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THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTICUS: ITS CONTENTS  
AND CHARACTER.

AMONG the editions of the Book of Ecclesiasticus, some fifty of which are more or less well known, there is one by J. Drusius (Franckeræ, 1596), which is interesting as having been undertaken by the desire of Archbishop Whitgift. The Reformers generally had a very high opinion of the work of the Son of Sirach, and from Luther downwards have used and quoted it, if not to establish doctrine, at any rate to confirm moral and religious teaching, and "for example of life and instruction of manners." "Ex eo certius," says Bullinger,<sup>1</sup> "et minore cum periculo discent moralem philosophiam studiosi, quam ex ullo Platone aut Aristotele." This is questioned, not so much on the ground of defects or error in the subject matter, as on the supposed absence of all system in the treatise, and the impossibility of discovering any methodical principle in the utterances of the author. Some commentators deny that there is any unity in the various portions of which the work consists, asserting that it is a mere *farrago* of apothegms and sayings gathered by different authors, from different sources and at different times.<sup>2</sup> Ewald<sup>3</sup> knows all about the composition of the book. According to this omniscient critic, the writer, up to Chapter xxxvi. 22, merely used two collections of proverbs already existing, dating respectively from the third and fourth century B.C.; his own composition com-

<sup>1</sup> *Præfat. in Vers. Leo. Judæ*, quoted by Arnald.

<sup>2</sup> Sonntag's edition (Riga, 1792) is entitled, *De Jes. Sirac. Eccles. non libro sed libri farragine*.

<sup>3</sup> *Gesch. d. V. Isr.*, vol. iv. pp. 300 ff, etc.

mences at xxxvi. 23, and extends to li. 30, excepting the song of praise in xxxix. 12-35, which is the production of the author of the second collection. Eichhorn<sup>1</sup> finds in it three distinct books, which, although now united, belong to different authors and ages, viz. i.-xxiii., xxiv.-xlii. 14, xlii. 15-1. 24. But all such hypotheses are annulled by a calm and unprejudiced study of the work. There is a marked individuality running through all its pages, a similarity of spirit and treatment, which can only be accounted for by identity of authorship. The genuine Prologue prefixed by the translator to his version certainly ascribes the work to one author. "My grandfather Jesus," he says, "who had much given himself to the reading of the law, and the prophets, and the other books of our fathers,<sup>2</sup> and had gotten good practice therein, was drawn on also himself to write something pertaining to learning and wisdom; to the intent that those who are desirous to learn, having become conversant with the same, might make the more progress in living according to the law." A somewhat different account is given in the other Prologue, found in Cod. 248, and transferred thence to the Complutensian edition, and prefixed to our Authorised Version. It is taken from the Synopsis of Sacred Scripture falsely attributed to St. Athanasius, and printed among his works.<sup>3</sup> According to this document, "Jesus not only gathered the grave short sentences of wise men that had been before him, but himself also uttered some of his own, full of much understanding and wisdom." He, dying before the book was quite completed, left it to his son Sirach, who in turn bequeathed it to his son Jesus. This grandson of the original writer "compiled it all orderly into one volume, and called it Wisdom, intituling it both by his own name, his father's,

<sup>1</sup> *Einleit. in d. Apok.*, p. 50, etc.

<sup>2</sup> We may here note that this is the earliest mention of the threefold designation of the Old Testament Scriptures.

<sup>3</sup> *Opp.*, T. ii. p. 173, Ben.

and his grandfather's names." Much credit, however, must not be attached to this spurious Prologue, inasmuch as it is a writing of late date, and is not consistent in some of its statements with the genuine Preface of the Translator. That the author embodied in his collection proverbs and apothegms, preserved by oral tradition or committed to writing, is most probable; but a careful study of the work shews him to have been not merely a collector, who was satisfied with recording what came to hand, but a man of experience and reflection, who passed all that he acquired through the alembic of his own mind, and thus composed a treatise which may be truly called original. The wisdom of many men and many ages is here collected by one master mind, which has elaborated out of its heterogeneous materials a solid single work. Can we discover any system in the disposal of its various parts? Are there any broad divisions which separate it into fairly well defined segments? We think such are to be found.

One difficulty, however, that meets us in endeavouring to discern the author's mind in arranging the book, is occasioned by the violent dislocation which some parts have suffered. Up to Chapter xxx. 24, all MSS. agree in arrangement; but between that passage and Chapter xxxvii. great confusion prevails. Immediately after the Verse: "Envy and wrath shorten the life, and carefulness bringeth age before the time," the uncials and the cursives give a passage which is totally unconnected with the previous matter. It is found in the Anglican version in xxxiii. 16, where it is rendered:<sup>1</sup> "[I awaked up last of all], as one that gathereth after the grape-gatherers: by the blessing of the Lord I profited, and filled my winepress like a gatherer of grapes." These MSS. run on from this point as in the Authorised Version unto Chapter xxxvi. 11: "Gather all

<sup>1</sup> The Greek is: *ὡς καλαμώνομος ὀπίσω τρυγητῶν ἐν εὐλογίᾳ Κυρίου ἐφθασα, καὶ ὡς τρυγῶν ἐπλήρωσα ληνόν.*

the tribes of Israel"; and then, in the midst of the prayer, they suddenly introduce the remainder of Chapter xxx. 25 : " A cheerful and good heart will have a care of its meat and diet," which is almost ludicrously out of place. Then follow Chapters xxxi., xxxii., xxxiii. to verse 16, " I awaked up last of all," where they insert, " And I gave them inheritance as from the beginning,"<sup>1</sup> proceeding with the rest of the prayer, which was interrupted by the former arrangement, thus : " O Lord, have mercy upon the people that is called by Thy name " (xxxvi. 11, 12), and so on, as in the Anglican version. Such is the disposition of parts in all the Greek MS. of which we have any information. Whether any of the cursives depart from this order we have no means of judging, as the edition of Holmes and Parsons, upon which at present we have to rely for our knowledge of them, is silent on this point. An examination of the reprints of the three great uncials, the Sinaitic, the Vatican, and the Alexandrian, shews that they agree in the strange dislocation which we have mentioned. Two of the ancient versions, the Old Latin and the Syriac, introduce a change. In them the chapters and verses are disposed as in our English Bibles. The Complutensian Polyglot, alone of ancient editions, has preserved this order. This book, in the case of Ecclesiasticus, coincides in its readings almost absolutely with the cursive numbered by Holmes and Parsons 248, a MS. of the fourteenth century in the Vatican Library. Whether this MS. was the actual authority which the Complutensian editors followed, we cannot tell. But we know, from internal evidence, that our English translators used the Complutensian Polyglot as the text from which their version was made; hence they were enabled to preserve what we must consider the original arrangement. How it came to pass that a book edited from late MSS., which are full of interpolations and quasi-corrections,

