

THE
BIBLIOTHECA SACRA.

ARTICLE I.

THE FIRST BOOK OF ESDRAS.

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THE title which this book bears in the English Bible, and which we here adopt, was first given to it in 1560, by the translators of the so-called Genevan version. The Church of England, however, in its article of religion relating to the Scriptures, promulgated two years later, and again in 1571, following the usage of the Vulgate, calls it the "Third Book of Esdras"; our present canonical books of Ezra and Nehemiah being known, respectively, as "First," and "Second Esdras."¹

In the Old Latin, Syriac, and Septuagint versions, on the other hand, it was designated as the "First Book of Ezra," and held a corresponding position in the order of books. This was doubtless due to the nature of its contents, which include a somewhat earlier period of history than the books with which it is associated, and not, as Movers² and Pohlmann³ strangely conjecture, on account of its superior age. The Codex Alexandrinus and some MSS. of the LXX name

¹ Cf. Cosin, *Scholast. Hist. of Can.*, p. xx, and Westcott, *The Bible in the Church*, 281 ff.

² *Kirchen-Lexicon*, Art. Apok. Lit., and *Loci quidam Historiæ Can. Vet. Test.* 30.

³ *Tüb. Theolog. Quartalschrift*, 1859, p. 257 ff.

the work *δ̄ ἱερεὺς*, — Ezra being regarded as a priest *par excellence*; while Jerome, in his *Prologus galeatus* or “Helmèd Prologue” (to give a free translation to this title), reckons the work among the “apocryphal” books of the Old Testament, under the name of “Pastor,” and is followed, in this respect, by some writers at a later period (Petrus Comestor, c. A.D. 1170). On the basis of this fact it has been asserted, even by so sagacious a critic as Credner, that Jerome classed the well-known *Pastor Hermae* with the Old Testament Apocrypha.¹

By Isidore of Seville (Orig. vi. 2) the book is entitled the “Second Book of Ezra”; Nehemiah and the canonical Ezra being regarded as the First Book. In times still more modern, writers have inaccurately applied to it such titles as the “Pseudo-Ezra,” and the “Apocryphal Ezra,” which might easily lead to confounding the work with what is known in the English Bible as “Second Esdras.” A fit title, both as it respects convenience and definiteness, would be the “Greek Ezra”; this distinguishes the book alike from the canonical Ezra with its Hebrew original, and from the “Apocalypse of Ezra,” which is extant in a Latin text only.

I. *Contents and Scope.* — The contents of the book are as follows :

- Chap. i. agrees in general with 2 Chron. xxxv., xxxvi.
- ii. 1-15 agrees in general with Ez. i.
- ii. 15-30 agrees in general with Ez. iv. 7-24.
- iii.-v. 6 is of unknown origin.
- v. 7-73 agrees in general with Ez. ii.-iv. 6.
- vi.-ix. 36 agrees in general with Ez. v.-x. 44.
- ix. 37-55 agrees in general with Neh. vii. 73-viii. 13.

Different opinions prevail respecting the aim of the work DeWette² says, that no object of the “characterless compilation” is discoverable. Ewald, Fritzsche, Keil, and others, however, agree that the object aimed at seems to have been to give a history of the restoration of the temple. The Old

¹ *Geschicht. d. N. T. Kan.*, pp. 273, 312, 313. Cf. Bertholdt, *Einleit. in d. Alt. Test.*, p. 1006, and Diestel, *Geschicht. d. Alten Test. in d. christ. Kirche*, 8. 182.

² *Einleit. in d. Alt. Test. ed. Schrader*, 1869, S. 565.

Latin version, indeed, led the way in this opinion, having given as the subject: *De restitutione templi*. In the language of Bertholdt (Einleit. in d. Alt. u. Neuen Test. p. 1011), "He [the compiler] would bring together from old works a history of the temple from the last period of the legal cultus to the time of the rebuilding of the same and the restoration of the appointed service therein." To this it should, perhaps, be added, that special and undue emphasis is put upon the generosity of Cyrus and Darius in their relations to the rebuilding of the temple, apparently as furnishing a fit example for other heathen rulers.¹

II. *Arrangement of Materials*. — With this supposed aim of the book the arrangement of its matter, so far as it can be said to have any arrangement, appears to agree. In the first chapter, the author places the account of the celebration of the Passover under Josiah, and carries the history forward to a period just previous to the Babylonian Captivity. He then passes over in the second chapter to the reign of Cyrus, giving an account of the return of the Jews under the leadership of Sanabassar [Zerubbabel], the attempt at rebuilding the temple, and the prohibition of the work by Artaxerxes. In chap. iii.—v. 6 comes the only independent portion of the work, in which it is narrated that, after a great feast given by Darius, three young men, who formed his body-guard, held a discussion in his presence on the question, "What is mightiest?" Zerubbabel is represented as one of these three young men (?), and secures the victory in the contest. He is able, consequently, to obtain the king's consent to the return of the Jews. Then follows, chap. v. 7-73, a list of the families that returned (in the time of Cyrus!), an account of the resumption of work on the temple, the opposition encountered, and an interruption for two years (!) until the time of Darius (!). Chaps. vi.—vii. continue the history to the completion of the temple and the restoration of its service, which took place under the direction of Zerubbabel, and

