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THE PETRIE-HIRSCHFELD PAPYRI.

ON April 30 last Prof. Flinders Petrie delivered the Arthur Davis Memorial Lecture¹ at University College. His subject was 'The Jews in Egypt'. After an account of his excavations on the site of the Onias Temple, Prof. Petrie referred to his discovery of some Hebrew papyri, in square characters and of an early date. These papyri had been handed to Dr Hirschfeld, whose report appeared in the *Jewish Guardian* of June 9. Before venturing to offer a few further remarks on these papyri, I must pay a tribute to Dr Hirschfeld's success and to Prof. Petrie's foresight. The records are so tattered and so faint that, at the first glance, one cannot but express surprise that they attracted any attention at all. It is a marvel that they escaped being thrown away as mere scraps. Their preservation is a testimony to Prof. Petrie's care as an archaeologist and to Dr Hirschfeld's labours in the sphere of palaeography. Except in one or two instances, I have not attempted to depart from his readings, but I will try to extract a few conclusions from the material which he has provided and for which the credit must, in reality, be ascribed to Dr Hirschfeld. Before doing so, let me quote Dr Hirschfeld:—

'The four Hebrew papyrus fragments, discovered by Professor Flinders Petrie, form a most welcome addition to the very few already known. However scant and broken they are, they deserve full attention, from both palaeographical and literary points of view. As regards the former, the writing, although slightly different in each fragment, brings us near the time when the Hebrew square alphabet was still in its early stages. The affinity between the fragments A and C is more marked than is the case with the other two.

'In all four fragments, the size of the letters, being about a quarter of an inch, is, in itself, a sign of great age. This view is supported, especially in fragment A, by the shape of various letters, notably *waw*, which, with its hook-shaped head, not only justifies its name, but greatly resembles its Palmyrene prototype. Similar resemblances to early forms can be found in the letters *beth*, *gimel*, *qof*, and *taw*. A notable feature of the writing in all four fragments is the absence of any tendency towards cursiveness, which is more marked in the pre-massoretic Nash Papyrus, published by Mr S. A. Cook, M.A., Cambridge, in the *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, 1903, pp. 34 and 99. This is a most interesting publication, and I only differ from the learned author in not styling this fragment a biblical one in the strict sense of the word because it seems to me to be rather of liturgical character. Hence the greater freedom in the spelling by the addition of occasional vowel letters. The fragment contains the Decalogue followed by a

¹ Since published under the title *The Status of the Jews in Egypt*. G. Allen and Unwin, p. 44 (with a photogravure of fragment A). Price 1s.

mixture of the verses of Leviticus xxvi. 46, and Deuteronomy iv. 45 (probably the result of writing from memory), and the opening paragraph of the *Shema*. Now this faithfully reflects the procedure outlined in the *Mishnah, Tamid* v. 1, where a similar arrangement is given.

‘The same freedom in adding vowel letters is visible in our fragments. They seem all to be of a liturgical character. This is clearly visible in Fragm. A, which I feel inclined to style a lament on the destruction of the Temple by the Romans. It is evidently older than the Nash papyrus, and several letters show distinct resemblance to those of the Beni Hezir, whjch are commonly ascribed to the first century of the present era.

‘We shall not thus go far wrong if we see in this fragment, as well as in C, the remainders of the oldest known *Piyyutim*. Their language is poetic. No sentence is large enough to reveal any of the features of biblical poetry, whilst later forms did not, at that time, exist, and the absence of any trace of them in the fragment is another indication of its great age. The broken character of the fragments, and the faded appearance of many letters make a coherent translation impossible, and it only remains to take each line singly.

‘Fragment D differs in so far as it occurs to be the remnant of a legal document, whilst Fr. B is beyond reconstruction.’

Dr Hirschfeld’s Text and Translation are as follows:—

| TEXT. | | TRANSLATION. | |
|-------------|---------------------|--------------|--|
| FRAGMENT A. | | FRAGMENT A. | |
| 1. 1 | סל | 1. 1 | (relic of) Selah. |
| 1. 2 | מק חצובים | 1. 2 | Wells . . . hewn. |
| 1. 3 | להנחית] לזאת ח | 1. 3 | to lead . . . to this. |
| 1. 4 | ששו ב בבון | 1. 4 | They rejoice . . . they decay. |
| 1. 5 | במ באור | 1. 5 | In the light (or with <i>heth</i> added, the <i>path</i>) . . . |
| 1. 6 | מזבול [הוב]יש יר(?) | 1. 6 | Of the Temple . . . He has put to shame. |
| 1. 7 | רנוו בלו שעו לך | 1. 7 | They trembled, languished, turned to Thee . . . |
| 1. 8 | בגיל ומקרא קוד[ש] | 1. 8 | With glee and holy convocation. |
| 1. 9 | בסוד רבבות קודש | 1. 9 | In the assembly of holy myriads . . . |
| 1. 10 | ברצד נבנונים ? | 1. 10 | When mountain peaks frowned (see Ps. lxxviii 16-17). |
| 1. 11 | מור וקנמן ב | 1. 11 | Myrrh and cinnamon . . . |
| 1. 12 | פיץ מלח[ץ] אנוכי | 1. 12 | I am inundated with tribulation. |

FRAGMENT A (*continued*).

