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From Burns Oates and Washbourne:

Knox translation *The Gospel according to St. Matthew*, *The Gospel according to St. Mark*, *The Gospel according to St. Luke*, *The Gospel according to St. John*. Separately in paper covers. *The Old Testament*, Vol. II.

Palanque &c., *The Church in the Christian Roman Empire*, Vol. I.

F. R. Hoare, *The Gospel according to St. John*.

From the Catholic University of America:

Heidt, *Angelology of the Old Testament*.

From T. Nelson and Sons, Edinburgh:

Harrison, *The Bible in Britain*.

From Letouzey and Ane, Paris:

Pirot-Clamer, *La Sainte Bible*, Tome IV (Par.—Job).

NEW BIBLE TRANSLATIONS[1]

THE June number of *Theology* contains an informing article by Dr. Hendry of Princeton Theological Seminary on the new translations of the Bible that are being prepared in England and the United States. Each of the two versions is to be a new translation, not a revision of any existing version; it will avoid all archaic words and phrases ("the second person singular shall be employed only in prayer"); it is to be based on what scholars consider to be the best available texts, which for the Hebrew Old Testament means Kittel's *editio tertia*; the unit of arrangement of the version on the pages will be the paragraph, while poetical books and passages will be printed in verse form. These works of Protestant scholarship will, in all probability, be many years in the making, and the panels of biblical experts will be supplemented by panels of literary advisers, made up of men distinguished in English letters.

[1] *The Old Testament*, newly translated from the Latin Vulgate by Mgr. Ronald A. Knox. Vol. I. Genesis-Esther. London, Burns Oates and Washbourne, 1949. Pp. ix + 739. Price 21*s.*

The Bible in Basic English. Cambridge University Press, 1949. Pp. 910. Price 12*s.* 6*d.*

Committees are traditionally unwieldy, and there is no sort of guarantee that this *oeuvre de longue haleine* will eventually be more acceptable than, let us say, the New Testament in the Revised Version of 1881, of which it has been remarked that the revisers knew much Greek but precious little English. Meanwhile it is a pleasure to call attention to two versions that make no claim to finality or omnicompetence, yet have achieved, each in its distinctive way, a large measure of success.

Mgr Ronald Knox's Old Testament has already been widely praised by men of letters, as well as by those whose chief concern is the close study of the sacred books. It deserves all the good that has been said of it, and its excellently clear type is matched by the clarity, vigour, and sustained attractiveness of the subject matter. The author modestly tells us in his preface: "The book gives my idea of how the Old Testament ought to be translated, and does not claim to do anything more. Neither common-sense nor canon law would justify its authorization for public use without further, more rigid, and more expert scrutiny." Yet, given the limitations of a rendering based on the Vulgate, a version that has already been improved out of all knowledge in the Psalter published by the Vatican press, it is hard to see how the work could in substance have been better done. No mere revision of an existing English version could have ensured this result, and translation from the Vulgate, in addition to giving a rendering of the Western Church's official version, possesses the marked advantage that it is based upon a text that is everywhere available and that is not at the mercy of editorial whims and fancies. Again, it may be generally true, as Dr. Hendry remarks in his *Theology* article on "New Translation of the Bible" that: "The vast bulk of the Bible makes its translation a formidable task for a single individual, and the variety of its contents demands a degree of versatility which no single individual is likely to possess." But Mgr Knox is an expert in the writing of English, Latin, and Greek, has made a careful study of Hebrew, and has the good fortune, as already noted, to be working on a text with some degree of fixity. While it has not always been possible to refer in footnotes to all the important variations between the Vulgate and the original texts, much assistance has been given, and no work of this kind can be expected to take the place of commentaries and special monographs.

