : if we do not accept the generality of the variant LXX readings as representing the original Hebrew text, how can we account for them ?

In Gen. 12¹-Ex. 6³ these readings may be reasonably regarded as errors :

(a) Arising naturally during the long series of transmissions ;

(b) Due possibly in some cases to the unintelligent substitution of what editors or scribes believed to be the better reading.

In comparison with the Jews and the Samaritans the Greek copyists were somewhat careless ; the assimilation of a name to others in the context was all too easy ; but probably the main reason why ' God ' was substituted for LORD so much more frequently than LORD for God was simply that God came much more readily to the pen of a Greek scribe than the Hebraic LORD. In Gen. 2-11 the case is somewhat different. The divergencies are much more numerous. Here the hand of the Greek editor may have been at work. The reading LORD God occurs almost exclusively in these chapters and, as Dr. Skinner pointed out in his *Divine Names*, if the first of the two names represents the original in agreement with the MT, then the proportion of LXX variants to the MT readings in these chapters comes very fairly near to the proportion in Gen. 12-50. The MT usage is so strikingly confirmed by other criteria that it seems reasonable to regard some

of the 18 occurrences of LORD God and some other variations as consciously made, and the other variants as in 'nearly,' if not quite, all cases due to transcriptional error.

If the preceding considerations are duly weighed, the conclusion which will commend itself to judicial minds must surely be that the attack made upon the reliability of the MT in the matter of the Divine Names in Gen. 1-Ex. 6 has failed. The claim made that the witness of the LXX, where it differs from the MT, should outweigh the witnesses on the other side has not been substantiated. On the contrary the unreliability of the LXX text has been shewn and the substantial accuracy of the MT has been brought out. So far from the basis of the whole documentary theory having been "seriously shaken," it stands unshaken and I believe unshakable.

J. BATTERSBY HARFORD.

JESUS AND ART.

LOWELL in one of his poems tells the tale of a prophet who, feeling that God had forsaken him, set out for a certain holy hill in the belief that there if anywhere upon earth His presence still lingered, and on the hillside he prayed for a sign and listened for an answer to his prayer. But there was no burst of thunder, and not even a murmur stirred the air. Only the tuft of moss before him opened, and a tender violet appeared ; and at the sight of it he remembered that ere he entered on his journey his child had run to him, holding in her hand a flower just like this, which she had plucked beside his very door. He had no need, therefore, to fare away to a far-off holy hill to see the homely flower, or to seek the Presence whose glory stood over the threshold.

The prophet had fallen into the ancient error of thinking