¹ Cf. Ewald, *Geschicht. d. Volk. Is.* Aufl. 1864, iv. 164; Keil, *Einleit. in d. Alt. Test.* Aufl. 1873, S. 708, and Zotenberg's *Translation of the "History of Daniel"* in *Merx's Archiv*, 1869, Heft iv. 397-399.

during the reign of Darius. Then follows, viii.—ix. 36, a narrative of the return of Ezra at the head of a colony, the history of his dealings with those who had married foreign wives; and, at the close, ix. 37—55, the public reading of the law.

By placing the order of the history in the related parts as found in the canonical books side by side with that adopted by our author, the evident confusion of the latter will be still more apparent.

Order of Canonical Books.

1. Return under Zerubbabel.
2. List of those returning.
3. Efforts to rebuild the temple and opposition of the Samaritans.
4. Cessation of work by order of Artaxerxes.
5. Resumption and completion of the work by Zerubbabel in the reign of Darius.
6. Return of Ezra with a caravan.

1 Esdras.

1. Return under Sanabassar [Zerubbabel].
2. Attempt to rebuild the temple, and opposition of the Samaritans.
3. Cessation of work by order of Artaxerxes.
4. Resumption of work by permission of Darius.
5. A list of persons who returned with Zerubbabel [in the time of Cyrus !]
6. Resumption of work on the temple which the Samaritans cause to cease.
7. Completion of temple by Zerubbabel during the reign of Darius, who uses against the opposing Samaritans a decree of Cyrus.
8. Return of Ezra with a caravan.

Naturally, the difficulties presented to the critic by this arrangement have been among the most perplexing of the book. Indeed, the palpable contradiction and absurdity of representing, among other things of a similar character, that the Samaritans effectually opposed the rebuilding of the temple under Zerubbabel *after* his return from Darius with plenipotentiary powers, and that such opposition continued until the *time of Darius*, when it was overcome by appealing to a decree of Cyrus, are so gross that most writers make no attempt at explanation. De Wette (Einleit. ed. Schrader S.

566) characterizes this arrangement as false and nonsensical. And Hervey in Smith's Bible Dictionary (Art. 1 Esdras), holds that efforts "to reconcile the different portions of the book with each other and with Scripture are lost labor."

Josephus, who made considerable use of the book, sought in vain to bring its several parts into chronological order. He made a series of suppositions to which, although they are evidently suppositions only, he did not scruple to give the form and force of historical statements. He represented, for instance, (1) that Zerubbabel returned to Babylon from Jerusalem; and, as a matter of personal friendship, was made one of his body-guard by Darius; (2) that the Samaritans were refused permission by the Jews to participate with them in the rebuilding of the temple, on the ground that the latter had received their permission from Cyrus *and from Darius*; and (3) that the disappointed Samaritans then complained to Darius, not that the Jews had again begun to rebuild, but that the *work was proceeding* too fast (Antiq. of the Jews, xi. 3-4). Josephus did not seem to consider that the age of Zerubbabel must have disqualified him from being one of the "young men" (*νεανίσκοι*) mentioned (v. 5), or that his other explanatory statements fall far short of covering the ground of our author's difficulties. For a notice of additional misplacement of the facts of this history of Josephus, see Ewald, *Geschicht. d. Volk. Is.*, iv. 167.

There can be little doubt that the immediate occasion for the series of contradictions in which our author involves himself, is to be sought in the narrative of the debate before Darius. This seems to have been with him a principal point of attraction, and its false glitter blinded him to the deficiencies of his work in other parts. Fritzsche supposes that the original hero of this part was not Zerubbabel, but his son Joakim (? v. 5), and that the former name, as the more illustrious, had been substituted (iv. 13) previous to the compilation of our present book. But, ingenious as this suggestion is, it seems to us less probable than that the name of Zerubbabel was originally introduced into the legend

under the mistaken impression that the Sanabassar, elsewhere spoken of as conducting the first company of captives from Babylon, was some other person than Zerubbabel. This critic's theory for explaining the confused arrangement is as follows: After the author had given an account of the return in the time of Cyrus, he passes at once, in order to come without delay to the history of affairs under Darius, to the official prohibition to build by Artaxerxes. Then, since according to his text in the original fragment, the historical position of Zerubbabel had been changed, in that he was understood to have conducted a subsequent caravan to Jerusalem during the reign of Darius, he first relates this fact, and then, without being conscious of the anachronism, takes up the list of those returning in the time of Cyrus (cf. *Einleit. zum Com.*, S. 6 f.)

