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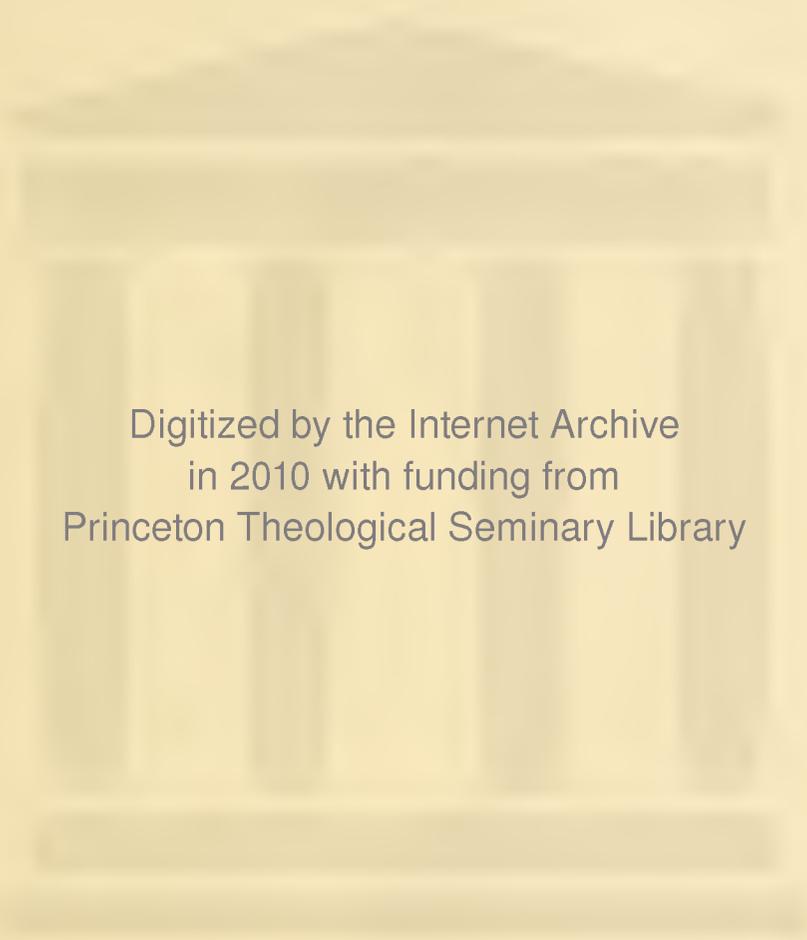
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ECCLESIASTES;

OR,

KOHELETH.



BY
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AMERICAN EDITION.

EDITED, WITH ANNOTATIONS, DISSERTATIONS ON LEADING IDEAS,

TOGETHER WITH

A NEW METRICAL VERSION AND AN INTRODUCTION THERETO.

BY

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ECCLESIASTES.

SOLOMON, THE PREACHER.

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. NAME AND CHARACTER OF THE BOOK.

According to the title: "The words of Koheleth, Son of David, King of Jerusalem," this book contains the discourses or reflections of a king whom the author presents as Solomon, but whom he designates with the peculiarly symbolical appellative קהלת. This expression, which is not used outside of this book, is used again in it several times, and twice with the article (vii. 27; xii. 8; comp. i. 2, 12; xii. 9, 10). It is clearly allied with קהל assembly, congregation of the people, and, as there is no such verb in Kal, is to be connected with Hiphil, הקהל (Numb. viii. 9; x. 7; xx. 8; Job xi. 10), and is accordingly to be considered as the feminine participial form with the signification of one holding an assembly, preaching. This signification which the oldest translators and expositors express (Sept.: ἐκκλησιαστής; HIERONYMUS: *concionator*; hence LUTHER: "Preacher") appears to stand in direct relation to the Chokmah of the Old Covenant, the personified Wisdom, preaching in the streets and on the market places, gathering around it all who were eager to learn (Prov. i. 20 sqq.; viii. 1 sqq.; ix. 1 sqq.). From an original designation of this wisdom, the name Koheleth seems to have become the surname of Solomon, the teacher of wisdom *κατ' ἐξοχήν*, or, as it were, wisdom incarnate,—a surname that with special propriety could be conferred on the great King, when he was represented as teaching and preaching, as in the apocryphal book of wisdom (chap. vii. 1 sq.; ix. 7, 8, etc.), or as in ours. If one does not wish thus to explain the feminine form, Koheleth, as a designation of a male individual (with EWALD, KÖSTER, HENGSTENBERG, HITZIG, and others), there is nothing left but to accept an *abstractum pro concreto*, or, what is the same thing, to derive the feminine ending from the character of the name as an official name; for which analogies may be quoted in the Syriac and Arabic, as in the later Hebrew (*e. g.*, מלך=מלכות, פחה administrator, כנת fellow-citizen, etc.; comp. J. D. MICHAELIS, Supplement to *Heb. Lex.*, p. 2168; GESENIUS, *Lehrgebäude*, p. 468, and KNOBEL *Commentary*, 10.)—In any case, Solomon, who was pre-eminently and emphatically the wise man among the kings of Israel, must be understood under the peculiar name of Koheleth; as is shown not only by the title, but also by the studied description of the learning of Koheleth, comprehending every thing under heaven (i. 13; viii. 9), and by his zealous searching after wisdom and truth (i. 13; xii. 9), his transcendent fame as a sage (i. 16; ii. 15), and finally his activity as a teacher of wisdom and author of proverbs (xii. 9). For these are all characteristics which the book of Kings attribute honorably to Solomon, and of all the posterity of David, to him only (1 Kings ii. 9; iii. 12; v. 9-13; x. 1; see the Introduction to the Literature of Solomon in general (in the beginning of this volume).

The whole literary character of the book proves also that it belongs to the circle of the Solo-

monic writings on wisdom, if not in the narrower than in the broader sense, and raises it to a certainty, that under the Koheleth, therein appearing as speaker, none other can be meant than Solomon. For the book belongs clearly to the class of didactic teachings, and is distinguished from the Proverbs as the characteristic and principal representative of this poetic style in the Old Testament, mainly by the fact that it does not range numerous individual proverbs loosely and without consecutive plan, but rather develops one narrow and close circle of thoughts and truths in poetical and rhetorical form. The idea of the *vanity of all human things* clearly forms the centre of this circle of thought, the common theme of the four discourses, into which the whole falls according to the division mainly corresponding to the intention and plan of the author. To the dialectically progressive development and illumination in various directions which these discourses cast upon the theme in question, there corresponds an appropriate change from special moral maxims to longer or shorter descriptions of conditions, citations of doctrines or examples, observations regarding personal experience, and reflections on prominent and subordinate truths. There is also, in a formal view, a strophic division of the discourse, marked by formulas and terms repeated either literally or in sense, and a fitting diversity of style corresponding to the various objects, expressed in rhythmical prose, or lofty rhetorical and poetical diction. As the shortest expression for the designation of these peculiarities, the term "*Philosophical and Didactic Poem*" might be used; but in this, however, the idea of the philosophical must embrace the characteristic peculiarities of the spiritual life and aspirations of the Hebrews, or rather of the Shemitic people in general (comp. *Introd. to Proverbs*, § 2, p. 5 sqq.).

OBSERVATION 1.—The tracing of the name קהלה to קהל in the sense of *congregare, conscionari*, has the best authority, and is supported by the oldest as well as by the most numerous and critical among the modern expositors of this book. Hieronymus says, *Comment. in Eccles. i. 1*: "Coëleth, i. e., Ecclesiastes. Ἐκκλησιαστής autem Græco sermone appellatur, qui coetum, i. e., ecclesiam congregat, quem nos nuncupare possumus concionatorem, eo quod loquatur ad populum, et sermo ejus non specialiter ad unum, sed ad universos generaliter dirigitur." Later expositors and lexicographers have fixed the fundamental meaning of the root קהל properly as that of "calling," and hence compare קול Arabic *quâla*, and Greek *καλέω*, with Latin, *calare, clamare*. קהלת "the caller, the preacher," is clearly nearest allied to the synonymous הקורא Isaiah xl. 3. On account of this fundamental signification of "calling," we condemn these expositions of the name which proceed from the supposed root idea of gathering or collecting. To these belong 1) the opinion of GROTIUS, HERDER, JAHN, *etc.*: that the word means *collector sententiarum*, a collector of sentences—a view that some ancient translators have already expressed, *e. g.*, AQUILA (*συναθροιστής*); SYMMACHUS (*παροιμαστής*); 2) VAN DER PALM's modification of this view from a partial consideration of 1 Kings viii. 1; in which Solomon is spoken of as the assembler of his people and his elders קהלת i. e., *congregator, coactor*; 3) the view of NACHTIGAL and DÖDERLEIN, that קהלת=*congregatio, consessus*, "learned assembly, academy," according to which the book would be marked as a collection of philosophical disputations in the style of the *Seances of Hariri*, or the *Collectiones Patrum* of CASSIAN (an acceptance clearly at variance with such passages as i. 12; xii. 9, 10, *etc.*); 4) the strange assertion of KAISER: that קהלת is the same as *collectivum*, and means the whole of the Davidic Kings, from Solomon to Zedekiah, whose history the book delineates in chronological order (KAISER, *Koheleth, the Collectivum of the Davidic Kings*, Erlangen, 1823, comp. § 6).—That no one of these explanations deserves attention, in view of the illustrations already given, is quite as certain as that it must also remain doubtful which of the two efforts to explain the femoral form of the name, which our paragraph has named as the principal, or, rather, only possible ones, deserves the preference. For the view of the expression taken by EWALD and KÖSTER, that it is synonymous with wisdom, and in so far a fitting designation of Solomon, the embodied wisdom, various significant parallels besides those above quoted press themselves on our attention; *e. g.*,

in an extra-biblical field the surname given to the sophist Protagoras, *Σοφία*, and, what is more important, the self-designation of Christ, the New Testament Solomon, as the *Σοφία* or *Σοφία τοῦ θεοῦ* (Matth. ii. 19; Luke xi. 49), with which, according to BENDEL'S example, may be directly combined the declaration concerning the desire of gathering the children of Jerusalem under his wings (Matth. xxiii. 37; Luke xiii. 34).* The view first advanced by MICHAELIS, and then adopted by GESENIUS, KNOBEL, ELSTER, VAHINGER, HAHN, KEIL, and others, now again appears, namely, that the feminine ending is explained by the character of the name as an official name, besides the already quoted names, פְּחָה, מְלִכּוֹת, בְּנֵת, and still more are we aided by the analogies of expression such as סֹפֵר "the writer," Ezra ii. 55; Neh. vii. 57; and פְּנֵת "the catcher, hunter" (contained in the proper name פְּנֵת הַצִּבְיִים *i. e.*, gazelle-hunter, Ezra ii. 57; Neh. vii. 59); for these names are closely allied with יְקָהֵל † And, moreover, since the Koheleth of our book appears every where as a real person, and no where clearly as a personified idea, and since expressions such as those contained in i. 16 f.; ii. 12, *etc.*; according to which the speaker attributes to himself an effort, a seeking, an obtaining, would not be especially appropriate in the mouth of personified wisdom, the weightiest arguments seem to declare in favor of the second mode of explanation, but without the absolute exclusion of the other.—But in any case we must adopt for the explanation of the feminine form one or the other of the above quoted hypotheses, and not the opinion of MERCERTS, that by the feminine ending there is an intimation of the senile weakness of the preacher, and consequently of the advanced age at which Solomon wrote the book; nor the view of ZIRKEL (see § 6), that the feminine ending is chosen because of the delicate and graceful style of the book, nor the still more fanciful assertion of AUGUSTI (Introd. to the O. T., § 172), that Koheleth is the spirit of Solomon returned to the realm of the living, and now represented as the preacher of wisdom, and that its feminine designation is to be understood in the neutral sense, because those deceased and living after death were considered destitute of gender, in harmony with Matth. xxii. 30. It has been justly made to appear in opposition to this latter view, by KNOBEL, ELSTER and others, that the book itself no where hints at the character of the speaker, as of a spirit from Scheel, and that apparitions in the Old Testament, as 1 Sam. xxviii. 11 ff. proves, clearly appear as something rare and abnormal, and that on account of the well known prohibition of conjuration of the dead (Lev. xix. 31; xx. 6; Deut. xviii. 11; Isa. viii. 19) even the poetic fiction of an apparition of Solomon could hardly occur, especially in religious writings laying claim to canonicity.

OBSERVATION 2.

The character of this book has suffered manifold misapprehensions, as well in a theological point of view (for which see below § 5) as in the rhetorical and esthetical. It has been accused of numerous contradictions with itself, of absence of plan and connection, on account of a faulty perception of its inner economy, and the development of its thoughts. It has been declared inconsistent that passages like i. 11; ii. 15, 16; iii. 19, 20; ix. 25, *etc.*, assert the complete equality of the final fate of the godly and the ungodly; whilst others, as iii. 17; viii. 12, 13; xi. 9; xii. 13, 14, promise a corresponding divine reward for each individual moral act, and therefore expressly exhort to uprightness and the fear of God. It has also been found contradictory, that the author sometimes praises wisdom as bringing profit and blessings (ii. 3, 12-14; vii. 10-12 viii. 1-6; x. 2; x. 13-16), and sometimes declares that it is injurious, making men ill-humored, and not leading to the goal of his endeavors; sometimes indeed causing more unhappiness than

* Comp. BENDEL'S remarks on Luke x. 49 in the *Gnomon*, N. T., p. 164: ἡ σοφία τοῦ θεοῦ, *Sapientia Dei, Suae nomen. Koheleth. congregatrix*, chap. xiii. 34 (ποσάκις ἠθέλησα ἐπισυνάξει κ. τ. λ.). Comp. also STARKE (Pref. to Ecclesiastes, § 2), who also considers Koheleth synonymous with wisdom, following the example of GEIER, See. SCHMIDT, RAMBACH, *et al.*; also DINDORF, *Quomodo nomen Koheleth, Solomonī tribuatur*, Lips.; 1791, and GUBLITT: "Studien und Kritiken" in explanation of the Book of Koheleth, 1865, II., 325 ff.

† [The strongest confirmation of all this is found in the use of the Greek feminine οὐρα ἀρχῆ, for ruler, magistrate, as though it were equivalent to ἀρχων, just as we use the word *authority*, or the *authorities*, for magistrates. See especially Paul's remarkable use of this feminine noun for *authorities*, powers, "*principalities, in the heavens*," Rom. viii. 35; Eph. i. 21; iii. 10; vi. 12; Col. i. 16; ii. 15; Titus iii. 1.—T. L.]

does folly, (i. 18; viii. 14; ix. 11, 18; x. 1). It is not less contradictory that at one time he praises his own wisdom, and at another maintains that he has not acquired wisdom (Sec. 16; ii. 3, 9, 15, with vii. 23, 24); that now he praises women, and recommends association with them, and now warns us against their seductive and immoral nature. (Comp. ii. 8; ix. 9, with vii. 7, 26-29); at one time recommends repose, at another activity (see iv. 6, with ix. 10); again he praises obedience to authority as being not without profit, and then he complains of the unjust oppression of subjects by their superiors (comp. viii. 5, with iii. 16; v. 7; x. 4 ff.), and finally he declares the dead and the unborn as happier than the living, and soon again calls life sweet, and greatly prefers it to death, (comp. iv. 2, 3, with ix. 4-6; xi. 7).—But aside from the fact that many of these so-called contradictions are but apparent, and become perfectly harmonious in view of the diverse tendency and surroundings of the individual assertions, or indeed through the double signification of one and the same word, as is here and there the case, comp. (e. g. עַד vii. 3, with the same word in vii. 9; יָד in ix. 11, with יָד in x. 12, etc.), a certain vacillation and unsteady effort in the presentation of the author is a necessary condition of his peculiar theme—the doctrine of the vanity of all earthly things. The most contradictory experiences which he may have made in life, he seeks to reproduce in a corresponding and often abrupt change of his feelings, a vivid transition of his thoughts and expressions,—a peculiarity which UMBRETT has not inappropriately characterized by his designation of the entire contents of the book as a "soul struggle, an inner strife between the judgment and the feelings of a wise old King;" (comp. § 6).

