TWO NOTES ON ENOCH IN SIR. xliv 16.

I.
The Greek of Sir. xliv 16 (ed. Swete) is—

'Ενδρχ εὐηρίσκοντος Κυρίῳ καὶ μετετίθη,

ὑποδείγμα μετανοιάς ταῖς γενεάσι.

metanoias] Edersheim in the Speaker's Commentary gives 'of wisdom' as the Coptic, with the suggestion διανοιάς (?); and quotes the Syro-hex. and MS 253 for the rendering 'an everlasting example to the generations,' the one reading דַּעַת and the other αἰώνος, cf. verse 17 διαβήκας (Heb. תַּנהֵב) αἰῶνος.

In the Cairene Hebrew the verse runs thus—

Enoch was found perfect and walked with יהוה;

And he was taken, a sign of knowledge to generation and generation.

M. Israel Lévi in L'Ecclesiastique suggests ἐννοιάς for μετανοιάς, and notes that Nöldeke proposes ἐννοιάς.

It has been pointed out that נַכְזָא וּרְשָׁי, he was found perfect, is a repetition from the next verse, on Noah; and Dr. Peters well remarks that this assimilation of the two verses accounts for the omission of verse 16 in the Syriac.

Looking at יהוה היא, a sign of knowledge, in its context I find it strange, and think that it may be corrupt. Omitting יהוה we get the clear sense, 'he was taken away, a sign to successive generations,' with a natural construction for יהוה, which usually stands without epithet or complement. The addition מַעֲלֵךְ, αἰώνος, as in Isa. lv 13 and Sir. xliii 6, is not wanted in Sir. xliv 16 (cf. li 30) before וַיַּרְדֶו רוֹחֵר.

The next verse ends—

לעת (marg. ב') לכל היה חלותיך

If יהוה ולעת or יהוה ו circumcision, was brought into verse 16 from verse 17, it may have been corrupted (1) into יהוה, and (2) into שֶׁלֶם. Compare Sir. iv 23 Heb. בָּשָׂמַי, בּוֹשָׂם, Gr. בָּשָׂמַי, Syr. בָּשָׂמַי.

In the Greek of verse 16 suppose a rendering—

ὑποδείγμα γενεὰς καὶ γενεὰς.

Then, repeating the μα, read

ΜΑΓΕΝΕΑΙΚ,

and change τ and an ε into τ and ο. Thus we get all the letters of

ΜΕΤΑΝΟΙΑΙΚ,

and then μετανοιάς ταῖς γενεάς, cf. Matt. xii 39 f., Luke xi 29 f. σημείον ... μετανόησαν. In the received Greek text μετανοιάς seems to correspond to
μετέτοιχος in the previous hemistich. But, according to the Hebrew, this should end at κυρίω, and the second (without μετανοεῖα) would be καὶ μετέτοιχος ὑπόδειγμα ταῖς γενεāίς.

Although in the 'Henochsage,' on which see Hamburger's Real-Encyc., Enoch 'kennt alle Geheimnisse,' it may be doubted whether Ben Sira himself wrote הער נאש. Rashi (cf. Gen. Rab. 25. 1) describes Enoch as righteous but quick in his mind (חכם) to repent and do wickedly (לעבב לחריש). If μετανοεῖα in its ordinary sense is to be retained as a rendering of הער, compare the sayings that repentance is θύμος καὶ μεγάλη (Herm. Mand. iv 2. 2).

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II.

It is, I venture to think, possible to explain and justify the reading both of the Hebrew 'sign of knowledge' and of the Greek 'sign (or 'pattern') of repentance' by means of the early Jewish exegesis of the story of Enoch contained in Gen. v 21–24. His repentance is indeed easily inferred from v. 22 'Enoch walked with God after that he begat Methuselah,' although the context seems to show that the writer thought only of the continuance of a consistently good life. But once the principle of interpreting the Old Testament characters as types of human nature was applied to the text, it is obvious that the translation of Enoch (inferred by LXX from the Hebrew 'he was not for God took him') must become a change of mind or repentance. Accordingly we read in Philo (de Abraamo: ed. Mangey, ii 4) 'Now after Hope Repentance for sins and Amendment holds the second place; and therefore the record follows of him who changed from the worse mode of life to the better, who is called among the Hebrews "Enoch," or as the Greeks might say "the highly favoured." Now of him it is said "Enoch pleased God and he was not found for God translated him." For translation implies a turning and change, and the change is for the better, because it comes about by the providence of God.' And so, as we might expect, Noah who is 'Rest' or 'the Just' follows 'him that repented.' The same generalization of the story is expounded in de Praemiiis (ed. Mangey, ii 410).

So also Clement of Alexandria (Strom. ii ed. Potter, p. 466): 'Moreover does not God, next after the pardon bestowed upon Cain, not much later introduce Enoch who repented, showing plainly that repentance is wont to produce pardon?'

It is then natural that a translator acquainted with the Alexandrian methods of exegesis followed by Philo and Clement, should transform 'sign of knowledge' to 'sign of repentance,' in order to expound the significance of the life of Enoch and that his unknown successor should