But it may well be questioned whether any supposed haste of the compiler to get forward in his narrative to the time of Darius could have been the occasion for his omitting, in its proper place, so conspicuous and closely-connected a part of the history as a long list of names which he deems of importance enough to justify its subsequent introduction. Herzfeld's effort to support the forced supposition of Josephus, that Zerubbabel returned a second time to Babylon, by appealing to Zech. i. 7; iii. 8, 9; vi. 13 cannot be regarded as successful.¹

III. *Author, Time, and Place of Compilation.* As helping to a decision of the question, who the compiler of our book was, and when and where his work was done, the original portion, chap. iii.—v. 6, appears to be of special importance, both on account of its own peculiar character and the interest with which, as we have seen, he himself regarded it. That the writer of this portion of the book did not live in the time of the Persian kings, seems evident from the fact, that he uses the phrase "Medes and Persians," and "Persians and Medes" interchangeably; ² that he lived in Egypt appears

¹ *Geschicht. d. Volk. Is. I.* 321-323; cf. Keil, *Einleit. in d. Alt. Test.* 706, and Fritzsche, *Einleit. zu diesem Buch.* S. 7.

² Hitzig, *Geschicht. d. Volk. Is.*, S. 277.

probable from his allusion (iv. 23) to "sailing upon the sea and upon the rivers" for the purpose of "robbing and stealing";¹ that he wrote after the period of the reception of Esther and Daniel into the canon, is indicated by the language chap. i. 1, 2 ff.² But was the compiler of the book himself the author of this independent portion? It is scarcely to be supposed; and the idea is entertained by no considerable number of critics. Still, the fact that he came into possession of it at all, and used it with so much esteem, while it bears in contents and form so evidently the stamp of the Alexandrian school, cannot be without its weight.

The evidence to be gained from other parts of the work on the points before us is less decisive. Fritzsche's opinion that the author was a Hellenist, living in Palestine, which he supports only by a single doubtful reference to the book itself (v. 47), can hardly pass for a probable conjecture. On the other hand, Dähne's argument,³ which Langen⁴ ably supports, to prove an Egyptian origin for the entire work from certain marked peculiarities of its language, seems to be entitled to more weight than Fritzsche (*Nachträge zum Com.*) is willing to allow it. It might also be added, that while no lack of interest in the contents of such a book could be predicated of the Jews of the dispersion, there would naturally be far more need felt for a Greek translation of this kind in Egypt than in Palestine.

After what has been already said, it will be evident that the date of the compilation cannot be fixed with any degree of definiteness. The acknowledged use of the book by Josephus furnishes a limit in one direction. Most critics, in fact, agree in assigning it to the first or second century before Christ; Fritzsche deciding for the former period as the more probable.

¹ Cf. Graetz, *Geschicht. der Juden.*, 3^{te} Band, 2^{te} Aufl. S. 39 f., and Gutmann, *Einleit. zu diesem Buch*, S. 214.

² Cf. however, Herzfeld, *Geschicht.* III. 73.

³ *Geschicht. Darstellung der jüdisch alexandrinische Religions-Philosophie*, II. 116 ff.

⁴ *Das Judenthum in Palästina*, S. 175 f.

IV. *Sources of the Work and Character of the Text.*—Even a cursory comparison of the text of our book with that of the canonical writers in parallel passages, will at once disclose the fact that, while there is a general agreement, there are, on the other hand, in detail, not a few cases of variation and disagreement, for some of which it is difficult, with our present information, satisfactorily to account. These deviations, which formerly led biblical students to the too hasty conclusion that the book was quite valueless, have, in later times, by a natural but extreme reaction, been regarded by some as evidence that the author used another recension of the Hebrew text, and one, in more or fewer instances, superior to the Masoretic. An overwhelming majority of the diverse readings of our book, however, may undoubtedly be referred to the acknowledged fact, that its author sought, as a matter of primary importance, to make his work smooth in language and clear in thought; and that to attain this object he did not hesitate to use whatever text he may have had before him with the utmost freedom. And since this is admitted to be the fact, it would appear to be a more reasonable course to seek an explanation for the really very few instances where a supposed *better reading* is followed in the general spirit and drift of the work, than in the bold theory of another recension of the original text.

Ninety-nine one hundredths of all the passages which disagree with the extant Hebrew original may probably be classed under the following heads:¹ (1) *Passages in which the author seeks to avoid hard Hebraistic expressions*, viii. 6, cf. Ez. vii. 9; (2) *where he shortens, for the sake of smoothness, to avoid repetition, or for other reasons*, i. 10, cf. 2 Chron. xxxv. 10–12; ii. 16, cf. Ez. iv. 7–11; vi. 3, 4, cf. Ez. v. 3, 4; (3) *makes changes or omissions in superscriptions to letters*, ii. 15, 16, cf. Ez. iv. 7–11; v. 7, cf. Ez. ii. 1; (4) *gives different lists of articles*, viii. 14, cf. Ez. vii. 17; viii. 20, cf. Ez. vii. 22; (5) *omits names from lists*, v.