<sup>1</sup> Reading *κατεκληρονόμεσα* instead of *κατακληρονόμεσον*.

managed to secure that symmetry which had for ages been lost, is a question which is still unsolved. The prevalence and use of the Old *Itala* may have had some influence in the matter. This version, which is supposed to date from the second century, must have been made from a Greek copy of earlier origin than that of all other existing MSS. Fritzsche's explanation of the disturbance in the order seems very probable. He supposes that our present MSS. are all derived from one codex, the mother of them all in primitive times. A certain sheet or roll of this codex began with the words, *λαμπρὰ καρδία* (xxxiii. 13, Tisch.), and ended with *κἀγὼ ἔσχατος ἠγρύπνησα* (xxxvi. 16); the next sheet commenced with *ὡς καλαμώμενος* (xxx. 25), and closed with *σύναγε πάσας φυλάς Ἰακώβ* (xxxiii. 13), which clause was followed in the next sheet by *καὶ κατακληρονόμησον* (xxxvi. 16). By some accident these sheets got confused—the second took the place of the first, and thus the whole passage was distorted, and in some portions rendered unintelligible. The contents of these "sheets" occupy, I find, respectively just five columns of Tischendorf's reprint of the Sinaitic MS., a fact which helps to confirm the above solution of the difficulty.<sup>1</sup> On the ground of common sense this explanation is especially admissible. It is fortunate for English readers that our so-called Authorised Version in this matter follows the Complutensian Polyglot, and that they are thus spared the confusion and incongruity offered by the usual editions of the Septuagint.<sup>2</sup> We may take the order found in the Latin Vulgate and our Anglican version as original, and base our remarks on these editions. It might be very possible to re-arrange the work under certain heads, and thus to make it more in accordance with our

<sup>1</sup> Fritzsche notes an analogous dislocation, capable of a similar explanation, in the MS. of Lysias. *Kurzgef. exeg. Handb. zu d. Apok.*, vol. v. p. 170. Similar confusion is found in the MSS. of the Greek version of Proverbs.

<sup>2</sup> In Mr. Field's edition, published by S.P.C.K., the chapters and verses are arranged as in the English Bibles.

notions of a logical whole; but we are not justified in regarding its contents as hopelessly disordered in the form in which they have reached us, nor would any such formal treatise suit the genius of Hebrew literature. It is sufficient for the author to be conscious of unity of purpose; and if the variety of his illustrations, the rapidity of transition, and the temporary postponement of a subject and its resumption after an interval, occasion a seeming confusion, yet the one principle underlying the whole treatise binds the members together, and makes it possible to trace its plan and connection. Some words of St. Jerome<sup>1</sup> have induced persons to consider that Ecclesiasticus was intended to reflect the three reputed works of Solomon. His remark is this: "Fertur et Panæretos Jesu filii Sirach liber, et alius pseudepigraphus, qui Sapientia Salomonis inscribitur. Quorum priorem hebraicum reperi, non Ecclesiasticum, ut apud Latinos, sed Parabolas prænotatum, cui juncti erant Ecclesiastes, et Canticum Canticorum; ut similitudinem Salomonis, non solum librorum numero, sed etiam materiarum genere cœquaret." Certainly in our book the maxims and apothegms correspond to Proverbs, the reflections on life and manners to Ecclesiastes, and the praise of Wisdom and of great men to Canticles; and, taking this view, we might make a threefold division of the work. But this would be far from satisfactory, as the first two subjects continually intertwine, and could not be separated without an arbitrary re-arrangement of the materials. Fritzsche, the most eminent modern critic on this book, has divided the contents into seven sections, omitting part of Chapter 1. and the Appendix li.; and, in minor details with some modifications, I am disposed to adopt this arrangement, only reminding the reader that the special subjects of the sections are not rigorously maintained, that the same idea

<sup>1</sup> *Præfat. in Lib. Salamonis.*

recurs frequently under varied treatment, and that the connection of thought is rather general than particular. The form of the work itself tends to make this disconnection more marked. The learning and experience of the author take the shape of proverbial enunciations in rhythmical order. The Hebrew parallelism of the original is preserved in the translation, and the uncials give the work in stichometrical form, though they do not always quite agree in the arrangement of clauses. Thus each paragraph is complete in itself, and is not of necessity logically connected with what has gone before and what is to follow. Some portions are strictly lyrical, some are didactic and more prosaic, but there is an attempt at grouping the whole material. The author seems to have written at various times and in various moods, gathering up the wisdom of others, and adding to his collection as opportunity offered. Scribes have endeavoured to discover the divisions of the work, and have inserted in the MSS. certain headings which are more or less appropriate. Some of these are printed in the margin of our English Bibles. They are the following: xviii. 30, *Ἐγκράτεια ψυχῆς*; xx. 27, *Λόγοι παραβολῶν*; xxiii. 7, *Παιδεία στόματος*; xxiv. 1, *Αἴνεσις σοφίας*; xxx. 1, *Περὶ τέκνων*; xxx. 14, *Περὶ ὑγείας*; xxxii. 1, *Περὶ ἡγουμένων*; xxxiii. 24, *Περὶ δούλων* (xxxiv. 1, "Of dreams," Authorised Version); xlv. 1, *Πατέρων ὕμνος*; li. 1, *Προσευχὴ Ἰησοῦ υἱοῦ Σειράχ*. These interpolations have no authority, and were probably added as guides to readers, Ecclesiasticus being one of the chief Church reading books.

In arranging the materials before us, we see at once that the natural conclusion is found in Chapter l. 27-29: "Jesus, the son of Sirach, hath written in this book the instruction of understanding and knowledge," etc. The last chapter forms a kind of appendix, having been found probably by the translator among his grandfather's papers, and placed by him in its present position, without much regard to the



propriety of its situation. The Praise of the Fathers, contained in Chapters xlv.-l., is a section complete in itself; the preceding portions of the work are those which we have, if possible, to distribute and group.