In this respect, also, VAHINGER strikingly observes, ("*Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon*," p. 8, f.): "It must be acknowledged that the preacher is not free from a timid uncertainty, from a doubting vacillation and striving in his mode of reflecting; that he strikingly depicts the want of a perfect clearness regarding human life and divine providence, in the varied experiences of man. The reason of this may be easily discovered by a consideration of the general and special stand-point on which he rests. He was once as Job, a thinking mind, that did not accept the traditional faith untried, that did not stop at the poetry of life, but penetrated into its prose. In this direction he encountered a struggle when he compared the daily experiences of life, in which men are often left to their own impulses, with the promises of the divine word, in which a sure punishment is announced to the sinner. He could not but perceive how evil often has a wonderful and incomprehensible success, whilst the good is not rewarded. At the same time he himself may have variously experienced the buffetings of life, and have passed through highly repulsive trials that unsettled his mental repose, and shook his faith in the eternal wisdom, goodness, and providence of God, and disposed him to be discontented with life and traditional prejudices. In this frame of mind, and with such experiences, his faith contended with the thought and the reality with the poetry of life, until, like Job, he had conquered a new stand-point. And from just this view is this book so instructive, lifting us out of a partial, arbitrary, and thoughtless faith, showing us the struggles of the thinking mind, and yet ever leading us back to the true faith. And this is the real profit of the genuine life of faith. If it is to be freed from the dross of thoughtlessness and self-sufficiency, from an idle clinging to tradition, it must be seemingly lost in the struggle of life to be found again in loftier purity. Divine truths must all be questioned, in order that we may find them again by inward struggles, and new experiences of God in a sanctified form; (Ps. lxii. 12, 13); and in this relation also avails the expression: "He who loses his life, shall find it again." The author presents to us also in this respect, the true life of faith in his conflicts.*

Besides the intention of presenting to the reader an intuitive vision of his inward strifes and contests, many reasons of a more formal and external nature may have exerted an influence on

* [These admirable remarks of VAHINGER suggest a thought of great value to one who would read the Scriptures with spiritual profit. In such books as Job and Ecclesiastes, the lesson is in the picture, the dramatic representation, as we may call it. It is to be found in the total impression, and not in any separate texts or precepts. The struggle, the doubt, the erroneous sentiment, often, are necessary to this total effect. Its very contradictions, when rightly viewed, furnish the strongest arguments for the truth ultimately brought out. This does not affect the idea of its plenary inspiration. It is all given to us by the ultimate divine Author, all intended for one great purpose, and thus all of it, even its peculiar diction "profiteth for our instruction in righteousness."—T. L.]

the vacillating and contradictory recital of the author; *e. g.*, the intentional interweaving of many digressions (see *e. g.* xii. 2-6), and especially the direct introduction of the expressions of contrary thinkers for the purpose of immediate refutation. Thus appears in Chap. iv. 5, an apparently antagonistic assertion, which in the sixth verse is disapproved and rejected; the same relation is held by x. 16-19, and x. 20. In any case it is perfectly proper and just to consider what HIRTZIG says, (*Preliminary Observations*, No. 5, p. 125): "It would seem that much that the author says possesses but a momentary influence as a link in the chain of deductions." It performs its duty and is neutralized; the latter assertion abolishes the former; and *at the close KOHELETH teaches only that which finally remains uncontradicted.* Comp. below exegetical explanations to chap. ii. 1 ff., No. 1.

OBSERVATION 3.

It cannot much surprise us now, after the above demonstrations, that the plan and thread of thought in the book have been very variously comprehended, and that the schemes adopted for the subdivision of its contents have deviated strongly from one another; and indeed to speak with VILMAR (*ART. KOHELETH, Pastoral Theological Journal*, vol. v. p. 253), "the economy of the book bears almost exactly as many forms as it has found expositors." Of these views and treatises the principal ones will be summarily recounted in Observation 1 of the following paragraph: The poetical form of the book will also receive more critical attention in the following paragraphs, on account of the close connection of its strophical design with its subdivision and the logical progress of its thoughts.

§ 2. CONTENTS AND PLAN.

"All is vanity," a sentence that appears no less than twenty-five times, forms the fundamental thought of the book; an assertion of the vanity of all human relations, destinies, and efforts, based upon experience. As there is in the objective phenomena of this world, *i. e.*, in nature and history, no true progress, but ever a constant return of old things that long have been, a perpetual monotony, a continual circle of things (i. 4-7, 9, 10; iii. 15); thus man, with all his efforts, attains to nothing new, but rather shows himself, in everything that he wishes to investigate, fathom and acquire, most manifoldly limited and controlled by the all-pervading and all-powerful hand of God; (iii. 1-8, 11, 13; viii. 6, 17; ix. 1, 5, 11, 12, *etc.*). On the way of his own efforts and strivings, man is able to arrive at no true and lasting happiness; for neither sensual pleasures (ii. 2, 11; vii. 6, *etc.*) nor earthly possessions and treasures (ii. 4-11; vi. 1-7, *etc.*), nor wisdom (i. 13-18; ii. 14-18; ix. 1, 11; x. 6, *etc.*), not even virtue and the fear of God (iii. 16-18; iv. 1; vii. 15-17; viii. 10, 14) help here below to lasting happiness. But we are not the less to doubt of the presence of a personal God, and of a moral system of the world regulated and watched over by him, (iii. 11, 13, 17; v. 5, 7, 17-19; vi. 2; vii. 13, 14; xi. 5, 9; xii. 7, 14), and the belief of this activity of God governing and directing the world, lends to all sensual and moral blessings of life their only worth (xi. 9; xii. 13, 14). On the basis of this belief it behoves us to enjoy the pleasures of this life in a cheerful, thankful, and contented manner (ii. 24; iii. 12, 13; v. 17, 18; viii. 15; ix. 7-9; xi. 8-11), but we must combine this cheerful enjoyment of life with an earnest endeavor after wisdom as a truly lofty and valuable treasure (vii. 11, 12; ix. 13-16; viii. 1-6, *etc.*), and above all this strive after the fear of God as the source of the highest happiness and peace, and the mother of all virtues (v. 6; vii. 18; viii. 12, 13; xii. 1, 13). In short, the author regards as end and aim of human life on earth, a joy in the blessings and enjoyments of this world, consecrated by wisdom and the fear of God, with renunciation of a perfect reconciliation of existing contrasts, difficulties, and imperfections, and an eye steadily fixed on the future and universal judgment, as the final solution of all the mysteries of the universe.

These contents of the book, as was remarked in § 1, are divided into four discourses of about equal length:

1. DISCOURSE: Chap. 1 and 2.—The *theoretical* wisdom of men, directed to the knowledge of the things of this world, is vanity (i. 2-18), as well as the *practical*, aiming at sensual enjoyments, great worldly enterprises, creations, and performances, (ii. 1-19); neither of these leads to lasting happiness, or to any good that may be considered as the actual fruit of human labor

(as the actual יִתְרוֹ of man), and not rather an unconditional gift of Divine Providence, (ii. 20-26).

II. DISCOURSE: Chap. 3-5.—In view of the complete dependence of human action and effort on an immutable and higher system of law (iii. 1-11) the answer to the inquiry after earthly happiness (or יִתְרוֹ) must be that there is no higher good for man than to enjoy this life and to do good, (iii. 12-22); a good that is not easily attained in the diversely changing circumstances of fortune, and the frequently unfavorable situations in private, social, and civil life (iv. 1-16), but a blessing, nevertheless, after which we must strive by piety, conscientiously honest actions, and a spirit sober, contented, and confiding in God, (iv. 17—v. 19).

III. DISCOURSE: Ch. vi. 1—viii. 15. Since worldly goods and treasures in themselves cannot lead to true happiness, but are rather vain and transitory, (vi. 1-12), we must strive after the true practical wisdom of life, which consists of patience, contempt of the world, and fear of God (vii. 1-22); and we must seek to gain and realize it, in spite of all the allurements, oppressions, injustices and misfortunes of this world, (vii. 23—viii. 15).

IV. DISCOURSE: Chap. viii. 16—xii. 7.—As the providence of God in the allotment of human destinies is, and will ever remain, unfathomable, and apparently has little or no reference to the moral and religious conduct of men in this world (viii. 16—ix. 16), and as there are no other means for the wise man to preserve his peace of soul in presence of the arrogance, impudent assumption, and violence of fortunate and powerful fools, than godly patience, silence, and tranquility (ix. 17—x. 20): therefore benevolence, fidelity to duty, a contented and serene enjoyment of life, and sincere fear of God from early youth to advanced age, are the only true way to happiness in this world and the world beyond, (xi. 1—xii. 7).

EPILOGUE: Chap. xii. 8-14. This contains a comprehensive view of the whole, and a recommendation of the truths therein taught, with reference as well to the personal worth of the author (9-11), as to the serious and important contents of his teachings (12-14).

Each of these principal divisions falls into subdivisions, already indicated by the preceding scheme, and within these are again separate paragraphs or verses. These smaller divisions are either marked by the mere inward progress of the thought, or by certain other external signs, as here and there by peculiar, cumulative, closing sentences, (i. 15: i. 18; ii. 11, 19, 23, 26), or also by like formulas and turns in the beginning (*e. g.* by the opening formula: "I saw:" iii. 10, 16; iv. 1, 7, 15), or by other similar expressions and sentences (*e. g.* vii. 26; viii. 12). In accordance with this the first discourse contains three divisions (i. 1-11; i. 12 — ii. 19; ii. 20-26), of which *the first* has three, the second six, and the third two strophes. *The second* discourse consists of three divisions (iii. 1-22; iv. 1-16; iv. 17—v. 19), each of three strophes; *the third* of three divisions, (vi. 1-12; vii. 1-22; vii. 23—viii. 15), of which the first counts two, the second and third each three strophes; *the fourth* of three divisions, of three strophes each, (viii. 16—ix. 16; ix. 17—x. 20; xi. 1—xii. 7). The conclusion comprises two strophes or half strophes (xii. 9-11; xii. 12-14), together with a shorter proposition (xii. 8). More about this division into strophes may be found in VAHINGER, *Ecclesiastes* and *Song of Solomon*, pp. 26-44 (also in *Studien und Kritiken*, 1848, 11); and in HÆVERNICK, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, edited by KEIL, Vol. III. p. 438 ff.

OBSERVATION 1.

With the arrangement of the contents of Ecclesiastes above given, which we designate according to its principal representatives, as that of VAHINGER and KEIL, correspond most nearly the divisions of KÖSTER (*the Book of Job and Ecclesiastes*, Schleswig, 1831), of H. A. HAHN (*Comment. on Ecclesiastes of Solomon*, 1860), and of EWALD (*The Poetical Books of the Old Testament*, 1 ed. iv. 193; 2 ed. 11, 284 ff.). That of the latter, to which HELLEGSTEDT subscribes, (*Commentar. in Eccl. et Cant. Cantic.* 1848), corresponds almost exactly with the one accepted by us, only that the second of the four discourses laid down in it, extends from iii. 1 — vi. 9, (and consequently the third from vi. 10—viii. 15),—which seems scarcely in harmony with the subordination of the new thought beginning with vi. 10. EWALD and HELLEGSTEDT also avoid, without sufficient reason, a more special classification of the separate discourses, according to

strophes and sections. KÖSTER, who also accepts four principal divisions or discourses, has attempted a more special division into strophes, but in the whole, as in the individual parts, indulges in many arbitrary assertions. His divisions are a) Introduction: i. 2—11, consisting of a proposition as a theme, and two strophes; b) I. Sec.: i. 12—iii. 22, containing eight strophes; c) II. Sec.: iv. 1—vi. 12, containing nine strophes; d) III. Sec.: vii. 1—ix. 16, containing nine strophes; e) IV. Sec. ix. 17—xii. 8, of eight strophes; f) conclusion: xii. 9—14, of two strophes. HAHN makes nearly the same classification, only he extends the third part merely to ix. 10, instead of to ix. 16, and adds the introduction, i. 2—11 to part I.—Of the remaining modes of classification we notice the following:* M. GEIER: Solomon tells I. wherein happiness does not consist; and this I) from his own experience (i., ii.); 2) from the experiences of others, namely, a. from the change in the times (iii.), b) from the character of persons, of the unjust, the envious, the avaricious, and of godless kings and the rich (iv., v.), c) from the uncertainty of earthly things, *a.* of wealth (vi., vii.), *β.* from the arrangement of human as well as divine things (viii., ix.); II. wherein true happiness consists, 1) in upright conduct towards superiors (x.); 2) in beneficence towards the poor (xi.); 3) in the fear of God (xii.).

SEBASTIAN SCHMIDT: Three parts: I. Treatise concerning the highest good, 1) negative, showing wherein it does not consist (i. 2—iii. 11); 2) positive, wherein it is to be placed (iii. 12—14); II. six instances by which man may be prevented from obtaining the highest good (iii. 15—iv. 16); III. guide to the true worship of God, and the way to happiness, contained in fourteen rules of conduct (iv. 17—xii. 7), together with a summary (xii. 8—14).

STARKE: Three parts: I. wherein the highest good is not to be found (i. 2—iii. 11); II. wherein it is to be found (iii. 12—iv. 16); III. of our demeanor after finding this good, taught in fourteen rules (iv. 17—xii. 7); then the close (thus differing but little from the previous division).

OETINGER: Two parts: One must not let himself be driven by the prevalence of vain things into folly, avarice, and temerity (chap. i.—vii.); II. One should not be led astray by vanity from the fear of God (chap. viii.—xii.).

PAULUS: As the former, only pointing out that in chap. i.—vii. Solomon speaks, and in chap. viii.—xii. another person answers him.—VAN D. PALM: Two parts: I. Theoretical part: illustration of the vanity of human endeavors (chap. i.—vi.); II. practical part: rules that are to be followed under such circumstances (ch. vii.—xii.); J. DAV. MICHAELIS: I. Theoretical part: the great insufficiency of the happiness of a man left to himself, and isolated from God (i. 2—iv. 16); II. practical part: the means leading to a true and lasting happiness in this life (iv. 17—xii. 14); the first of these parts containing four, and the second six subdivisions.—FR. SEILER: As the preceding, only that he accords to the theoretical part six, but to the practical part eleven subdivisions. So also ROSENMÜLLER and others.

MENDELSON: Thirteen sections: 1) chap. i. 1—11; 2) chap. i. 12—ii. 11; 3) chap. ii. 12—26; 4) chap. iii. 1—iv. 3; 5) chap. iv. 4—16; 6) chap. iv. 17—v. 19; 7) chap. vi. 1—vii. 14; 8) ch. vii. 15—viii. 9; 9) chap. viii. 10—ix. 12; 10) chap. ix. 13—x. 15; 11) chap. x. 16—xi. 6; 12) chap. xi. 7—xii. 7; 13) chap. xii. 8—14.

E. CHR. SCHMIDT: also thirteen sections: but which correspond with the preceding in scarcely any point, and of which the last, chap. xii. 8—14, is regarded as the addition of a younger hand. KNOBEL and UMBREIT take the same position; (consult the following paragraph concerning them and other contestants of the genuineness of the conclusion, chap. xii. 8—14).

HITZIG: Three main divisions: I. The theoretical foundation, or investigation for the reader regarding the situation (chap. i. 2—iv. 16); II. Recommendation to enjoy the pleasures of life cheerfully, with various provisions and restrictions (iv. 17—viii. 15); III. Positive and direct illustration of what it is salutary for man to do, or development of the principles of a genuine and practical wisdom (viii. 16—xii. 14).

R. STIER: Introductory Preface (chap. i. 2—11), and then three main divisions: I. To the natural man all is vanity; he falls into confusion and trouble, as long as he does not look to God (chap. i. 12—vii. 29); II. Various passages alluding in various ways to the foregoing, but illuminating everything with the light found in the first part (viii. 1—xi. 10); III. The teaching

* For the titles of the expositions here quoted, comp. § 6.

of the Book, "Regard thy Creator before thou becomest old, for this yields an immortality;" together with conclusion and recapitulation (xii. 1-14);—each of these principal divisions falls into several subdivisions; the first into four, the second into three, and the third likewise into three.