Here are a few suggestions that may be of service for the revised and improved edition to which Mgr Knox refers in his preface. First, an occasional archaism or unduly mannered turn of phrase might be eliminated to make way for an expression in current English. A comparison of Ruth i, 16–17 (p. 371) with the wonderfully beautiful and moving rendering of the older versions might be held to show that, in this instance at least, the latter have the benefit of a simpler and more direct style. Secondly, a plea may once again be entered for arranging Hebrew

poetry, even in translation, as poetry, and not as ordinary prose. Dr. R. G. Moulton's *Modern Reader's Bible* proved, some decades ago, that this could be done without any great increase in bulk, and Professor Theodore H. Robinson's *Poetry and Poets of the Old Testament* (Duckworth, 1947) gives many examples of successful attempts to reproduce in translation the metre and poetic quality of the Hebrew.

Lastly, some revision of not a few of the notes might be advisable. From the note to Gen. iii, 15 (p. 4) an uninstructed reader might gather that the reading *IPSA conteret caput tuum* could be defended as seriously probable. On the contrary, Mgr J. O. Smit in his recent work, written in Dutch, *De Vulgaat* (J. J. Romen, Roermond, 1948) has proved sufficiently clearly that, even in the Vulgate manuscripts, *ipse* is the correct reading. In the words of the late Dom Donatien de Bruyne, the reading *ipsa* is to be ascribed either to a drowsy copyist or to an unwary corrector who did not understand the reference of *ipse*. " En tout cas," he concludes, "cet imbécile n'est pas saint Jérome." (Smit, p. 276, n. 415.)

The note on Ex. xxiii, 19 (p. 115), on the prohibition of seething a kid in its mother's milk, attempts to justify the substitution (for the literal sense of the Hebrew) of an interpretation *in sensu typico* devised by St. Augustine and St. Chrysostom. This is unnecessary and misleading. Centuries before the discoveries at Ras Shamra, Old Testament scholars suspected that the prohibition (repeated in Ex. xxiv, 36 and Deut. xiv, 21) was directed against a pagan custom. This is now confirmed by the Ras Shamra " Poem of the Gracious Gods," on which the article by Père R. de Vaux, O.P., in *Revue Biblique*, 1937, p. 550, *c.f.r.*

Note 2 on p. 124 (Ex. xxviii, 30) might be supplemented in the light of Professor G. R. Driver's paper on " The Modern Study of the Hebrew Language " in *The People and the Book* (Oxford, 1925, p. 91), where it is suggested that the Urîm and Tummîm mean " Oracles and Spells " (from the Accadian *ûrû* " to give an oracle " and *tummû* " to cast a spell.")

There seems to be some reluctance to admit that the Hebrew text of such a passage as II Kings v, 8 has suffered from corruption. Yet, as Professor S. R. Driver testifies, these books (of Kings) have " suffered unusually from transcriptional corruption," so that the passage in question (and the note on p. 431) might well be emended on the lines suggested by Père L. H. Vincent, O.P., in his article " Le *Sinnor* dans la Prise de Jérusalem " in *Revue Biblique*, 1924, pp. 356 ff. Cfr. also the reconstruction of the text in T. H. Robinson and W. O. E. Oesterley, *History of Israel*, i, p. 215, n. 2.

These are a few examples of corrections that might be proposed. These relatively slight imperfections in no way affect what has already been said about the beauty and general reliability of Mgr Knox's impressive new version.

The Bible in Basic English, which was published almost simultaneously with Mgr Knox's first volume, cannot be expected to display in the same manner the richness and resources of the English language. The "narrow limits of the word-list" (to use the phrase employed in the preface of the committee directed by Professor S. H. Hooke) "make it hard to keep the Basic completely parallel with the Hebrew and the Greek." The word-list itself comprises no more than 850 words, which are able, it is claimed, "to give the sense of anything which may be said in English." At the same time, it may well be a temptation to any motorist to describe the vocabulary of this edition of the Bible as Basic *plus* Supplementary, the supplementary here including "50 Special Bible words" and "100 words listed as giving most help in the reading of English verse." In addition there are a number of special terms that can neither be directly expressed nor described in Basic English, such as bdellium, onyx, gopher, cubit, olive (leaf), camels, pigeon, and shekels (these in the word-list for Genesis alone). Even after all allowance has been made for such supplements and additions, this version of the Bible in an irreducible minimum of words must remain a remarkable achievement. Whether the attempt was entirely worth-while must depend, in some degree, upon the reader's general attitude towards Basic English, and upon the usefulness of its contribution to knowledge. The case against Basic English, particularly in the matter of Bible translation, has been stated as clearly and succinctly as possible in the late Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's article "Basic English: A Challenge to Innovators," first printed in the *Times Literary Supplement* for 30th September 1944, and now reprinted in the *Q Anthology* (Dent, 1948).