Now the opening words seem to me to give a clue to the author's design in writing and to the arrangement which satisfied his plan, such as it was; so that the writer of the spurious Prologue could say that the book was "compiled orderly into one volume, and called Wisdom." "All wisdom cometh from the Lord, and is with him for ever." This is the first verse of the book, and it strikes the keynote of the whole treatise. For what is its object? Is it not to treat of wisdom, divine and human, its source, its nature, how it resides in God, how it has manifested itself in the world, the lessons which it teaches, the duties to which it calls? Here is a field that contains all the obligations of life; here is scope for descanting on all the varied relations, religious, moral, political, social, which belong to a man in virtue of his position in the world. It is no abstract notion of Wisdom that engages the writer's pen. He takes no high philosophical view, but uses his study of the past, his own experience and observation, to shew how wisdom is the best object of man's life, how it has guided Israel in all time, how it leads a man to be a devout worshipper, an obedient citizen, a good parent; how it descends even to the teaching of manners and social conduct; how it not only directs kings, judges, and rulers in the management of their offices, but informs the physician, the husbandman, the handicraftsman. "Sapientia," says St. Augustine<sup>1</sup> after Cicero, "est rerum humanarum divinarumque scientia"; but in the eyes of Siracides the term *σοφία* would comprise not only what is usually understood by that term, speculative wisdom, but also *φρόνησις*, practical wisdom, the knowledge

<sup>1</sup> *Contr. Acad.*, ii. 16. *Comp. Cic., De Off.*, i. 43; ii. 2.

of things useful for the purposes of life.<sup>1</sup> Having then the design of illustrating wisdom, the author troubles himself little about forming any definite plan, being content with the virtual unity which his design implies; at the same time he groups his materials into three great sections, each ending with a prayer or hymn. The first division comprises Chapters i.–xxii., and closes with the prayer xxii. 27, xxiii. 1–6; the second extends to Chapter xxxv. 20, terminating with the prayer xxxvi. 1–17; the third concludes with the hymn of praise on the works of creation, xlii. 15 and xliii. This is followed by “The Praise of the Fathers.” Each of the parts, I suppose, was intended to contain a section or sections on Wisdom, either explaining its nature, or apostrophising it, or dealing with it under some of its various aspects, the original subject being thus, as it were, recalled and re-stated. Thus in the first great division we have many portions dealing with Wisdom, shewing her origin and nature, her fruits and effects, and exhorting to use and profit by her. It may be interesting to give the opening paragraphs, arranged as in the uncials (according to Hebrew parallelism) in stiches.

- 1 All wisdom cometh from the Lord,  
And is with Him for ever.
- 2 The sand of the sea, and the drops of rain,  
And the days of eternity, who can number?
- 3 The height of heaven, and the breadth of earth,  
And the great deep, and wisdom, who can discover?
- 4 Before all kings was wisdom created,  
And the understanding of prudence from everlasting.<sup>2</sup>
- 6 To whom was the root of wisdom revealed?  
And who knew her subtle devices?
- 8 One is wise, greatly to be feared,  
One sitting upon his throne, the Lord.

<sup>1</sup> Thus Chap. i. 4, σοφία and σύνεσις φρονήσεως are regarded as convertible terms. Comp. Prov. iii. 13, 19.

<sup>2</sup> Verse 5 in the Authorised Version is an interpolation found only in late MSS. So also Verse 7.

- 9 He created her,  
And saw and reckoned her,<sup>1</sup>
- 10 And poured her forth upon all his works, with all flesh,  
according to his gift,<sup>2</sup>  
And bestowed her upon them that love Him.
- 11 The fear of the Lord is honour, and glory,  
And gladness, and a crown of rejoicing.
- 12 The fear of the Lord delighteth the heart,  
And giveth joy and gladness and a long life.
- 13 With him who feareth the Lord it shall be well at the last,  
And in the day of his death he shall be blessed.
- 14 The beginning of wisdom is to fear the Lord,  
And with the faithful in the womb was she created.<sup>3</sup>
- 15 With men<sup>4</sup> she prepared an everlasting dwelling,  
And with their seed shall she continually remain.
- 16 The fulness of wisdom is to fear the Lord,  
And she maketh them drunken with her fruits.
- 17 She filleth all her house with things desirable,  
And the garners with her produce.
- 18 The fear of the Lord is a crown of wisdom,  
Making peace and sound healing to flourish.<sup>5</sup>
- 19 And He saw and reckoned her,  
He showered forth skill and practical knowledge,  
And exalted the glory of them that hold her fast.
- 20 The root of wisdom is to fear the Lord,  
And her branches are long life.

This section closes with the prayer against sins of word and concupiscence (xxii. 27) :

O that One would on my mouth set a watch,<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ἐξήριθμησεν, which the commentators (referring to Job xxviii. 27) think is a false rendering of the original. The word should have been ἐξηγήσατο, "revealed," "made known."

<sup>2</sup> The Authorised Version divides Vers. 9, 10 erroneously.

<sup>3</sup> A popular expression of the opinion that early virtue is the gift of God. Comp. Job xxxi. 18; Wisd. viii. 19, 20.

<sup>4</sup> That is, with the Jewish race, the peculiar people.

<sup>5</sup> The rest of the verse in the English version is spurious. The next clause is omitted in the Complutensian Polygl., and in our version.

<sup>6</sup> The prayer begins in the form of a question: "Who will set," etc.? So xxiii. 2.

- And on my lips a seal discreet,  
 That I fall not by my tongue,  
 And it destroy me not.
- xxiii. 1 O Lord, Father and Ruler of my life,  
 Leave me not to the counsel of the same,<sup>1</sup>  
 Suffer me not to fall by them.
- 2 O that One would set scourges on my thought,  
 And the discipline of wisdom on my heart,  
 That they [the scourges] spare me not for my ignorances,  
 And that it [discipline] pass not by my sins;
- 3 So that my ignorances may not increase,  
 Nor my sins abound,  
 And I fall before mine adversaries,  
 And mine enemy rejoice over me.<sup>2</sup>
- 4 O Lord, Father and God of my life,  
 Let me not have eyes that look lustfully,
- 5 And avert from me concupiscence;
- 6 Let not greediness of appetite and lust of the flesh take hold  
 of me,  
 And give me not over unto a shameless mind.

The next great division contains the magnificent encomium of Wisdom, as the foundation of the fear of God and the guide of life (Chap. xxiv.). This is most carefully arranged in stichometrical form, and is complete in itself. Bishop Lowth translated it into Hebrew, and Paulus and Ewald have published versions in their own tongue.<sup>3</sup> It consists of seventy-two members. In the first two verses the author introduces Wisdom into the congregation of Israel, and then (Vers. 3-22), makes her utter her own praises, telling of her origin and her mighty acts in behalf of the favoured people. The author again speaks in his own person, Vers. 23-29, of Wisdom as exemplified in the

<sup>1</sup> That is, my lips.

<sup>2</sup> There are many minor additions in the Authorised Version, resting on the authority of the Compl.

<sup>3</sup> Lowth, *Did. Poetry*, Lect. 24, vol. ii. pp. 181 ff., ed. 1816. *De Sacr. Poes. Hebr. Praelect.*, pp. 242 ff. Oxon. 1821. Fritzsche, who has skilfully analysed this section, prints Lowth's Hebrew version in his commentary, pp. 134 ff.