FR. DE ROUEMENT: Two main divisions of very unequal length: I. Philosophical discourse (i. 2—xii. 10); II. inspired teaching (xii. 11-14). The first of these parts is introduced by the presentation of the problem to be solved, (i. 2-11), and then divided into three books: 1) the vanities of human existence (i. 12—iv. 16); 2) the human conditions of happiness (v. 1—vii. 14); 3) the divine conditions of happiness (vii. 15—xi. 6): each of these books is again divided into three or four paragraphs, and the last is accompanied by a special conclusion: "life and death," (xi. 7—xii. 10).

A. F. C. VILMAR: Seven divisions (mainly for practical utility). I. General introduction: everything on earth is transitory, and returneth to the place whence it came, *etc.* (chap. i.); II. *deeds* in life are vanity; God alone carries their success in his hand; we see no profit of our labors, and no result of our life (ii. 1—iii. 15); III. to expect a *recompense* on earth, is a deceptive hope (iii. 16—v. 8); IV. *riches*, with all that they are permitted to accomplish and effect, are vain and transitory (v. 9—vii. 9); V. *wisdom* on earth is no avail, for it can find out much but not all things, and the end of the wise man is (externally) like the end of the fool (vii. 10—x. 4); VI. *result*: our unsuccessful labors, the inequality of the things of the world, the nothingness of riches, and the insufficiency of worldly wisdom must not deceive us in what we have to do in our narrow circle, and least of all the youth (x. 5—xii. 7); VII. *conclusion*: repeated summary of the result more circumstantially given in No. VI.

OBSERVATION 2.

Many commentators deny that there is any evidence of a well-arranged and systematic train of thought, and have considered the book an immethodical collection of individual thoughts, views and expressions, that have simply a loose connection by the assertion that all is vanity, and for whose grouping the usual division into chapters presents a sufficient means. This is the view of the older commentators, as also of LUTHER, MELANCHTHON, DRUSIUS, MERCERUS, BAUER, HANSEN, SPOHN, *etc.*, and it yet appears in the most recent period of ELSTER, and HENGSTENBERG. The two latter form, it is true, certain sections, and groups of verses in the course of their exegesis of the book, but bring these divisions together in no unitary and well-arranged scheme. GURLITT (*Studies and Criticisms of the Book of KOHELETH*, 1865, II. 321 ff.) has also declared this book "anything but a systematically arranged writing, to bring whose contents in the form of a logical scheme, would be a fruitless undertaking."—Even those exegetists who see a colloquial character in the book, aim at no regular arrangement of its contents, and consider the whole, therefore, as a conversation or disputation between the representatives of two antagonistic views. A few older commentators inclined to this view, especially HIERONYMUS (comp. *e. g.* his remarks on chap. ix. 7, 8); "*et hæc, inquit, aliquis loquatur Epicurus et Aristippus et Cyrenaici,*" and other similar passages, which show a certain inclination to a dramatizing of the contents, and Gregory the Great, who (*Dialog. IV.* 4), seems to give the book almost directly the character of a dramatic colloquy between Solomon and various opponents of his religious views. Among the moderns these views are represented by the Englishman, Matt. Poole, (*Annotations on the Bible*, London, 1683), F. GEARD, (*a Paraphrase on Ecclesiastes*, London, 1701), of whom the latter considers: That the Preacher introduces a refined sensualist or a sensual worldling, who interrupts him, in order to attack and ridicule his doctrine. This colloquial hypothesis has received its most refined form from HERDER and EICHHORN. According to HERDER's eleventh letter on theological study, there are to be distinguished in the book two voices, that of a hypercritic who seeks truth in the tone of one speaking in the first person, and mostly ends with the assertion that all is vanity, whilst another voice in the tone of "Thou," often interrupts him, represents to him the temerity of his investigations, and mostly ends with the question: what remains as the result of a whole life? It is not fully question and answer, doubt and solution, but something that out of the same mouth resembles both, and is distinguished by interruptions and continuations. One can therefore divide the book into two co-

lums, of which one belongs to the exhausted seeker, and the other to the warning teacher. Under these two columns HERDER distributes the separate sections of the book as follows :

1. THE SEEKER.	2. THE TEACHER.
I. 1-11.	
I. 12-18.	
II. 1-11.	
II. 12-26.	
III. 1-15.	
III. 16-22.	
IV. 1-16.	IV. 17.
	V. 1-8.
V. 9-19.	
VI. 1-11.	
VII. 1.	VII. 2-15.
VII. 16.	VII. 17-23.
VII. 24-33.	
VIII. 1.	VIII. 2-13.
VIII. 14-17.	
IX. 1-3.	IX. 4-10.
IX. 11-18.	
X. 1-3.	X. 4.
X. 5-7.	X. 8-19.
	X. 20.
	XI. 12.

EICHHORN, independent of HERDER, arrived at a very similar view, on the path of more careful critical and scientific procedure. According to his Introduction to the Old Testament (III. 648 ff) two kinds of persons clearly alternate in the book, a contemplator, observer, investigator, who regards with gloomy eyes the life and destiny of men, and in youthful fervor exaggerates the deductions from his observations and seldom does justice to the good of this world; by his side stands an aged man of wisdom, who tempers the fire of ardent youth, and brings him back to the path of truth beyond which he in his excitement has hurried, and even shows how evil has a good side. The former ends with the lamentation that all is vanity, the latter with the deductions that a wise man will draw from the course of the world. In sympathy with this EICHHORN's divisions are :

1. THE SEEKER.	2. THE TEACHER.
I. 2-IV. 16.	IV. 17-V. 11.
V. 12-VI. 12	VII. 1-14.
VII. 15.	VII. 16-22.
VII. 23-29.	VIII. 1-8.
VIII. 9-IX. 6.	IX. 7-10.
IX. 11-18.	X. 1-4.
X. 5-7.	X. 8-XII. 7.
CONCLUSION : XII. 8-14.	

Similar, but deviating frequently in details, is the view of BERGST, in EICHHORN's Repertory, X. 963 ff. From these efforts at introducing dialogues, in which but one thing can be acknowledged as true and tenable, namely, that in some few passages the author introduces his opponent as speaking, in order immediately to contradict them (see above § 1, Obs. 2, towards the end) there is clearly only one step to that view which regards the whole as a compilation of various investigations, reflections, and songs or sententious poems of Israelitish philosophers, a view directly destructive to the unity of the book; as is done by DÖDERLEIN and NACHTIGAL in connection with their already mentioned peculiar explanations of the name KOBELETH by "session, assembly" (comp. § 1, Obs. 1). According to this view of DÖDERLEIN, presented in his *scholia in libros poeticos* V. T., t. 1, (1779), but at a later period (*Solomon's Song, and Ec-*

desiastes, 1784) again rejected and opposed, (which however found a so much more zealous and determined advocate in NACHTIGAL) the whole is a collection by some later hand of various philosophical and didactic poems, sayings of wise men, obscure questions, together with their solutions, and a few additions in prose. The entire contents are classified therefore in eight divisions, together with a supplement:

- I. SECTION: Poems (i. 2; iv. 16);
- II. " Proverbs (iv. 17; v. 8);
- III. " Poems (v. 9; vi. 9);
- IV. " Proverbs (vi. 10; vii. 22);
- V. " Obscure questions and their solution (vii. 23; viii. 7);
- VI. " Poems (viii. 8; x. 1);
- VII. " Proverbs (x. 2; xi. 6);
- VIII. " Poems (xi. 7; xii. 7).

SUPPLEMENT: Additions in prose (xii. 8-14).

This view, as well on account of its denial of all connection between the individual parts, as of progressive thought within them, falls into the class of those expositions which are capable of vindicating a logically arrayed train of ideas in the book only at the sacrifice of its unity. With these the following paragraph will be more especially occupied.

OBSERVATION 3.

As to the literary *form* of the book, its close connection with that of the older Maschal poetry in the Proverbs, and its occasional transition into complete prose, comp. especially EWALD, *Poets of the Old Testament*, p. 285 f.: "It is not to be denied that our didactic poet has much that is delicate and refined in expression, and finished in the composition of individual thoughts and proverbs, such as one would scarcely have expected at this late and depressed period. A genuine poetic spirit pervades everything;—our poet understands how to give a poetic mould to the most brittle material, to bring the most distant fields into clear view, to unite the most dissonant elements, to smooth what is rough, and either harmlessly to bend the views to be opposed, or get rid of them before they become too marked. But in one direction he far surpasses the limit even of the freest of the earlier proverbial poetry, and creates something entirely new. *He no longer gives every where pure poetic lines, but lets the discourse here and there be concluded, without retaining the strict law of metrical construction.* When he desires to interpolate in his freer reflection something purely historical, he dispenses with the restraint of poetic measure (e. g. i. 12; ii. 4 ff.; ix. 13-15); for in the process of accurate and clear thought, many things may be expressed most curtly and sharply without the trammel of measure. Thus there is found in our poet a variegated form of discourse, and he is also creative as a composer of proverbs. The Arabs understand this change from verse to prose in many half poetic works, and in the Indian drama it is universal. even in the prophets of the Old Testament we find much that is similar, and thus it became so much the more easy for this poet to yield to it. When the thought soars, the pure height of poetic style always appears with him (comp. as example of the highest poetic flight especially chap. xii. 1-6). But especially where teaching and admonition appear, there the language rises to the sharp brevity and genuine character of the ancient proverb; to this our later poet has clearly devoted all care and skill, so that it also in this production beams forth in the highest beauty. It is neatly polished, sharply stamped, briefly and pointedly completed; and he especially rejoices in retaining the old style of genuine Hebrew speech, whilst this is already inclined to lower itself to the more modern language of intercourse. It appears thus separately intertwined, or in series; either in strictest poetic style, or in somewhat weakened fetters, but may even then be recognized by the pure doctrine that it imparts. Where several proverbs follow each other, there are formed well connected links of a strong chain of thought, which separates into its parts; but such a chain has at most seven parts or individual proverbs (iv. 17; v. 6; vii. 1-7; vii. 8-14), so that we can here every where in the entire composition recognize the significance of the old Hebrew strophes. For the whole construction of each of the four separate discourses of the book clings to the structure of strophes

and nowhere oversteps the limits of this structure." With reference to the limits of these strophes, EWALD differs in many particulars from VATHINGER and KEIL, whom we in this respect have followed as in the paragraph above; just as KÖSTER, who first perceived and pointed out the strophical arrangement of the book in general, differs from the three others in various respects. This uncertainty regarding many of the specialties of the strophical construction, need not mislead us as to the fact in general, nor carry us to the view taken by HENGSTENBERG, BLEEK, KAHNIS, *etc.*, that the character of the style of the book is entirely without form and plan. Comp. VAH., Art. Solomon the Preacher, in HERZOG'S *Real-Encyclopedia*, Vol. XII. p. 100 ff.

§ 3. UNITY AND INTEGRITY.

That Ecclesiastes forms one connected whole, appears from the uniform character of its language, and the universal reference of its individual sentences and expressions to the fundamental thought of the vanity of all earthly things. It appears also from the unmistakable progress of its reflections throughout the whole, as it goes on from the unharmonious incongruity of the beginning to the increasing clearness, certainty and confidence of the final judgment. However one may regard the internal law of this progress, and in accordance with it interpret the plan and order of the whole, it cannot be doubted, in the main, that it is a work from one mould, and that only isolated inequalities and coarse asperities of structure remain for the candid critical observer, a characteristic peculiarity of the book which can by no means be denied, and which may not, without farther regard, be explained as a defect of rhetoric or style (see § 1, Obs. 2). In just appreciation of this peculiarity, nearly all the latest exegetists have opposed the hypercritical procedure of their predecessors, towards the end of the last century, extending to the arbitrary dismemberment and mutilation of the whole (*e. g.*, SPOHN, SCHMIDT, NACHTIGAL, PAULUS, STÄUDLIN, and partially, also, GROTIUS and WHISTON), and have, at the same time, with the internal uniformity and continuity of the style, also acknowledged the integrity of the traditional text. Only in reference to the closing section (chap. xii. 8-14) has it been doubted down to the latest period by certain expositors, whether this may be regarded as an authentic and integral part of the whole. But even these doubts have justly been rejected by the most, as unfounded, because the pretended contradiction which the doctrine of happiness, immortality and judgment as found in this closing part presents to that of the book itself, is merely apparent, and because the circumstance, that therein Koheleth is spoken of, not as formerly in the first, but in the third person, is by no means an isolated case, but has in i. 2 and vii. 27 perfect analogies preceding it.

OBSERVATION.

Concerning NACHTIGAL'S strange experiments in tracing back the contents to divers wholly unconnected compositions and aphorisms, see previous Paragraph 2, Obs. 2. H. GROTIUS* is to be named as the earliest representative of this mutilating method, which in many respects reminds us of HERDER'S, EICHHORN'S, and MAGNUS' treatment of the Song of Solomon. The former, in his *Annotiones in V. T.*, describes the origin of Ecclesiastes in these words: "*redactus esse in hunc librum varias hominum, qui apud suos quisque habebantur, opiniones, περὶ τῆς σοφίας, quare mirari non debemus, si quædam hic legimus non probanda; omnes enim sententias cum suis argumentis recitanti necesse erat id accidere.*" He strangely imagined ZERUB-BABEL to be the instigator of the collecting of these proverbs. "*Qui hæc colligerent ac sub persona Solomonis in unum corpus congerent, mandatum habuerunt ab uno pastore, i. e., ut puto, Zorobabele, qui ob res tenues Judæorum et Persici imperii reverentiam, regem se dicere non ausus, quamquam inter suos pro rege habebatur, nomen usurpavit modestius Pastoris*" (*Annot. ad c. xii. 11.*)—Besides NACHTIGAL and (for a while) DÖDERLEIN, it was especially H. E. G. PAULUS (*Comment.*, 1790) and STÄUDLIN (*History of the Moral Teachings of Jesus*, I., 1799), who maintained towards the end of the last century the fragmentary and compilatory character of the book, at the same time with its post-Solomonic origin; and each in his peculiar way; PAU-

* Many trace to LUTHER the assertion of a post-Solomonic origin of Ecclesiastes, carrying it back to several collectors, but this occurs solely on the basis of his "Preface" of the year 1524, not of his *Annotiones in Ecclesiastes* of 1522, a far more thoughtful and conservative work of a calmer and maturer period. Comp. § 5.