- l. 13
 l. 14 מלכים
 l. 15 חרותים
 l. 16 זכור זו
 l. 17 אם לא

FRAGMENT A (*continued*).

- l. 13 ...
 l. 14 ... Kings ...
 l. 15 ... Engraved ...
 l. 16 Remember ...
 l. 17 ?

FRAGMENT B.

- l. 1 ?
 l. 2 טובב
 l. 3 ?
 l. 4 [מ]סלול
 l. 5 חמה
 l. 6 על הא[רץ]

FRAGMENT B.

- l. 1 ?
 l. 2 surrounding.
 l. 3 ?
 l. 4 path ...
 l. 5
 l. 6 upon the earth (land)

FRAGMENT C.

- l. 1 ?
 l. 2 שלם
 l. 3 ה ושמי
 l. 4 ת זכרים
 l. 5 נקום נקמת מק[?] דש] קש
 l. 6 אתה דא ? י? תנו ממלכת כוהנים
 l. 7 [מ] מלכה
 l. 8 כתר

FRAGMENT C.

- ll. 1-3 ? ? ? illegible.
 l. 4 ... males.
 l. 5 ... and avenge the sanctuary.
 l. 6 Thou hast ...? ... as a kingdom of priests.
 l. 7 a kingdom.

FRAGMENT D.

- l. 1 קול ...
 l. 2 א אה
 l. 3 ?
 l. 4 באות ש
 l. 5 ש
 l. 6 יואל ש? הנמיה
 l. 7 ונחמיה נחור ברין
 l. 8 וחב חוקפין
 l. 9 ?
 l. 10 ?

FRAGMENT D.

- ll. 1-5 ... illegible.
 l. 6 Joel ...
 l. 7 And Nehemiah Nahor in judgement
 ll. 8-10 Illegible.

This, then, is the material with which Prof. Petrie and Dr Hirschfeld have presented us.

There is one more fragment which, for the present, may be called the colophon, as the top has not yet been deciphered. It would appear to be a column of foreign words in Hebrew—or rather in Aramaic—characters. The words may be gnostic charms or just a list of Latin names. The colophon, also deciphered by Dr. Hirschfeld, below runs:—

אנה שאול ב[ר] א[לעזר] כת[ב]ת[ח]

אלין כת[ב]ת[ח]ן שלום על

ישראל אמן ואמן סלה

I, Saul son of Eleazar, have written these writings. Peace be upon Israel. Amen and Amen: Selah.

This colophon must be regarded as separate from the other four fragments. It looks older and, in any case, it is in Aramaic and not in Hebrew. Hence though found together with the rest, it must be treated by itself.

In A. 5 possibly פִּאֹרֶךְ and not פִּאֹרֶר is to be read. In A. 3 the fourth letter of the first word may be ה not ח, and in 10, after נבנונים, a ל is visible.

The first point that engages attention is the occurrence in l. 10 of A of two rare words, ברצר נבנונים. This direct adaptation of Ps. lxxviii 16, 17 attests the present M. T. reading of this difficulty in the Psalter. Each of these words is a *hapax legomenon* and, in each case, the meaning has, more or less satisfactorily, to be inferred from¹ cognate languages.

¹ The root letters which underlie נבנונים offer some freedom of choice in regard to a suitable meaning, e. g. נִבְּן hump-backed, crook-backed, whence N. H. נִבְּן a mountaineer (according to Levy); נבנוני or perhaps נבנוני, name of a tribe of mountain dwellers who circumcised themselves; חבל נבינה eyebrow; נִבְּנִין swelling, lofty (of a hill); גִּבְּנָה cheese. Any one of these ideas is metaphorically applicable to mountains, e. g. shaggy or tree-covered; white like cheese, because of snow which is mentioned in the previous verse תִּשְׁלַג בְּצִלְמוֹן; the LXX *τετυρωμένον, mons ex lacte quasi coagulatus* adopts this interpretation; so do the Vulgate and the Arabic قَبْضِش. Sheer or abrupt may be suggested by the idea of circumcision and, finally, peaked or rounded of summit, either from the swelling of cheese or from the hump of the crook-backed (so ibn Ezra). Each of these epithets, snow-covered, tree-clad, abrupt or peaked, suits the context and it is hard to select any one as pre-eminently fitting.