Law, and, Vers. 30-34, of his own connexion with her. "I," he says:—

I also came forth as a canal from a river,  
 And as an aqueduct into a pleasure-ground.  
 I said, I will water my garden,  
 I will make my border freely drink;  
 And lo! my canal became a river,  
 And my river became a sea.  
 I will yet make discipline shine as the morning,  
 And I will shew her even afar.  
 I will yet pour forth doctrine as prophecy,  
 And will leave it to everlasting ages.  
 See ye that I laboured not for myself alone,  
 But for all them that seek her out.

This division terminates with the Prayer for Israel, in which God is besought to have mercy upon his people, and to pour forth his wrath upon the heathen (xxxvi. 1-17).

Hearken, O Lord, to the prayer of thy suppliants,  
 According to the blessing of Aaron over thy people;  
 And all who dwell upon earth shall know,  
 That Thou art the Lord, the eternal God.

The third section contains a description of the truly wise man (xxxix. 1-11), ended by a Hymn of Praise to the Lord as displaying his wisdom and power in the works of nature. This is a truly sublime poem, which has no exact parallel in the writings of the Old Testament. It is composed of one hundred and four clauses, arranged in seven groups of varying length.<sup>1</sup> Undertaking to magnify the works of the Lord, the author confesses his inability to treat his theme worthily. "The Lord," he says, "hath not given power to the saints to set forth fully all his marvels." He proceeds to shew how God not only created all things, but also adorned and beautified them. He particularizes some of his glorious works:—

<sup>1</sup> This is Fritzsche's view.

- xliii. 1 The pride of the height, the pure firmament,  
The figure of the heaven with its glorious show!
- 2 The sun when it appeareth proclaimeth Him,  
At its rising a marvellous vessel, a work of the most High.
- 6 And the moon, amidst all, keeps to her season,  
Announces times, and is a sign for the world.<sup>1</sup>
- 11 Look upon the rainbow, and bless Him who made it;  
Very beautiful is it in its lustre.
- 12 It compasseth the heaven with a circle of glory,  
The hands of the Most High spread it forth.
- 13 By his commandment He maketh the snow to fall apace,<sup>2</sup>  
And hasteneth the lightnings of his judgment.
- 20 The cold north wind bloweth,  
And the water is congealed into ice;  
On every gathering of water it makes its resting place,  
And the water putteth on, as it were, a breastplate.
- 24 They that sail the sea tell of the danger thereof,  
And we marvel at that which we hear with our ears.
- 32 Many things that are hidden are greater than these,  
For but few of his works have we seen.
- 33 For the Lord made all things,  
And to the pious gave He wisdom.

From the praise of God's works in the lower creation to the "praise of famous men," who have served Him well in their generation, is a natural transition. This leads us to the final section of the book, with its epilogue and appendix.

The above seems to me the only plan of the work which its present shape affords. The elaborate distribution of its several parts, which has been set forth by Fritzsche, is very useful as an analysis of its contents, but is less satisfactory as a view of the whole. The subjects are so intermixed, a matter treated of is so suddenly interrupted and resumed after a long interval, the virtual repetitions are so frequent,

<sup>1</sup> Αἰῶνος, which Fr. takes to mean "the future."

<sup>2</sup> Fr. supposes that the translator has mistaken the Hebrew, and that the correct rendering would be, "The snow maketh haste." The Sinait. MS. (with which, for a wonder, the Compl. agrees), reads *κατέπαυσε* for *κατέσπευσε*. The Angl. here deserts its usual authority.

that the only feasible arrangement of the materials before us is a topical one. Collecting under certain heads the miscellaneous matter of this book, I shall here endeavour to give Siracides' views on theological, moral, social, and political questions. The references are to the English version, which, though made from a corrupt text, full of interpolations, and very badly translated, is sufficiently accurate for our purpose.

The author's conception of God is that of a true Israelite of the Old Testament type, who has travelled indeed, and seen the religious observances of foreigners and heathens, but has kept himself wholly pure from alien taint, and honours the God of his fathers with an intelligent worship, which rests not on mere outward observances, but on the devotion of the heart (v. 5, 6, vii. 9, 10, xxxv. 1-7). He indulges in no speculations as to the nature of God; he is thoroughly orthodox, and quite content with the revelation of the Old Testament. There is no trace of Philo-ism or allegory, or of the Alexandrian philosophy in his book.<sup>1</sup> He

<sup>1</sup> This statement needs perhaps some defence. In xvii. 17 it is said (the first part of the verse is spurious): "He set a ruler (*ἡγούμενον*) over every people; but Israel is the Lord's portion." And it is argued that the author here takes up a position opposed to Palestinian theology, implying that every heathen nation had its guardian angel, but that Jehovah Himself ruled Israel. A reference to the Sept., at Deut. xxxii. 8, 9, and to Dan. x. 13, 20, 21, shews that the doctrine is simply that of the O. T., and has nothing peculiarly Alexandrian about it. In xlv. 16 we read: "Enoch pleased the Lord and was translated, an example of repentance to the generations." Certainly there seems to be nothing in the Hebrew text of Gen. v. 24 to account for the expression here. The words *ἐντέθησεν* and *μετετέθη* are from the Sept. But Philo (II. p. 4) allegorises the story into something very like the notion of Siracides: *ἡ γὰρ μετάθεσις τροπὴν ἐμφαίνει καὶ μεταβολὴν κ.τ.λ.* Hence it is said that here is an evident example of Jewish-Alexandrian exegesis. Now Philo lived some two centuries after our author, and, if his exposition was not original, he must have derived it from the same tradition which is followed in Ecclesiasticus. Fritzsche gathers from Gen. v. 21, 22, that Enoch did not live a pious life till after the birth of Methuselah in his sixty-sixth year, and that thus the language of our text is simply a deduction from the Hebrew Scripture. Others (as Corn. a Lap. *in loc.*) would explain the words as meaning: Enoch was translated, "quia sua sancta vita homines sui sæculi docebat penitentiam, et ad eam trahebat." At any rate there is no reason for finding anything peculiarly Alexandrian in the