LUS inclining to the view of HERDER, *i. e.*, of a dialogue between scholar and teacher; STÄUDLIN, with the effort to trace as many things as possible to Solomon himself as originator. The vacillating and doubtful condition of Solomon towards the end of his life he has depicted in isolated paragraphs, which a later Hebrew found, and from them took the main material of which he composed the book, as from certain hitherto uncollected sayings of Solomon. This collector then added in his own name some remarks at the end of the book, by which the fate of the whole is indicated, and some account of the origin of the book is given.—This hypothesis of STÄUDLIN forms the transition to the second principal form in which the critical efforts directed against the unity of the book have appeared. This consists in the acceptance of one author, perhaps Solomon, who wrote *at various times* the single paragraphs, sayings and reflections which form the book, and finally united them into one rather unfinished and unharmonious whole. Thus, at first, WM. WHISTON († 1752), who, under the supposition of Solomonic authorship, says: “*in librum Ecclesiastæ tamquam in unum systema redactas esse plures Solomonis observationes, super rebus gravissimi momenti, sed factas diversis temporibus, ut longe maxima pars ab eo perfecta sit, quum solius Jehovæ cultui addictus de vera religione bene sentiret, nonnullæ autem, eum per illecebras voluptatum ab hoc cultu descivi visset.*” Thus also J. CHR. SCHMIDT (1794), according to whom the book, as it appears, consists of paragraphs written in various moods and times, and does not yet seem a book fully finished for the public, but rather a mere sketch drawn up (!) by the author for himself, as a guide for further labor. And there are several similar exegetists about this time, namely, MIDDLEDORPF (1811), also SPOHN (1785), according to whom the book consists of moral sentences which more or less cherish genuine reverence of God, and call attention to His wisdom in the government of the world, in order thereby to lead to a firm trust in God, to alienate the mind from the world, direct it to virtue, *etc.*; and in the same strain writes ZIRKEL (1792), to whom the whole appears as a reading book for the young inhabitant of the world, *etc.*—This view, denying the unity and integrity of the book, appears in its most modest form, and with the greatest semblance of scientific support in VAN DER PALM, DÖDERLEIN, BERTHOLDT, HERZFELD, KNOBEL, and UMBREIT, who think the unity only here and there destroyed by certain changes of the text, alterations, and interpolations, or at least consider the closing section (chap. xii. 8–14) as a later addition, either of the author himself (as HERZFELD) or of a later interpolator (as BERTH., KNOB., UMBR., *etc.*). In support of this latter view, KNOBEL says: 1) the whole addition is superfluous, because the author in xii. 8 (which verse KNOBEL still considers genuine) brings the whole to a satisfactory conclusion; 2) Koheleth is not therein introduced, as in the book itself, in the first person speaking of himself, but he is referred to as a third person; 3) the thought of a future judgment of God in verse 14 contradicts the earlier denial of immortality on the part of the author; 4) presenting the fear of God and piety as the aim of all wisdom does not comport with the earlier recommendation of a gladsome, sensual enjoyment of life; 5) the expression in verse 12 that “of the making of many books there is no end,” does not accord with the epoch of Koheleth, since this period, that of Persian rule, is rather supposed to have been poor in the literary activity of the Jews. None of these reasons will stand a test. For to the 1) a very clear and expressive prominence of the principal didactic thoughts was by no means superfluous, in the obscure and casual way in which these had been previously expressed (*e. g.*, xi. 9); to the 2) Koheleth is spoken of in the third person already in the i. 2; vii. 27, and even in verse 8 of the 12th chapter, recognized by KNOBEL as genuine; and again, the fact that an author alternately speaks of himself in the first and third person has its analogies in other fields (*e. g.*, Sir. l. 29 ff.; to the 3 and 4), neither the doctrine of happiness, nor that of immortality and retribution is at variance with the corresponding views and principles of that closing section, since the endemonism (or blessedness) previously taught is by no means partial, sensual, or even epicurean, but is rather coupled with frequent direct and indirect exhortations to piety (see iii. 14; v. 6; viii. 12 f.), and since the final judgment in chap. xi. 9 has been specially and clearly enough alluded to (comp. § 5). In regard to the 5th, the presumption of a comparative literary inactivity and unproductiveness of the Jews of the Persian period is destitute of all proof, as the learned activity of the elders of the synagogue, and the collectors and multipliers of the sacred writings beginning with Ezra, proves; but since the author, as is probable from other signs, possessed a learned culture extending beyond the circle of

Israelitish writings (see the following paragraph), and consequently "with the making of many books," was thinking of the literary activity of the Greeks, Persians, Egyptians (for whose immense religious and profane literature, even in the pre-Alexandrine age, comp. *Diodorus Siculus*, I., 49), and other contemporary nations, therefore the expression in question proves more for than against the appropriateness of that part to the whole. Two arguments also of UMBREIT against the genuineness of the section are decidedly untenable; one consisting in the marked self-laudation of the author in verses 9 and 11, and the other in the pretended change of expression and tone of the discourse from verse 8 onward. For the laudatory expressions of the author concerning his own wisdom and learning have their complete and significant parallel in Prov. ii. 1-15; iii. 1 ff.; iv. 1 ff.; v. 1 ff.; vii. 1 ff.; in Job xxxii. 6-19; in Sirach 1. 30; and indeed in many earlier expressions of Koheleth himself, as i. 16; ii. 3; vii. 23;—and the change of diction from verses 8 or 9 is simply an internal one, affecting the tone of the discourse and not the individual linguistic peculiarities, and is therefore satisfactorily explained by the essential contrast existing between the epilogue and the contents of the first part (comp. *e. g.*, also Sir. 1. 29-31, with the foregoing; and also 2 Macc. xv. 38-40; John xx. 30, 31, *etc.*). One need not even consider (with HERZFELD) xii. 9-14 as a later addition from the author's *own hand* to his book. For if, indeed, verse 9 treated of a later activity of Koheleth, this would only then prove a later addition of the section, if Koheleth, *i. e.*, Solomon, were the real and not the pretended author of the book. As for the rest, UMBREIT, apart from his exclusion of the ending as a false addition, has decidedly defended and maintained the unity and continuity of all the preceding; comp. his valuable treatise on the "Unity of the Book of Koheleth," *Studien und Kritiken*, 1857, i. 1-56. Next to him, of the latest exegetists, EWALD, VAHINGER and ELSTER have done the best service in proving the unitary character and integrity of the book. Compare what the last named of these beautifully as strikingly remarks concerning this subject (*Preface*, Sec. III. f.): "As in landscapes, whose forms, in consequence of previous struggles of contending elements, contrast in a manner apparently lawless and wild, the eternal law of all natural formation is stamped, but in another form; thus the Divine impulse that appears to every candid mind in the book of Koheleth, cannot be wanting in regularity and unity in its revelation. Although permeated by the most ardent contest of a human heart full of inward glow, it presents in the forms of its revelation, and in consequence of this previous strife, something of the not entirely lawless dismemberment of a volcanic region. Yes, as landscapes of this kind present to the eye of the artist an especially rich material with which to express his indwelling idea of beauty in bold and stupendous forms, so may we say that the sublimity of the Divine mind is most deeply felt in the rough and dismembered form of the book of Koheleth."

§ 4. EPOCH AND AUTHOR.

Neither the title nor the contents of this book can be used to sustain the traditional opinion that Solomon is the author of it (though it presents the fundamental features of the physics of Solomon, as the proverbs those of his ethics, and the Song those of his logic—comp. the general introduction to the Solomonic writings, § 1, Obs.). For the manner in which the self-designating Koheleth speaks of himself, chap. i. 1; xii. 16, as the Son of David and King of Jerusalem, and then attributes to himself works, undertakings, and qualities, whose originator and bearer history teaches to be Solomon alone (ii. 4 till xii. 15; viii. 9 ff.; comp. § 2), indicates rather a literary fiction and an artful self-transposition of the author into the place of Solomon, than the direct Solomonic authorship. For the author says i. 12: that he, Koheleth, has been king in Jerusalem, and speaks, vii. 15, of the "days of his vanity," as if he had long been numbered with the dead! And again, what he says of himself, i. 16; ii. 7, 9: that he was wiser and richer *than all before him in Jerusalem*, points, under unbiassed exposition, clearly to an author different from the historical Solomon: and, moreover, the allusions to his prosperity, as not less the boasting expressions regarding his own wisdom in i. 16; ii. 3, 9, and finally the remarks in reference to him as a person belonging to history, vii. 27; xii. 9-11, are scarcely in harmony with the authorship of Solomon the son and successor of David. And that also which is said, vii. 10, of the depravity of the times, accords as little with the age of Solomon, the most brilliant and prosperous of Israelitish history, as the manner in which, iv. 13-16; v. 7 ff.; viii. 2-10; x. 4 ff.; 16 ff.,

it is spoken of princes and kings, indicates the man as speaker who himself is king. And altogether unkingly sound the complaints in iii. 17; iv. 1; x. 5-7 concerning unjust judges, violent tyrants, officers given to imposition, and slaves and fools elevated to high offices and honors, *etc.*; these are all lamentations and complaints natural enough in a suffering and oppressed subject, but not in a monarch called and authorized to abolish the evils (comp. Obs. 1).

To these references to an author other than Solomon, and an origin considerably later than the Solomonic period, may be added also the linguistic peculiarities of the book, which point with great definiteness to an epoch after the exile. Compared with the prosaic and poetic diction of writings antecedent to the exile, that of this book shows a comprehensive breadth and superfluity of Aramaic words, forms, particles and significations only comparable with similar appearances of well-known productions of post-exile literature, *e. g.*, the Books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, the earliest prophetic writings. The linguistic character of the book is, on the whole, in such direct contrast with that of the genuine and old Solomonic writings, especially of the constituent parts of the Proverbs, and in the use and formation of certain favorite philosophical expressions, that these isolated contacts with the old Solomonic thesaurus and custom are necessarily attributable to a direct use of these older writings on the part of the author; while in other regards a most radical difference is observable in the two spheres of language and observation. We condemn, however, as an unscientific subterfuge, the opinion of some that Solomon purposely used in Ecclesiastes the Chaldaic mode of expression of the philosophers of his age (comp. Obs. 2).

For a more exact determining of the person of the author, and the epoch in which he wrote, the descriptions given by him of the religious and moral conditions of his nation and its cotemporaries, offer some hints and assistance. According to iv. 17; v. 5 and ix. 2, the temple worship was assiduously practiced, but without a living piety of heart, and in a hypocritical and self-justifying manner; the complaints in this regard remind us vividly of similar ones of the prophet Malachi (*e. g.*, Mal. i. 6 to ii. 9; iii. 7 ff.), with whose book, moreover, our own comes

in striking contact in some points of language, namely, in the use of the expression **הַמְּלָאךְ** "the angel" in the sense of "priest" (chap. v. 5; comp. **מְלָאךְ יְהוָה** Mal. ii. 7). Other expressions of the author, regarding the religious, moral, and social vices and evils of his age, remind us of the lamentations of Ezra and Nehemiah in reference to the misery under the Persian Satraps, *e. g.*, what he says about the decline of public justice (iii. 17), the violent oppression of the innocent (iv. 1; vii. 5), the perversion of judgment in the provinces (v. 8), the advancement of idle, incapable, and purchasable men to high honors and places (vii. 7; x. 5-7; xvii. 19), the debauchery of officers and lofty ones of the realm (x. 16-19), informers and secret police (x. 20), the increase of immoral, unrighteous, and selfish conduct of the great multitude (iv. 4, 8; v. 9; viii. 10, 11; ix. 3). The harmony of these passages with much that is similar in the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther (comp. *e. g.*, Ez. iv. 1 ff.; ix. 1 ff.; Neh. i. 3 ff.; ii. 10, 19; iii. 33 ff.; iv. 1 ff.; xiii. 10 ff.; Esth. iii. 1 ff.; v. 9 ff.), is the more significant because our book uses in common with these very literary productions of the Persian period a word indisputably Persian, (**פְּתוּרִים**) edict, command, chap. viii. 11; comp. Ez. iv. 17; Esth. i. 20, *etc.*).

There is no exact indication in the book of a later period of authorship than that of the books of Nehemiah and Malachi, or than the last decades of the fifth century before Christ,—neither in the gloomy view of the world and the melancholy philosophy of the author extending at times to inconsolable doubts of Providence, which might have been easily indulged in immediately after the exile,—nor in the complaint about the making of many books (chap. xii. 12), to which by no means the last period of Persian rule should be the first to offer an inducement, nor finally in the apparent controversy against Pharisaical, Sadducean and Essæan principles (iv. 17; v. 6; vii. 2-6; ix. 2); for this is a controversy which in truth refers only to the germs and additions of the mode of thinking of these parties extant since the exile, or since the period immediately preceding the exile, and not referring to the life and doctrine of these sect-like parties as they were in the last century before Christ. The fact that this book hints no where in the slightest at the political condition of the Jewish people under the Ptolemaic and Seleucid rulers, and

not less the fact that it has been accepted in the canon of the Old Testament, while the book of Sirach, composed soon after the commencement of the Macedonian rule, was excluded from it, as from an already finished collection, testifies pretty clearly against the composition of the book in so late a post-Persian period (comp. Obs. 3).

If this book may therefore be very probably considered as about contemporary with Nehemiah and Malachi, or between 450 and 400, then we may find the inducement and aim of its production in the fact that the sad condition of his nation, and the unfortunate state of the times, led the author to the presentation of grave reflections as to the vanity of all earthly things, and to the search after that which, in view of this vanity, could afford him consolation and strength of faith, and the same to other truth-loving minds led by the sufferings of the present into painful inward strife and doubts. The result of these reflections, the author—a God-fearing Israelite, belonging to the caste of the Chakamim, or wise teachers of that time (chap. xii. 9–11; comp. 1 Kings iv. 31), whose personal relations cannot be more clearly defined, thought to bring most fittingly to the knowledge and appropriation of his contemporaries, by presenting King Solomon, the most distinguished representative of the Israelitish Chakamim, and the original ideal conception of all celebrated wise men of the Old Testament, as a teacher of the people, with the vanity of earthly things as his theme. And he puts into the mouth of this kingly preacher of wisdom (Kohleth—comp. § 1) as his *alter ego*, mainly two practical and religious deductions from that theme; 1) the principle that while renouncing the traditional belief of a temporal adjustment of Divine justice and human destinies, we must seek our earthly happiness only in serene enjoyments, connected with wise moderation and lasting fidelity to our trusts; and 2) the exhortation to a cheerful confidence in the hope of a heavenly adjustment between happiness and virtue, and to a godly and joyous looking to this future and just tribunal of God (comp. Obs. 4).

OBSERVATION I.

The Talmud seems to express a certain doubt of the traditional Jewish and Christian view, that Solomon himself wrote this book when it, *Baba Vathra*, f. 14, 15 (comp. *Schalschelleth Hakkabala*, f. 66), makes the assertion that Hezekiah and his philosophers (Prov. xxv. 1) wrote Isaiah, Proverbs, the Song of Solomon, and Ecclesiastes. But this assertion does not so much regard the actual composition of these books as their final revision and introduction into the Canon; the origin of their entire contents from the authors named, and consequently their authenticity in the strict sense of the word, is not called into question. Of a more serious character are the objections raised by LUTHER against the Solomonian origin of Ecclesiastes. In his preface to the German translation of this book, written in 1524, he says: "The book was not written or arranged by King Solomon himself with his own hand, but was heard from his mouth by others, and collected by the learned men. As they themselves finally confess when they say: These words of the philosophers are spears and nails, arranged by the masters of the congregation, and presented by one shepherd; *i. e.*, certain chosen ones at that time were ordered by kings and people, this and other books of Solomon, presented to the one shepherd, so to place and arrange, that no one should have need to make books according to his desire; as they therein complain that of book-making there is no end, and forbid others to undertake it. Such people are called the masters of the congregation, so that the books must be accepted and ratified by their hand and office. For the Jewish people had an external government established by God, in order that these things might be surely and justly arranged. Thus also the book of the Proverbs of Solomon was put together by others, and at the close the teachings and sayings of some wise men were added. Thus also the Song of Solomon seems like a pieced book, taken by others from his mouth. Therefore also is there no order in these books, but one part is mingled with the other, since they did not hear all at one period, nor at once, as must be the way with such books."—He judges still more boldly about the same book in one of those casual remarks of his "*Table Talk*," to which, however, he would himself scarcely have given any scientific value (WORKS, *Erlangen* Ed., Vol. 62, 128): "This book ought to be more complete; there is too much broken off from it—it has neither hoots nor spurs—it rides only in socks, just as I did when in the cloister.—I do not believe that Solomon was damned, but it was thus written to terrify kings, princes and rulers. Thus he did not write Ecclesiastes, but it was composed by