Sir Arthur's root objection to Basic is, it may be remembered, that it cuts out all but eighteen verbs from its vocabulary, whereas: "Nouns and adjectives are but dead haulage, prepositions and conjunctions inert couplings, until the verb (*verbum*, the 'Word') comes along, supplies the motive power, starts and keeps the whole train going." (*Q Anthology*, p. 411). Another objection, not directly stated by Quiller-Couch, is that the vocabulary of English is emasculated and impoverished by the constant need for circumlocution. One may compare Exodus ii, 3 in Mgr Knox's version and in the Basic English edition:

Mgr. Knox

Then, unable to conceal him any longer, she took a little basket of reeds, which she smeared with clay and pitch, and in this put her baby son down among the bulrushes on the river bank.

Basic English

And when she was no longer able to keep him secret, she made him a basket out of the stems of water-plants, pasting sticky earth over it to keep the water out; and placing the baby in it she put it among the plants by the edge of the Nile.

Apart from the fact that Mgr Knox needs only thirty-six words, where Basic needs fifty-one, there is bound to be some loss from the absence of specific terms in Basic, such as *conceal*, *reeds*, *smeared*, *clay*, *bulrushes* and *bank*. When we read in Gen. xix, 24 that " the Lord sent fire and flaming smoke raining down from heaven on Sodom and Gomorrah," we must all regret the absence of " brimstone " ; when we find in Gen. xxiii, 4 that Abraham said to the sons of Heth : " Give me some land here as my property, so that I may put my dead to rest," we are inclined to prefer Mgr Knox's rendering : " Will you grant me rights of burial among you, to bury my dead ? " "Does it help anyone's intelligence " (wrote Quiller-Couch in the article already quoted) " to be taught ' I have knowledge ' as a step towards saying ' I know ' or anyone's grasp of a doctrine hallowed by centuries of faith to alter the Virgin into ' unmarried woman ' (' See, an unmarried woman will be with child '), the two terms meaning quite different things, as any heathen can tell his teacher ? " (*Q Anthology*, p. 414).

It may not, however, seem quite so clear to all of us as it was to Quiller-Couch that the use of Basic in schools is to be wholly reprobated. It is possible that some children, at various stages of their development, may find help in reading the Bible, or any other book, in a version that is limited to fairly obvious words chosen from a strictly limited vocabulary. Yet it remains true that children often pick up the spelling and connotation of complicated terms without much effort, and that a Bible written in relatively easy words is no more to be specially commended than a Bible written in words mainly of Anglo-Saxon origin. A distinguished historian and writer of English (the late George Townsend Warner) used to rejoice that the great translations of the Bible were made at a time when the English language was at its best, and that the Bible was not translated in the age of Dr. Johnson. Otherwise, in place of the short and easy words : " There were two men in one city ; the one rich, and the other poor " (A.V. of II Kings [Sam.] xii, 1), we might have had : " There were two denizens of one metropolis ; the one opulent and the other indigent "! Yet it is perhaps worth observing that each of the four substituted words in the supposed " Gospel according to Samuel Johnson " is rather more exact and informative than the corresponding term in the Authorized Version. Basic English, excluding as it does some ninety-five per cent of the English working vocabulary, is a highly artificial product, and has little in it to remind us of the strength, simplicity, completeness, and subtlety of our language in its full splendour.