is a Palestinian Hebrew to the backbone. Thus, with him, God is an eternal Being, who in all the ages has neither increased nor lessened (xlii. 21); He is the Creator and absolute Lord of all things (xliii. 33), and by his word all things consist (*ib.* Ver. 26; comp. Col. i. 17); He sees and knows all things; his eyes are ten thousand times brighter than the sun, looking upon all the ways of men and considering that which is most secret (xxiii. 19). Man's thought cannot reach to Him, cannot magnify Him as He is. Exalt Him as much as we can, we can offer no worthy praise; He is very great and terrible; marvellous are his works, of which we see but a small portion; we may speak much and still come short of Him, for, to sum it up, He is All<sup>1</sup> (xliii. 27 ff.). And He is merciful as He is almighty; his loving-kindness is great and his compassion unto those that turn to Him (xvii. 29). He knows how frail man is, therefore He is patient, and poureth forth his mercy upon him (xviii. 9-13). He hears the prayers of all who call upon Him without partiality; He despises not the supplication of the fatherless, nor the widow when she poureth out her complaint. The prayer of the humble pierces the clouds, and he that serveth the Lord shall be accepted with favour (xxxv. 13-17). But He is just and strict, and punishes the sinner. As his mercy is great, so is his correction also; He judges a man according to his works; no multitude of sinners shall stay his vengeance; He corrects the guilty in this life by putting in operation against them natural agencies,—death, bloodshed, strife,

passage. The same verdict must be pronounced in the case of other supposed Alexandrianisms alleged by Gfrörer, *Philo und die jüdisch-alex. Theos.*, vol. ii. pp. 18 ff, and Dähne, *Gesch. der jüd. al. Rel. Phil.*, vol. ii. pp. 141 ff. The marked absence of allegory is a strong argument against Alexandrian influence.

<sup>1</sup> Τὸ πᾶν ἐστὶν αὐτός. This is not Pantheism: it means merely that God pervades, determines, all things; as Corn. a Lap. says (*in loc.*): "causaliter Deus est omne, quia in omnibus est præsens, ea efficiens, conservans, dirigens, movens, gubernans, et in omnibus mirabilem se exhibens."



famine, sickness, tribulation, wind,<sup>1</sup> fire, hail, and storm (xvi. 12, 13, xxxix. 9, 28-30). The idea of God enunciated in Ecclesiasticus is said<sup>2</sup> to be greatly wanting in spirituality and to contain unscriptural elements. Some commentators seem to think themselves bound to find error, more or less pronounced, in all the Deutero-canonical books. I am not here concerned to defend them, my object being to see what Siracides says, rather than to wield the lance in support of his orthodoxy. But I may say in passing that the author's object led him to direct attention to God's relation to the outer world, and to man's active duties therein, and that the vague charge of unspirituality shews a failure in realizing the standpoint of the writer. It will be found also that many of the expressions objected to form no part of the original work, but are accretions of much later date, like those which are so numerous in the Septuagint version of Proverbs.<sup>3</sup> I would also caution the reader of the Anglican version against forming his idea of the contents of Ecclesiasticus from a perusal of that rendering. Many striking passages which seem to anticipate Christian doctrine are mere glosses of late introduction, as will be seen at once on comparing the Authorised Version with Tischendorf's edition, which is a reprint of the Vatican MS., or with Mr. Field's, which is founded on the Alexandrian, and in which the interpolations are for the most part relegated to the position of foot-notes.

Next in importance to the writer's conception of the Deity

<sup>1</sup> In xxxix. 28 the word translated "spirits," *πνεύματα*, ought doubtless to have been rendered "winds," as the author is here referring to natural causes, and his view of the spiritual world is decidedly Sadducaic.

<sup>2</sup> See Dr. Bissell's *Introduction*, ap. Lange and Schaff's *Commentary on the O. T.*

<sup>3</sup> *E.g.* Ecclus. xi. 16, which seems to imply that God created error and darkness with sinners, is absent from the Vatican, Sinaitic, and Alexandrian MSS. and from most cursives. It is found in the Old Latin, and has therefore satisfied the orthodoxy of Romish critics, even if regarded as not spurious. *Comp. Prov.* xvi. 4.

comes his view of Wisdom. Already in Job, Wisdom is represented as the thought of God whereby the future creation was present with Him eternally (Job xxviii. 20-28), and as developing the moral growth of man:—

“ He saw it and He declared it,  
He established and searched it out ;  
And unto man He said :  
Lo, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom,  
And to depart from evil is understanding.”

In the Book of Proverbs the idea is further advanced. Wisdom speaks of herself (viii. 22-31) as possessed by God in the beginning of his way, ordained from everlasting, with Him in creation, daily his delight, rejoicing always before Him, and having pleasure in the sons of men. This is an adumbration of the Divine Logos or Sophia. But a still nearer approach to hypostatizing Wisdom is found in Ecclesiasticus. She is with God from everlasting, who formed (ἐκτίσεν)<sup>1</sup> her before all things, and hath revealed her in the works of creation and in the government and preservation of the world (i. 1, 4, 9, xxiv. 3, 9). He bestows her upon those who love and obey Him (i. 10, 26) ; but she is bidden especially to make her dwelling in Jacob and her inheritance in Israel (xxiv. 8).<sup>2</sup> She speaks of herself:—

I came forth from the mouth of the Most High,  
And as a mist I covered the earth ;  
I tabernacled in the heights,  
And my throne was on a pillar of cloud ;  
The circuit of heaven I compassed alone,  
In the depths of abysses I walked ;  
In the waves of the sea and in all the earth,  
And in every people and nation, I got a possession . . .

<sup>1</sup> Bp. Bull notes that κτίσω is used of any kind of production, *Def. Fid. Nic.*, II. vi. 8. See Canon Liddon's *Bampt. Lect.*, vol. ii. pp. 92 ff. ed. 1867. We may here note that the quotation (note t. p. 96), πηγὴ σοφίας λόγος Θεοῦ, is spurious.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Bar. iii. 14, 29, 36, 37.

In the holy tabernacle I served before Him,  
 And so in Sion was I established . . .  
 As a terebinth I spread forth my branches,  
 And my branches were branches of glory and grace. . . .

We see Wisdom here in her two characters: as Divine, original, unlimited; and as human, derived, limited. In the latter notion she has her sphere in law, particularly the Law of Moses. "All these things," says the author (xxiv. 23), "are [authorised by] the book of the covenant of God, even the law which Moses commanded as an heritage unto the congregations of Jacob." This is her practical side. She teaches discipline and obedience, knowledge and right conduct. Hence are used the correlative expressions, *παιδεία, σύνεσις, φρόνησις, ἐπιστήμη*. And Wisdom becomes in effect equivalent to the fear of God, piety, and true religion. For "all wisdom," every kind and manner thereof, "is the fear of the Lord, and in all wisdom is the performance of the law" (xix. 25).