Sirach at the time of the Maccabees. But it is a very good and pleasant book, because it has much fine doctrine concerning the household. And, moreover, it is like a Talmud, composed of many books, perhaps from the library of King Ptolemy Evergetis in Egypt. As also the Proverbs of Solomon were brought together by others," etc.—LUTHER seems by no means to have always entertained this opinion of the book, disputing its authenticity as well as its unity; in his Latin Commentary at least (*Ecclesiastes, Solomonis cum annotationibus*, 1532, Ed. Erlang., Lat. T., XXI., p. 1 ss.), he presents the immediate hearers and contemporaries of King Solomon, as writing the pronounced contents of Koheleth: "*Titulum Ecclesiastæ sive concionatoris magis referendum puto ad ipsius libri, quam ad auctoris nomen, ut intelligas hæc esse verba per Salomonem publice dicta in concione quadam suorum principum et aliorum. Cum enim rex esset, non erat sui muneris neque officii docere, sed sacerdotum et Levitarum. Quare hæc arbitrator dicta a Salomone in conventu quodam suorum, seu a convivio, vel etiam intra convivium, præsentibus aliquot magnis viris et proceribus, postquam apud se diu et multum cogitasset de rerum humanorum s. potius affectuum conditione et vanitate, quæ sic postea (ut fit) illis præsentibus effuderit, deinde ab illis ipsis magistris communitatis vel ecclesia excepta et collecta.—Unde et in fine fatentur hæc se accepisse a pastore uno et concessisse. Sicut nostrum quispiam posset in convivio sedens de rebus humanis disputare, aliis, quod diceretur, excipientibus. Ut scilicet sit publica concio, quam ex Salomone auderint, a qua concione placuit hunc librum Coheleth appellare, non quod Salomon ipse concionator fuerit, sed quod hic liber concionetur, tamquam publicus sermo.*" As the direct Solomonic authorship appears here decidedly retained, so LUTHER in other places names Solomon without restriction as the immediate author, just as do MELANCTHON, BRENZ, and the other contemporary and next following exegetists throughout. GROTIUS was the next one to take up again the denial of the Solomonic authenticity, and indeed in a far more distinct and consistent manner than LUTHER. See the Obs. to the last paragraph, p. 15 f. He sought in some measure to give a scientific foundation to the assertion of a post-Solomonic origin by reference to the later Chaldean style. "*Ego Salomonis non esse puto,*" he says, "*sed scriptum serius sub illius regis tamquam penitentis ducti nomine. Argumenta ejus rei habeo multa vocabula, quæ non alibi, quam in Daniele, Esdra et Chaldæis, interpretibus reperias.*" Another opponent of the genuineness of the book appeared then in HERM. v. d. HARDT (*de libro Coheleth*, 1716), who, however, did not, as GROTIUS, and as subsequently and more decidedly G. PH. CHR. KAISER (comp. § 1, Obs. 1), think ZERUBBABEL to be the author of the book, but his younger contemporary, JESUS, son of the high priest JOIADA. Although these rather arbitrary and poorly supported assertions met strong opposition among all contemporaries, and J. D. MICHAELIS declared himself decidedly in favor of the direct Solomonic origin of the book (*Poetic Outline of the Thoughts of Ecclesiastes of Solomon*, 2d ed., 1762), nevertheless, since the epoch of genuine rationalism, the belief of its composition in a post-exile era, and by a philosopher identified with Solomon by means of free poetic fiction, has become so general, that since that time, even from orthodox quarters, only a rather isolated opposition has appeared. The defence of the Solomonic origin has been attempted by SCHELLING (*Salomonis quæ supersunt, etc.*, 1806), F. DE ROUGEMENT (*Explication du livre de l'Ecclesiaste*, Neuchâtel, 1844), H. A. HAHN (*Commentary*, 1860), WANGEMAN (*Ecclesiastes practically treated according to contents and connection*, 1853), ED BÖHL (see Obs. 2), and also the Catholics, WELTE (HERBST'S *Int.*, II., 2, 252 ff.), LUDW VAN ESSEN (*Ecclesiastes*, Schaffhausen, 1856), and others; while the opposite view has found representatives not only in EWALD, UMBREIT, ELSTER, VAHINGER, BLEEK (*Int. to the O. T.*, p. 641 ff.), H. G. BERNSTEIN (comp. Obs. 3), etc., but also in HAVERNICK, KEIL, HENGSTENBERG, O. V. GERLACH, VILMAR, DELITZSCH, and others.

OBSERVATION 2.

The numerous Aramaisms in the book are among the surest signs of its post-exile origin; of these nearly every verse presents some: For example, אָלוּ if (vi. 6; Esth. vii. 14); בָּטַר to cease, rest (xii. 3; Dan. v. 19; Esth. v. 9); זָמַן time (iii. 1; Neh. xi. 6; Esth. ix. 27, 31). בִּישָׁר to succeed, prosper (x. 10; xi. 10; Esth. viii. 5); מְרִינָה province (xi. 8; v. 7); פְּתָנִים

edict (compare what is said above, (p. 14); פִּינֵר, interpretation, meaning (viii. 1; comp. Dan. xi. 5 ff.); מְבַלֵּי אִישׁר לֹא so that not (iii. 11); כָּל-עֵמֶת exactly like (v. 15); שָׁלַט to rule (ii. 19; v. 18; Neh. v. 15; Esth. ix. 1); שָׁלְטוֹן authority, ruler (viii. 4, 8; Dan. iii. 2, 3); תָּקַן to be right (i. 15; vii. 13; xii. 9; comp. Dan. iv. 33); תְּקִיף powerful (vi. 10; Dan. ii. 40, 42; iii. 3); likewise the particles כִּבֵּר long since (i. 10; ii. 12, 16); חוּץ מִן without (ii. 25); עַל דְּבַר on account of (vii. 19); מָה יֵשׁ what was (i. 9; iii. 15).—Ed. BöHL has lately tried in vain to weaken the testimony against the Solomonic origin of the book, contained in these numerous direct and indirect parallelisms with the books of Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, etc. (*Dissertatio de Aramaisms libri Koheleth, qua librum Salomoni vindicare conatur*, Erlang., 1864). To these we may add the many peculiar philosophical expressions, as: יִתְרוֹ advantage, gain, excellence (i. 3; ii. 13); רַעִיוֹן, רַעִיּוֹת, חֵשְׁבוֹן, חֵלֶק, בְּשֵׁרוֹן together with numerous abstract forms in וַת as הִלְלוֹת madness (x. 13) סְבָלוֹת foolishness (i. 17; ii. 3); יִשְׁהָרוֹת morning red, youth (xi. 10); שִׁפְפוּתִי sluggishness (x. 18), etc. Where there appear, on the contrary, characteristic expressions and terms from the old Solomonic language, there every time the thought of borrowing is patent. Thus the expression בַּעַל כָּנָף the bird (x. 10; comp. Prov. i. 17); that favorite conception הֶבֶל (i. 2, etc.; comp. Prov. xiii. 11; xxi. 6; xxxi. 30); the expression חָבַק יָדַיִם fold the hands, as a picture of idleness (iii. 5; iv. 5; comp. Prov. vi. 10; xxiv. 33); מְרַפָּא remissio (x. 4; comp. Prov. xiv. 30; xv. 4); עֵצְלָה laziness (x. 10; comp. Prov. xix. 15); שׁוּק street (xii. 4, 5; comp. vii. 8; Cantic. iii. 2); the word play in שֵׁם and שִׁמֶן (vii. 1; comp. Cantic. i. 3); תַּעֲנֹגוֹת delights (ii. 8; Cantic. vii. 7; Prov. xix. 10). Compare HÄVERNICK, Introduction to O. T., I., p. 233; EWALD, Poets of O. T., II., 268 f. The Hebrew is here so strongly permeated with the Aramaic, that there are not only many individual words entirely Aramaic, but the foreign influence extends into the smallest veins, while at the same time the material remaining from the old language has been farther developed under Aramaic influence. Indeed this book deviates farther than any other in the O. T. from the ancient Hebrew, so that one is easily tempted to believe that it was the latest of them all. But this would be a hasty and erroneous conclusion, for the Aramaic penetrates not suddenly and violently, but by degrees; so that in this period of intermingling, the one writer might adopt a much stronger Aramaic tint than the other. We see from this, and from many idioms here ventured on for the first time, and wholly absent elsewhere (e. g., “under the sun,” i. e., on the earth) only so much, that this book comes from an author from whom we have nothing else in the O. T.: to all appearances he lived not even in Jerusalem, but in some country of Palestine; for we can safely enough thus conclude from the proverbial phrase, “To go to the city,” i. e., Jerusalem, x. 15, compared with similar expressions, vii. 19; viii. 10 (בְּעִיר in the city), and on the contrary מְדִינָה v. 7, or שָׂדֶה v. 8, the field (or soil).—Whether this conclusion, as well as that one for the same reason based on the expression “King in Jerusalem,” i. 1, is so perfectly well assured, might well be doubted; comp. for the phrase בְּעִיר also Song of Solomon, iii. 2, 3; v. 7: Deut. xxviii. 3; and also the exegetical explanations to x. 15. What EWALD (p. 269, note 1) adduces concerning the linguistic probabilities in favor of Galilee as the residence of the author, is in any case insufficient.

OBSERVATION 3.

HÄVERNICK, KEIL, HENGSTENBERG, etc., accord with our above transfer of the epoch of the composition of Ecclesiastes into the second-third of the Persian period, or into the times of Nehemiah and Malachi (450-400). ROSENMÜLLER, DE WETTE, KNOBEL, EWALD, VAHUNGER,

ELSTER, BLEEK, *et al.* go a little farther down; they think it could not have originated until the last years of the Persian rule, or perhaps (so at least the first three) even not until the beginning of the Macedonian period. As reasons for this view they say (ELSTER, p. 7 f.; VAIH. p. 51 ff.): 1) the period of Nehemiah, and indeed also the next following decades, (mainly therefore the years 460 till 350), could not be brought into consideration, they being the happiest periods of Israel during the Persian rule; the origin of KOHELETH must occur in a time of greater national adversity and sorrow, such as did not begin till after Artaxerxes II. (Mnemon); 2) the complaint about the making of many books (xii. 12), points to a period "in which a diffuse and unfruitful literature has been formed by a peculiar learning of the schools," (ELSTER and EWALD); 3) the commencement of sectarianism which did not appear until after the peaceful period of Artaxerxes II. (404-358), forms the historical inducement to many of the expressions in the book, as iv. 17; v. 6; vii. 2-6; ix. 2, (VAIH.); 4) in the same way the book presupposes the entire disappearance of prophetic literature, and must therefore have been written a considerable period after Malachi; 5) the author points on the one hand to the occasional desire of apostasy from the Persian Kings (viii. 2), on the other, he foresees the fall of the Persian realm, and admonishes them to wait for the fitting time, adding a warning against precipitate action (viii. 5; x. 8-11, 18, 20); these are all references to the last decades of the Persian period, or to the years 360-340, as the probable era of the origin of the book (VAIH.). HENGSTENBERG has answered the first of these arguments in a thorough manner, and has shown that nothing very definite is known of a more oppressive and violent character of the Persian rule during its last period, but that this from the beginning to the end was severe and tyrannical for the Jews, and that especially under Nehemiah there was much cause for complaint, deep mourning, and despair, as may be clearly enough seen from Neh. v. 15, 18; viii. 9; ix. 36, 37; xiii. 10, 11, 15 ff. Against the second argument, taken from Koh. xii. 12, we would refer to what has already been said (§ 3, Obs.) on the reference of the expression "making many books" not only to the Jewish, but also to the entire oriental as well as the Grecian literature; whereby this argument is lost for a later period of composition. No. 3, includes the wholly untenable assumption that the germs of the "sects" of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes were not known before the year 400 before Christ; a view so much the more groundless, the more distinctly the germs to these peculiar religious and moral tendencies may be traced back to a considerably earlier period; as for instance in the second part of the prophet Isaiah, Sadducean unbelief and materialism (chap. lvii. 3 ff.; lix. 1, ff.), and Pharisaic justification by works, and hypocrisy are deprecated, and the same may be shown in Jeremiah (comp. REUSS, *History of Christian Theology in the Apostolic Age*, I. p. 126 ss.). Though it may be a fact that according to the many quoted passages iv. 17; v. 6; vii. 2-6, *etc.*, in KOHELETH, there appear, in the germ, the scepticism of the Sadducees, the anxiety and timidity of the Pharisees, the pleasure in morose retirement of the Essenes (EWALD, *Hist. of Israel*, IV. 495); nevertheless from this fact but the one probability for determining the period of this book is to be deduced, and that is that it belongs to the time of the exile, or to one subsequent; any thing more definite cannot be deduced from it. Comp. also the exegetical illustrations to the passages quoted, and to ix. 2.—The fourth of the above arguments is based on the erroneous supposition that the labors of the prophets were unknown to the author and distant from him, and that with him appeared a new mode of understanding the divine truth of revelation, beside which a prophetic literature could not well be imagined (ELSTER). To which we reply that there is nowhere in this book so decided an ignoring of the presence of the prophets as that contained in Macc. xiv. 41, and that the author did not find sufficient inducement to refer to the labors of the few bearers of prophetic truth whom he and his contemporaries may perhaps have known,—men like Zachariah, Haggai, and Malachi—any more distinctly than he had already done in speaking of wisdom and wise men. As to the fifth reason for the composition of the book in the last decades of the Persian rule, it rests on exegetical supports entirely too insecure to permit us to attach any weight to it. The desire of apostasy from the Persian king, or the wavering in loyalty (VAIH.) in passage viii. 2, must be artificially introduced; and that the passage in chap. x. 18, "By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of hands the house droppeth through," is a special reference to the near approach of the

ruin of the Persian kingdom, is quite as untenable, as it is arbitrary to find in viii. 5; x. 8-11, 20, warnings against a national rebellion, or immature efforts for throwing off the Persian yoke. And in general it is advisable to refrain as much as possible from introducing political references into the book, and instead of that to devote so much greater attention to its allusions to the religious and esthetical conditions of its period. These allusions however present many strikingly close parallelisms with the book of Malachi; as whose most immediate contemporary in the whole of the Old Testament literature, KOHELETH may therefore very properly be considered. On account of this unmistakable connection with the " seal of the prophets," this book can scarcely be brought down lower than the year 400 before Christ, and the hypothesis nearest to our own, of BERNSTEIN (*Quæstiones Kohelethanæ*) and of DELITZSCH (*Commentary on Job*, p. 15) must therefore be rejected, according to which it originated under Artaxerxes II. therefore between 400 and 360, B. C. Still more decidedly must we reject the views of BERGST, BERTHOLD, SCHMIDT, *et al.*, which accept the period between Alexander the Great and Antiochus Epiphanes, those of ZIRKEL and HARTMANN which adopt the epoch of MACCABEAN struggles for liberty, as well as those of HITZIG, who takes the precise year 204 B. C. as the period of the composition. The arguments presented by the latter for this exact period, are mostly the merest assumptions; *e. g.* the assertion that chap. viii. 2, points to the period after Ptolemy Lagi, who was the first to demand an oath of allegiance from the Jews (*Josephus, Archæology*, xii. 1); the opinion that chap. x. 16-19 refers to the commencement of the government of Antiochus Epiphanes, who at his father's death was only five years old; that the little city, chap. ix. 14 f. is the little marine city of Dora with its victorious resistance to King Antiochus the Great, 218 B. C.; that the amorous woman, chap. vii. 26, is Agathoklea, the concubine of Ptolemy Philopator † xx. 3); that the former days were better than those of chap. vii. 10, point to the more happy periods for the Jews of the first three Ptolemys. How poorly the acceptance of such special references harmonizes with the otherwise general contents of the respective passages, the separate exegesis of each will show more pointedly. The affinity between the Book of Wisdom and KOHELETH, adduced by HITZIG, does not therefore prove the composition of the latter in the Alexandrine era, because the " Wisdom " is the original Greek product of a later imitator of the ancient Hebrew Chokmah-literature, but KOHELETH is an original production of this latter, and of a specific Hebrew character, whose isolated parallelisms with that apocryphal writer must arise from the use made of him by the author of it. (Comp. HAHN, in *Reuter's Repert.* 1838, Vol. XIV. p. 104, ff.)

OBSERVATION 4.