The other *hapax*, √רצד, is not capable of such easy explanation. Commentators follow three main lines of interpretation: I, to leap; II, to rush out as from an ambush; III, to watch stealthily. As regards I, the idea of mountains 'leaping' is, of course, known from Ps. cxiv 6 (הוררים תרקרו), and √רקד is extraordinarily like √רצד. In fact, on the basis of the equation ארץ = ארעא = ארקא it has been suggested that √רצד is but a by-form of √רקד. This explanation is

LXX, was that counting should begin on the evening of the Second Day of Passover. In order to instruct the laity how to meet controversy, the disputed passages in the Pentateuch were publicly read and expounded on the Festival concerned. The *Haftara* or prophetic lesson began with a few verses illustrating or amplifying the lesson from the Pentateuch. Sometimes, when the *Sedra* or Pentateuchal Lesson was chosen for reasons of *Halakha* or Canon Law, the *Haftara* inculcated some other aspect of the festival, and, like the Festival Psalm, brought out, in poetic form, reminiscences of the primitive cause and celebration of the Holy Day. Thus three stages may be traced: I, the ordinance; II, the poetry; III, the praise; in other words, law, mysticism, and hymn.

Now the two *hapax legomena* in Fragment A come from Psalm lxviii 16 and 17, and this Psalm is, to this day, the Pentecost Psalm in the Italian and *Sefardi* rites of the Synagogue. In the *Ashkenazi* rite it is often omitted, but that it still exists may be seen from p. 63 of Heidenheim's *Mahzor* or p. 36 of Davis and Adler. Nevertheless it was not the earliest Pentecostal Psalm for, according to *Maṣṣ. Soferim* xviii 3, the appropriate one for the day was xxix, in which, by the way, the root רקד is also used metaphorically. Dr Thackeray gives various reasons why this Psalm was chosen for Pentecost. One of these is that the Psalm commemorates both a Maccabean victory in Gilead and the wheat harvest; the former event, according to 2 Maccabees xii 31 foll., occurred just before Pentecost and the victors went up to Jerusalem to keep the Feast.

Now as the two *hapax legomena* in Fragment A can come only from Psalm lxviii and from nowhere else, and as that Psalm is Pentecostal, one link between Fragment A and Pentecost may be regarded, in all likelihood, as established. Another is close at hand. One of the themes common to the Psalm and the two *Haftaroth* for the two days is that of the מרכבה, the Divine chariot, the triumphal march of the Deity from Sinai. The working out of this *motif* is clearly demonstrated by Dr Thackeray. He also shews a further phenomenon, namely that Ps. lxviii is replete with reminiscences of Deut. xxxiii. Now both of these phenomena are exhibited in Fragment A. For the triumphant march from Sinai is mentioned in l. 9, and, moreover, it is an unmistakable citation from Deut. xxxiii 2, ואתה מרכבת קרש. Here, then, we may claim a second and a third link between Fragment A and Pentecost.

That the Fragment refers to a festival and not to a fast, as suggested by Dr Hirschfeld, is indicated by l. 8, which contains a highly significant phrase, viz. מקרא קודש. Dr Büchler (*J. Q. R.* v 425 foll.) shews the importance of this phrase in connexion with the controversy of the

Festivals and the establishment of the lectionary: the 'holy reading out of the Torah' became synonymous with 'holy convocation', a term applied (Lev. xxiii 4) to the three Pilgrim Festivals. And since Pentecost is one of these, it is not unjustifiable to see in l. 8 a fourth link between the Fragment and that festival.

In l. 6 the only complete word that is legible is מִזְבוֹל. This root occurs six times in O. T., once as a verb יִזְבֹּל (Gen. xxx 20) and five times as a noun. As the root is rare and as the noun occurs but once in the Habakkuk *Haftara* for Pentecost (and in no other portion of Habakkuk), it might be inferred that the use in the Fragment implied an allusion to the *Haftara*. If so, there is another link between the Fragment and Pentecost. Further, the remainder of the line is not clear, and nothing but tops and bottoms of consonants survive. I am inclined to read [ע]מְרוּ מִזְבוֹל on the basis of verse 11 in the Habakkuk *Haftara* שְׁמַשׁ יִרַח עֲמֵד וּזְבֹלָה. As some confirmation it may be noted that the verse in Habakkuk continues לְאוֹר חֲצִיךָ יִהְלֹכוּ and the only legible word in l. 5 is בְּאוֹר (unless this be בְּאוֹךְ). It is not impossible, therefore, that ll. 5 and 6 of the Fragment formed a couplet based on the Habakkuk *Haftara* for Pentecost. Whether this suggestion be adopted or not, the allusion contained in מִזְבוֹל may, alone, be regarded as sufficient to increase to five the number of links connecting Fragment A with Pentecost.

L. 12 begins with פִּיךָ, about which I shall have further to say below. For the moment I would observe that these root letters are to be found twice in the Habakkuk *Haftara* for Pentecost, וַיִּתְפַּעְצוּ הַרְרֵי עֵד (verse 6) and יִסְעֲרוּ לְהַפְעִינִי (14), and at the beginning of the Pentecost Psalm, יְקוּם אֱלֹהִים יַפְעוּ

L. 12 of the Fragment is so near in thought to יִסְעֲרוּ לְהַפְעִינִי that one can scarcely doubt the connexion, and one feels constrained to admit another link between the Fragment and Pentecost.

