

suggested. It is certainly less in harmony with the 3 + 3 metre which is prevalent throughout the ode.

The passages of the ode dealt with here are, it is hoped, sufficient illustration of the applicability of our thesis to others, which need not, therefore, be discussed at this juncture. It should be added, however, that the assumption of the original existence of blanks on clay tablets is not a vital factor in the thesis. It helps in many cases in the restoration of the full form of recital and also in accounting for the shorter versions of M.T. But where this arrangement cannot easily be discovered, the shortness of M.T. may be explained by the simple assumption that the mode of recital was so familiar that the copyist did not think it necessary to repeat words which were well known to the readers of his text. In connexion with this the following may be quoted:

'Words, phrases, and lines appearing in a text only once may . . . have been recited or sung more than once.'¹

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A TAUNT-SONG IN GEN. XLIX 20, 21.

IN the Authorized Version Gen. xlix bears the superscription, 'Jacob calleth his sons to bless them'. But there is no blessing for the first three tribes mentioned, Reuben, Simeon, and Levi. To Reuben the address is 'Have not thou the excellency!' And of Simeon and Levi it is said, 'Cursed be their anger for it was fierce'. The patriarch's own purpose is expressed in *v.* 1 *b*, 'Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the latter days'. The discourse is not a 'blessing', but rather a characterization of the separate tribes, and an indication of their several fortunes after their settlement in Palestine. Different sections of the discourse refer to different incidents or to different periods of Israel's history. Though the *encomia* on Judah (*vv.* 8-12) and on Joseph (*vv.* 22-26) are generally held to belong to the period of the undivided kingdom, the characterization of Asher and Naphtali in *vv.* 20, 21 belongs most probably to the period of the rising of Deborah and Barak against the Canaanites.

The parallel between the Song of Deborah and the 'Blessing of Jacob' in their reference to Asher and Naphtali becomes very clear on a careful reading of the text of both. In Judges v 17 *b*, 18 we find Asher reproached as one of the tribes which gave no help when Deborah sent her summons northward. The inaction of Asher is contrasted

¹ Cf. my 'Stichometry and Text', *J.T.S.*, vol. xxix p. 264 f. Cf. also *op. cit.* p. 261 f. section (c).

with the devoted courage of Zebulun and Naphtali, who receive equal praise for their response to the call to war.

Asher sat still at the haven of the sea,
And abode by his creeks.
Zebulun was a people who thought it shame to shun death,
And Naphtali likewise, upon the high places of the field.

The Hebrew phrase translated above, 'thought it shame to shun death', is literally rendered, 'reproached himself to die' (חרף נפשו למות), i.e. Zebulun (Naphtali) did not wait to be moved by the reproaches of his fellows, but himself recited in his own heart the reproaches which he would deserve, if he shrank from the ordeal of battle. The correctness of the Hebrew text of this vigorous phrase has been questioned by critics who look for smoothness rather than life in Hebrew poetry, but surely they are mistaken.

These two verses of Judges form a *Māshāl* (משל), a 'proverb', a 'taunt-song' at the expense of Asher, in which the taunt is expressed by a comparison. As we know from the Book of Proverbs comparisons are often given in Hebrew by simple juxtaposition without the intervention of any particle to suggest that a comparison is intended. So we may detect in Gen. xlix 20, 21 another *Māshāl*, a taunt-song in which Naphtali is praised at the expense of Asher. So we render, reading אֲשֶׁר, not מֵאֲשֶׁר, as the first word:

Asher, his bread is fat,
But he supplieth the dainties of a king:
Naphtali is a hind let loose,
Giving forth sweet songs [of freedom].

The first line is a statement (LXX: Ἀσίηρ, πίων αὐτοῦ ὁ ἄρτος), not a promise as in EV. The second clause is in strict grammar adversative, 'But he supplieth the dainties of a king', words of scorn. Asher's bread is indeed 'fat', but what profit is it, since he has to furnish the table of 'a king', one of those 'kings of Canaan' (Judges v 19) who were the oppressors of Israel. Commentators have missed the sinister suggestion in the word 'king'.

But still more has been missed in the following verse. The Septuagint has led the way by misunderstanding the common word אֵיִלָּהּ, 'hind'. Verse 21 runs in the Greek:

Νεφθαλεί, στέλεχος ἀνεμμένον,
ἐπιδοῦς ἐν τῷ γενήματι κάλλος.

This is quoted by Jerome (*Quaestiones in Genesisim*, in loco):

*Nephtalim virgultum resolutum,
dans in generatione pulchritudinem.*

This is a dull rendering: στέλεχος ἀνεμμένον is a 'tree-trunk left un-

lopped of its branches'; cf. *ἄσλος ἀνειμένον*, 'a consecrated grove' in Plato (L. and S.). The LXX read the word as אֵילִן (a *ἄπαξ λεγόμενον* if genuine) and associated it in meaning with אֵילִן, which they render by *δρῶν* ('oak' RV) in Gen. xii 6; cf. xiv 13.

