

hitherto been given them. Some of the other apocryphal books would also seem to have been composed in a similar dialect, and cross-references are likely to be helpful. A *complete* restoration of Ben-Sira is, of course, not to be hoped for, but enough may be made out to tell us what the language of Hebrew poetry in 200 B.C. was like; and (though here I have the misfortune to differ from so good an authority as Prof. Driver) I venture still to think that the accomplishment of this work may be of consequence for the Hebrew language and for biblical theology.

D. S. MARGOLIOUTH.

NOTE.

By the courtesy of the editor of *THE EXPOSITOR*, I am permitted to make a few remarks on the subject of the preceding pages. If the criticisms that have been passed on the *Inaugural Lecture* of the Laudian Professor of Arabic should have no other effect than that of having induced him to publish the additional illustrations of his method and results contained in the last and present numbers of *THE EXPOSITOR*, they will not have been written in vain; for his future critics will assuredly be in a better position to judge of both than those who had only the *Lecture* to guide them. In particular, many, at any rate, of the very interesting collection of New Hebrew words (p. 301 ff.) recovered for Ben-Sira appear to be certainly correct; and the grounds on which the Professor bases his opinion of the metre of Ecclesiasticus are far more fully stated than was the case in his *Inaugural Lecture*.

On the subject of the metre, the real difficulty which I felt was the want of a sufficient reason for supposing that Ben-Sira would be likely to adopt it. It is admitted by most Hebrew scholars—and the Laudian Professor himself does not appear to judge differently (see *Inaug.*, p. 7)—that no part of the Old Testament has been satisfactorily shown to be written in strict metre; but until this has been done, or, in other words, until it has been proved that metre was a form in which ancient Hebrew poetry naturally found expression, it is difficult to understand what motive or inducement Ben-Sira could have had for adopting it. I grant of course that this *à priori* objection would be overcome by facts

establishing with sufficient clearness the contrary; but these did not appear to me to have been produced. The proportion of the lines quoted by the Rabbis agreeing with the metrical canon proposed did not seem to me to be greater than, considering the nature of the canon, and the form of many Hebrew words, could be attributed to accidental causes.¹ Nor, so far as I could judge, was there anything in the lines—as there would have been in an equal, or even in a smaller, proportion of iambs or hexameters—to show that their precise conformation was the result of design; and in some cases, as I thought, the metrical form prevented the best words and expressions being adopted in the restoration. These were the reasons which operated with me when I wrote my notice of the Professor's Inaugural Lecture in the *Oxford Magazine* of February 5th and 12th. In his present papers, as I am glad to see, the Professor has indicated more fully than he did before the inductions on which he founds his metrical canon. Whether these are sufficient to overcome the difficulties of which I was conscious I must leave others to consider: I feel that I have said on the subject as much as I have a right to say. But I readily allow, that if the Professor should succeed in restoring metrically a reasonably large proportion of Ben-Sira's verses, in idiomatic Hebrew, and without unduly deserting tradition, he would have gained a great point: for the possibility of metrical uniformity, on a considerable scale, once established, would tend to show that the uniformity itself was the result of design.

As regards the relative date of Ecclesiastes and Ecclesiasticus, I think I may say that neither Professor Cheyne nor myself desired to maintain that they were "contemporary." Professor Cheyne expressly said otherwise. For my own part, though I said that, to judge from such linguistic evidence as was before me, they appeared to belong to the same period, I purposely avoided using the term "contemporary," because some of the words quoted from Ben-Sira by the Rabbis appeared to me to raise a presumption, though not quite a decisive presumption, that Ben-Sira's proverbs were later than Ecclesiastes. And of the words recovered

¹ What this proportion is, it must be left to the reader to ascertain for himself. Those who are not in the fortunate position of the Laudian Professor of being able to add to the quotations that have been observed by other scholars, must content themselves with those collected by Dukes, *Rabbinische Blumenlese*, pp. 67-84, who cites something like fifty lines, agreeing more or less closely with those occurring in the extant book of Ecclesiasticus.