¹ Cf. Keil, *Einleit. ad loc.*, and Trendelenburg, in Eichhorn's *Allgemeine Bibliothek der bib. Lit.*, I. 177 f.

5 ff., cf. Ez. viii. 1 ff.; (6) *adds for the sake of clearness or completeness*, i. 56, cf. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 20; ii. 5, cf. Ez. i. 3; ii. 9, cf. Ez. i. 4; ii. 46, cf. Ez. iv. 7, 8; ii. 18, cf. Ez. iv. 12; v. 46, cf. Ez. ii. 70; v. 47, cf. Ez. i. 1; v. 52, cf. Ez. iii. 5; v. 66, cf. Ez. iv. 1; vi. 18, cf. Ez. v. 14; vii. 9, cf. Ez. vi. 18; vi. 9, cf. Ez. v. 8; v. 41, cf. Ez. ii. 64; (7) *makes an explanation*, ii. 17, 24, 25, vi. 3, 7, cf. Ez. iv. 8, 13, 17; v. 3, 6, ii. 19, cf. Ez. iv. 13; ii. 20, 26, cf. Ez. iv. 14, 19; ix. 38, cf. Neh. viii. 1; (8) *changes on doctrinal grounds*, i. 15, cf. 2 Chron. xxxv. 15; i. 28, cf. 2 Chron. xxxv. 22; (9) *would honor the temple*, i. 5, cf. 2 Chron. xxxv. 4; ii. 18, cf. Ez. iv. 12; ii. 20, cf. Ez. iv. 14; (10) *makes a mistake*, ix. 49, cf. Neh. viii. 9; (11) *substitutes an equivalent*, v. 36, cf. Ez. ii. 59; (12) *changes the form of proper names*, v. 69, cf. Ez. iv. 2; vi. 3, cf. Ez. v. 3; viii. 41, 61, cf. Ez. viii. 15, 31; v. 8 ff., viii. 26 ff., cf. Ez. ii. 2 ff., viii. 2 ff.; (13) *introduces changes for no discoverable reason*, i. 34, cf. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 1; viii. 24, cf. Ez. vii. 26; viii. 69, cf. Ez. ix. 1.

With respect now to the question of the immediate sources of the book, the opinions of critics may be divided into two general classes: those who hold that it is a direct translation from the Hebrew, and from a text in some instances superior to that which has come down to us; and those who hold that, with the exception of the independent portion, iii.-v. 6, it is simply a free, and somewhat altered, working over of a former Greek translation of the canonical books, either the LXX, as Keil maintains, or a different one, as maintained by Ewald, Dähne, Langen, and others. Ewald formerly advocated the first theory, but in the latest edition of his history fully abandons it (*Geschicht.*, iv. 166). It still has the support of such critics as Michaelis, Trendelenburg (and Eichhorn), Bertholdt, Herzfeld, DeWette (ed. Schrader), and Fritzsche. It is to be said, however, that some of the last-named scholars content themselves with justifying this view either by a single citation or two from the work itself, or, as is quite common, refer to the supposed critical results of

Trendelenburg's study of the same (l. c. pp. 178-232).¹ Michaelis makes the sweeping declaration, that the readings of the Greek *Ezra* *not seldom* appear to him to be preferable to those of the canonical books, and that now one, and now the other is to be followed.² But in the course of a somewhat thorough study of the entire book before us, in which we have taken continual counsel of Michaelis's able and useful work, we do not find that his assertion is by any means borne out by his own use of the apocryphal author. Bertholdt adduces a single passage. Herzfeld makes no citations where he treats of this point, but promises to note passages which are pertinent as they shall incidentally occur in the course of his history. DeWette (ed. Schrader), who is content to hold the theory of a different recension of the Hebrew text without maintaining that it is a superior one, directs attention to the investigations of Trendelenburg. Finally, in the nearly seventy pages of Fritzsche's work, including Introduction and Commentary to our book, we cannot discover on actual examination that he is ready to maintain in more than about a dozen instances that it has readings superior to the traditional text, and these include the entire number of passages cited by Trendelenburg, and adopted by Eichhorn, as supporting the same theory, with the exception of two of minor importance.

We may, therefore, conclude that if there is any real ground for this opinion, whose bearings are so important, it will be found in these fourteen passages. But, at the outset, we make the discovery that in five of them our author, in departing from the current Hebrew text, essentially follows the LXX version of the same passages in the canonical books. Hence, in the face of an alternative theory that the book itself is a compilation from the LXX version, they cannot fairly be used as evidence to support the theory of a Hebrew original, and much less of one with a text superior to the

¹ Eichhorn adopts without change this work of Trendelenburg's in his *Einl. in d. Apokr.*, pp. 335-377.