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DEMETRIUS I, KING OF SYRIA

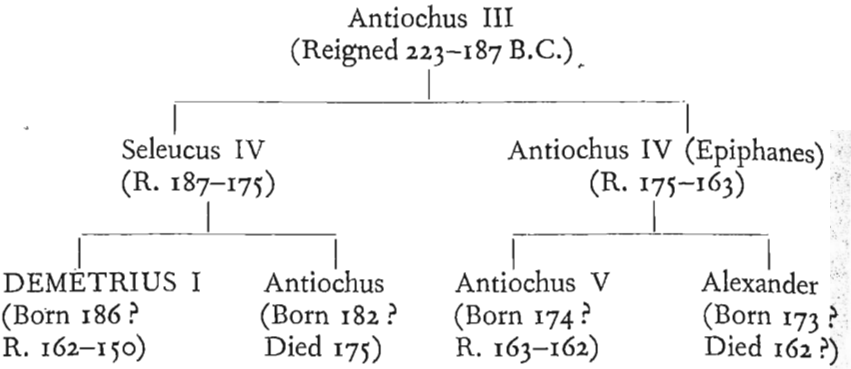
162-150 B.C.

The authors of the two Books of Maccabees do not labour to distinguish the individual traits of the various pagan kings who come and go in their pages. For the most part they belong to the Seleucid family, a Greek dynasty which for two centuries reigned in Syria and Mesopotamia and claimed dominion over vast areas to the east of these regions. About 200 B.C. Palestine had been added to their kingdom. Their capital was Antioch, a fine, new, well-planned city, though not yet so large or so beautiful as it was in St. Paul's time. The Seleucid kings regarded themselves as the true successors of Alexander the Great, and this tradition was the curse of their family. They wasted their energy in distant wars and neglected the more useful work (which the Romans accomplished later) of planting European civilization in Syria. As yet there was only a Greek ruling class amidst a population of Asiatics. Moreover, the Seleucid family produced none of those heroic characters of which one alone might have ennobled the dynasty and made us half-forget their general faults—rapacity, perfidy, fickleness, and vulgar ostentation. Demetrius perhaps had the best opportunity of breaking away from the familiar course, for he began life with blessings denied to the rest. But his story is a sad proof of the strength of dynastic tradition. A partial sketch, not a history, is all we can give here.

Demetrius was born probably in 186 B.C. but possibly a year or so earlier or later.[1] His grandfather was that Antiochus III who had dared to send forces into Europe in defiance of Rome, and had been disastrously defeated by the Romans in 190. Nearly all his possessions in Asia Minor were divided among the allies of Rome, and his kingdom ceased to be a first-rate power and sank into semi-dependence on Rome. Antiochus perished soon afterwards and his son, Seleucus IV, who succeeded him was compelled by financial difficulties to forgo the usual warlike adventures of his dynasty and to devote himself to administrative work. He is the king who tried in vain to seize the treasure deposited for safe keeping in the temple at Jerusalem, as related in II Macc. iii. Demetrius was his eldest son. Seleucus's younger brother, Antiochus, was detained in Rome as a hostage for the peacefulness and solvency of the king. When Demetrius was still something under ten years old, it was arranged that he should be sent to Rome to take his uncle's place as hostage.[2] This was about 177. We do not know who acted as guardian for the boy during the next few years, but some of the foremost senators, Paullus, Gracchus, and the Scipios, took a friendly interest in him.

[1] Polybius XXXI, 2, 5.

[2] Appian, *Syriaca*, 45. For the date see Bevan, *House of Seleucus* II, p. 124 note.



