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## ON 2 KINGS xix 26, 27

The chief object of the following Note is to defend the famous conjecture of Wellhausen (לְּפֵנֵי לְּפְנֵי לְּפְנֵי לְּפְנִי לְּפְנִי לִּפְנִי לִפְנִי לִּפְנִי לְּפְנִי לְּפְנִי לְּפְנִי לְּפְנִי לְּפְנִי לְּפְנִי לְּפְנִי לְּבְּנִי לְבְּנִי לְבְּבִי לְבְּנִי לְבְּבִי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִּי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִּי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִּיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִּיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּיבְּיי לְבְּבִּיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבִּיי לְבִּיי לְבְּבִיי לְבִּיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּיי לְבִּיי לְבְּבִּיי לְבְּיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּיי לְבִּיי לְבְבִּיי לְבְּיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבִּיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִּיי לְבְּבִּיי לְבְּיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּיי לְבְּיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּיי לְבְּיי לְבְּיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּיי בְּיי בְּיבְיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּיי בְּייוּבְייוּבְיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי לְבִּיי לְבְּבִיי לְבְּבִיי בְּייִבְיי בְּיבְיי בְּייי בְּיבְּי

1. Wellhausen's conjecture. This is to be found in the 4th ed. of Bleek's Einleitung in das Alte Testament, p. 257, note. Wellhausen, who was responsible for this edition, there says:

'In 2 Kings xix 26, 27 (= Isai. xxxvii 27, 28) one must divide לְּבֵנֵי קְבֵּוּךְ וְשְׁבִּחְּךְ Before Me is thy standing up and sitting down, thy going out and coming in I know. To get any sense for the expression Corn blasted before it be grown up is a thankless task; on the other side ושבחך stands opposite the corresponding pair מאחך ובאך on one leg.'

This characteristically short and lively utterance will bear some expansion. Isaiah declares that the inhabitants of the cities sacked by the King of Assyria were weak, broken, and withered. They had become vegetation and green herb, grass of the roofs and a thing blasted before standing (corn). Roof-grass, as every one knows from Psalm exxix 6, is a standing comparison for something weak and withered, and the word for 'blasted' is almost the same as that used in Gen. xli for the dried-up ears of corn in Pharoah's dream. But, as Wellhausen says, it is a thankless task to find a sense for the words 'before standing corn'. In the next verse 'and thy sitting down' stands all by itself, something is missing. The 'and' (translated 'But' in the E.V.) is very harsh: obviously 'thy standing up' is required before it.

Wellhausen's solution is to end verse 26 at שרפה (blasted) and to transfer לפני קמה to verse 27, at the same time changing the final ה into 7. By a perfectly legitimate alteration of the vowel-points this can be read 'Before Me (i.e. Jehovah) is thy rising up'. Sense and balance are at once secured by the emendation of a single letter.

2. Budde's objection. Prof. Budde of Marburg, still happily with us though he fought at Gravelotte in 1870, is well known as the discoverer of the Kīnā-metre in Hebrew, the rhythm used for laments, the characteristic of which is a long line of three beats followed by two. In the Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft xii 31-37 (1892) he discusses this Isaianic oracle and points out that it is in Kīnā-rhythm. Therefore, he says, Wellhausen's emendation is unsatisfactory. The rhythm of the Masoretic text is better, though the text is obviously

corrupt, and we must read לפני קרים (a thing blasted before the east wind) or something like it.

The general question of metre in the Old Testament is highly controversial, and I do not wish to raise it. But it may be pointed out that the whole subject of metres and rhythms in Hebrew is theoretical, derived not from tradition but deduced from a study of the text. Granted that the  $K\bar{\imath}n\bar{a}$ -metre was used, and further that some of the lines in this passage have the  $K\bar{\imath}n\bar{a}$ -rhythm (three beats followed by two), there is no indication beyond the mere syllables, which are all written and printed as prose, where this rhythm began or left off. No doubt it begins where the poetry begins, at xix 21 b:

Mócked thee and laúghed thee to scórn hath the Vírgin of Zíon, At thée hath she sháken her heád, Jerúsalem's Maíden.

That, no doubt, is  $Kin\bar{a}$ -rhythm, and it goes on similarly. But I must confess that ver.  $23^a$  seems to me to have another rhythm, though the sense is perspicuous and the diction poetical. In any case the rhythm changes after ver. 26. Verses 27 and 28 appear to me to be written in three and six lines to a verse.

To make my meaning clearer I add a translation of vv. 25-28.

<sup>25</sup> 'Hást thou not héard from afár? *Thát* is My dóing, From dáys of óld I fórmed it, nów I have broúght it, That thóu wert to máke waste heáps fórtified cíties.

Théy that mánned them were wéak, they are bróken and withered;
Théy became hérb of the field, as gráss that springs up,
wéeds on the róof all scórched.

Before Me is thy rising <sup>27</sup> and sitting, and thy going and coming I know, and thy rage against Me.

<sup>28</sup> And because of thy rage against Me, and thy noise has come up in My ears,

I will put My hook in thy nose, and My bridle in thy lips,

And so I will bring thee back
by the way thou hast come.'