Before seeing how Wisdom guides man in various relations of life let us glance at the author's view of man's own position in the world. He was created by God, and endowed with various gifts, a definite time of life, power and strength, dominion over all things, the faculty of appreciating objects around him, intelligence and prudence (xvii. 1-13). Some are placed in high position, sanctified and exalted; some are cursed and brought low; for "as the clay is in the potter's hand, to fashion it at his pleasure, so man is in the hand of his Creator" (xxxiii. 12, 13).<sup>1</sup> But this foreordination of God does not deprive man of responsibility. He is possessed of free will, and if he sins it is his own act, and he cannot charge God with his faults. Very solemnly says Siracides:—

The parallelism with Rom. ix. 20, 21 is obvious.

Say not thou, Through the Lord I fell away ;  
 For thou oughtest not to do the things which He hateth. . . .<sup>1</sup>  
 He Himself made man from the beginning,  
 And left him in the hand of his free counsel ;  
 If thou wilt, thou shalt keep the commandments,  
 And to act faithfully is a matter of good pleasure.  
 Before thee He hath set fire and water,  
 To whichever thou wilt thou shalt stretch forth thy hand.  
 Before man is life and death,  
 And whichever he liketh shall be given him (xv. 14-17).

Yet there is forgiveness for those who turn from sin. God is merciful; He knows that flesh and blood will imagine evil,<sup>2</sup> that men are but earth and ashes, and to them that repent He granteth return (xvii. 24-32). Man's life is full of misery; great travail and a heavy yoke is the lot of every child of Adam. Present care, wrath, envy, trouble, unquietness, watching for coming woe, fear of death,—these things appertain to him that sitteth on a throne, and to him that is humbled to the earth (xl. 1-7). The only happy man is the wise man, who fears God and keeps his law (xiv. 20-27). Man is rewarded or punished in this life according to his works; for there is no praise in Hades, there is no seeking of dainties in the grave. The penalty or the reward may come late, but will fall surely either on the man or his children (xi. 26; xvii. 27, 28; xli. 13). Of the doctrine of the Resurrection of the body there is no trace whatever in Ecclesiasticus;<sup>3</sup> and even the references to a belief in a future state are ambiguous. Some of the passages which seem to support it are not genuine.

<sup>1</sup> Comp. James i. 13, 14.

<sup>2</sup> This is the reading of the Compl. and some uncials; the alternative is, "an evil man considers flesh and blood."

<sup>3</sup> There is one passage, viz. xlvi. 11, which seems to contradict this statement. We read there: "Blessed are they that see thee and have been adorned (*κεμοσμημένοι* not *κεμοιμημένοι*) with love, for we also shall surely live." But the author is most probably merely expressing his confident hope that he shall live to see the happy time when Elijah shall return and restore glory to Israel.

Thus the words in xix. 19: "They that do things that please Him shall receive the fruit of immortality," are found only in one very untrustworthy late uncial and in the cursive on which the Complutensian is based, and are owing doubtless to an annotator with a remembrance of a passage in the Revelation in his mind. It has been held that the words in vii. 17: "The punishment of the ungodly is fire and worms," shew that the author believed in the future punishment of the wicked. I am not prepared to say that he did not; but this expression does not necessarily bear this interpretation. The terms are of course derived from Isaiah lxvi. 24; and we, regarding the passage by the light cast upon it by later Scriptures (St. Mark ix. 44), see in it a reference to the torments of hell fire. To a Jew of that age it would more probably appear to be an allusion to the abominations of the valley of Hinnom, and to the dishonoured burial of an evil man with all its horrid circumstances.<sup>1</sup> Certainly the expressions of Siracides, though capable of being paralleled by citations from canonical Scripture, are very far from hopeful touching a future life.

Who will praise the most High in Hades,  
 Instead of them who live and give thanks?  
 Thanksgiving perisheth from the dead as from one that is not:  
 The living and whole shall praise the Lord (xvii. 27, 28).

Any reward in the future that a man may expect must be derived from the prosperity of his children and the fame of his good deeds (xliv. 10-15). As to the inquisition and verdict in the other life, which shall set right all anomalies in this world, and which is so bountifully and beautifully put forth in the Book of Wisdom, nothing is openly expressed in Ecclesiasticus. The author appears to take his stand upon the Law in its most literal and limited

<sup>1</sup> There is a similar expression in Judith xvi. 17, where the enemies of the Jews are doomed to punishment: "the Lord putting fire and worms into their flesh;" but here the doctrine of retribution in another world is more marked.

sense; and although he may intimate a more liberal view, yet his dogmatic statements are confined to the letter of the earlier Scriptures. But he is something better than a mere Sadducee. The yearnings of the immortal soul are not satisfied by the thought that death closes the history, cuts short the hope, seals up the account. Injustice and wrong shall soon pass away, but true dealing shall endure for ever (xl. 12); a good life hath but a few days, but a good name endureth for ever (xli. 13); God shall reward them that wait for Him (xxxvi. 16). Such utterances are capable of a wider interpretation than mere literalism allows; and beneath the language that tells of the hopelessness of death and the finality of the grave, there is an undertone of dissatisfaction with the present and confidence in God's eternal justice, which tends to confirm the idea that the writer had reached beyond the narrow tenets of sect and party and was prepared to accept higher and purer teaching.

Let us now see the advice which Wisdom, by the mouth of Siracides, gives to man in his social relations. As parent he has full authority over his children, and it is his duty to instruct them and bow down their neck from their youth. He must not "cocker" them, or give them too much liberty, or wink at their follies, but teach them to labour at an honest calling, and to reverence their parents (iii. 2, vii. 23, xxx. 1-13). Daughters especially should be most carefully guarded, and suitable husbands found for them (xxii. 3, 5, xxvi. 10, 12, xlii. 9-11). Sad as it is to be childless, it is far better to have no children at all than ungodly ones (xvi. 1-4). On the other hand it is the duty of children to honour and to help their parents in their need, to bear with their infirmities, never to grieve them; for he that forsaketh his father is as a blasphemer, and he that angereth his mother is cursed of the Lord (iii. 1-16). The husband who is blest with a good wife should prize

her above gold, and forsake her not (vii. 19, 26); nothing is more beautiful than the life of a wedded pair who agree together (xxv. 1). But a bad wife must be treated with rigour and must be kept under strict control; otherwise she will cause her husband annoyance, spoil his happiness, embitter his temper, make weak hands and feeble knees, and may drive him to the last resource, even to cut her off from his flesh (xxv. 20-26). The Son of Sirach lays great store on friendship. Love thy friend, he says, and be faithful unto him (xxvii. 17, ix. 10), for he is a strong defence, a real treasure, shares and thus lessens thy troubles, is a gift of God to them that fear the Lord (vi. 14-17). Whether he be in high or poor estate cleave unto him; for he is no true friend who hides his face in time of affliction and abides not in the day of trouble. But before making a friend prove him, test his stedfastness, and be not hasty to put your trust in him (vi. 7). At the same time you must not strain the cords of friendship too roughly. You may admonish your friend sternly, and yet retain his love; you may even in righteous anger threaten his life, and yet the good feeling between you may not be broken; but treachery towards him and slander and revealing of secrets are fatal: the breach caused by such things cannot be repaired (xix. 13-17, xxii. 21, 22, xxvii. 16-18). In the treatment of enemies Siracides shews the inferiority of his code of morals to that of the Christian. An enemy is never to be trusted; you must always be looking for open or secret attack from him, and be ready to repel it (xii. 10-12); when he falls, you are right to exult;<sup>1</sup> but if you die before he is subdued, do not let him escape, leave the *vendetta* to your children (xxv. 7, xxx. 6). A master should treat his servants with kindness; they should be unto him as brethren, yea, even as himself (vii. 20-22,

