dent application of the authority of the will, does not exclude doubt and fear.

10. On the other hand, the absolute and perfect certitude of Divine faith does not appeal to ratiocination or to human *motiva*, but simply to this one fact, that God, the eternal Truth, has spoken, who can neither deceive nor be deceived.

11. So that, as has already been pointed out, Divine faith is not based upon ratiocination or on human *motiva*, but depends on the will, which, moved by Divine grace, commands the intellect to yield a firm assent to things which, so far as the *motiva* which go to prove them are concerned, can claim only credibility, and not certainty.

12. And herein lies the merit of faith, that it is an act of the free will, aided by grace, and not the mere admission of conclusions which the intellect is forbidden by sheer logic to reject.

THE LANGUAGE AND METRE OF ECCLESIASTICUS.

(THE following review of Professor Margoliouth's *Essay on Ecclesiasticus*, by Professor Th. Nöldeke, of Strassburg, which appeared in the *Literarisches Centralblatt* of July 12, 1890, has been translated, with permission of the author and of the editor of the *Literarisches Centralblatt*.—EDITOR.)

THE present *Inaugural Lecture* must be taken in conjunction with the article on "The Language and Metre of Ecclesiasticus" in THE EXPOSITOR, 1890, pp. 295–320, 381–387, in which the author develops and defends against his critics the views expressed by him in it. In both he seeks to show that the original Hebrew text of the Book of Sirach consisted of verses exhibiting a quantitative metre, and that its language approached much more closely to the "rabbinical" idiom, and in general displayed a later character, than the books of the Old Testament which are commonly supposed to be the latest. Antecedently now it cannot but cause some surprise to be told that a North-Semitic dialect possessed an original metre, with definite quantities, such

as in the case of Arabic, with its abundance of short syllables, is quite natural. Nor at the same time is confidence particularly inspired by the fact that Professor Margoliouth assumes for this ancient period the same prosodical principle which enabled the Jewish poets at a much later date, in the Middle Ages, to produce an imitation, though an imperfect one, of the Arabic metre, by treating, *viz.*, a consonant with Shwa mobile as short, and all other syllables as long. The metre discovered by him, consisting of a threefold or fourfold repetition of the foot ⏑ – ⏑, is certainly sufficiently comprehensive; and inasmuch as Hebrew gnomic poetry (as is well known) is composed, as a rule, of lines of three or four words (very short words not being counted), instances conforming to the scheme proposed may no doubt be found, if one only searches long enough, especially as, by the use of longer or shorter suffixes, the insertion or omission of the article, or of אֵת, etc., considerable latitude is obtained. And the task becomes still easier when the liberty is taken—which, it is true, ought not antecedently to be excluded—of reckoning or not reckoning, as circumstances may require, certain helping-vowels, such as the compound Shwa in מַעֲשֵׂה, and of allowing the imperfect with ו (convers.) to interchange indiscriminately with the perfect with ו.

The more elastic the rule, however, the more difficult is the proof of its correctness! And this proof the author, in our opinion, has altogether failed to produce; indeed, his own instances tell in great measure against him. In the first place, he deals arbitrarily with the Shwa mobile. The punctuation of the Old Testament shows that, even till a tolerably late period, in cases like בִּכְתֹּב, מַלְכֵי, etc., a Shwa mobile was heard as the survival of an originally short vowel. That the mediæval Jewish poets no longer measured these forms correctly proves nothing with regard to a date some 200 years before Christ. It follows that the