Similarly the root רָנַן in l. 7 occurs no less than four times within fourteen verses in Habakkuk. There is first רָחַם תִּזְכּוֹר in v. 2. Then we find יִרְנֹנָן יִרְעוּת אֶרֶץ מְדִין in v. 7; and in 16 וְתָרְנוּ בְּמִנִּי and, finally, in the same verse, וְתַחֲתֵי אֶרְנֹנָן. In the rest of the book of Habakkuk the root never occurs: when, therefore, four instances are crowded into the short Pentecost *Haftara*, and when, further, the root is used in the Fragment, one cannot help thinking that not only was the writer of the Fragment familiar with the vocabulary of the Habakkuk *Haftara*, but that he consciously imitated it because the purpose of the poem which he was composing was identical with that of the writer of Habakkuk iii, i. e. a Pentecostal theme.

The one word left in l. 15 is חֲרוּתִים, engraved. The word occurs only in Exod. xxxii 16, with reference to the tablets of stone. A famous

play upon words is recorded of R. Joshua b. Levi in *Aboth* vi 2 : 'And the tables were the work of God and the writing was the writing of God; graven on the tables. Read not *תְּרִיִת* but *תְּרִיִת*, for there is no free man save he who is occupied in Torah.' Whether l. 15 is to be read *תְּרִיִתִים* or *תְּרִיִתִים*, there can be little hesitation in connecting it with the giving of the Torah and hence with Pentecost.

Myrrh and Cinnamon in v. 11 occur in juxtaposition twice, viz. Prov. vii 17 and Cant. iv 14. The phrase is so general that no definite source need be sought. Were it not that there is no evidence for such a custom before the Middle Ages, one might have been tempted to see here an allusion to the practice of strewing fragrant boughs in the Synagogue on Pentecost.

In Fragment C the allusion in l. 6 to *ממלכת כהנים* can only be to Exod. xix 6, a passage which is the Pentateuchal lesson for the First Day of Pentecost.

The foregoing evidence may, possibly, be regarded as cumulatively sufficient to establish the connexion of the Fragments with Pentecost. If this be conceded the enquiry may be pushed a stage further. To what category of writing do these fragments belong? Dr Hirschfeld calls them *Piyyuṭim*, and he is clearly right. This can be judged by defining a *piyyuṭ* and noting its essential characteristics, which the fragments will be found to display. An easy method is to see on what grounds the opponents of *Piyyuṭim* based their opposition. Perhaps the *locus classicus* is ibn Ezra's sarcastic passage in his commentary on Ecclesiastes v 1. He attacks the *Piyyuṭim* (1) because they are cryptic riddles unsuitable for prayer; (2) because of the impurity of their language by reason of the use of foreign words; (3) because, even when Hebrew words are employed, distorted forms are introduced, *hapax legomena* are borrowed, verbs are made into nouns, &c.; (4) because the *Piyyuṭim* are improperly based on *Midrashim*, in which poetical figures are introduced too boldly and quite unsuitably. Metaphors are transferred in improper ways, and thus there is produced bathos and even blasphemy. Ibn Ezra enumerated these defects in the twelfth century. He was, more or less successfully, answered by Heidenheim¹ in the nineteenth.

As will be seen later, it is of some importance to draw a line of demarcation round the *Piyyuṭ*, hence this present insistence on the question of characteristics. Now the first characteristic which determines a *piyyuṭ* is its indebtedness to the Bible. No doubt parallels and borrowings can be found within the Bible itself, but these are

¹ See his commentary on *מלכה סלכה* in the *Musaf* of the first day of New Year (=f. 70a of his own Roedelheim ed. of 1832) and on *שרשן עמק איומה* in *Musaf* for Atonement (=f. 9b).

different in nature. Not that *piyyuṭim* lack originality, but it is not the originality of the biblical writers; it is of quite another kind. True, the Canon is closed and the *piyyuṭ* writer can never hope for inclusion, but this very circumstance elevates the Bible to a model and gives the *paiteḥan* actual phrases and not merely ideas that can be incorporated. The *piyyuṭ* writer had a wider range, for he had the Psalmist's work which could be extended, his subjects for bases, and his actual vocabulary for technical use. True, *piyyuṭ* writing tended sometimes to approximate to jigsaw effects, just as in mediaeval ecclesiastical hands the works of classical authors became fountains whence *clichés* might be drawn. But the general result was pleasing. The adroit use of a rare biblical term conjured up scenes and reminiscences: the cumulation of several citations of this nature produced a wealth of ideas and imagery in a concise and indescribable manner. Hence *piyyuṭim* can scarcely ever be translated with any expectation of success, unless the rendering is greatly expanded.

Now the Fragments use the Bible: there are direct citations; of the thirty legible words in A no less than three are *hapax legomena*; they are cryptic—as any one who attempts a translation will see; they contain rare forms, e. g. פִּץ (A, 12), and, finally, verbs become nouns, e. g. the תרצרו of the Psalter is turned into the infinitive רצרו. One cannot therefore go very far astray in describing the Fragments (1) as portions of *piyyuṭim*, and (2) composed for Pentecost.