Demetrius had only been a year or two in Rome when his father King Seleucus was murdered by his unscrupulous minister, Heliodorus,[1] who also appears in II Macc. iii. Heliodorus meant to rule the kingdom himself, but he proclaimed Demetrius's younger brother Antiochus, a child of six or seven,[2] as king, ignoring Demetrius's claim to the crown. But after a few months Heliodorus was killed or ejected by Demetrius's uncle, the former hostage, who invaded Syria and made himself king as Antiochus IV. Demetrius's brother was murdered, beyond doubt at the instigation of the new king.[3] Demetrius, who was then only about eleven, had no means of urging his claim and the Roman Senate recognized Antiochus as king, considering that the succession in that kingdom was no business of theirs. Demetrius remained in Rome and was still treated as a hostage, now valued as a possible rival to his uncle. So he grew up to manhood feeling no doubt that he had been wronged by his uncle and to some extent by the Roman government. His sister, Laodice, some years his senior, had been married to Perseus, king of Macedonia, just before Demetrius's arrival in Rome.[4] When Demetrius was fifteen, his brother-in-law provoked a war with Rome, which lasted three years and ended in the loss of his kingdom. In 167 Demetrius may have watched the triumphal procession in which King Perseus walked in chains before the chariot of the victorious general Aemilius Paullus, and he probably visited the king and his family in their imprisonment at Alba Fucens not far from Rome,[5] where Perseus died two years later. How far these events may have embittered him against Rome, we cannot tell. Meanwhile his uncle, King Antiochus, had in 167, begun that effort to compel the Jews to adopt paganism, which led to the Maccabean revolt, as is described in the first five chapters of I Maccabees.

[1] Appian, *Syr.* 45.
[2] Bevan, *H.S.* II, 126 note.
[3] Diodorus, XXX, 7, 2.
[4] Pol. XXV, 4, 8–10.
[5] Livy, XLV, 42.

In the same year 167, when Demetrius was about nineteen, there arrived in Rome another hostage coming from Greece, the historian Polybius, to whom we are indebted for all we know about Demetrius's early days. Polybius was a man of thirty-five, the son of a Greek general, knew everybody and everything in the Greece of that time and a great deal about the rest of the world, and had reflected on his knowledge. Not long after his arrival, as it seems, he made the acquaintance of the young prince. They first met at a boar-hunt in the Volscian hills, forty miles from Rome,[1] for some of the hostages were allowed considerable freedom of movement. Their common passion for hunting must have often drawn them together during the next few years. Polybius was living in the house of Aemilius Paullus, the conqueror of Macedonia. Both he and Demetrius must have lived much among that circle of noble families with whom Paullus was intimately connected, a circle which had acquired Greek culture without losing Roman strength and honesty. For men of Roman or Latin race this middle period of the second century before Christ was the happiest in all their history. Although her empire comprised only Italy and Spain, Rome had now no enemies to fear. All her possible rivals were either beaten or decadent. The Roman people could draw breath after its anxieties and toils. Every foreign nation regarded it with admiration or fear, and wealth on many accounts began to flow steadily to Rome. It seemed impossible that Italy would ever again experience war or violence. Within the state, too, peace and order seemed secure. The aristocracy, which had led the country through the appalling crisis of the Punic War, now ruled it without opposition or murmur and seemed established for all eternity. Certainly for Romans of the upper classes life must have been pleasant in that age. They must have felt somewhat like the English of late Victorian times.

Polybius, trained amidst the endless rivalries and intrigues of the small Greek states, soon learnt to appreciate the greatness of Rome, and afterwards wrote his history in order to persuade his countrymen to appreciate it too. Even after his exile was over, he preferred to make his home in Italy. But Demetrius had hardly known anything but Rome. He was not able to make a real comparison: for him the East probably had all the charm of distant and unknown things, and there was also the attraction of the royal dignity which he regarded as his right. At their meetings both in the city and in the hunting-field Demetrius and Polybius were no doubt frequently accompanied by Paullus's son, young Scipio Aemilianus, who was just the same age as Demetrius and already a close associate of Polybius, and who often neglected the tedious business of building up a political following for the excitement of the chase.[2]

[1] Pol. XXXI, 14, 3. [2] XXXI, 29, 8–9.