The last line is very near prose: Isaiah has brought his poem to an end, and the succeeding Oracle is only prose.

It is of course possible that the original had lost two words through

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In ver. 25 I should like to omit וצרתיה (with LXX, certainly in Isai. xxxvii 26), and begin the second third of the verse with למימי קדם. So also Budde.

'like beginnings', i.e. it read לְפְנֵי קרים: לְפָנֵי קרים: לְפָנֵי קרים: לְפָנֵי קרים: לְפָנֵי קרים: , and that through this accidental loss the text has suffered. In that case the short line at the end of ver. 26 would run

'Wéeds on the róof all scórched befóre the Eást wind.'

But be this as it may, it is surely difficult to force verses 27 and 28 into the Kīnā-rhythm. We know very little of the metric feeling of the ancient Hebrews, e.g. how soon Isaiah would feel he had maintained one rhythm long enough in the circumstances. Moreover, if this stirring tale of the Prophet's defiance of the insolent Assyrian be substantially historical—and why should it not be so?—the occasion is not one in which we should look for metrical finish!

3. The Septuagint. It may not be out of place to add a few remarks on the Greek versions of 4 Regn xix 26, 27. In the parallel passage (Isai. xxxvii 27) משרכה is passed over altogether and שרכה is rendered שׁס מֹץρωστισ, possibly a mere guess. The Greek of 4 Regn is more literal, but very unintelligent: it is evident that the translator had a very feeble grasp of the Hebrew, especially as regards its poetical form. The words from שרכה to שרכה ישרפה עד ישרפה ישרפה עד ישרפה אונים אונים ישרפה בישרים ישרפה אונים ישרפה עד ישרפה ישרפה ישרפה ישרפה ישרפה עד ישרפה ישרפה אונים ישרפה ישרפה

πάτημα ἀπέι αντι έστηκότοσ. <sup>27</sup> καὶ τὴν καθέδραν σου καὶ τὴν ἔξοδόν σου καὶ τὴν εἴσοδόν σου ἔγνων.

Here ἐστηκότοσ stands for σος (see I Regn xxviii 20, Isai. xvii 5). but πάτημα can be nothing but a guess. It is fair to say, however, that its mere existence is a proof that we have here the original Greek of the version, for any correction by a later interpreter would be sure to be more literal, if not better sense. ἀπέναντι ἐστηκότοσ means nothing, but it shews us that the LXX read στος λαι quantum present Hebrew.

There is no evidence for a Fifth Greek Version of '4 Kingdoms', in addition to the Hebrew in Greek letters, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion. But in this book a number of readings are cited in the margin of the 'Syro-Hexaplar' text, i.e. the Syriac translation of the LXX Greek of Origen's Hexapla made by Paul of Tella. These readings have prefixed to them .5, i.e. 5, as if they came from some fifth column. Their nature is entirely obscure, but they may perhaps have been corrections of the LXX which Origen thought it worth while to preserve in a sort of margin, making a fifth column.

The Syriac here is عصما المجال مبع مسمال عبد معالم المجالة عبد معالم المجالة المجالة

This is translated in the Larger Cambridge LXX

¿. et incendium ante segetem tuam.

That, no doubt, is the meaning (or, a possible meaning) of the Syriac, but it does not seem certain how it should be retranslated into Greek, or what Hebrew that Greek represents.

The natural deduction is that Paul of Tella had here in mind not the Peshitta but a Greek text, and that the Note is a literal rendering of Greek words without reference either to the Syriac Bible or to the sense of the context. Now like with in the Targums, is sometimes used to translate the Hebrew map meaning 'standing (corn)', but its ordinary meaning is something that stands, a statue (like Lot's wife) or a stele. I suggest that it is nothing more than a rendering of the LXX ἐστηκότοσ, which in the text which the Note follows had σου () added to it.

Field, in his Hexapla loc, translated the Note

Ε΄. καὶ ἐμπυρισμὸσ ἀπέναντι ἀναστάσεώσ σου,

and would have pointed to Zeph. iii 8 (ἀναστάσεώσ μου = אוני) as his justification. But there is really not much reason to go beyond ἐστηκότοσ for אסבבא, which as I have said is paralleled by the Syro-Hexaplar renderings in 1 Regn. xxviii 20 and Isai. xvii 5. To render אסבבאל by seges in this passage is to beg the question.

May I say here that I dare not continue to maintain the view which I put forward some time ago (PSBA for 1902, p. 218) that this Note from the 'Fifth Column' is really a survival of the original LXX? It does seem to support לפני קבוך, the consonants of Wellhausen's emendation, but the πάτημα of the ordinary text looks more original, because more incompetent, than the scholarly ϵμπυρισμόσ of the Note. Therefore it is an emendation of the LXX, not an earlier form. But even without this shadowy support the emendation itself may be confidently accepted. At least, there is little reason to sacrifice it at the altar of a metrical theory, which we have but small reason to suppose that Isaiah or his contemporaries would have ratified.

F. C. Burkitt.