verses with בְּקִטְנָתוֹ, p. 317 of THE EXPOSITOR (xlii. 9); וּבְמִכְסֵה, *ibid.* (iii. 21)—where moreover מִמְּךָ disturbs the metre, for מִמְּךָ in the middle of a sentence would be out of place; וְיִעַצְךָ, p. 319 (vi. 6); וְרָאָה, p. 381 (i. 8), do not agree with the supposed metre. כִּסְאוֹ also, p. 381 (i. 7), ought strictly to be scanned as –⏑–, the ס being properly doubled. Even, however, though it were granted that all these Shwas might, as in the later Jewish poetry, be ignored, such a license could in no case be extended to the case of a Shwa following a consonant at the beginning of a word: accordingly the metre is destroyed by בְּנִסתרות, p. 317 (iii. 22); לְאביה, p. 317 (xlii. 9—this verse is also in other respects unmetrical); בְּקִרבּוֹ, p. 382 (x. 9); וְקִצר, *ibid.* (x. 10). In the insertion and omission of ו, Margoliouth proceeds arbitrarily. Thus in xvi. 16 (p. 12 of the *Lecture*), ו before שמי is required by the Greek and the Syriac texts, as well as by the sense. Even however without the ו, the verse is still unmetrical; תהום moreover belongs to the second line of the couplet: here therefore a simple enumeration is sufficient to show the incorrectness of the author's theory. And yet on p. 383 he boldly claims the lines containing enumerations as on his side! But in these cases also each must be considered upon its own merits. In xxxix. 26 (p. 383) the ו before אש cannot be dispensed with. In the same line also ו before חטה is certainly to be read with the Syriac, though even so the metre is not secured. It is further of questionable legitimacy to read at pleasure וְ for ו, as in וְרִיב xl. 9 (p. 383) and וְשבר *ibid.* (שבר וְשוט, on the other hand, would naturally be quite in order). In xxxvii. 18 (p. 384) the metre requires וחיים; but the Greek and the Syriac texts show that here no ו existed. Extremely doubtful also is the assumption that in such a book, in the simple proverbs, the names יה and יהוה would be used. It is a question whether even the use of אדני ought to be assumed. In no case however can Ben-Sira for the sake of his metre

have had recourse to such incorrect forms as צַרְכוֹ for צָרְכוֹ, xxxviii. 1 (p. 318), or מַהֲלֵךְ for מְהַלֵּךְ, x. 10 (p. 382). Not much better is וּכְפֵן, xxxix. 29 (p. 383)—and that close beside וּבְרֵד—since כְּפֵן (Job v. 22, xxx. 3) is of exactly the same formation as בָּרָד (فَعَل). To be sure the *monstrum* הַשְׁנָתָא (p. 15 of the *Lecture*), which according to our author means "the years," is a great deal worse: if a purely Aramaic form were here permissible, it must at least have been שְׁנַיָּא (though שְׁנָתָא is found in the existing text of the Targum on the Psalms).

To pass to another point, only upon stringent grounds could we at all attribute to this book such Aramaic words as are equally unknown to Ancient Hebrew and to New Hebrew. השכח, "to find," מרעות, "sickness," and even לחדא, "very," accordingly drop out of its vocabulary. In li. 16 also (p. 310), צַלִּי, "to pray," cannot have been the word used; the Greek text has here the true reading: in the Syriac ܨܠܝ is a later addition, and originally the Peal ܐܬܠ = *ἔκλινα* was intended. To be sure, the author credits Ben-Sira and his readers even with a knowledge of Arabic: he supposes him, for instance, to have used עֵלֶם, "learned" = عليم (p. 16 of the *Lecture*), and עֵלֶם = حلم (p. 20), נָהוֹר = نهار (p. 18); and in כרב, a presumed corruption of כַּדֹּב, the ancient translators saw, it is argued, the Arabic كرب, which is alleged to occur also in New Syriac (p. 19). In reality, the Syriac translator has rendered iv. 30 correctly; naturally ܟܠܒ does not mean "dog" (p. 15), but "raging, mad" (* כָּלֵב); see 1 Sam. xxv. 3. Similarly the Greek translator is credited with a knowledge of the Arabic قرى, "to entertain" (p. 302), a word with which the author somewhat strangely does not seem to be particularly familiar. He is also supposed to have understood חָסִד in the sense of حاسد, and to have represented it by *ἐπίβουλος* (p. 19),—which by the way is not at all the meaning of حاسد.

How uncritical Margoliouth is appears however most clearly from the fact that the word רגישה, "sense," which he attributes to Ben-Sira, although it will hardly have come into use before the Middle Ages, is derived by him from the Sanskrit *raǧas* (p. 20). From the same source will then of course be derived ܪܓܫܐ, ܪܓܫ, the New Hebrew הרגיש, etc.!