This brings us to the third stage. What is the period to which these documents must be assigned? On palaeographical grounds Dr Hirschfeld postulated an early date. The letters are large and the forms of some are archaic. They indicate a fairly advanced stage in the evolution of the square characters. There is no trace of any cursive tendency. The individuality of each consonant is preserved and repeated whenever written. Dr Hirschfeld adduces for comparison the Nash papyrus and the Bene Hezir inscription. At first sight such a comparison seems impossible; the fragment looks much younger. But as soon as details are examined Dr Hirschfeld's choice is justified by consonant after consonant. The whole looks younger than its parts, but, as will be seen, the dates of the three records are close enough to each other to enable deductions to be drawn.

The Nash papyrus is attributed by Prof. Burkitt to *circa* A. D. 55, and the Bene Hezir inscription was regarded by the late Prof. Driver as belonging to the end of the pre-Christian era. This date is accepted by Prof. Chwolsohn. Prof. Cooke (p. 342 of *N. S. Inscriptions*) suggests the reign of Herod the Great. One feature the three documents have in common, the use of *plene* spellings. In the Fragment this use is consistent, e. g. מוֹבֵל, קוֹרֵשׁ, אֲנוּכִי, &c. But, on the whole, as stated,

the writing has a later look than that of the other two records. Yet it is interesting to note the reasons which induced Prof. Burkitt to claim an early date for the Nash papyrus and to see how the test can be applied to the fragments. The reasons are given on pp. 400-1 of vol. xv of *J. Q. R.* 1903. He says:—

‘The nearest parallel of all is to be found in a Nabataean inscription of A. D. 55, and I am inclined to assign this papyrus to about the same date. Those who place it later will have to account for

- (1) The archaic ה (ה).
- (2) The large broken-backed medial כ.
- (3) The occasionally open final ט.
- (4) The ק with a short foot like Palmyrene and Syriac.
- (5) And the looped ת.

Now as regards the Fragment:—

- (1) The only ה that occurs in A (להנחות in l. 3) is certainly not archaic. Neither is every ה of the Nash papyrus. On the other hand, the ה of כהונים in C 6 is ה.
- (2) In C 4 the כ of זכרים is ל, though in A the כ has a more developed head than in the Nash papyrus. In the colophon it is כ, but the colophon is, perhaps, not directly admissible.
- (3) The final ט is open in the three instances that occur in the Fragment, מלכים, נבננים, and חרותים.
- (4) The foot of the ק is longer in the Fragment than in the Nash papyrus, but it is still fairly short.
- (5) The ת is never looped in the Fragments except in the colophon, where ת occurs. But there are numerous instances in the Nash papyrus of ת similar to ת of the Fragments.

It will therefore be admitted that Dr Hirschfeld was on firm ground in choosing his two standards of comparison; the Fragment and the Nash papyrus stand in close relationship, but I would venture to differ from Dr Hirschfeld and regard the Nash papyrus as slightly earlier.

Palaeographical evidence is supported by archaeology. Prof. Petrie states that these papyri came from an untouched mound that was finally closed in the days of Severus. This gives as a *terminus ad quem* the year 211 in which Severus died at York. As a *terminus a quo* there is the circumstance that one of the other documents is a letter written during the lifetime of Augustus, whose death occurred in 14. The two centuries then that elapsed between, let us say, the years 11 and 211 of the present era give, roughly, the limits within which the Fragments may be placed. For the present no greater precision need be attempted. An important fact has been gleaned.

We have, then, before us a Pentecost *Papyrus* composed not later than the beginning of the third century. A statement so revolutionary demands further consideration and raises important questions.

The origin of the *Papyrus* is too vast and disputed a subject to be

treated here. Hitherto the oldest and anonymous *piyyutim* have been assigned to the era of the early *Geonim* about the seventh century, four centuries after the latest date to which the Fragment may be attributed. The oldest known *païlanim* or writers of *piyyut* are Jose b. Jose hay-yathom, Jannai and Elazar ben Qalir. Since Jose was known to Saadya, he must have lived before 850. Jannai's lost writings have been recovered from Egypt; some were found as the upper writing of the Aquila palimpsest discovered by Taylor and Burkitt in the Schechter collection of Geniza documents. Jannai's *Mahzor* has been edited by Prof. Davidson. Qalir's *piyyutim* may be seen in any Ashkenazic liturgy. It is interesting to observe how Jannai's themes throw a side-light which illustrates the principle, pointed out by Dr Büchler and Dr Thackeray, that the festival lectionary was selected to meet controversy. Jannai's Sabbatical *piyyutim* expound *halakha*. Canon law, not poetry or mysticism, was the main purpose of this *païyyetan*. He wrote to instruct the laity, and among the matters he treated are just those laws which the Qaraites attacked. Now if we work backwards from Qalir it is not hard to trace the stages which the *piyyut* underwent. In the hands of Qalir, the author of *איין קרוצן בן קרוצן*, that astounding jingle for *פרשת זכור*, the *piyyut* was a maze of intricacy, acrostic, riddle, and allusion; no wonder that the wrath of ibn Ezra was aroused. Rhyme was the end for which no sacrifice was too great. Jannai, Qalir's teacher, who generally wrote in rhyme and who used alphabetical arrangement, is much simpler than his pupil. Jannai's well-known Passover *Piyyut*, *אז רב נסים הפלאה* (to be found now in every *Haggada* for Passover), is a good example. In that alphabetical composition, which is far easier to understand than an average Qalirian *piyyut*, he does not use rhyme, as in his others, but each verse ends with the word *לילה*. But the further back we get, the simpler are the phrases. This can readily be seen from the Singer's Prayer Book, by examining the oldest anonymous compositions such as *אל ארון* (p. 129), *הכל יודוך* (p. 128) for Sabbath, *והוא רחום* (p. 57) for week-days, *אשר הניא* (p. 276) for Purim. If this line be prolonged backwards, from the complicated mosaics of Qalirian artificiality, through simpler songs of Jannai and Jose to the freedom which marked the anonymous writers, we shall not find it hard to carry the line over the gap and see its beginnings in our Fragments.