There is no doubt that אֵילִן is rightly rendered 'oak' or 'terebinth' (RV margin), but the Targum gives 'plain' (מִישֵׁר), being perhaps misled by the resemblance of the Greek word *αἰλῶν*, 'valley'.¹ Jerome vacillates between 'ager irriguus' (*Quaestiones in Genesim*) and 'cervus emissus' (*Vulgate*). Rashi also vacillates between different interpretations and writes: אֵילֵהּ שְׁלֹחָה. This is the *Plain* of Gennesar, which is *swift* in ripening her fruits as a *hind* which is *swift* to run'. The clause, 'He giveth goodly words' (so RV), is then explained by Rashi and Aben Ezra as meaning that Naphtali praises and blesses God for his goodly inheritance. This interpretation, be it said, makes the 'blessing' of Naphtali differ hardly at all from the 'blessing' of Asher.

Both Rashi and Aben Ezra mention as an alternative view that the reference of v. 21 may be to the war of Sisera and the song which Deborah and Barak sang of victory, but they do not pursue their suggestion further. Apparently they could not reconcile the 'hind' of v. 21 a with the 'goodly words' of v. 21 b.

No modern proposes to take אֵילֵהּ in the sense of 'plain', but many would point the word אֵילִן and translate 'terebinth'. This view is hardly strengthened by the proposal to read אֲמָרֵי as אֲמָרֵי 'branches' from אֲמָרֵי a *ἄπαξ λεγόμενον* in Isa. xvii 6. אֲמָרֵי (אֲמָרִים) in the sense of 'words' is well established in Hebrew, and the interpretation of אֲמָרֵי שִׁפְרָה as 'goodly words' of *triumph* is sufficiently vindicated by Ps. lxxviii 12 (11 EV):

The Lord giveth the word [אֲמָרֵי, of victory],

The women that publish the good tidings are a great host.

Other versions, the Vulgate and the Peshitta, have caught the sense which the LXX and the Targum have missed. The Vulgate has

Nephtali, cervus emissus (= *ἔλαφος ἀπεσταλμένος*, Aquila)
et dans eloquia pulchritudinis.

So also the Peshitta:

נִפְתָּלִי מְבַרְכֵּן מְבַרְכֵּן
וְהוּא מְבַרְכֵּן מְבַרְכֵּן

i.e.

Naphtali is a swift messenger:

He giveth (uttereth) fair discourse.²

Certainly the Syriac paraphrase covers the Hebrew reading 'hind'.

¹ The Targumist shows from time to time a knowledge of Greek words.

² Aquila ὁ διδοὺς καλλονῆν. Post διδοῦς fortasse excidit λόγους (καλλονῆς) Field.

In contrast to Asher in his bondage to a 'king', Naphtali was 'a hind let loose'. Free upon 'the high places of the field' (Judges v 18) Naphtali was like the young warrior Asahel 'as light of foot as the wild roe' (2 Sam. ii 18). Another warrior, Jonathan the son of Saul, is similarly described in 2 Sam. i 19, 'The gazelle, O Israel, is slain upon thy high places'. Fleetness is a constant attribute of the ancient warrior. Achilles himself is *πόδας ὠκύς*. The hind was 'let loose', i.e. Naphtali, held back for a time until the day of the LORD (Judges iv 14), was loosed (שׁלוחה) against the enemy at the battle of the Kishon; cf. Judges v 15, 'Into the valley they rushed forth (שׁלח) at his feet' (said of the army of Barak).

The connexion between 21 a and 21 b is obvious. The swift rush of the men of Naphtali brought victory to Israel, and victory called forth a song of triumph. The song is attributed to Naphtali: why? Because it is probable that both Deborah and Barak who sang the song of victory in Judges v belonged to the tribe of Naphtali. Barak had to be summoned out of Kedesh of Naphtali for his task (Judges iv 6). Of Deborah it is said that she 'sat' (ישב), not 'dwelt' as EV, Judges iv 5) for judgement under the palm tree of Deborah in the hill country of Ephraim. This tells us nothing of Deborah's tribe: it does not even tell us what was her usual dwelling-place. She may have had a circuit like Samuel: 1 Sam. vii 15-17. But it is surely a significant fact that she sent the whole way to Naphtali to find a leader for her levy. Why did she not choose some warlike Ephraimite, or some man of Issachar stung at last into revolt under Canaanite oppression? But tribal feeling was always strong in ancient Israel, and Deborah no doubt followed the natural course and turned in the crisis to her own tribe and to her own tribesman. If Deborah, as well as Barak, was of Naphtali, Naphtali did indeed give goodly words in Judges v.