In 163 news came to Rome that King Antiochus had died in Persia amidst great misery,[1] and that his minister Lysias had proclaimed his son, aged about nine, as king. Demetrius who was now twenty-two or twenty-three thought the time had come to urge his own claim to the throne. He was allowed to state his case before the Senate, and Polybius gives a summary of his speech.[2] The Senate was very friendly but postponed its decision. For the present they would neither recognize little Antiochus V nor allow Demetrius to return, but only sent a commission of senators to the East and awaited their report. A year or more passed. Lysias pressed on the war against the Jews and in 163 he himself led a very large force, said to be a hundred thousand, into Palestine, bringing the young king with him. He defeated the Maccabeans and besieged them on the Temple mount till they were starving. The campaign is described in I Macc. vi, 28–63. A rebellion in N. Syria compelled Lysias to raise the siege. He granted religious liberty to the Jews and recognized Judas Maccabeus as governor.

Soon afterwards one of the Roman commissioners was murdered in Syria by a fanatic.[3] Lysias was naturally, though unjustly, suspected of complicity. Demetrius thought this a good occasion to try once more to gain his father's throne. He consulted Polybius : there was now perfect confidence between the two. It is certain that Polybius had a good opinion of the young man's character and capacity. He would not have given his friendship to a worthless person even though he had been a prince. But when we read that Polybius warmly encouraged him to return, even in defiance of Rome,[4] we may suspect that he either overrated Demetrius's gifts, or did not realize the dangers and temptations before him. He was sending the untried young man into a far worse wilderness than that from which he himself had escaped and into which he later declined to return. Although Polybius probably had not visited the Greek states of the Levant, he must have known that their moral condition was much lower than even that of Greece. No doubt he gave Demetrius much good advice but something more is needed to enable a young prince to rise superior to a bad dynastic tradition and to deal with hypocritical courtiers and a servile yet treacherous populace. However, Polybius did encourage and actively help Demetrius to return to Syria. It is possible that the thought of himself as a king-maker may have dazzled even such a level-headed man. His account of Demetrius's departure is an unusually life-like episode in his rather colourless pages.[5]

Demetrius, after a last fruitless appeal to the Senate, decided to take the matter into his own hands and escape from Italy. Polybius persuaded

[1] Pol. XXXI, 9 ; I Macc. vi, 1–16 ; II Macc. ix, 1–28.
[2] Pol. XXXI, 12, 4–5.
[3] Pol. XXXII, 6–7.
[4] Pol. XXXI, 19, 5.
[5] Pol. XXXI, 19–23.

the King of Egypt's ambassador to co-operate. A Carthaginian ship bound for Tyre was lying at the mouth of the Tiber. The ambassador arranged with the captain a passage for some members of his staff, who were to come aboard just before the ship sailed. On his last day in Rome Demetrius sent a large party of his slaves to Anagnia with hunting-nets, etc. telling them to wait there for his own arrival. He dined at a friend's house in order that his movements in the evening should not arouse suspicion in his own household. Polybius, who was ill, sent him a note urging haste. In the late evening Demetrius with only seven friends hurried from Rome to Ostia and embarked at dead of night. The captain thought they were the persons mentioned by the ambassador, and set sail at daybreak. We do not know when he discovered who his passenger was. Demetrius's Roman friends thought he was hunting in the usual district, and three days went by before his escape was known. By that time the vessel had passed the Straits of Messina and could not be intercepted. The Senate met and it was decided to send another commission to the East to watch the course of events.