Regarded as a *piyyut*, Fragment A fulfils all the conditions one might expect. From an examination of the papyrus it is clear that the right-hand side, with the beginnings of lines, is complete.¹ Nor can much

¹ Dr. L. Belleli courteously suggested to me that Frag. A might be a complete left-hand half of a leaf, each line containing responses to the corresponding line on the lost right-hand portion.

have gone from the left-hand side, for lines 7 and 8 are almost perfect, and they are the only two that can be read in mutual conjunction. From these two lines it can be deduced that rhyme was not used but assonance, just as in many passages of ben Sirach and Psalms, where endings such as ים or יך follow each other in frequent succession. This is what one would expect when the *piyyuṭ* was in its infancy. Again, if assonance is used, words cannot be divided at the ends of lines. Hence פין at the beginning of 12 is not the incomplete end of such a word as הפין or הפין. Here, as in ברצר in 10, are the germs of the adaptation of rare biblical words, a tendency which reached its zenith in Qalir. Further, as the beginnings of the lines are perfect, it can be established that there is no attempt at alphabetical arrangement, though this system is to be found in the Psalter and Ecclesiasticus: nor is there any attempt at acrostic. The opportunity afforded by initials was rarely neglected by later writers. In this fragment it was unrecognized.

Perhaps the most interesting phenomenon is the absence of the name of God.¹ True, in so small a fragment, the argument from silence is dangerous, but, so far as it goes, it is significant, for in *piyyuṭim* the divine title is regularly avoided.

That the fragments are hard to translate is due not to their composition, but to the state of their preservation. Line 4 stands alone in presenting a real *crux*. One is entitled to infer that the style was simple in character, just what one would postulate for the germ of the *piyyuṭ*.

That these *piyyuṭim* are to be associated with Pentecost is of some special interest. To this day, in certain rites, the Synagogue Service on that Festival is peculiar in having *piyyuṭim* not merely for the liturgy but also for the lectionary. One cannot now speak of the liturgical use of the Targum among the Yemenites, nor of the old Spanish translation of the Ninth of Ab *Haṣṭara*, still recited at Bevis Marks. But the compositions אקרות and ארכין, יציי פתנם (their date is irrelevant) are still interpolated in the *Sedra* and *Haṣṭara* for Pentecost. It has been said by Dr Büchler that all these compositions, being in Aramaic and following the first verse of the lesson, were *piyyuṭim* on the *Targum* and not on the Hebrew. There is no *piyyuṭ* to-day for the Ezekiel *Haṣṭara*, only for the Habakkuk *Haṣṭara*, and it is significant that Fragment A has plenty of allusions to Habakkuk, but none to Ezekiel. Fragment C mentions ממלכת כהנים and would seem to have alluded to the Decalogue, the giving of which to Moses is the theme of the *piyyuṭ* ארכין. Here again, though the precarious validity of our argument from silence cannot be denied, the positive evidence, small though it be, has claims to be admitted. One can scarcely doubt that this fragment represents an

¹ Is C, line 3, an exception?

Egyptian Pentecost *Piyyuṭ*, possibly composed for the lectionary and not for the liturgy.

If, then, *piyyuṭim* existed in Egypt during the second century, what became of them? Qalir's compositions are recited to this day in innumerable synagogues: the latest edition of the *Ashkenazi Mahzor* has, it is true, somewhat curtailed the recital of *piyyuṭim*, but one need not go to papyri to recover them. Possibly the changes of fashion caused earlier and simpler poems to be discarded, and the more intricate and later ones to be preserved. Possibly local patriotism preferred the products of the home synagogue. Yet Qalir, whose country of origin is unknown, was sung all over Europe. At any rate, one cannot do more than guess why the Egyptian *piyyuṭ* lived and died by the banks of the Nile. In a land where Ecclesiasticus could disappear and be recovered, it is not strange to find a similar fate overtaking the poems of a humble hymn-writer of an obscure synagogue.