The aim of Ecclesiastes has ever been defined in very different ways. HIERONYMUS understood it almost wholly in a theoretical sense, when he made its object the teaching of the vanity of all earthly things; a view in which many modern men have followed him, as HERDER, EICHORN, FRIEDLÄNDER, DATHE, and others. All these define its object mainly or exclusively according to chap. i. 2; xii. 8, and similar passages, whilst again PAULUS, UMBREIT, KÖSTER, EWALD, *et al.* look solely to such passages as i. 3; iii. 9; vi. 11, *etc.*, and make the aim of the book the demonstration of the nature of the highest good. The view of DESVOEUX belongs also to the theoretical comprehension of the book (§ 6): *viz.*, that the author of it would prove the immortality of the soul, and a future reward in another world, with which undue appreciation of the religious character of the book, others substantially coincide, as M. FR. ROOS (*Footsteps of the Faith of Abraham*, p. 76), RHODE (*de vet. poetarum sapientia gnomica*, p. 223). *etc.* KAISER has given to the book an historical and didactic aim, by supposing that he finds therein an allegorical presentation of the secret history of the Davidic kings from Solomon to Zedekiah, (See § 1 and 6). DE ROUGEMENT, UMBREIT, and VATKE have, on the contrary, declared it to be a philosophical composition, with the difference, however, that the first designates its tendency as specifically religious, the second as skeptical, and the third as nihilistic. Luther makes the aim of Ecclesiastes wholly practical in his preface to the books of Solomon (ERL. Ed., Vol. LXIV. p. 37); " The second book is called Koheleth, what we call Ecclesiastes, and is a book of consolation. If indeed a man will live obediently to the teachings of the first book, (*i. e.*, Proverbs) and obey its commands, he is opposed by the devil, the world, and his own flesh, so that he becomes weary of his condition, and averse to it. As now Solomon in his first

book teaches obedience in contradistinction to mad frivolity and frowardness, so in this book he teaches us to be patient and constant in obedience against dissatisfaction and opposition, and to await our hour with peace and joy." Comp. his Latin Comment. p. 8: *Est ergo summa et scopus hujus libri, quod Solomon vult nos reddere pacatos et quietis animis, in communi-bus negotiis et casibus hujus vite, ut vivamus contenti presentibus sine cura et cupiditate futurorum, sicut Paulus ait: "Sine cura et sollicitudine agentes,"—futurorum enim curam frustra affligere. Ibid. p. 12: "Est ergo (ut repetens dicam) status et consilium hujus libelli, erudire nos, ut cum gratiarum actione utamur rebus presentibus et creaturis Dei, quæ nobis Dei benedictione largiter dantur ac donatæ sunt, sine sollicitudine futurorum, tantum ut tranquillum et quietum cor habeamus, et animum gaudii plenum, contenti scilicet verbo et opere Dei."* Against the traditional Catholic conception of the book, as a substantially theoretical representation of the worthlessness and baseness of earthly things, Luther argues with energy: "*Nocuerunt multum hæc libro false intellecto plurimi sanctorum Patrum, qui senserunt Solomonem h. l. docere contemptum mundi, i. e., rerum creaturarum et ordinarum a Deo,*" etc.—The Catholic Hardouin, quite independent of Luther, has given to the book an object closely allied to his when he says: "That the best, that is the most tranquil, the most innocent and the most happy thing in this life, is to enjoy with his family in their repasts, the gain that a legitimate labor may have acquired, and to acknowledge that to be able to do so is a gift of God, which we should consequently use with thanks, not forgetting that we shall all be summoned to the judgment of God for these as for all other things." This purely practical and moral tendency of the conception of most expounders of the rationalistic school, appears debased to a meaningless simplicity; for example, in ZIRKEL, SPOHN, BERTHOLDT, SCHMIDT, GAAB (Contributions to the exegesis to the Song of Solomon, p. 48), G. L. BAUER, (*Int. to the O. T.*, p. 411) etc. According to them Ecclesiastes teaches "how one can enjoy a happy life and avert evils," (ZIRKEL); or also: "How a youth, who wishes to enter the great world, may demean himself sagely in many of the scenes of human life, and deferentially towards God, religion, and virtue," (SPOHN); or: "How one should accept fortune and misfortune, joy and sorrow," (BERTHOLDT); or: "How one, with all the imperfection of his destiny, may live cheerful and happy," (GAAB, BAUER), or: "How laws may be ascribed to human effort, to keep it within proper bounds, and point out the limit beyond which it may not pass," (SCHMIDT), etc.—The just medium between the practical and the theoretical in fixing the aim of this book, is found substantially with GREGORY OF NYSSA; he in his first homily regarding it, places its tendency in the elevation of the mind above all sensual perceptions, and above what is apparently greatest and most magnificent, to the super-sensual, and in the awakening of a strong desire for this super-sensual; and later, he declares the constant joy in good works that springs from the performance of them to be substantially identical with that elevation, to something beyond the sensual; (*ἡ διαρκὴς ἐπὶ τοῖς καλοῖς εὐφροσύνη, ἥτε ἐκ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἔργων γεννᾶται*).* Just so writes Augustine, (*de Civ. Dei* XX. 3): *Totum istum librum vir sapientissimus deputavit, non utique ob aliud, nisi ut eam vitam desideremus, quæ vanitatem non habet sub hoc sole, sed veritatem sub illo, qui fecit hunc solem.* Several expounders of the period of the reformation, have more fully and concretely comprehended the object of this book in its theoretical as well as in its practical side, e. g., BRENZ, who finds its benefits and excellences as follows: "*quod ad timorem et fiduciam in Deum recte nos erudit ac ducit, quibus seu iudicibus quibusdam ad pium creaturarum usum pertingamus,*" MELANCTHON, who finds its principal aim in the *confirmatio sententiæ de providentia, of the doctrina de obedientia et patientia, of the asseveratio futuri judicii*, and encouragement to the duties of one's calling. DRUSIUS, according to whom, . . . "*agit hic liber de fine bonorum;*—*suadet autem, ut ob hac vanitate animum attollamus ad sublimia.* MERCERUS, according to whom Solomon *aperte docet presentibus pacatis et tranquillis animis frui, abjecta humani cordis irrequieta curiositate et inconstantia, quum divitiæ, honores, magistratus, uxor et ceteræ hujus seculi creature bonæ sint, si illis cum gratiarum actione et Dei timore utaris, animo semper in Deum sublato nec his terrenis adicto,*" et al. STARKE (in his *Int.* § 9) finds a double aim in the author; a.) in reference

* Ἡ γὰρ τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐργασία νῦν μὲν διὰ τῆς ἐλπίδος εὐφραίνει τὸν τῶν καλῶν προϊστάμενον ἔργων μετὰ ταῦτα δὲ ἀπόλαυσιν τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἐλπίδων διεξαμένη ἰδίου τοῖς ἀξίοις τὴν εὐφροσύνην προστίθεισιν.

to himself, he had the intention publicly to confess and regret his foolish striving after peace of soul in vain things; b.) in reference to his readers, he desired to warn them against epicureanism, and to inculcate therefore especially these three rules: 1.) that one must despise all earthly things as vanity; 2.) that one must enjoy the present good with calmness and cheerfulness; 3.) that one thereby must fear God and serve Him. The latest exegetists are mostly in harmony in their acceptance of a practical as well as theoretical aim, (namely, all those who, in accordance with this, distinguish two main divisions of the book, one theoretical and the other practical, comp. § 2, obs. 1). On the basis of this view, HENGSTENBERG, VAHNINGER, and ELSTER have given the best development of the peculiar tendency of the book; the latter in connection with a detailed historical summary of the most important views of the earlier exegetists regarding its fundamental thoughts and aim.

§ 5. THEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND CANONICAL VALUES.

On account of the apparent leaning of this book towards skeptical, fatalistic, and Epicurean teachings, it early became the object of doubts in regard to its inspired character, and of attacks on its canonical dignity. According to the Talmud, the philosophers (*i. e.* the collectors of the canon, or also the learned of the most ancient period) intended to suppress it on account of the contradictions within itself, and the apparent moral levity of its teachings; but this intention remained unexecuted in view of the fact, "that its beginning and its end are words of the law."* That the author of the "Wisdom of Solomon" belonged to these earliest critical opponents of the book, is an erroneous opinion entertained by AUGUSTI, SCHMIDT, *et al.* (partly also by KNOBEL); for the controversy supposed to be contained in chap. 2 of that work, against the doctrines of the Preacher, amounts in part simply to seeming points of contact, and it is in part directed against those lawless and immoral men who were accustomed to misuse many assertions of the Preacher for the purpose of glossing over their base conduct. With much greater certainty, however, the book found various opponents in the ancient church; as PHILASTRIUS (*hæc.* 130) speaks of heretics who condemn the Preacher, because he at first proclaims that all is vanity, and then permits but one thing to remain, *viz.*, that one should eat, drink, and be merry. Theodorus of Mopsuestia soon afterwards joined these opponents with the assertion, that Solomon composed Ecclesiastes only in accordance with human wisdom, and not by virtue of divine inspiration; this, together with other heresies attributed to him, was condemned at the fifth Ecumenical Council at Constantinople. At a still later period of the middle ages the Jacobite Barhebræus († 1286) ventured the assertion, that Solomon in Koheleth had defended the view of Empedocles the Pythagorean, (whom he considered a contemporary of Solomon), that there is no immortality of the soul.—The opinion of HIERONYMUS was authoritative for the middle-age theology of the Occident, *viz.*, that Ecclesiastes taught the vanity of earthly things, and contempt of the joys of this world (comp. § 4, obs. 4.). Under the protection of this view of the book, entertained by Hugo of St. Victor, Bonaventura, Nicolaus of Lyra, *et al.*, it maintained its authority and acceptability with most of the theologians of the Reformation and the next following period. Luther, indeed, gave here and there a free and bold opinion of the book; *viz.*, "that it has neither boots nor spurs, and rides only in socks, and he himself formerly in the cloister;" (see § 4, obs. 1); but again he recommended it with special emphasis as a "noble book

* FA. SCHABB. f. 39, b: "The philosophers wished to suppress the book of Koheleth, because it contains contradictions. Why then did they not suppress it? Because its beginning and its end are words of the law."—Comp. MIDR. KOHELETH f. 114, a: "The philosophers wished to suppress the book of Koheleth because its wisdom all tends to what is written in chap. xi. 9; "Rejoice, O young man in thy youth;" (which is incompatible with Numbers xv. 33, *etc.*). But because Solomon adds: "Know, that for all these things God will bring thee unto judgment"—they declare that Solomon spoke well (כִּי אָכַר שְׂכָרָה) comp. *Pesikta Rabb.* f. 33, a. *Vajikra R.* f. 161, b.; *Midr. Kohel.* f. 311, a, where we notice the hearing of certain assertions of the book to the side of the heretics (סִינִי) perhaps of the sadducees *Tr. Edajuth.* c. 5; *Jidaim.* c. 3, where direct divine prompting is denied, *etc.* And finally also HIERONYMUS: "Aunt Hebræi quem inter cetera scripta Salomonis, que antiquitas sunt nec in memoriis duraverunt, et hic liber obliterandus videtur, eo quod vanas assereret Dei creaturas et totum putaret esse pro nihilo et cibum et potum et delicias transientes præferret omnibus, ex hoc uno cupitulo meruisse auctoritatem, ut in divinorum voluminum numero poneretur, quod totam disputationem suam et omnem catalogum hæc quasi ἀναεπαλασίου conarctaverit, et dixerit finem sermonum suorum auditu esse promptissimum, nec aliquid in se habere difficile: ut scilicet. Deum timeamus et ejus præcepta faciamus."

which for good reasons was worthy of being daily read with great diligence by all men." He declared this wisdom taught therein, as higher than any under the sun, namely, "that every one should perform his duty with diligence in the fear of God, and therefore should not grieve if things do not go as he would have them, but should be satisfied and allow God to control in all things great and small; he called it a "book of consolation" for every one, and especially for princes and kings, to whom it might serve in some measure as a consolatory, didactic, and satisfying manual of "politics and economies."* All evangelical theology till near the end of the last century, agreed in their favorable judgment of the religious and moral worth, and the theological character of the book, a few quite insignificant and isolated cases excepted; as for example, those Dutch opposers of whom Clericus speaks.

The vulgar rationalism was the first to disseminate that low opinion of the book which has since been maintained in many circles, and whose practical consequence is its degradation below the better class of the Apocryphas of the O. T.; *e. g.*, below Sirach and the Book of Wisdom. On this platform HARTMANN affirms "Ecclesiastes to be the labor of a fretful Hebrew philosopher, composed in a morose mood, and exceedingly tedious at times;" SCHMIDT declares that it is not a work fully prepared for the public, but a hasty outline of the author for his own subsequent revision," (see § 3 obs.); DE WETTE: "Kohleth represents the last extreme of skepticism within the Hebrew philosophy, and this in a barbarous style, by means of which he shows himself partial and sensually prejudiced in the maxims of the cheerful enjoyment of life, and in virtue of which his system is no system, his consistency inconsistency, and his certainty uncertainty;" BRUCE: "The skepticism of this book extends to a painful, internal disorganization, and to a perfect despairing of all order and aim in human life;" finally KNOBEL says: All ethical teachings and admonishings in Kohleth, end in the convenience and enjoyment of life.

The refutation of these accusations, is contained mainly in the foregoing, *viz.*, in what has been said in § 2 about the contents and plan, and § 4 about the aim of the work. The decidedly pious and sternly moral stand-point of the author, appears above all in the closing passage, chap. 12, 13, 14, which lays down, as the sum of the whole, the advice to fear God, and keep His commandments, and also a warning against punishment in His future judgment. But this conclusion is not detached from the religious contents of what precedes, is not connected in a mere outward manner with the whole as if there existed no deeper organic connection between this closing "inspired teaching" and the preceding "philosophical discourse," (expressions of ROUGEANT, comp. § 2. obs. 1). But, as is clearly pointed out in paragraph 3, the conclusion forms the pinnacle projecting with organic necessity from the whole; it is the concentrated collection of the rays of higher truth penetrating and illuminating the whole work, which are designed to pour forth their glorifying light with full power only at the very end. The author has also every where in the preceding paragraphs distinctly announced that God is the Almighty from whom every thing originates, and especially every thing that is precious to men in body and soul, (ii. 26 ff.; iii. 10 ff.; v. 1; vii. 17-19; viii. 14; ix. 1-3); that this Almighty God, according to the measure of strict justice will deal out moral reward to the good and evil (iii. 17; viii. 12 ff.; xi. 9); that man, even where he does not understand the works of God, where they are and remain incomprehensible to him, may not cavil with God, but must humbly submit to the command to fear God (iii. 11-18; v. 6, 17 ff.; vii. 18; viii. 16 ff.); and that therefore also the enjoyment of temporal blessings must ever be accompanied with thanks to God, and with contentment and moderation, iii. 12 f. 22; v. 11 ff., 17 ff.; vi. 2 ff.). The conclusion draws from all only this result reduced to the shortest possible expression, and gives to it intentionally a form and shape which reminds us of the sum and quintessence of all other teachings of wisdom in the Old Testament, (comp. ver. 13 with Prov. i. 7; ix. 10; Ps. iii. 10; Sir. i. 16, 25, *etc.*). It also declares distinctly enough that the teachings of the book

* "*Hunc librum Ecclesiasten rectius nos vocaremus Politica vel Economica Salomonis, qui viro in politia versanti consulit in casibus tristibus et animam erudit et roborat ad patientiam.*" As an example of a prince who in accordance with Luther's advice, read Ecclesiastes with special pleasure, we may quote Frederic the Great. That he was in the habit of considering it a genuine "mirror of princes," is proven by the fact that he was not drawn to it simply by the skeptical character of its contents.

are testimonies of truth pertaining to the "words of the wise," which must cling closely "as goads and fastened nails" to the hearts of the people (xii. 9-11); whereby the author clearly wishes not only to rank himself as in the class of the Chokamin, but also to embody his work into the mass of sacred literature, and separate it from the massive productions of profane literature; (ver. 12). In view of this so emphatic testimony of the author himself and the manifold direct and indirect references of his book to the older writings of the canon (namely, to Proverbs and the Song of Solomon, comp. § 4, Obs. 2; to Job: chap. v. 14; vii. 28; to the Pentateuch: chap. v. 3, 4; xii. 7; and to the Psalms: vii. 6; xi. 5), we need not assume that "the antagonism between the divine perfection and the vanity of the world is represented as unreconciled, or but partially reconciled" (OEHLER), or what is the same thing, that the Preacher harmonizes the traditional belief in Jehovah, and his unbelief to a simply external agreement between the fear of God and the cheerful enjoyment of the moment," (KAHNIS). The reconciliation between faith and doubt is actually effected; the contest between a God-fearing life and an irreligiousness serving the world and the flesh, has been fought out to the decided victory of the former; and the account could only acquire the appearance of lingering in the earlier stages of this conflict, and of favoring skeptical uncertainty, looseness, and indecision, (Jas. i. 8), by purposely lingering with great minuteness over the description of the conflict of the thoughts of the doubter, "accusing and excusing one another," in order thus to afford a most intuitive picture of the vanity, unrest, and joylessness of a consciousness detached from God and devoted solely to the impressions of worldly vanity, (§ 4, Obs. 2). It was the philosophical tendency of the author that forced him to this thorough development of the dialectics of doubting consciousness; and it was also the same religious and speculative tendency, philosophizing in the sense of the Old Testament, Chokmah doctrine, which probably induced him always to dispense with the sacred name of Jehovah where he speaks of God (in all 39 times), and ever adopt the more general designation of Elohim, usual also outside of the sphere of the positive revelation of the Old Testament. As the representative of such a philosophical standpoint and aim, the Preacher could lay no claim to being so direct an organ of divine revelation as the lawgiver, or as the prophets of God's ancient people. But he certainly considered his writings as a book fully harmonizing with divine revelation in the law and the prophets, if we consider the closing words already prominently alluded to, (xii. 9-12). And the excellent practical wisdom, full of significant references to the most precious truths of the entire word of God, and full of the richest consolation for earthly need and temptation of every kind, as the glorious book lavishes from beginning to end,—this, we say, is a well attested claim, that it belongs to the series not of the secondary, but of the primary canonical writings of the Old Testament.