It was probably still spring or early summer in 162 when Demetrius and his few friends landed on the Syrian coast at Tripolis (the modern Tripoli).[1] Lysias's administration was no doubt unpopular but apart from that a change of kings was always acceptable to the Syrian cities. Demetrius was welcomed so eagerly and generally that Lysias does not seem to have been able to bring any forces against him. Word was sent to Demetrius that Lysias with the young king and his brother Alexander had been taken prisoner, and he had to decide what should be done with them. Lysias had been responsible for some deeds for which his life might plausibly be considered forfeit. But the young princes, now aged about twelve and ten, could not fairly be charged with any crimes. The evil tradition of the Seleucid family and of the neighbouring states favoured their destruction and no doubt that was urged by some or all of Demetrius's chief supporters. But Demetrius had grown up in a more wholesome atmosphere where justice was considered to be the same for all men from the highest to the lowest. It was now to be shown whether the Roman or the Seleucid was stronger within him. The Seleucid prevailed, and his better self only appears in the pitiful evasiveness of his reply: "Show me not their faces." The officers rightly interpreted his meaning and put Lysias and the two boys to death. If Demetrius had spent another ten years at Rome, his answer might have been different, and his reign would then very likely have been different too. (I Macc. vii, 1—4.)

Demetrius had won most of Syria and Antioch the capital city without a battle. The next two years he spent in almost feverish energy.[2] Among

[1] II Macc. xiv, 1.; I Macc. vii, 1

[2] Diodorus, XXXI, 27a.

other things he undertook the final suppression of the Jewish nationalists. He repudiated the treaty which Lysias had made with them, appointed a Jew of the anti-Maccabean party named Alcimus to be High Priest, and sent him to Palestine with a force commanded by an able but ruthless officer, Bacchides. They put to death all the nationalist leaders whom they could seize, and Bacchides left Alcimus in possession of Jerusalem, as described in I Macc. vii. But Judas Maccabeus's bands again soon made the open country so unsafe that Alcimus had to ask for help from Antioch. Demetrius then sent Nicanor, one of the friends who had come with him from Rome. Apparently Demetrius had directed him to gain the confidence of the nationalists and then destroy them by treachery. Nicanor however seems to have made a sincere attempt to conciliate Judas and his party and to have made considerable progress during the winter of 162–161. (II Macc. xiv.) The king was displeased and sternly ordered him to obey his instructions. Judas escaped capture and took up arms again. In March 161 he met Nicanor's forces at Adasa which is supposed to have been about 15 miles north of Jerusalem. In the battle Nicanor was defeated and killed: there is a full description in II Macc. xv and I Macc. vii, 39–50.

It was the greatest success yet gained by the nationalists and raised high hopes among them. Judas thought it might be possible to win the sympathy of the Romans and perhaps even obtain some help from them, for Rome had not yet recognized Demetrius as king. He sent two of his friends on an embassy to Rome, which was still to the Jews a little-known, half-fabulous city, almost at the end of the world. (I Macc. viii, 1.) But before the embassy had arrived in Rome, Judas's earthly career was closed. On hearing of Nicanor's defeat, Demetrius immediately sent another army southwards under Bacchides. Judas's forces were unnerved at this sudden invasion and melted away. With a few hundreds he encountered Bacchides's thousands. A desperate battle was fought at Elasa apparently a few miles from the scene of his victory and only a few weeks after it (I Macc. ix, 1–22). Judas's little force was destroyed and he himself was among the dead. The paganizing Jews were re-established in power and the nationalists could only carry on guerilla warfare. Bacchides determined to secure the country finally and spent a year or two in building a ring of fortresses round Jerusalem —nine places are mentioned in I Macc. ix, 50–52.

Meanwhile Judas's embassy, ignorant of his death, arrived in Rome in the summer of 161 and "the way was exceeding long" (I Macc. viii, 19). It was led by Eupolemus[1] who afterwards wrote one of the first Greek books ever composed on Jewish history. The embassy was probably the first official contact between Jews and Romans—King

[1] Schürer, II, iii, p. 203–6 (Engl. transl.).