for Ben-Sira by the Laudian Professor (above, p. 301 ff.) there are some which materially confirm this presumption. Ecclesiastes contains many examples of words and usages common in the Mishnah, which otherwise occur either not at all in the Old Testament, or only in admittedly late books, such as Chronicles and Esther¹; and hence it must, I suppose, as is generally allowed, be assigned to the period when these idioms had begun to form. But I readily grant that the restorations of the Laudian Professor increase the probability that Ecclesiastes belongs to an earlier stage of this period than Ecclesiasticus, and tend to confirm the opinion that it may be assigned, as is done for instance by Professor Cheyne,² to the latter years of the Persian rule,³ and I willingly allow that the development of the rabbinic dialect, as it appears in Ben-Sira, is to a certain extent different—I cannot yet bring myself to say (p. 316) “*wholly* different”—from its development in Ecclesiastes. I only venture somewhat to doubt the argument based, p. 299 f., on the Targum to Ecclesiastes. For this Targum is very paraphrastic, and the terms there referred to occur not in word-for-word renderings of the text of Ecclesiastes, but in the *additions* of the Targumist, and usually introduce ideas neither contained nor implied in the text itself.⁴ Hence it seems to me precarious to argue, from their occurrence in the Targum, that they were not known to the author of

¹ See C. H. H. Wright's *Ecclesiastes*, pp. 488–500 (though these pages include some particulars to which the description in the text does not apply).

² *Job and Solomon*, pp. 256–258. On p. 181 of the same work the date of the Hebrew text of Ecclesiasticus is conjecturally fixed at “about 180 B.C.” The late Dr. Edersheim placed it at “about 235 B.C. or earlier.”

³ But it remains, I suppose, a question how far, in what would seem to have been an age of transition, even contemporaries would use precisely the same proportion of the new words. For if Ecclesiastes be placed at a date which makes it approximately contemporary with (say) Chronicles or Esther, its style is still not the *same* as that of either of those two books; for while it shares some features in common with them, it also exhibits a decided Mishnic colouring, which these books do not display, and which (in the Old Testament) is peculiar to itself. And if Ecclesiastes be assigned to any earlier period, the difference between it and contemporary writings will be the greater.

⁴ See, for instance, the *good* and *evil inclination* in iii. 11; vii. 8, 19; ix. 14, 15; x. 1, 4, 10; *merit* in iv. 10, 12; v. 15; vi. 4; vii. 1, 15; viii. 14; ix. 14, 16; x. 19; xi. 3; the *third tongue* in x. 11. The case is similar mostly with לעסק (p. 302), though this also represents occasionally a Hebrew expression; viz. חפץ (iii. 1, 17); דברה (iii. 18; viii. 2), דבר (vii. 8), and ? (xii. 4). But חפץ, דבר, דברה are not used in Aramaic; so that *some* translation in the case of these words was necessary.

Ecclesiastes, and could not have been used by him had he desired to express the ideas which they convey. I rather rest my inference on certain of the more characteristic words, occurring partly in the rabbinical quotations, partly in the verses restored by the Laudian Professor (while reserving my judgment, at least for the present, in the case of some amongst the latter). I hope also that I do not differ from the Professor on another point so widely as he seems from his concluding sentence to suppose; for I certainly think that, when his work is completed (which I trust may ere long be the case), he will have made both interesting and valuable additions to our knowledge of the Hebrew dialect spoken *circa* 200 B.C. The time however does not appear to me to be ripe for pronouncing an opinion on the degree in which his results will contribute to the more definite or secure solution of problems of the "higher criticism"; for the linguistic character of Ben-Sira's work can only be properly estimated when the restoration of a large part of it is complete, and when both the nature and the proportion of New Hebrew words recovered for it with certainty are exactly known.

S. R. DRIVER.

ONLY a few lines shall be added to Professor Driver's note. A statement on p. 297 seems to require re-examination. Most readers will certainly understand that Professor Delitzsch maintained the same view of the Hebrew quotations from Ben-Sira as Zunz. But as I read pp. 21 and 204 (cf. 181) of his work on Jewish poetry, this great Christian Talmudist held, not that Ben-Sira wrote "pure biblical Hebrew," but that his Hebrew presented many of those peculiarities which later on helped to form the idiom of rabbinism; in a word, that it was transitional, which is what we also thought to be the case. With regard to Professor Driver's explanations, I am delighted to have the opportunity of endorsing them, so far as they apply to anything that I have said or implied in my review. I thought that it was a complete restoration that was aimed at. I am happy to be assured of the contrary. I even hope that the restoration may be more complete than I had thought possible, and am certain that biblical critics will be at no loss to harmonize, as they have ever done, new data with old. Some at least of the New Hebrew words in the author's list fully satisfy my own judgment. I could wish