<sup>1</sup> But see viii. 7, quoted further on, where a more Christian sentiment is expressed.

xxxiii. 30, 31); nor should he think scorn to learn wisdom of them (x. 25). But he must not give them too much liberty; he must see that they do their appointed work, and punish severely any neglect of duty (xxxiii. 24-28, xlii. 5). Sloth and laziness are disgraceful and infectious, and cannot be checked too carefully (xxii. 1, 2). The Jews, we must remember, at this time had turned their attention to agriculture and handicrafts, so that advice on such matters was very natural and acceptable. A man is exhorted not to hate laborious work, especially agriculture, which is appointed by God (vii. 15); to be active and diligent; for it is far better to feed yourself by your own manual toil than to take pride in idleness and want bread (xxxii. 22, x. 27), and the life of a hard-working and contented man is sweet (xl. 18). It is true that the labourer, the ploughman, the grazier, the smith, the artificer, cannot be expected to find time to study wisdom, or to practise statecraft; but they are useful in their own spheres, and maintain the state of things without which the social and physical life of man could not exist (xxxviii. 25-34). Such work too tends to health of body, which is better than infinite wealth; indeed death itself is preferable to long continued sickness (xxx. 14-20). It is wise to take care of oneself before becoming ill (xviii. 19, 20); but if sickness increase the physician is to be summoned. It is a Divine appointment that there should be medicines in the world and persons skilled to apply them. Send for such in your illness, and grudge them not their fees. At the same time pray that the remedies may be efficacious, cleanse your heart of sin, and God will make you whole (xxxviii. 1-15). From intercourse with other nations the Hebrews had learned to cultivate the art of healing as distinguished from the practice of the priesthood which had alone been recognised formerly; but the direction that both doctor and patient should pray for the success of the treatment issues



from a pious mind, which looks to the Lord as the dispenser of life and death (xxxviii. 14).

Siracides' rules of social intercourse are wise and prudent, but oftentimes worldly and selfish. Of the former class are such as these: Strive not with a mighty or a rich man, lest he overweigh thee (viii. 1, 2); talk with the wise and do not consult a fool (ix. 15, viii. 17); consort not with sinners: he that toucheth pitch shall be defiled therewith (xii. 14, xiii. 1); learn to be independent and contented, for better is a poor man's life in a mean cottage than delicate fare in another man's house (xxix. 22 ff., xxxiii. 19 ff.); whatsoever thou takest in hand, remember the end, and thou shalt never do amiss (vii. 36). Of the selfish and worldly maxims which abound in the book, many are concerned with the use of money. The warnings in the Book of Proverbs against suretyship are repeated with emphasis by the Son of Sirach. Many a man of good estate hath been undone by suretyship; so dangerous and ruinous is it, that it may be regarded as one of the ways in which God punishes a wicked man (viii. 13, xxix. 18, 19). Never lend money to a man mightier than yourself, for you are sure to be the loser (viii. 12); help the good, for you are safe in their hands, and they will make you a recompense (xii. 2); be faithful to your neighbour in the time of his trouble, that thou mayest be heir with him in his heritage (xxii. 23).<sup>1</sup> If a great man invite you to his house, do not be too eager to accept his hospitality, but put on an appearance of reluctance, and so much the more will he desire your company (xiii. 9); and at table be not greedy, lest you be hated by your host, or injure your own

<sup>1</sup> One cannot help contrasting the very different teaching of the Gospel (St. Luke vi. 30-36). The Jewish Law fully recognised the duty of helping the needy, and placed it under merciful regulations. Siracides, also, is quite in accord with this direction (xxix. 1, 2); but his worldly prudence steps in to modify and restrict the obligation.

bodily health (xxxi. 12-21).<sup>1</sup> In such cases the advice is sound, but the motives upon which it is based are of a low and worldly standard. As a fact men are influenced by such secondary motives, and no teacher can afford to ignore them, though doubtless it is his duty to shew their inadequacy, and to lead his hearer to higher things. The writer of Ecclesiasticus cannot be accused of neglecting this. He is copious in his recommendations of mercy, charity, and almsgiving in themselves, without thought of recompense. Have patience with a man in poor estate, he says, and delay not to shew him mercy; help thy neighbour according to thy power (xxix. 8, 30); for no good can come to him that giveth no alms and breaketh the commandment of the Most High (xii. 3). But give with a cheerful countenance, dedicate thy tithes with gladness (xxxv. 9). Bountifulness is as a fruitful garden, and mercifulness endureth for ever (xl. 17). A kind word is better than a gift (xviii. 15-18); fail not to be with them that weep, and mourn with them that mourn<sup>2</sup> (vii. 34); let it not grieve thee to bow down thine ear to the poor, and give him a friendly answer with meekness (iv. 8); be as a father unto the fatherless, and instead of an husband unto their mother (ib. 10). Reproach not a man that turneth from sin, remembering that we all are worthy of punishment; dishonour not a man in his old age; rejoice not in any one's death; be not slow to visit the sick (viii. 5-7, vii. 35). Such counsels are not only of a high order of morality, but are truly religious and scriptural. Of this character are the injunctions concerning the love of truth: Speak not against the truth, strive for it unto death, and the Lord shall fight for thee (iv. 25, 28); use not to make any

<sup>1</sup> On the art of eating to excess, as it has been termed, the Son of Sirach is minute in his advice. "If thou hast been forced to eat, arise, go and walk, and thou shalt find relief." The unsavoury particular in the English version, *ἐμεσον*, is a gloss.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Rom. xii. 15.