OBSERVATION.

OEHLER (Prolegomena to the Theology of the O. T., p. 90) maintains that there is an externally-dualistic juxtaposition of the religious and worldly-skeptical character in this book. "The antagonism between the divine perfection and the vanity of the world, is represented as unreconciled; the latter as an inevitable experience, the former as a religious postulate. Thus the only wisdom of life lies in *resignation*, in which man profits of the nothingness of life as best he can, but therein commits all to God." With a still sharper censure of the skeptical standpoint of the author, KAHNIS (LUTH. *Dogmatics*, I., p. 309) declares: "Trite sounding words, many assertions not easily reconcilable, and only relatively true, and, to say the least, easily misunderstood expressions, show to him who reads this book with unprejudiced mind how, in ancient and in modern times, it could be read with anxious eyes. In it traditional faith and a skeptical view of the world, which sees vanity in all spheres of nature and human life, are united in a covenant between the fear of God and the cheerful enjoyment of the moment. However easy may be the historical comprehension of such a standpoint, it is difficult to justify its truth."—In reply to these reproaches, BLEEK has strikingly observed, in favor of the religious character of the book, that "it is affecting and elevating to see how the faith in God's reconciling justice is nevertheless retained amidst all doubt, and how the poet ever returns to it." (*Int. to the O. T.*, p. 644). HENGSTENBERG has replied in a manner still more definite and thorough to these cen-

sures: "It is not correct that the book presents an unreconciled contradiction between faith and knowledge, idea and experience. It certainly permits doubt to appear, as do the Psalms; this is the truth of the view which would distinguish two voices in the book; but this every where occurs only in order to conquer the doubt immediately. Nowhere stand, as in imitation of DE WETTE's theology, doubt and faith as equally authorized powers opposed to each other, but every where, when the voice of the flesh has spoken, it is confronted by the voice of the Spirit, as in Psalms xxxix.; xlii.; xliii. This meets us most strikingly in the very passage in which doubt is poured forth like a mighty stream in chap. ix. 7-10. The expression of a feeling that is skeptical and dissatisfied with life, extends only to verse 6; in verses 7-10 it is immediately conquered with the sword of faith.—It is also not correct that the author knows no higher wisdom of life than "*resignation.*" It is true, he teaches that human life often presents difficult enigmas, that it is very difficult to comprehend the providences of God, and that we not seldom find ourselves committed to blind faith (chap. iii. 11; vii. 24; viii. 17; xi. 5). But who could not see that these are truths that yet have their force for those who walk in the light of the gospel? Not in vain does the Lord declare those blessed, who, seeing not, yet believe. The apostle enjoins upon us, that we walk by faith and not by sight. The clearest human eye is not clear enough to see every where the causes of divine guidance, and to penetrate the ways of God so frequently mysterious. In the epoch of the author, it was so much the more necessary to make this view prominent, since at that time so many of the clear eyes lacked that perception of sin which gives the key to the sanctuary of God, if we will there seek the solution of the enigma of earthly life. But the author has no thought of committing every thing to blind faith; it does not occur to him to yield the field of knowledge to unbelief. "Who is as the wise man?"—thus he exclaims in chap. viii. 1.—"And who knoweth the interpretation of a thing?" There is therefore for him a wisdom which leads into the essence of things, illuminates the mysterious depths of the cross, and justifies the ways of God. HENGSTENBERG has already illustrated (—p. 23 ff.) the philosophical character of Koheleth in his relation to revelation, and demonstrated the exclusive use of the more general name of God as a necessary consequence of the fact that the author did not wish to teach direct prophetic revelation, but simply sacred philosophy; (referring to a treatise by KLEINERT in the *Dorpat* Supplement to Theological Sciences I, where also are considered similar passages in the books of Job, Nehemiah, etc.).—VILMAR, in the treatise quoted above, (§ 1, Obs. 3), has supplied an important aid to the justification of the book against the usual reproaches of skepticism, fatalism, and Epicureanism. He shows how the real weight of the paranetic (the hortatory) as well as the paracletic (the consolatory) powers of the author, the true fundamental thought of his practical philosophy of life, consists in the effort truly to fulfil individual earthly duty, even where there is no prospect of a rich worldly success, and the willingness cheerfully and continuously to labor without seeking reward or gain; (comp. ii. 10; iii. 22; v. 17 f.; viii. 15; xi. 6 ff.). "Success is of God alone, and we are nothing more and nothing less than God's servants." There is really for us no יְהוָה not even in the kingdom of God in the New Testament. We are to look for no result; but unconcerned as to success or failure, and unaffected by the unfruitfulness of our efforts, and without being excited or spurred by the hope of any success whatever, or of results that are all far-reaching, we are to do day by day, and day after day, only that, and all that, which lies within our mandate.—It is true the temptation which befalls us on account of this failure of our efforts, by this apparent immovability and retrogression in the kingdom of God, and by apparent הִבֵּל even in divine things, if it is not early conquered, will inevitably become moroseness, dissatisfaction with life, renunciation of the world, and misanthropy; "so that one will let hands and feet go, and do nothing more," from which at last may proceed the almost unpardonable sin of ἀκήδεια (recklessness, indifference). Such an actual disdain of the gifts of God because he does not satisfy us, is (as ἀκήδεια) nothing but defiance of God. The natural and God-created strength, courage, and cheerfulness of life must therefore be preserved (this is the desire of the Preacher) in order that we may move according to God's will in the narrow circle which in the will of God still remains to us. The הִלֵּק is not alone, is not indeed in the first place, eating, drinking, and being merry,

which finally would be nothing else than *Dulce desipere in loco*; but the חֵלֶק consists in the pleasure of fatiguing labor, in the זְמַח בְּעֵמְרוֹ (iii. 12, 22; v. 17, etc.). It is here a duty to assume the curse of the labor, and the sterility of labor, and to bear them cheerfully for the sake of God. In thus accepting and cheerfully bearing this curse, lies the only condition of its removal, yes, in no small degree the removal itself lies therein. We must especially preserve that God-created, cheerful, vital strength, and the fresh courage of youth, which may not carry the bitter experiences of advanced age into its sphere of life without destroying the divine work which it bears in itself—for such is indeed youth with its unconcerned and courageous spirit," (xi. 9; xii. 1 ff.). As a comprehensive, final judgment of the theological value and canonical dignity of the book, we may finally consider what is said by ELSTER, p. 33 f.: "The book bears not only a decidedly ethical and religious character, it forms also a material epoch in the connection of revelation, a peculiar stage of development of the Old Testament religion, an important link in the transition from the old to the new covenant, and therein is its canonicity safely grounded, so that we may say with CARPZOV. (*Int. in V. T. II.*, 221): "*Divinæ et Canonice libri auctoritati utut testimonium perhibeat universa tum synagoga vetus tum primitiva Christianæ ecclesia, quæ in Protocollicorum numero eum unanimi semper habuit consensu, fidem tamen præterea conciliant in dubia divinitatis documenta ipsis textus visceribus innoxæ.*"

‡ 6. THEOLOGICAL AND HOMILETICAL LITERATURE.

I. COMMENTARIES PREVIOUS TO THE REFORMATION:—GREGORII THAUMATURGI *Metaphrasis in Ecclesiasten Salomonis, ex. ed.* ANDR. SCHOTTII; Antwerp, 1613; also in *Opp.* GREG. NAZIANZENI *ed. Morell.*, T. I., p. 749 ss. (Paris, 1630). GREGORY OF NYSSA, Ἀκριβὴς εἰς τὸν Ἐκκλησιαστὴν ἐξηγησις, (in eight Homilies): *Opp.* T. I., p. 373 ss. ed. Paris, 1615.—HIERONYMUS, *Commentarius in Ecclesiasten*, *Opp.* T. III., p. 383 ss. ed. Vallars., Venet., 1766.—OLYMPIODORUS, in *Ecclesiast. Commentarii. Bibl. Patrum max.*, Tom. xviii. p. 490 ss. SALONIUS (sec. 5), *Expositio mystica in Ecclesiasten*. CEKUMENIUS, *Catena in Ecclesiast.* Veron, 1532.—HONORIUS of AUTUN (*Augustodunensis*), *Expositio in Ecclesiasten Salom.* BONAVENTURA, *Expositio in librum Ecclesiastes.* *Opp.* T. I., p. 294 ss. ed. Moguntin. 1609.

II. MODERN COMMENTARIES SINCE THE REFORMATION:—a.) Jewish Expositors: DAVID of POMI, 1571; SAMUEL ARIPOLE, 1591; BARUCH BEN BARUCH (double Commentary, grammatical and allegorical). Venice, 1599; MOSES ALSCHECH, 1605; SAMUEL KOHEN of PISA, 1661; MOSES MENDELSON (*The Preacher Solomon*, by the author of the *Phädon* pub. by RABE. Anspach, 1771); DAVID FRIEDLÄNDER, 1788; MOSES HEINEMANN, 1831; B. HERZFELD, Brunswick, 1838.

b.) ROMAN CATHOLIC EXPOSITORS:—JOH. of KAMPEN (*Campensis*) *Psalmorum et Ecclesiastes paraph. interpretatio.* Paris, 1533.—JOH. MALDONATUS, *Commentarii in præcipuos Sacræ Scripturæ libros veteris Testamenti.* Par., 1643 f.—CORNELIUS a LAPIDE, *Commentarius in Ecclesiasten.* Antv. 1694; also in the collected Comment. in V. et. N. T., X. vol. Venet., 1730.—CORNEL JANSSEN, *Commentarius in Ecclesiasten*, Antwerp, 1589. JOH. DE PINEDA, *Comment. in Eccles.* Antv. 1620—DU HAMEL, *Salomonis libri III. cum annotationibus.* Rotomagi, 1703. AUGUSTIN CALMET, *Commentaire literal sur la Bible.* Par. 1707 ss.—J. HARDOUIN, *Paraphrase de l' Ecclesiaste avec des remarques.* Par., 1729. THADD. DERESER, *The Sacred writings of the O T.*, III. Parts. Frankfort, 1797—1832.—L. VAN ESSEN: *The Preacher Solomon*; a supplement in illustration of the O. T. Schaffhausen, 1856.

c.) PROTESTANT EXPOSITORS: JOH. BRENTIUS, *Ecclesiastes Salomonis cum Commentariis, per HIOB GAST e Germano in Lat. translatus et per auctorem, quantum ad sententiarum cognitionem satis est, restitutus.* Hagenov., 1529.—M. LUTHER, *Ecclesiastes Salomonis cum annotationibus.* Vitemb., 1532. *Opp.*, lat. ed. Erlang. T. XXI. (also German by JUST. JONAS, 1533)—PH. MELANCHTHON, *Ennaratio brevis concionum libri Salomonis, cujus titulus est Ecclesiastes, Opp. ed.* Bretschneid., T. XIV.—THEODOR. BEZA, *Ecclesiastes Salomonis paraphrasi illustratus.* Genex. 1558.—JOH. MERCERUS, *Commentarii in Jobum, Proverbia, Ecclesiasten, etc.* Lug Bat., 1573, 1651.—JOH. DEUSIUS, *Anotationes in Coheleth.* Amstelod., 1635.—PAUL EGARD, *Theologus practica sapientissimi regis Israelitarum, seu Salomon Ecclesiastes*, 1619.—THOM. CARTWRIGHT,

Metaphrasis et Homiliae in libr. Salomonis, qui inscribitur Ecclesiastes. London, 1604.—HUGO GREGIUS, *Annotationes in V. Test. Par.*, 1644; Basil, 1732, T. I.—JOH. COCCEIUS, *Comm. in libros Salomonis* (1658) *Opp. omn.*, VIII. Vol. Amstelod. 1675 ss.—MART. GEIER, *Commentarius in Salomonis Ecclesiasten.* Lips., 1647, 1711.—ABR. CALOV, *Biblia Testamenti veteris illustrata*, II. Vol. Francof., 1672.—SEBAST. SCHMIDT, *Commentarius in Coheleth.* Argentor. 1691, 1704.—F. YEARD, *A Paraphrase upon Ecclesiastes.* London, 1701.—J. W. ZIEROLD, the *Preacher Solomon*, translated in the spirit of the Hebrew idiom, and thoroughly explained. Leip., 1715.—CHR. WOLLE, *Rest of the Soul, i. e.*, the Preacher Solomon translated and enriched with moral annotations. Leips., 1729.—JOH. JAC. RAMBACH, *Annotationes in Eccles.*, in J. H. MICHAELIS, *Uberiores adnotationes in Hagiogr.* Hal., 1720.—JOH. CLERICUS, *Commentarius in Hagiographa.* Amstel., 1731.—CHR. FR. 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III. MONOGRAPHS:—HERMAN V. D. HARDT, *Schediasma de libro Coheleth*, 1716.—DINDORF, *Quomodo nomen Coheleth Salomoni tribuatur*. Leips., 1791.—BERGST, on the Plan of Koheleth, in EICHHORN'S *Reperatory*, Vol. X. p. 963 ff.—H. F. PFANNKUCHE, *Exercitationes in Ecclesiasten*. Götting, 1794. J. F. GAAB, *Aids to the Exegesis of the Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, and the Lamentations*. Tübingen, 1795.—A. TH. HARTMANN, *Linguistic Introduction to the Book of Koheleth*, in Winer's *Journal*, Vol. I. s. 29 ff.—R. HENZI, *Programma quo libri Ecclesiastæ argumenti brevis adumbratio continetur*. Dorpat, 1827.—R. STIER, *Hints for a faithful understanding of the Scriptures*, Königsberg, 1824.—F. LÜHRS, *Ecclesiastes*, in the *Quarterly for Theology and the Church*, 1847; Vol. III.—VAHINGER, On the Plan of *Ecclesiastes, Essays, and Reviews*, 1848, H. II.—The same, Art. *Ecclesiastes*, in Herzog's *Real Encyclopedia*, Vol. XII., p. 92 ff.—UMBREIT, *Unity of the Book of Koheleth, Studien und Kritiken* 1857, H. I.—ED. BÖHL, *Dissertatio de Aramaismis libri Koheleth, qua librum Salomoni vindicare conatur*. Erlang, 1860.—A. F. C. VILMAR, On *Koheleth*, *Journal for Pastoral Theology*, 1863, p. 241 ff.—FR. BÖTTCHER, *New Exegetical Gleanings from the Old Test.*, Sec. 3, p. 207 ff.—J. F. K. GURLITT, *Studien und Kritiken, in illustration of Koheleth*, 1865, II., p. 321 ff. *Bernstein Questiones Kohelethance*.—GELBE, *Supplement to the Introduction to the O. T.*, p. 129 ff. Leips., 1866.

SPECIAL EXEGESIS OF THE PASSAGE Chap. xii. 1–7: CASP. SIBEL († 1658), *Frænum juventutis, seu perspicua et graphica descriptio incommodorum senectutis a Salomone, Eccles. xii. 1–9 tradita homiliis 33 explicata*. Deventer, 1639 (also in his *Opp. Theologica*, Tom. I.).—J. F. WINZER, *Commentatio de loco Köhel. XI. 9; XII. 7; 3 programme*. Leips., 1818, 19.—GURLITT a. a. O., p. 331 ff.—The older literature (e. g., JOHN SMITH, *Regis Salomonis descriptio senectutis*; WEDEL, *de moribus senum Salomonicis*; SCHEUCHZER, *Physica sacra*, T. IV., p. 819 ss.; JABLONSKI, *Last Speeches of Solomon*; PRAUN, *Physico-anatomica analysis cap. XII. Ecclesiastes*; PAPE, *Weekly Sermons*, etc.) is quite fully enumerated by Starke on this passage.

