Two years ago Dr. S. Schechter, Reader in Rabbinic in the University of Cambridge, recognized among some old manuscripts that had been brought from the East a leaf from a copy of the long-lost original Hebrew of the apocryphal book Ecclesiastics. With reference to the acquisition of it, Mrs. Lewis has lately written to the Guardian: 'The single leaf which Mrs. Gibson and I brought to Cambridge in May 1896, and which was discovered amongst a bundle of other fragments by Dr. Schechter, was bought by us in Southern Palestine, and not in Sinai.'

The publication of the Lewis-Gibson folio in the Expositor led to the discovery of others from the same copy of Ecclesiastics in the Bodleian Library. These were promptly edited for the Clarendon Press by Messrs. Cowley and Neubauer, together with the one first discovered.

In the middle of December in the same year, 1896, Dr. Schechter, well furnished with credentials and introductions, started on an expedition to Egypt, purposing, with the consent of the local Jewish authorities, to examine the contents of the Old Cairo Geniza thoroughly, and hoping above all things to find in it more leaves of the original Hebrew of Ecclesiastics. The term Geniza, from a word meaning hide, denotes a storehouse or burial-place of disused Jewish books. His unexpectedly complete success is described by Dr. Schechter in a striking article, entitled 'A Hoard of Hebrew Manuscripts,' published in the Times, on Tuesday the 3rd August 1897. The contents of the Geniza were placed freely and unreservedly at his disposal by the Grand Rabbi Raphael Aaron Bensimon, and every fragment that seemed likely to prove of interest and importance was brought to Cambridge.

A mass of separate pieces of writing from all departments of Jewish literature cannot be examined and catalogued expeditiously, like a collection of books. A volume in print or writing may be identified from a small fraction of its contents; but the thousands of fragments in the Geniza collection have to be examined laboriously one by one. Consecutive leaves of a codex are found at long intervals, or even the half of a leaf at one time, and the remainder of it weeks or months afterwards. A long time must therefore elapse before the collection can be reduced to order and made practically accessible to scholars.

Many of the fragments, on whatever subject, are of independent interest to the palaeographer, one of them, for example, containing the oldest dated piece of Hebrew writing at present known to exist. A general feature of them is the absence of decorative additions, the likeness of anything in heaven above or in the earth beneath. On one biblical fragment have been found some letters of gold. The use of gold ink in writing Holy Scripture was forbidden by the Rabbis, but the prohibition was meant to apply only to the case of copies for public reading in the Synagogue.

The reader of Rabbinic must be practised in the solution of acrostics; for he will encounter many phrases in Talmud, Midrash, and all manner of Jewish writings expressed by initials. Some of these groups of letters are familiar and simple enough, while others convey no meaning until perhaps a text of Scripture is noticed which supplies the key. The names of oft-quoted Rabbis are commonly written in this way. Thus RMBM (Rambam) is the Jewish shorthand for Rabbi Moses, son of Maimon, or Maimonides. A complete autograph letter of this famous and voluminous author is one of the treasures of the Geniza collection. It was photographed and heliogravured last summer by M. Dujardin, who was then in Cambridge preparing a facsimile edition of the New Testament manuscript Codex Bezae for the University Press.

Curious and important are the Cairo fragments which testify to a wholesale use of acrostic shorthand, in which a verse is represented by its first word, followed by a series of initial letters. It is as if the Fourth Gospel were written after this manner: In-the-beginning w. t. w. a. t. w. w. G. a. t. w. w. G. 'The particular system represented in the Geniza,' writes Dr. Schechter, 'seems to have been known to the old Rabbis under the name of Trellis-writing. Dr. Felix Perles, from his acquaintance with the few specimens acquired by the Bodleian Library, at once recognized their
The letters at the beginning have their tops torn off. From three to four months after the discovery of the fragment, which is the lower half of a folio, the upper half with the missing tops was found. The scribe has written δμ for δαιμ. He writes σου repeatedly for σου, thou.

One of Aquila's first principles was to translate 'etymologically,' that is, not merely to give the sense of a Hebrew word in a practical way, but to show its etymological affinities by his Greek. The word demonize here serves his turn. If the Hebrew had been lost, we might have argued back from his 'devilling at midday,' to shed, demon, or devil, and thence to the Hebrew yashud, rendered 'that wasteth.' In like manner he lets us know by his word for 'destruction' that the Hebrew was the word used in Hos 13:14, where his rendering done into English is, 'I will be thy bitings, Hades.' Such a version may be of the greatest use for critical purposes. William de Moerbeke's Latin translation of the Politics of Aristotle from an older copy of the book than any now extant is in the first rank of authorities for the Greek text.

But the best known peculiarity of Aquila as a translator is his use of σου sometimes with an accusative following. He shows thereby that in the Hebrew stood ETH, which has the meaning with, but is also sometimes an untranslatable and not indispensable prefix to the objective case. It occurs in Gn 1, where his translation accordingly is, in effect, 'In capitulo God created with the heaven and with the earth.' Rabbinically, this was made to mean that God created at once the heavens with all therein, and the earth with all therein. The fragment gives a good example of this rabbinic in the line (Ps 91) ending κωρύς, which is for the Hebrew zoth, this (fem.), with ETH prefixed. Dr. Field gives the passage in an appendix, but with ταιτα for ETH ZOTH. Aquila's version has the merit of being transparent. It shows the Hebrew through the Greek.