² *Anmerk. zum Ez.*, S. 40.

Masoretic. These passages are as follows : i. 43, cf. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9 ; v. 69, cf. Ez. iv. 2 ; viii. 29, cf. Ez. viii. 3 ; viii. 32, cf. Ez. viii. 5 ; viii. 36, cf. Ez. viii. 10. The remaining instances we will now proceed to examine in detail.

(1) The first is i. 27 (cf. 2 Chron. xxxv. 21). Our author translates as follows : *ἐπὶ γὰρ τοῦ Εὐφράτου ὁ πόλεμός μου ἐστὶ*, “for my war is upon the Euphrates.” The Hebrew, at this place, literally translated is : “but against the house of my war ;” i.e. “the family with which I wage war,” “my hereditary enemy” [“have I come out this day”]. It is maintained that the author of the Greek work before us must have found in his Hebrew text, and read, *רַבִּי*, instead of *רַבִּי* of the present text ; and that it is a better reading. The Hebrew, as it stands, is pronounced “hard and unnatural” ; while 2 Kings xxiii. 29 is cited as a parallel passage, where it is declared that the war mentioned was actually on the Euphrates. But to this it may be replied first, that the LXX does not translate this passage in 2 Chron. at all ; thus leaving our author, on the supposition that he might otherwise have been influenced by its rendering, to his own devices. And secondly, the passage as it is found in the Greek Ezra has every appearance of being a paraphrase, and the supposition that it is such would be in entire harmony with the usual course of this book in instances of “hard and unnatural” Hebraisms. Moreover, the passage cited from 2 Kings would seem to favor the theory of a paraphrase by our author, quite as much as any other. Again, if the Hebrew be here “hard and unnatural,” light is shed upon it from other parts of Scripture where a similar Hebrew form is found ; cf. 1 Chron. xviii. 10 ; 2 Sam. viii. 10. And finally, the text as it stands is sufficiently clear ; while, historically, it is far more significant than that which it is proposed to substitute for it. The latter point is well illustrated by Michaelis. Cf. Anmerk. zum 2^{ten} Buch d. Chronik, S. 296.

(2) The second instance is i. 35 (cf. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 3), *καὶ ἀπέστησεν αὐτὸν βασιλεὺς Αἰγύπτου τοῦ μὴ βασιλεύειν ἐν*

Ἱερουσαλημ. The translation of the Hebrew here is as follows: "and the king of Egypt put him down [removed him] at Jerusalem." It is supposed that the word אֶרֶץ has fallen out from the present text, but was to be found in that used by our author. It might be granted that the passage would read more smoothly if this word were to be admitted; and also, as is maintained, that it is ordinarily found in connection with similar expressions in the Scriptures. But, on the other hand, these two reasons would, undoubtedly, have had great weight with the author of our book to lead him to introduce the word into the text if he did not find it there, while the exceedingly faulty rendering of the immediate context shows that he did not scruple to make any changes which seemed best to him. Still more to the point is it, however, that the LXX has interpolated in the preceding verse in 2 Chron. a passage from 2 Kings xxiii. 33, which ends with the very expression before us, viz. *τοῦ μὴ βασιλεύειν αὐτὸν ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ*. And it is a far more likely conjecture, that he adopted the suggestion thus brought to his hand by the LXX, than that he had a different reading of the original text before him.

(3) The next passage is i. 46 (cf. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 10). The Hebrew as it stands is translated: "and made Zedekiah, his brother, king over Judah and Jerusalem." Now we learn from parallel passages in the canonical books themselves — 2 Kings xxiv. 17, 18; 1 Chron. iii. 15 — that Zedekiah was not really a brother, but an uncle of the preceding king. And the LXX likewise has *καὶ ἐβασίλευσεν τὸν Σεδεκίαν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ Ἰούδαν καὶ Ἱερουσαλήμ*. But it can scarcely be said that the Greek Ezra has a *better* reading here, for it does not translate the word in question at all; illustrating once more in this case a marked habit of the book, viz. to avoid supposed difficulties when possible. Hence, the commendations bestowed on our author by Fritzsche,¹ Bertheau,² and Graf³ at this point, seem hardly

¹ Com. *ad loc.*

² Com. zum 2^{ten} Buch d. Chronik, *ad loc.*

³ Die Geschichte. Bücher d. Alt. Test., S. 183.

to be deserved, especially if we consider that the Hebrew as it stands may not be even in error. Calling a nephew a brother is, indeed, just what is done in the case of Abraham and Lot, and is a usage not strange to the Old Testament.