manner of lie, for it is a foul blot in a man, and is surely punished by God (vii. 13, xx. 24-26). Against wrath and malice: Unrighteous anger cannot be justified; abstain from strife and thou shalt diminish thy sin; remember the commandments and bear no malice to thy neighbour, but forgive him the hurt that he hath done unto thee, so shall thy sin also be forgiven when thou prayest.<sup>1</sup> Of patience and trust: Set thy heart right and be stedfast, make not haste in time of trouble; whatever is brought upon thee take cheerfully; believe in God and trust in Him, and He will help thee (ii. 1-6). Of obedience: If thou desire wisdom keep the commandments, and the Lord shall give her unto thee (i. 26, xxi. 11);<sup>2</sup> there is nothing sweeter than to take heed to the law of God, and he that obeyeth it shall never be confounded (xxiii. 27, xxiv. 22); a man of understanding trusteth in the law, and the law is as trustworthy to him as an answer of Urim (xxxiii. 3). Of avoidance and confession of sin: Flee from sin as from the face of a serpent; for if thou comest too near it, it will bite thee; go not after thy lusts, and restrain thyself from thy appetites; be not without fear to add sin unto sin, for in one thou shalt not be unpunished (xxi. 2, xviii. 30, v. 4, vii. 8). Be not ashamed to confess thy sins; to conceal them doubles the offence; he that confesseth his fault shall be preserved from hurt (iv. 26, xx. 2, xxiii. 11). Of prayer: Before praying prepare thyself by self-examination and repentance (xviii. 20, 23, xvii. 25); use not vain repetitions in thy prayers (vii. 14),<sup>3</sup> nor be faint-hearted (v. 10);<sup>4</sup> pray to the Most High to direct all thy

<sup>1</sup> "One man beareth hatred against another, and doth he seek pardon from the Lord? He sheweth no mercy to a man which is like himself; and doth he ask forgiveness of his own sin?" (xxviii. 3, 4). A beautiful anticipation of Christ's own teaching.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. John vii. 17.

<sup>3</sup> *Μὴ δευτερώσης λόγον.* (Matt. vi. 7.)

<sup>4</sup> Comp. James i. 6.

ways in truth (xxxvii. 15). The prayer of the humble pierces the clouds (xxxv. 17). But a man's life should correspond with his prayers, otherwise he is like a man who builds with one hand while he pulls down with the other (xxxiv. 23-26). It is of no use to fast for sins if you go and do the same. You cannot bribe the Almighty by the multitude of your oblations: He is not pacified by the costliness or number of your sacrifices (vii. 9, xxxiv. 18-20). He that keepeth the law bringeth a rich offering; to depart from unrighteousness is a propitiation. The only sacrifice that is acceptable is that of the just man, and the memorial thereof shall never be forgotten (xxxv. 1-12).

In such utterances as the above a spirit is discernible which rises far superior to the traditional Pharisaic view of religion; and we must set this against the consideration of the exaggerated efficacy due to outward acts of mercy. Reasoning doubtless from such passages as Dan. iv. 27, and the letter of the Fifth Commandment, and looking on charitable gifts as offerings made to the Lord, the writer speaks of alms as atoning for sin,<sup>1</sup> precious to God as a signet ring to a man, and as delivering from all affliction (iii. 30, xvii. 22, xxix. 12) He attributes the same effect to the honouring of parents: The relieving of thy father shall not be forgotten, and instead of sins it shall be added to build thee up; in the day of thy affliction thou shalt be remembered by God, and thy sin shall melt away as ice in the fair warm weather (iii. 14, 15). These and the like sentiments have been regarded as repugnant to the teaching of canonical Scripture on the one side, and defended on the other hand as orthodox and even Christian. In all such cases we should try to place ourselves at the author's standpoint, taking into consideration his era, his nationality, his surroundings, not expecting a precision of

<sup>1</sup> Some notion of this sort has led to the variant *ελεημοσύνην* for *δικαιοσύνην* in Matt. vi. 1.

doctrine and a balancing of statements, which appertain to a later age; and, if we do this here, I think that most of the proscribed opinions will be found to be one-sided presentments of acknowledged truths, or not incapable of spiritual explanation.

Of Messianic glimpses there is but little trace in Ecclesiasticus. The author hopes for a time when Israel will be restored to her former greatness, punish her enemies, judge the nations; he prays that he himself may live to see this happy era; he believes in the supremacy of the House of David; but of a personal Messiah, of a suffering Messiah, he says nothing. His exhortations to cheerfulness under depressing circumstances point to a time of national distress, but the relief which he expects is to arise from the employment of earthly arms, and to issue in temporal prosperity.<sup>1</sup>

I have refrained from dwelling upon the episode of The Praise of Famous Men, which is a distinct portion of the book, keeping close to its topic. On the general subject of Ecclesiasticus enough, I trust, has been said to give a competent notion of its contents. I conclude with the fine account of the truly wise man, the ideal *sopher* (xxxix. 1-12):—

He that giveth up his mind  
 To the law of the Most High, and meditateth thereon,  
 Will seek out the wisdom of all ancients,  
 And occupy himself in prophecies.  
 He will observe the sayings of renowned men,  
 And where subtle proverbs are he will make entrance.  
 He will seek out the secrets of parables,  
 And with enigmas of proverbs he will be conversant.  
 In the midst of great men he shall serve,  
 And before princes he shall be seen;  
 In the land of strange peoples shall he travel,

<sup>1</sup> See iv. 15, x. 13 ff., xi. 5, xxxv. 17-19, xxxvi. 1 ff., xxxvii. 25, xxxix. 23, xlviii. 10 ff.

For he hath tried the good and evil among men.  
 He will give up his heart to resort at early morn to the Lord  
     that made him,  
 And before the Most High he will pray,  
 And will open his mouth in supplication,  
 And for his sin he will pray.  
 If the Lord, the Great, will,  
 He shall be filled with the spirit of understanding;  
 He himself shall shower forth words of his wisdom,  
 And in prayer give thanks unto the Lord;  
 He himself shall direct aright his counsel and knowledge,  
 And in God's secrets shall he meditate.  
 He himself shall shew forth the teaching of his wisdom,  
 And in the law of the covenant of the Lord shall make his  
     boast.  
 His understanding shall be commended by many,  
 And so long as the world endureth he shall not be blotted out;  
 His memorial shall not depart,  
 And his name shall live from generation to generation.  
 Nations shall tell of his wisdom,  
 And the congregation shall publish his praise;  
 If he live, he shall leave a greater name than a thousand,  
 And if he die, he shall increase it." <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Shall leave," *i.e.* wherever he goes, wherever he is known. The last clause is difficult: *ἐὰν ἀναπαύσῃται ἐμποιεῖ αὐτῷ*. Wahl explains: "is, defunctus ubi fuerit, augebit nominis celebritatem." The Ang. vers. transposes the words "die" and "live."