Demetrius was therefore indirectly responsible for introducing two of the greatest nations of the world to one another. It was given a formal audience by the Senate and Polybius must have heard about it from his senatorial friends. Now or afterwards he learnt something about the Jewish religion (perhaps from Eupolemus's book) for in his history he promised to describe their temple at Jerusalem but never did so.[1] A treaty of mutual defence was signed between the Roman and Jewish peoples (I Macc. viii, 22–32). No doubt the Romans never meant it to be more than a friendly gesture, but it gave the nationalist Jews the status of " allies of the Roman people " and might be useful to them in dealing with adjacent states. But on their return the ambassadors found their enemies dominant and in the next year Demetrius was recognized by Rome as King of Syria.[2]

After two years of fortress-building Bacchides's troops were so much tied down to garrison work that he had too few mobile forces left, and the nationalists, now led by Judas's brother Jonathan, grew bolder. Demetrius could spare no more troops, and in 159 or 158 Bacchides was allowed to make a sort of armistice with Jonathan, which lasted for about six years (I Macc. ix, 69–73). Demetrius's war against the Jews can hardly be numbered among his crimes. He regarded their refusal to worship his gods as a mark of barbarous and narrow-minded fanaticism. It would never have crossed his mind that Jonathan's ragged levies were the armies of the living God or that his collision with them would be his chief title to a place in history.

Having obtained recognition from Rome in 161, Demetrius might have had a useful and prosperous reign if he had worked for the consolidation of his kingdom and friendship with Rome. But the unscrupulous imperialism which had possessed his ancestors possessed him also. We can only briefly touch on the rest of his reign. Without any just excuse he drove out his neighbour the king of Cappadocia, an ally of Rome, and set up a despicable puppet-king there. By the lowest kind of treachery he attempted to seize Cyprus, an Egyptian possession, and irrevocably antagonized the King of Egypt. King Attalus of Pergamum, an able and prudent man who ruled over most of Asia Minor, fearing that he might be the next victim, made a close alliance with the two injured kings, and put forward a candidate for the Syrian throne, a boy who claimed to be (and perhaps really was) the younger of Demetrius's cousins, who was said to have escaped in 162 when his elder brother was killed. He is known as Alexander Balas. By this time Demetrius had lost the popularity which he enjoyed in Syria at first. Although his upbringing had not taught him Roman justice and moderation, he was Roman enough to despise the capricious, excitable populace

[1] Josephus, *Ant.* XII, 136. [2] Pol. XXXII, 7, 13.

of the Syrian cities and was not politic enough to conceal his contempt. They disliked him for his proud, reserved manners. He seldom appeared at Antioch but spent his time in a fortress which he had built outside the city,[1] in solitary brooding and, it was said, in drinking.[2] In 153 or 152 the three allied kings sent Alexander to Syria with an armed force. He seized Ptolemais (Acre) and proclaimed himself king. He and Demetrius now began to bid against one another for the support of the Jewish nationalists, who found themselves courted and flattered by both sides, as is graphically described in I Macc. x. Naturally they preferred Alexander to Demetrius "because they remembered the great evil which he had done in Israel," and Jonathan promised his support to Alexander. New forces came from his allies and early in 150 Demetrius was defeated and killed, refusing to surrender to his rival. He was about thirty-six at his death. Some of his coins have been found, showing his "eagle face" as it has been called.[3] The aquiline nose, stern forehead, and the studied negligence of the hair, seem to bear out the impression that where no sacrifice was involved he would willingly imitate the Romans.

It was apparently over twenty years after Demetrius's death that Polybius wrote his account of him and his age. In the story of Demetrius's escape there is no expression of regret for his own part in it. From 160 onwards we unfortunately possess only a few lines of his about Demetrius, but these fragments show that he condemned Demetrius's actions in Cappadocia and Cyprus.[4] His account of the king's death would have probably contained his considered judgment on his reign. It would certainly have been an unfavourable one, though some acts would doubtless have been treated more gently than they deserved. We wonder whether the historian gave any hint of self-accusation there. Something of the kind seems due from the judge to the criminal.

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[1] Jos. *Ant.* XIII, 35–6. [2] Pol. XXXIII, 19.
[3] Babelon, *Rois de Syrie*, Plate XVI, No. 14; Bevan, *H.S.* II, Pl. ii, 11, 12.
[4] Pol. XXXII, 24, 7; XXXIII, 5.