(4) Again, we are referred to the discrepancy in the number of vessels which it is said Cyrus delivered to Sheshbazzar to be carried to Jerusalem, ii. 13 (cf. Ez. i. 9-11). According to the canonical book the entire number is represented as being five thousand four hundred. But we find, on adding the number of separate articles as there given together, that the sum is only two thousand four hundred and ninety-nine. In the Greek Ezra, on the other hand, the sum of the separate articles exactly corresponds to the whole amount as there stated. Hence, it is proposed to emend the former account by the latter. But a glance should satisfy any one that there is no reasonable proportion in the number of vessels among themselves as given in the apocryphal work. There are said to be, for instance, just as many gold as silver chargers; but the number of silver basins is given as two thousand four hundred and ten, while the gold basins number but thirty. Moreover, Fritzsche agrees with Trendelenburg that a mistake is made in the Greek Ezra in interchanging a Hebrew word which means of the *second quality*, כִּי־זָהָב, for כִּי־כֶסֶף; and hence the whole number has been made too great by two thousand. The most that can be said, therefore, is that the Hebrew text here has suffered corruption, and that neither account can be regarded as strictly accurate.

(5) The next case, v. 9 (cf. Ez. ii. 2), is simply a matter that relates to the proper dividing of a verse. The phrase which Trendelenburg thinks should be placed as in the apocryphal, rather than as in the canonical work, is simply the superscription to a following list: Ἀριθμὸς τῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔθνους καὶ οἱ προηγούμενοι αὐτῶν. And if the division of verses were at all a matter with which we have any concern in this connection, we still cannot understand by what rule it is judged that the phrase in question has a more correct

position at the beginning of one verse than at the end of the previous one.

(6) Again, in ix. 2 (cf. Ez. x. 6), Fritzsche, Bertheau, and others think that the Greek Ezra shows that the reading עָפְּ וַיִּשָּׁב was before it, rather than that of the extant text עָפְּ וַיִּשָּׁב . Its translation is *καὶ ἀνλισθεὶς ἐκεῖ*, "and remained [lodged] there." It must be admitted that the two Hebrew words have a very close resemblance, and might easily be mistaken for one another; also, that by substituting the former for the latter, a smoother sentence would be secured. Moreover, in this case, the facts are against the supposition of a dependence of our author on the current text of the LXX, which translates the Hebrew by *καὶ ἐπορεύθη ἐκεῖ*. But, on the other hand, the immediate repetition of the same thought in the Hebrew, supposing its present form to be genuine, would furnish an occasion not likely to be left unimproved by our author for exercising his talent for contraction, or making a paraphrase, and the context might easily suggest to him the form which he has adopted. Still, the repetition of a thought in this manner would be no sufficient reason for distrusting the genuineness of the passage (cf. vs. 5, 6, and 1 Sam. ii. 14). DeWette's rule for determining the true reading where the mss. of the New Testament differ, is certainly quite as applicable in many of the cases of variation which the present book brings before us. He says: "That reading to which the origin of the others may be traced, is the original. The more obscure and difficult reading is to be preferred to the clearer and easier; the harder, elliptical, Hebraizing, and ungrammatical, to the more pleasing and grammatical, the shorter, to the more explanatory and wordy."¹

(7) The next passage cited is ix. 16 (cf. Ez. x. 16). It is held that our author read, וַיִּבְרַח לֵוִי , *καὶ ἐπελέξατο ἑαυτῷ*, instead of וַיִּבְרַח לֵוִי . Undoubtedly the extant Hebrew is corrupt. But only the copula ו is wanting before the word עָפְּ to restore what seems to be the correct reading; and since all

¹ *Introd. to New Test. (Frothingham's trans.), pp. 80, 81.*

the old versions, with the exception of the Syriac, supply this copula in rendering the passage, it is quite unnecessary to resort to the theory proposed.

(8) Once more, it is said by Fritzsche, in his Introduction to this book (p. 7), that the reading in Neh. viii. 9, where Ezra and Nehemiah are represented as prosecuting a common work in Jerusalem at the same time, is historically improbable; and he would, therefore, adopt the reading found in 1 Esd. ix. 49 as the correct one. But, in the first place, the reading of our book is not such that the statement made in the book of Nehemiah is denied; nor is another statement made which is irreconcilable with it. In the Greek Ezra the whole passage is not given. The title of the satrap of Syria is given, but not, as in the canonical book, the name of the person who held the office. From this silence of our author it would seem to be too weighty an inference which Fritzsche would draw. And secondly, to characterize as historically improbable the opinion that the work of Ezra and Nehemiah in Jerusalem was for a certain period of their lives contemporaneous, is allowing too little weight to a theory which, according to Nägelsbach (*Herzog's Real-Encyc.*, iv. 173), is held by a majority of biblical students.¹

With respect, now, to the question of a direct Hebrew original for our book, which, of course, is to be distinguished from the more important point just considered, a few additional passages have been cited in support of such a view, on the ground that they agree better with the Hebrew than with any extant Greek translation. None of them agree literally with the Hebrew, however, while all such variations from the LXX may be accounted for on the quite credible supposition (see below) that for the book before us a text of this version was used differing in many points from the one that has come down to us.² On the other hand, there

¹ Cf. on the subject, Winer's *Real-Wörterbuch*, Art. Neh.; Hävernicks, *Einleit. in d. Alt. Test. ad loc.*; Herzfeld, l. c. II. 55; Vaihinger, *Stud. und Krit.* 1854, 122 ff.; Ebrard, *Stud. und Krit.* 1847, 679 f.; Ewald, l. c. iv. 168-213.