Of Ecclesiasticus as much has been found by Dr. Schechter as had been discovered previously, and a specimen leaf was published in the January number of the Jewish Quarterly Review. The Cairo text itself is not immaculate; but the Hebrew and the ancient versions correct one another, as in chap. 50, where the Revisers say in the margin, 'The text here seems to be corrupt.' The Revised Version of course now needs revision. But for some time to come

The abbreviation system was not limited to certain isolated words, but extended to the whole contents of the Bible. The Old Testament in Greek uncials still legible is not indispensable prefix to the objective case. It occurs in Gn 1, where his translation accordingly is, in effect, 'In capitulo God created with the heaven and with the earth.' Rabbinically, this was made to mean that God created at once the heavens with all therein, and the earth with all therein. The fragment gives a good example of this rabbinic in the line (Ps 91) ending κωρύς, which is for the Hebrew zoth, this (fem.), with ETH prefixed. Dr. Field gives the passage in an appendix, but with ταιτα for ETH ZOTH. Aquila's version has the merit of being transparent. It shows the Hebrew through the Greek.

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scholars will disagree about the treatment of passages of which the Hebrew is of questionable accuracy, or defective, or hard to decipher.

After writing thus far I saw another palimpsest, and read on it in Greek uncial (beneath Midrash) the first piece of New Testament found in the Genizalz collection. In the first line is (or was) o φημες followed by ανε, the beginning of the verb 'deferred' (Ac 24:22). Thus the fragment agrees here with the textus receptus, as again, for example, in v.23, 'And that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him.' The next page has not much legible Greek of its own, but some words, as τον εν αυτον προειρον, can be read through from the other side.

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Israel's Historical Recollections.

By Professor Eduard König, Ph.D., D.D., Rostock.

The most recent commentary on Genesis, which has just been published, closes with the following words:—'To the beginnings of Israel historical recollections do not reach back, any more than with other nations.' The latter instance appealed to embodies a general proposition. But the commentary before us says not a word about the special relation of Israel to historical reminiscences. It never raises the question whether a nation which had memories of extraordinary value to preserve might not lay special weight upon the transmitting of its traditions. Nor is any attempt made to trace the indications which prove that this nation possessed a strong genius for the preserving of its reminiscences. In the following remarks I will seek to supply these omissions.

First of all, let it be noted that Israel had the custom of creating actual and externally perceptible supports for historical reminiscences. Such fulcra memoriae were the ‘cairn of witness’ (Gn 31:47), the pot of manna (Ex 16:32), the tables of the Law (Ex 34:26, 40:20), Aaron’s rod that budded (Nu 17:10), the stones from the Jordan (Jos 4:21), the erecting of an altar on Mt. Ebal, and inscribing of the law upon the altar (Jos 8:30ff); note specially, also, the altar by Jordan (Jos 22:30ff), the great stone under the oak by the sanctuary of Jahweh (Jos 24:26ff), the stone Eben-ezer (1 S 15:12), the sword of Goliath hung up as a national memorial in the sanctuary at Nob (1 S 21:9), the statue which Absalom caused to be erected in the king’s vale, that it might preserve the recollection of his name (2 S 18:18), and the monument of stones which the people raised for him (v.17). It is an extremely interesting circumstance, also, that in Israel one was fond of noting the date when a city was built (Nu 13:29, Hebron built seven years before Zoaan), or a national custom introduced (1 S 30:26). Note-worthy, also, is the tenacity of memory which recalled the ancient attack of the Amalekites (1 S 15:27), or the ban pronounced long before on the city of Jericho (1 K 16:8).

Further, I may refer to the fact that in Ex 13:9-10 a command is given to keep the origin of the Passover celebration alive in the consciousness of future generations. In the same passage the continual inculcating of the Divine laws is also enjoined. So also in Ex 13:1-10 and Dt 6:9-113:21. The reading of the Deuteronomic law to the people is commanded in Dt 31:10-13. Moreover, the priests have the function assigned to them of transmitting the Divine statutes from generation to generation (Lv 10:11, Dt 33:21, Jer 18:18, Ezek 22:20-44:25, Hos 4:6, Mic 3:1, Zeph 3:9, Hag 2:11-13, Mal 2:4-8). In particular, the Song of Moses is to be learned by the people (Dt 31:21), as well as the Elegy which David composed upon the death of Saul and Jonathan (2 S 19).

Another group of positive tokens of the historicity of the Old Testament consists of those statements which assign a non-Israelitish origin to some important phenomenon in Israel’s history. Is not the institution of subordinate tribunals expressly traced back (Ex 18:26) to the counsel of the Midianite priest Jethro? At the building of Solomon’s temple, is not the execution of the

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