Besides, Jewish history in Egypt is one long list of gaps and disappearances, as well as of unexpected reappearances. Tabari's account of the treaty between Amr ibn el-As, the Arab conqueror, and the Mukaukis does not include the Jews among the sects enumerated. Yet a century or so later, in the time of Saadya, there were flourishing communities in the Fayoum: a few centuries earlier, and the Jewish quarter of Alexandria was the home of an important congregation, the records of which can be carried on for a considerable time. Yet another instance is furnished by the primitive Jewish congregation of Elephantine, which suddenly swum into our ken on the day when the Mond-Cowley papyri were found.

Who were these Jews of Oxyrhynchus? The history of that town still has to be written: the material¹ has been provided by Drs Grenfell and Hunt in the series of volumes of Oxyrhynchus papyri which they have edited with so much scholarship. The Jewish settlement, of which the author of the Fragments formed a member, has to be accounted for. At present it is isolated: neither its beginning nor its end is known.

Certain links are, however, to hand. These are three in number. The first of these is another of Prof. Petrie's marvellously lucky discoveries. Across the Nile, not far from the mound where the Fragments were unearthed, he came upon some tombs. One long passage is covered with Jewish Aramaic inscriptions, sixty feet in length. These

¹ This article was in type before the appearance of Dr A. N. Modena's *La vita pubblica e privata degli Ebrei in Egitto nell'età ellenistica e romana* in the 1922 issues of *Aegyptus* (Milan?), and of Prof. Umberto Cassuto's article in the Italian periodical *Israël* of Nov. 2. It was read before the Society of O.T. Study, at Keble College, Oxford, in July last.

inscriptions have not yet been copied and their position precludes their being photographed. Prof. Petrie drew a few words in his note-book, which he was kind enough to shew me. The lettering is practically that of the Aramaic papyri at Assouan. Here we have continuity at once. Oxyrhynchus is joined to Elephantine across the centuries. The fragment containing the colophon is in Aramaic. Possibly then Oxyrhynchus was founded by an offshoot of the body of Jews who penetrated further south and settled at Elephantine. Perhaps when Prof. Petrie reaches a lower stratum in his excavations at Oxyrhynchus, evidence, contemporary with the Aramaic inscriptions, will be forthcoming, and perhaps some also which will bridge the gap between the inscriptions and our Fragments.

The next information about Oxyrhynchus is much later. It consists of some Hebrew papyri which, too, Prof. Petrie discovered and which he has handed to Dr Cowley. Prof. Petrie tells me that these belong to the fifth century of our era. Therefore we can trace Jews at Oxyrhynchus five centuries before and three centuries after the period of the present fragments, and so the isolation in which the present fragments stood is thus broken down on both sides.

I can, however, add just a few more little pieces. I have not examined Grenfell and Hunt's volumes carefully, but a cursory glance at vol. iv, No. 735, revealed a small fact of interest. This document is a military receipt, dated A. D. 205, for provisions supplied to soldiers. Among the names recorded are Malichus (twice) and Μαλωχῶς (Malik, though Semitic, is not necessarily Jewish), Zabdius or Zebidius, Barichius, Ibael. These one may regard as Jewish with tolerable certainty. Trypho occurs here and in other documents, but is, of course, not bound to denote a Jew. One may, however, infer that in A. D. 205 there were Jewish soldiers in the Oxyrhynchus garrison, and A. D. 205 is within the limits of time that have been assigned to the papyrus.

Two more papyri in vol. iv throw light on the Jews of Oxyrhynchus. No. 707 is dated A. D. 136, and deals, on the *verso*, with legal proceedings connected with the lease of a vineyard. The *recto* contains a survey of land, and includes ψιλοὶ τόποι ἐν οἷς κέλλαι ἐμποιοῦνται ὑπὸ τῶν Ἰουδαίων. The only meaning given by Scapula for κέλλη is *cella* (Byzantine); the word is not to be found in Liddell and Scott. One is almost tempted to translate it by Tabernacle.¹

¹ I am indebted to Dr. Hunt for the following note which he kindly sent me. He writes :—

κέλλα = *cella*, and is used, I think, in just the same sort of sense, e. g. P. Oxyrh. 1128, 14-15 (vol. viii) τὸ συμποσίον καὶ τὴν ἐντὸς αὐτοῦ κέλλαν; Berl. Gr. Urkunden, 98. 12-14 [πυρ]οὺ ἀρταβῶν . . . ἀποκειμένων ἐν [κ]έλλη οὐσῃ ἐν τῇ . . . οἰκίᾳ; *ibid.*, 606.

No. 705 is dated A. D. 205 and is a petition of Aurelius Horon, of Oxyrhynchus, to Severus. In it he refers to a local Jewish rising against Rome which seems to have happened just before; Horon mentions on behalf of the Oxyrhynchites their *φιλία ἣν ἐνεδείξαντο καὶ κατὰ τὸν πρὸς Εἰουδαίους πόλεμον συμμαχήσαντες*.