² See Keil, l. c., p. 705.

are positive reasons, of no little weight, which bear in the contrary direction. They are such as these: the frequent literal agreement of our work with the LXX in the character of the Greek used, even where the *words are unfamiliar and rare*, viii. 86 (cf. Ez. ix. 13); ix. 51 (cf. Neh. viii. 10); the fact that the LXX is so often followed with more or less fidelity, in its *deviations* from the Hebrew text, i. 3 (cf. 2 Chron. xxxv. 3); i. 9 (cf. 2 Chron. xxxv. 9); i. 13 (cf. 2 Chron. xxxv. 13); i. 23 f. (cf. 2 Chron. xxxv. 19, 20); i. 33 (cf. 2 Chron. xxxv. 26); i. 38 (cf. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 5); ii. 30 (cf. Ez. iv. 23); that in the case of deviations from both the Hebrew and the LXX, the readings of our book are more easily referred to the latter than the former, viii. 92 (cf. Ez. x. 2). These examples, which with a single exception Keil has taken from two chapters of the Greek Ezra, it is believed might easily be almost indefinitely extended, if a more thorough examination were made.

It would seem, then, that if anything were still wanting to confirm the theory of a Greek original for our book, which, if not exclusively used, was left only for an occasional reference to the Hebrew, it might be found in the fact of the extraordinary variations in the text of the different mss. of the LXX. According to Jerome (Ep. ad Suniam et Fetelam, also Praef. in Paralip.), there were two copies of this work, the older one being much the less faithful to the Hebrew. And an examination of extant mss. furnishes abundant reason for crediting this statement. Taking, for instance, the Roman edition of the LXX (1587), based on the famous Vatican Codex as a standard, and comparing with it other mss., we shall find eighty places where some of them disagree with it while agreeing with the Hebrew, and only twenty-six places where they, at the same time, disagree with it and with the Hebrew. Moreover, when there is variation from the Hebrew, it is chiefly shown in the addition or omission of words and clauses.¹

¹ Cf. Selwyn's valuable Article on the Septuagint in Smith's Bib. Diet., and that of Fritzsche in Herzog's Real-Encyc., I. 226 ff.

V. *Historical Estimate of the Book.* — Josephus is the first writer who shows any acquaintance with the Greek Ezra. In his work on the Antiquities of the Jews, it seems to have been his favorite book of reference for that part of the history which it includes. It was most probably the smooth and graceful style of the author, which, as has been already shown, was one of his most marked characteristics, that specially attracted this Jewish historian. That he would not have been hindered from using the work on account of its apparent discrepancies when compared with the holy books of his nation, is evident from the manner in which, as we have shown above, he attempts to pass off his own suppositions as history. That he was not insensible to its want of accuracy appears from his efforts at correction. The statement of Movers,¹ made also by Pohlmann,² that Josephus in no case leaves the Greek Ezra to follow the canonical books, is not justified by the facts. Cf. i. 9 and i. 36.

By Christian writers during the first five centuries after Christ, the book is frequently alluded to, but it is impossible to say, in all cases, in just what estimate it was held; or, indeed, whether it or the canonical Ezra was meant. Diestel, referring to the article of Pohlmann just cited, says, that *most* of the church Fathers, excepting Jerome, held the work for canonical.³ But if this be true it is not shown by the citations of Pohlmann. Of the score of church Fathers, Greek and Latin, whom he adduces, the great majority give no certain evidence in the citations made from their works that they valued the work before us as "holy Scripture." Cyprian and Origen do, indeed, introduce it under the well known formula, *ut scriptum est*. Augustine speaks of the picture of Truth, given in iv. 38–40, as a possible prediction of Christ; but Jerome, whom Pohlmann well styles "der gründlichste Kenner der alttestamentlichen Literatur," denounced the work as "apocryphal," and prepared the way for its rejection by the entire Western church. His language

¹ Kirchen-Lexikon, I. 335.

² Theol. Quartalschrift, 1859, p. 259.

³ L. c. p. 182.

is: *nec quemquam moveat, quod unus a nobis editus liber est nec apocryphorum tertii et quarti libri somniis delectetur, quia et apud Hebraeos Esdrae Nehemiaeque sermones in unum volumen coarctantur*, etc.¹ Moreover, we find on examination, that three fourths of all the citations from the Fathers made by Pohlmann, refer to the one circumstance of the literary contest before Darius, and most of them to the striking expression which it contains respecting the power of the truth. This attractive story, taken in connection with a loose way of making quotations at this time, naturally became a kind of stock reference in the early church, and once started, readily passed from hand to hand with little or no thought of its origin. The most that can be said, therefore, is that the book was used with respect by a number of the Greek and Latin Fathers.

