Notes on Amos.

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I.

1^1. נֹקֵד: occurring also in 2 Ki. 3^4 of Mesha. The current interpretation of the word explains it from the Arabic *nakad*, which is defined by Freytag (*Lex. s.v.*) as "a deformed and short-legged race of sheep which abounds in the Arabian province of Bahrein, . . . whose wool is considered to be the very finest." In support of this view may be adduced the Lexicons of Gesenius, Siegfried-Stade, Brown-Driver-Briggs, and the Commentaries of Driver, Nowack (on 7^{14}), Kittel on Kings, and G. A. Smith, *Twelve Prophets*, i. 76, note. The word is also made out by some scholars at the end of line 30 of the Mesha-stele; here Neubauer (*RP.* New Ser., ii.) would read our word "shepherd," but Smend-Socin (*Inschrift d. K. M.*) and Lidzbarski (*Nordsem. Epigraphik*, 326) would understand it as meaning "sheep," equivalent of the Arabic *nakad*.

But the Arabic parallel is provincial, and it seems a far cry to use such a special term for the general designation of shepherd as applied to Amos or Mesha. Should not the word, therefore, be explained as the equivalent of the Assyrian *nâkidu*, shepherd? This suggestion has already been made by Fried. Delitzsch in his *Prolegomena eines neuen Heb.-Aram. Wörterbuch zum AT*, p. 47. Nöldeke in his review of this work in *ZDMG* vol. xl. so categorically rejected this etymology in favor of the Arabic origin (p. 723) that Delitzsch's view seems to have passed into obscurity; it is not mentioned in Brown-Driver-Briggs. But I submit that the Assyrian etymology is the preferable one, as furnishing a more comprehensive idea.

I venture to present a further suggestion. May there not be a radical relation between the Assyrian *nâkidu* and the Hebrew נָגִיד, prince?

II.

$7^{2,5}$. מִי, in מִי יָקוּם יַעֲקֹב. The most common interpretation of מִי is to consider it "an appositive to the subject Jacob" (Nowack, *ad loc.*), that is, to render it literally with Driver (*ad loc.*) "*as who* shall Jacob stand?" But such Hebrew must be as bad as such English! The Gr. reading יָקִים gives good sense, but as Nowack points out, does not suit the following clause. Accordingly Oort ("De Profet Amos," *Th. Tijd.* xiv.), followed by Wellhausen (*Die kleinen Propheten*), has suggested that מִי יָקוּם stands for מַה יָקוּם, which was then written מִי יָקוּם, and that מִי was then erroneously pointed מִי.

Such an emendation is to be preferred, but for the fact that a similar construction occurs in Ru. 3^{16}, where Naomi addresses Ruth upon her return from Boaz with the words מִי אַתְּ. Again we are told that this means "als wer d. h. in welcher Lage bist du, wie steht es mit dir?" (Nowack, *ad loc.*). The rendering is as poor as in the first text.

Now the passage in Ruth vouches for the form מִי in Amos. Thus the two instances give מִי used in a question and with evidently neuter meaning. The thought is somewhat as follows: "How can Jacob stand?" "How art thou [here]?" It seems necessary, therefore, to consider this מִי as distinct from the personal מִי. Either it may be taken as a parallel, perhaps colloquial, form of מַה, which is improbable (the two forms are kept distinct so far as our evidence goes); or else it is an interrogative particle otherwise lost to us. Cf. the Talmudic מַאי (מַי) = *what, how.*

III.

7^{4}. הַחֹלֶק. This is generally understood of Israel's "portion," or Yahwe's "portion," *i.e.* of land; compare Mic. 2^{4}; also חֵלְקָה in Jer. 12^{10}. However, a glance at the commentaries shows the trouble this simple word affords. In opposition to תְּהוֹם, "Great Ocean," we should expect a word like הָאָרֶץ, or תֵּבֵל, which latter Krenkel has suggested (*ZWTh.* ix. 271).

Certainly *Tehom* is a strong expression, and its counterpart ought to denote the earth as distinguished from the primeval flood. May we not understand the word in the sense of Arabic *halaḳ*, create? The suggestion is given additional weight by the appearance of

חלק in this sense in the Hebrew Ben Sirach: 31^{13}, where it is parallel to ברא; and 31^{28}, where it is parallel to יצר in verse ^{27}. The presence of this meaning for חלק has given rise to an extensive debate as to its implication for the age of the newly found Hebrew text. Such scholars as Nöldeke, however, hold that this root meaning is native to the Hebrew (*ZATW* 1900, p. 1). The presence of the root in Amos helps us trace back its history to an early stage in Hebrew literature, and must have weight in estimating the Hebrew text of Ben Sirach.

In the passage in Amos, then, החלק (howsoever vocalized) would be the Creation, the Kosmos, as separated out of the primeval waters; while the latter, the great *Tehom*, was conceived as existing from eternity. I would therefore translate: "And (the fire) ate up the great Deep and then began to eat up the Created World."