There are two earlier papyri in the second volume. No. CCLXXVI is dated A. D. 77. In it a Jew . . . son of Jacob of Oxyrhynchus, a steersman of a cargo boat, gives a receipt to the *sitologus* of the village, probably for a cargo of corn. No. CCCXXXV is dated A. D. 85. It records that Theon son of Sarapion gave notice to the *Agoranomis* to register the sale of a sixth part of a house ἐπ' ἀμφοδὸν Ἰουδαικοῦ bought from Παῦλος by Νικαία Σιλβανῶ Ψουβίου τῶν ἀπ' Ὁξυρύνχων πόλεως Ἰουδαίων. From this important record it seems clear that by A. D. 85 there was a Jewish quarter in Oxyrhynchus. That there were Jews as late as A. D. 295 is shewn by vol. i, No. XLIII, *verso* ii 13, where, in a list of military accounts, supplies and watchmen of Oxyrhynchus there is mentioned Jacob son of Achilles.

All the foregoing tends to shew that apart from the Hebrew papyri there is plenty of documentary evidence for the existence at Oxyrhynchus of Jews, of a Jewish quarter, and hence, one may infer, of a congregation.

Many questions arise that one dare but adumbrate. Was there in early days any ritual of sacrifice at Oxyrhynchus, analogous to that of the Onias Temple, seeing that the Elephantine papyri give a strong hint of the existence of a temple at Assouan, and seeing that Aramaic inscriptions have been found at Oxyrhynchus also? Did the author of the Fragments write for a congregation that used the annual or the triennial cycle? Did he keep one day of Pentecost like the author of Jubilees or two days, as ordained in the Mishna? Did he use the LXX or the Targum? Did he know of the *Haftara* from Ezekiel or was it still prohibited in his day on account of its mysticism?

To these questions answers cannot be attempted here: indeed one doubts whether any attempt is justifiable at present on such slender material as is at hand. It will, however, be profitable to try to collect the main results which an examination of the Fragments may be said to afford.

After protecting one's statements by the strongest of saving clauses and after disarming criticism in advance by freely admitting the con-

5-6 αὐτὴν βοῶν ἐν ἧ κέλλαι δύο [πρὸς] ἀπόθεσιν ἀχύρου καὶ χύρτου. The diminutives *κελλίον* and *κελλάριον* also occur, and the masculine derivative *κελλάριος* = *cellarius*.

In Oxyrh. 707 the expansion of the abbreviation *εμπ*() is uncertain, and *ἐμπ(ρησθίσαι)* as well as our *ἐμπ(οιοῦμεναι)*, has been suggested.

jectural nature of much that follows, one may be allowed to postulate a Jewish congregation at Oxyrynchus during the first and second centuries of the present era. That congregation was, perhaps, established by the founders of Elephantine Judaism, and it lasted, certainly, till the fifth century. It observed Pentecost and, in its ritual, the Lesson from Exodus, the *Haftara* of Habakkuk, and the 68th Psalm were used. In that congregation *piyyuṭ* was known and possibly of a lectionary as opposed to a liturgical nature. But there was a striking contrast between the primitive religion of Elephantine and the developed form that existed in Oxyrhynchus. Between the two stages a wide gulf is discernible, whereas the affinity between Oxyrhynchus and later Rabbinic Judaism is close. At all events, four or five centuries before it can be traced elsewhere, there was to be found in this obscure settlement on the Nile the germ of that wonderful form of poetry that spread all over the Jewish world, giving light and pleasure to thousands of worshippers, and stimulating and inspiring hosts of writers and translators up to the present day. It is indeed appropriate that these fragments of the earliest known *piyyuṭim* should have been given to the world at the Arthur Davis Memorial Lecture, which was instituted to commemorate the life work of one who, together with his daughters, has done such yeoman service in the cause of the *piyyuṭ* and of the Jewish liturgy.

HERBERT LOEWE.

THE DOXOLOGY IN THE PRAYER OF ST POLYCARP.

It is told of an eminent scholar whom we have lately lost, that when a friend confronted him with a passage from Justin Martyr, which destroyed a generalization to which he had imprudently committed himself, he gently replied, 'I am afraid I had rather forgotten Justin'.

In my article on 'The Apostolic Anaphora and the Prayer of St Polycarp' (*J. T. S.* xxi pp. 97 ff, Jan. 1920) I gave some account of Dom Cagin's extraordinary theory of an 'Apostolic Anaphora'. For this theory, which I myself could not possibly accept, he had found support as he believed in an article which I wrote many years ago ('Liturgical Echoes in St Polycarp's Prayer', *Expositor*, Jan. 1899), and he had done me the honour of quoting almost the whole of it in his book. In that article I had mentioned a number of parallels from liturgical sources to the language of the Prayer, abstaining however from drawing any conclusions. The last of these parallels was concerned with the doxology at the end of the Prayer. It was the form, not the substance, of this doxology which at that time struck me as remarkable—'Thy Beloved