But the probable reason why it was not accepted as canonical by the Tridentine Council in 1546, which elevated to this rank other works having apparently less claim, was, that in addition to the pronounced opposition of Jerome, it was not then known to exist in Greek. Luther, speaking of first and second Esdras says: "These books we would not translate, because they have nothing in them which you might not better find in Aesop." Oecolampadius and Calvin speak with more care, but refuse the book a place in the canon. The same is true of the English church from its earliest history, as is shown in its various translations of the Bible.² The more recent criticism, as we have said, is characterized by a too extreme reaction in favor of the historical and critical worth of the book. Its value is chiefly lexical. The translation, which Trendelenburg compares for smoothness and elegance with that of Symmachus, can, no doubt, be made useful in the study of the remaining apocryphal books of the Old Testament as well as of the New Testament Greek. And there are, undoubtedly, a few instances where its aid may properly be invoked in the interpretation of those parts of the canonical books which it includes.

¹ Praef. in libr. Esdr. Opp. T. ix. col. 1472 (ed. Migne).

² Westcott, *The Bible in the Church*, 281 ff.

VI. *Is it a Fragment?*—Opinions on the question whether the book in its present form is complete in itself will naturally be much modified by the view that is adopted respecting its aim. Those who hold that the compiler meant to arrange his material simply with reference to a history of the restoration of the temple, find the work, as it is, pretty nearly complete. But it undoubtedly breaks off in the midst of a sentence, and one cannot say with certainty whether the last part has been lost, or that the author failed to carry out his original design. At least, there would be nothing against the current opinion of the purpose of the author—and it seems to be required by the abrupt conclusion—to suppose that Neh. viii. 13–18 originally formed a part of the work. The theory of Trendelenburg that the first part of the book is also wanting, which he bases on the fact that the history begins with the eighteenth instead of the first year of Josiah's reign, harmonizes with no tenable theory of its object.

VII. *Manuscripts and Versions.*—The critical edition of the LXX undertaken in England by Holmes and completed by Parsons (Oxford, 1798–1827), in which the readings of twenty-four different MSS. of our book are given, still furnishes scholars with their principal resource for the criticism of its text. According to Fritzsche,¹ these twenty-four MSS. may be divided with respect to worth into four classes, the best text being found in II. (Codex Vaticanus) 52 (Codex Liguriensis, Florentiae, saeculi fere x), and 55 (Codex Vaticanus, saeculi fere x). This text, however, is not free from mistakes of copyists in addition to arbitrary attempts at improvement. It is especially to be suspected, Fritzsche thinks, when agreeing with 19, (bibl. Chigianae Romae, saeculi x), and 108 (Vaticanus, n. 330, saeculi fere xiv). The latter MSS. represent in general the text of the Complutensian Polyglott (1514–1517). The remaining codices are (1) III. (Alexandrinus), XI. (Basiliano-Vaticanus, 2106, saeculi ix),

¹ *Libri Apocryphi Vet. Test., Praef. viii.–x.* Cf. Tischendorf's *Vetus Testament. Graece juxta LXX. interpretes.* Lips. 1869. Prolegom.

58, 64, 119, 243, 245, 248, and the Aldine; (2) 44, 71, 74, 106, 107, 120, 121, 134, 286. These last two recensions, as they are named, present a text more or less emended — the former with reference to Codex Alexandrinus — and, at the same time, do not always retain their distinctive features, being more or less influenced by each other.

ARTICLE II.

ARISTOTLE.

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I. — HIS THEOLOGY.

“It is natural that he who first discovers any art whatsoever, beyond the ordinary perceptions of the senses, is admired by men, not only because he has discovered something useful, but as wise and different from the rest of mankind.”¹ This remark of Aristotle’s is peculiarly appropriate to himself. All men seem to be possessed with a desire to trace an art or an idea to its originator. Countless pages have been written to prove that this or that man first invented printing. Immense labor has been expended by the learned in their attempts to discover the discoverer of gunpowder. Fierce contests have raged over the question to whom the glory of applying steam as a motive power was due. Between the followers of Newton and those of Leibnitz a most envenomed controversy arose as to which was first in the application of fluxions. In more recent times we have seen the magnificent honors heaped upon Morse, because he first reduced electricity to the service of man. All early nations must have their eponymous heroes; when they cannot find them they invent them. The early writings of the Hebrews give us the names of the inventors of the arts; the modern Arabs even point out the tomb of the first of the human race. This desire may be explained in the words of Aristotle him-

¹ *Arist. Met.*, i. 1. extr.