Gen. xlix 20, 21 seems to me one of the many instances in which modern scholars show an excess of suspicion of the Masoretic text. It is no doubt an inevitable reaction from the superstitious reverence for the 'Hebrew verity' which once prevailed. But I do not find that our Western commentators in studying the text make sufficient allowance for the difference between Eastern and Western modes of thought and expression. They are impatient of that which is not Western. Abrupt turns, curt phrases, and allusive expressions are characteristic of the East,¹ but they often surprise the modern critic into declaring that the text is corrupt. Again, many modern commentators do not sufficiently recognize the great flexibility in the use of parallelism which prevails in Hebrew poetry. In theory they acknowledge the existence

¹ This statement can be copiously illustrated from the Qur'an.

of different kinds of parallelism, including the constructive form, but in their interpretations they seem unwilling to recognize any form except that in which the second member merely repeats the thought of the first in different words. Thus Gunkel (*Genesis in loco*) after rendering *v. 21 a*, 'N. ist eine flinke Hinde', declares, 'Die Uebersetzung des zweiten Gliedes "der gefällige Reden hervorbringt" steht vom ersten zu weit ab'. But in *v. 21*, judged as an instance of constructive parallelism, the second member follows naturally on the first: 'N. hath been freed: so he hath a goodly song to sing'. It is as good an instance of constructive parallelism as in Ps. cxii 8:

His heart is established, he feareth not,
Until he see his desire upon his adversaries.

In short we find an ample defence of the Masoretic text of Gen. xlix 20, 21, if we read it in the light of the parallel passage, Judges v 17 a, 18. Asher stands condemned in Judges for unbrotherliness, and in Genesis for serving a 'king'. Naphtali is a 'hind' (Genesis), because he distinguished himself 'on the high places of the field' (Judges), where hinds run free (Genesis). Naphtali uttered 'goodly words' (Genesis), when Barak of Naphtali joined Deborah—perhaps also of Naphtali—in her song of triumph (Judges).

The fact that the view taken in this note is not supported by the LXX need not trouble us. The rendering of אֵילָה by στέλεχος has other faulty renderings in this very chapter to keep it company, as σκληρὸς φέρεσθαι for יתַר שׂאת (*v. 3*)—ἐκ βλαστοῦ for כּמַרְרָ (*v. 9*)—τὸ καλὸν ἐπεθύμησεν for חֲכַר גֵּרָם (*v. 14*)—ἀνήρ γεωργός for לָמַס עֵבֶר (*v. 15*). The Seventy had no doubt an older text before them than the Masoretic, but very often they could not translate it. Much Hebrew was forgotten by the Jews in Alexandria, and we owe the Septuagint not to the learned, but to the less ignorant who translated for the benefit of the more ignorant.

It may no doubt be objected that to defend the Masoretic text is to depart from the practice of most modern scholars. But if an appeal be made to authority, must not the older scholars also be heard? Moderns show a readiness to emend far in excess of their predecessors, yet the scholars of a generation or two ago were deeply learned and cannot have been wholly wrong in their more sparing use of conjecture. It must not be forgotten that there are fashions even in scholarship, and that scholars are human. The tendency to emend grows in emendators, and a clever hit always wins praise. But those who restore a text, like those who restore an ancient building, are likely to put something of their own into it. So a literary reconstruction (even one of the best)

may prove to be not a return to the original, but only a tertiary reading one step further removed from the author's own words.

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P.S.—A paraphrase may give point to the interpretation defended above:

Asher hath store of the fat of the wheat,
But he serveth the board of a king.
A soul set free is for Naphtali
And a song of triumph to sing.

W. E. B.

JOHN WYCLIF'S 'LOST' *DE FIDE SACRAMENTORUM*

THE supposedly lost works of John Wyclif are rapidly decreasing in number as MSS in English and continental libraries are gradually being thoroughly catalogued. Some works that have been assigned to him have been found on closer scrutiny not to be the work of the *Doctor Evangelicus*¹; others, heretofore listed as 'lost', are found to form part of larger works.² Some others are doubtless really lost. Shirley's catalogue carefully listed the works as 'extant', 'lost', and 'spurious', largely from the catalogue of Bale. Among those lost whose incipits were not known was one called by Bale *De Fide Sacramentorum* (Shirley, p. 53). But Shirley also listed among extant Latin works (no. 20, p. 10) a *De Eucharistia Confessio*, beginning *Illa hostia alba et rotunda . . .* and ending . . . *et in multis aliis*, to be found in MS B. 14. 50 of Trinity College, Cambridge. Shirley suggested that it was really one of the English works of Wyclif, by which he probably meant no. 54: *Of the Eucharist*, beginning 'I beleve as Crist and his apostels haue taught us þat þe sacrament of þe auter whyte and rounde . . .', and ending ' . . . of hor lyue', last printed by Vaughan in his *Life of Wycliffe* (1831 ed., pp. 433-434). But there is no similarity between the two tracts beyond the reference to the 'white and round' host. Moreover, although the title *De Eucharistia Confessio* more or less correctly describes the contents of the tract found in the Trinity College MS, the scribe gave it quite a different title, viz. *De Fide Sacramenti*. This

¹ Cf. S. H. Thomson, 'Some Latin Works Erroneously Ascribed to John Wyclif', in *Speculum* iii (July 1928) 382-391.

² E.g. nos. 4, 19, 25, 26, 35, 36, 37, 38, 42, and 46 of 'Lost Works' in the *Catalogue of Latin Works of John Wyclif* (Oxford 1865) by W. W. Shirley, are separate sections of Wyclif's *De Logica* (ed. M. H. Dziewicki, London 1893-1899).