Naturally it is only out of regard to his metrical hypothesis that Prof. Margoliouth's translations are often different from what they would have been, had he been translating quite freely. In the first example of all, for instance, xii. 8 (p. 8), there is no other reason for deviating from the order of words presented by both the Greek and the Syriac versions (יְוָדֵעַ which is expressed equally by ܝܬܝܕܥ, "is known"—not *doctus sit*—and by the reading *ἐπιγνωσθήσεται*, would in any case leave his metre intact). ii. 5 (p. 304) the Syriac confirms *καὶ πενίᾳ* as the right reading. xxvii. 9 (p. 318) the form attested by the rabbinical quotation is completely supported by the Syriac, in particular למינו ישכן by ܠܡܝܢܘ ܢܫܟܢ. The case is similar with xxxviii. 1 (*ibid.*), where at most הרפא might be read for רפאך (the Greek text had originally *πρὸ τῆς χρείας*). xxxviii. 9 (p. 319) דרשי שלמך of the rabbinical tradition is in agreement with the Syriac ܫܐܠ ܫܠܡܟ, and in the second line סודך with ܪܙܟ. ix. 8 (p. 320) ܠܐ corresponds with השחתו in the rabbinical quotation: כי too is fairly well assured by ܕܠ, and the Greek variant. vii. 16 (p. 382) it appears from the line *ταπείνωσον, κ.τ.λ.*, omitted by Professor Margoliouth, that the Syriac text at least expresses the sense better than the Greek. A Jew would scarcely have said לִפְנֵי שְׁאֹל for "before death," xi. 28 (p. 307); and a Syrian would hardly have translated these words by "before examining" (ܫܐܠ, moreover, means not "to examine," but "to ask"). In all these instances the metre is ruined, in most cases irretrievably, and many another

specious assumption falls at the same time. We should like, lastly, to ask how i. 1 could be translated except by כל חכמה מפני אלהים or מאלהים? Whether, now, אדני or some other Divine name be substituted, the first sentence of the entire book disagrees with Margoliouth's metre.

We have placed more details before the reader than he will care for, in order to avoid the objection that we reject the new theory only upon general grounds. We could readily adduce more; but what has been said will suffice to show that it is confirmed neither by Prof. Margoliouth's own re-translations, nor by the proverbs preserved in the rabbinical tradition. Of the "rabbinical" words, also, which he finds in the book, the greater part must be treated as not proven. Such as are in some degree certain, as for instance עשק, are not more surprising than the expressions which Esther, Chronicles, Ecclesiastes, and the Hebrew parts of Daniel, have in common with the post-biblical literature. Even, however, though it could be shown that the Book of Sirach contained somewhat more of this kind than the books just named, it would by no means follow that it was later, or even considerably later, than they are. In points of detail, also, Margoliouth's philological observations contain much that is questionable. The engine which he has constructed against the well-ascertained results of Old Testament criticism falls to pieces so soon as it is handled with any force, even before it is brought into use.

The approximate restoration of the original Hebrew text of Ben-Sira as a whole is hardly possible, if only on account of the great differences subsisting between the two versions, both made directly from the Hebrew. With many individual verses the re-translation may be accomplished; in the case of longer passages it will only be successful occasionally. Even the attempt made by Bickell (*Zeitschr. für Kathol. Theol.*, vi., p. 326 *seq.*) with li. 13–30

is not free from objection, however valuable his discovery is, that we have here an alphabetical poem. Undoubtedly our author's acuteness and boldness are adequate to such a re-translation; but he needs a far greater measure of sobriety as well. To be frank, we foresee from the continuance of his present project no further gain to science than perhaps here and there a clever remark on a particular passage.

TH. NÖLDEKE.

ADDITIONAL NOTE TO "ECCLESIASTICUS."

BY the kindness of the editor of THE EXPOSITOR I am allowed to say a word on Prof. Nöldeke's article on the Ecclesiasticus question in No. 29 of the *Literarisches Centralblatt*. I willingly allow that where I am at variance with Prof. Nöldeke the chances are very greatly in favour of Prof. Nöldeke being right and my being wrong; yet this violent review does not seem to me to really touch the vital points of my essays. For the question whether השכח and לחדא could have been used by Ben-Sira we have on his side merely an *à priori* assertion; whereas on mine we have in the first case *three* indicia, and I may now add the express assertion of the Syrian translator in xi. 27, where for *κάκωσις ὥρας ἐπιλησμονὴν ποιεῖ τρυφῆς* he gives באשתא דיומא תשכח טבתא; and since תשכח does not mean *forget* in Syriac, the Hebrew must have been here תִּשְׁכַּח, and the Syrian by rendering it *find* shows that he thought it could have that meaning. And if it be clear that MS. 106 represents a partly independent recension (and this has not yet been denied), then its reading *αἰνέσει* in vi. 16 should be accounted for; and ישכח with ישבח gives that account; for these two words are certainly confused in xxxvii. 6, *μὴ*