[Works on Ecclesiastes not mentioned by Zöckler. A Commentary on Ecclesiastes by Moses Stuart, Prof. of Sacred Literature in the Theological Seminary, Andover, Massachusetts. New York, 1851.—Very full and minute, containing valuable introductions on the design and method of the book, its time and authorship, with an account and description of the ancient versions. The Book of Ecclesiastes, with Notes and Introduction, by Charles Wordsworth, D.D., Archdeacon of Westminster. London, 1868; a condensed but valuable commentary in one volume with Proverbs and the Song of Solomon. It maintains the ancient view of the date and authorship, and is very full of the patristic interpretations, whilst exhibiting a good acquaintance with the modern German Exegesis. To these add (mainly from the lists given in Horne's Introduction, and Smith's Dictionary of the Bible) a philosophical and critical essay on Ecclesiastes, with Philological Observations, by A. V. Desvœux. London, 1762, 4to., (see a notice of it in the *Monthly Review*, O. S., Vol. XXVI., p. 485). Ecclesiastes translated with a Paraphrase and Notes, by Stephen Guernay. Leicester, 1781, 8vo.—Ecclesiastes: A New Translation from the Original Hebrew, by Bernard Hodgson, LL.D., Principal of Hartford College, Oxford. London, 1791, 4to.—An Exposition of the Book of Ecclesiastes, by Edward Reynolds, D. D., Bishop of Norwich. Revised and corrected by the Rev. Daniel Washbourne, London, 1811, 8vo.; a work that formed part of the collection of Notes on the Bible, usually called the Assembly's Annotations. London, 1822.—An attempt to illustrate the Book of Ecclesiastes by a Paraphrase (similar to Doddridge's Family Expositor) in which the expressions of the Hebrew author are interwoven with a Commentary; accompanied by valuable Notes on the scope and design of the book.—The Synopsis Criticorum of Matthew Pole will be found a great store-house of the opinions of the Biblical scholars of the 16th and 17th centuries. Among these the Commentary of Martin Geier, barely mentioned by Zöckler, stands preëminent. It is still a most valuable guide to the meaning of the old book, and, in regard to its essential meaning, is unsurpassed by later criticisms. There may also be mentioned, here, Scott's Commentary, and especially the Commentary of Matthew Henry, as contained in his general commentary on the Bible. It makes no show of learning, though in reality the product of more erudition than is commonly claimed for

it. It shows how the deep and difficult things of Scripture are, oftentimes, better comprehended by the spiritual than the merely critical mind.—T. L.]

APPENDIX BY THE AMERICAN EDITOR.

[THE ANTIQUITY AND AUTHORSHIP OF KOHELETH.—Notwithstanding the plausible arguments adduced by ZÖCKLER, § 4, and the authorities he quotes, the antiquity and the Solomonic authorship of this book of Koheleth are not lightly to be given up. The rationalistic interest contradicts itself. At one time it is argued for the late date of the work, that it contains a recognition of a future life. This is grounded on the assumption, so freely entertained without proof, that the Jews derived their knowledge of a future life from the Persians, during and after the captivity. Another class of rationalists, for a different reason, yet with the same purpose of disparaging the book, strenuously maintain that all its teachings are confined to this world, and that there is no recognition whatever of any life or judgment beyond it. Again, the difficulty of fixing any period for its authorship, if we depart from the date of Solomon, is another proof that no other time is genuine. The reader will see how great this difficulty is by simply advert- ing to the different views presented by ZÖCKLER, all of which are held with equal confidence, and yet, in every way, are opposed to each other. Once set it loose from the Solomonic time, and there is no other place where it can be securely anchored.

The internal evidence of the Solomonic authorship, when viewed by itself, or without reference to the argument from what are called later words, or Chaldaisms, is very strong. Independent of any influence from such an objection, the reader, whether learned or unlearned, could hardly fail to be struck with the harmony between the character of the book and the commonly alleged time of its composition. It is just such a series of meditations as the history of that monarch would lead us to ascribe to him in his old age, after his experience of the vanity of life in its best earthly estate, and that repentance for his misuse of God's gifts, in serving his own pleasure, which would seem most natural to his condition. The language which he uses in respect to kingly power, and the oppression of the poor, has been made an argument, by some, against the authenticity of the book as ascribed to him. To another class of readers, viewing the whole case in a different light, this very language would furnish one of the strongest arguments in its favor. Even if we do not regard him as referring directly to himself, yet his experience in this respect, greater than that of others in a lower position, may well be supposed to have given him a knowledge of the evils of despotic power, and of government in general, whether in his own dominions or in those of other monarchs, which could not so well have come from any other position. It agrees, too, with what we learn of the character of Solomon in other respects, that though fond of great works, and of a magnificent display of royal state, he was, by no means, a tyrant, but of a mild and compassionate disposition towards his own subjects, and all whom he might regard as the victims of oppression; hence his studious love of peace, and the general prosperity of his reign, which the Jews regarded as their golden age.

In regard, too, to its literary claims, its ornate style and diction, and other excellencies of composition usually conceded to it, which period, it may well be asked, is to be regarded as best adapted to such a work,—that splendid era of national prosperity, such as in other historical periods has ever been found most favorable to literary effort, the time when Solomon wrote his three thousand parables, his poems one thousand and five, and his discourses on Natural History, from the cedar on Lebanon to the hyssop growing out of the wall, containing also a treasure of knowledge concerning domestic animals, birds, reptiles, and fishes—such an era, we say, of national splendor, and consequent intellectual life, or that time of darkness, retrogradation, obscurity, and semi-barbarism, contemporaneous with and following the captivity, that historical twilight and confusion, in which almost any thing may be found, or invented, by those who would throw discredit on the received Scriptures? If Koheleth is to be assigned to a later date, the Book of Kings, it would seem, must go still later; for nothing, so far as the thought is concerned, would be in better harmony with the account there given of Solomon's splendid reign and the sorrows of his old age, than this production wherein both are so graphically portrayed, and set forth as a lesson of warning. The most stubborn rationalist must admit the historical account, we have, to have been founded, at least, on credible tradition. Every thing goes to show

that Solomon was distinguished for literary as well as imperial eminence. Some of the books he wrote retained their hold upon the national memory long after the greater part had been lost by failure of transcription, or a diminution of interest, or obsolescence arising from any other cause. We can account for the minor portion that remained. The sacred mystic song was written in Solomon's pure youth, when his name was Jedediah, the *beloved* of Jehovah, whose voice, in the visions of the night, he had heard responding to his earnest cry for wisdom. Its preservation was, doubtless, owing, in a great degree, to the very aspect of mystery which it presented from the beginning. It was early seen that it could have no consistent meaning given to it as an ordinary epithalamium, or even as a picture of the better human conjugal life. Its rapt, ecstatic, dream like, transitions, its most sudden and inexplicable changes of scene, the strange purity of its language, even when it seemed to be the vehicle of the most ardent love, would bear no Anacreontic or Sapphic interpretation. Its ethereal chasteness, repelled, as it ever has repelled, all approaches of sensual feeling.* Hence very early must have arisen the thought of its containing that idea of a Divine bridal relation which was so precious to the pious in Israel, as the chosen people, the "beloved of God." This gives us the reason why a production so strange, so unearthly, we may say, was preserved from becoming obsolete like the rest of Solomon's numerous songs. It accounts, too, for the tenacity with which, against the strongest objections seemingly, it ever kept its place among the Scriptures deemed canonical or inspired,—being thus ever regarded in the Jewish Church, even until the bridegroom came. A similar argument may be maintained in respect to the Proverbs. Out of the "three thousand" mentioned, 1 Kings v. 12, less than a third of that number entered into the national ethics, and were arranged, in the days of Hezekiah (see Prov. xxv. 1), in the form in which we now have them. All this favors the idea that out of Solomon's numerous writings, or, rather, *utterances*, as they are called, 1 Kings v. 12 [וְיִדְבַר יְשֻׁלֵּשֶׁת אֲלֵפִים מִיָּסָל], there was, also, preserved this precious discourse on life's vanity, this series of meditations so addressing themselves to the universal human heart, and especially to the Jews as reminding them, by contrast, of the period of their highest national greatness. Thus viewed, it is more easy to account for the preservation of Koheleth than for that of any other book in the canon except the Psalms and the Pentateuch. There may be allowed the idea of a later editor, or recensor, who may have added some of the short prose scholia by way of explanation, even as they were added to the Pentateuch—some few parenthetical insertions of the name Koheleth where it was deemed necessary more clearly to announce the speaker, and perhaps some comparative modernizations of the language, or the adaptation of it to a later period. But the book itself, in its plan, its ideas, its great lesson, belongs to the Solomonic time beyond all others, as is shown by intrinsic evidence, by the extreme difficulty which the opponents of its antiquity find in adapting it to any other period, and the endless disputes and contradictions in which they mutually involve themselves in the effort.

* It has been said that this portion of Scripture has a tendency to stir up licentious passions; and even most pious men, like WORDSWORTH and MATTHEW HENRY, have felt themselves called upon to give a caution against reading it in a wrong spirit, lest it have this dangerous result. But it may well be a question, whether any such caution is really needed, or whether such an effect was ever produced in the thorough sensualist. In his ignorance, he might try the experiment, but we may well doubt whether such a one ever read a single chapter without getting wearied and discouraged in the unholily attempt. He can make nothing of it. There is something here too pure—too dreamy and unintelligible, he would say—to kindle a licentious flame. There pervades it a holy, spiritual, unearthly air, which chills every effort to treat it as a mere love song. This is confirmed by the fact that no such attempted abuse of it is to be found, or rarely found, in the licentious literature of any, even an infidel, age. When, or where, was ever love song so written? When, in any composition of the kind, was there ever such a combination of power and brightness, or so much of an indescribable awe mingling with its serene beauty? When was the object of affection ever thus described: "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" It is the spotless Church, the Bride of the Lamb, arrayed in the white and glorious apparel that He has given her. "Arise, my love, my fair one, arise and come away." It is the Bridegroom's resurrection voice calling to the Beloved who lies sleeping "in the clefts of the rocks" (see the frequent allusions to this in the Syriac liturgical hymns, and compare Isaiah xxvi. 19: "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust"). *Surge formosa mea*, "arise, my sister, bride [יִנָּתִי—רֵיבִי—כַּלְתִּי—אֲחֹותִי] my love, my dove, my perfect one, arise and come away." For lo, the morning breaks, "the shadows flee"—death's "winter night is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers (of Paradise) again appear, the voice of the turtle [the song of love] is heard in our land." How heavenly chaste is this language, though so tender and impassioned! How repellent of all impurity! It is some feeling of this, even in the most licentious, that makes it impossible to treat Solomon's Song of Songs like the amatory strains of MOORE, or the erotics of OVID and CATULLUS.—T. L.

In nothing is this more evident than in the attempts that have been made to explain what have been called its historical allusions, such as ch. iv. 13-16; ix. 15; xii. 12, *etc.* If they are such, they may be referred to events preceding, or cotemporaneous with, the time of Solomon, with as much clearness, or with as little difficulty, it may rather be said, as to any times following. But these critics will have them to be much later. It is essential to their argument; but it is wonderful to see how, in fixing them, they continually unsettle previous views just as confidently held, and directly contradict each other. HIRTZIG goes down to the time of Ptolemy Euergetes, king of Egypt about 230 B. C., and finds "the old and foolish king" (iv. 13) in the High Priest Onias (no difficulty in making a king out of a priest), and the wise young man in his nephew Joseph, who wrested his kingdom (his priesthood) from him, *etc.* Ergo, Koheleth was written after this. Another critic refutes HIRTZIG, as he might easily do, and then he himself is refuted by a third, and so they go on, in respect to this and similar plans, refuting one another, until there is nothing left of them, whilst the old book and the old account of it stand in their historical integrity, unaffected by any such self-destroying criticism. The "old and foolish king" has been referred to Rehoboam (see WORDSWORTH and others of the more orthodox commentators), but there is equal, if not greater difficulty in that. Better take it as a general illustration, of which history furnishes frequent examples, such as Solomon would easily have known from his royal experience, or have presented by the aid of his imagination, as something which would not fail to find its confirmation, in some form, in the annals of almost every people. The "old and foolish king," born to royalty, **בְּמִלְכוּתוֹ נוֹלַד**, and the ambitious young man coming out of obscurity and restraint, **מִבֵּית הַסּוֹרִים**, who rises to great power, either becoming king himself, or, what is better, sometimes, Mayor of the Palace, with an "impoverished" (**רָשִׁי**) and humbled king under him, are quite common characters in history. It needs no hunting among the dark times of the later Jewish history, or the assigning any prophetic spirit to Solomon, making him to see what a fool Rehoboam would be when he came to the throne, to find cases in abundance, either for the most ancient or the most modern times. And so of what follows, about the "second child standing up in his stead," it is quite a serious question whether they have not made a particular historical allusion out of a general and most affecting picture of the flowing generations: I saw *all the living* (all the human race as presented to his imagination) walking (passing on, sub sole) *beneath the sun*, and the second child, the second generation (as the offspring of the one before), that shall stand in its place. How exactly does this harmonize with what follows: there is no end to all the people, *to the all* (literally) that was before; yea, those who come after have no joy in it [**בּוֹ** in the singular as referring to the collected *all* (**כָּל**) that is past]. It is highly poetical this treating all the long past as one antecedent, dead and gone, of no account in comparison with the boasting self-satisfied present. It certainly seems out of place to make any application of this graphic language ["all the living"—"people without end"] to Jeroboam, or to the man whom HIRTZIG has dug out of obscurity, or to any of the later events of Jewish history. See more fully on this and the preceding verse the exegetical appended note, p. 84. The same may be said of "the poor wise man (ix 15) who saves the city." It has been again and again repeated in history. Solomon must have known enough to warrant the illustration without having in view any circumstantial event that has come down to us. Again, the "many books," of ch. xii. 12, has furnished a most fruitful subject of dispute about the period to which it best applies, and by which these critics would determine the date of Koheleth. If **סִפְרִים** here means books at all, in the modern sense of separate treatises on various subjects, it may have a very fair application to the many writings which the account, 1 Kings v. 12, 13, ascribes to Solomon himself; but there is another view of the matter which may be fairly taken. Instead of referring to Persian, Greek, or Babylonian literature, to Ptolemaic collections, or Alexandrian libraries, the language may be used simply of this little book, or collection, styled Koheleth. It may well be doubted whether **סִפְרִים** here means *books* at all, in the large plural sense of separate treatises on every variety of subject, or collections of volumes, according to the idea of the critics referred to. The word **סֵפֶר** seems to be

sometimes used for a book in this separate sense, as "the Book of the Covenant" (סֵפֶר הַבְּרִית), Exod. xxiv. 7; 2 Kings xxiii. 2; The Book of the Law (סֵפֶר הַתּוֹרָה) Josh. i. 8, or the Book of Life, Ps. lxix. 29, but in these cases it may more strictly be regarded as meaning an account, roll, catalogue, or writing in general, long or short, either as a whole, or a part. Thus in Job xxxi. 55: "O that mine enemy had written a book,"—that is, his accusing declaration, or bill of indictment. And so it is used of a bill of divorce, Deut. xxiv. 1, 3. In 2 Samuel xi. 14 it means a letter, the very curt epistle that was sent by David to Joab about Uriah; so in 2 Kings x. 1. Again, the plural may be used, like the corresponding Greek and Latin phrases, to denote a writing collectively, or as a collection of words and sentences—*πολλὰ γράμματα*, *multæ literæ*—much writing, or many sentences, though referring to single treatises, as Xen. Mem. IV. 2, 1. In this collective way, the plural form, in Greek, may be used to denote a single law or precept, as ARISTOPH. *Ecclesias*. 1047, *γραμμάτων εἰρηκότων*. Or lastly, and most probably, it is used in the plural like the Latin *libri*, and the Greek *βιβλοι*, for the different parts or sections of the same work, as CICERO says in his *treatise De Divinatione*, II., 1, 3, *tres libri perfecti sunt de Natura Deorum*. So in the Greek, *βιβλοι* was early used of the different parts of one work, as in the supplants of ÆSCHYLUS, 944, *ἐν πτυχαῖς βιβλων κατεσφραγισμένα*, does not mean in separate books, as we take the term, but in the compartments of one and the same book. There is every thing to favor the idea that it is so used by Koheleth. The whole aspect of the passage, too, aside from any exegesis of the single word סֵפֶרִים, shows that the writer had in his mind only this single brief discourse, or meditation, or collection of thoughts, which he is just bringing to a close: "There is only one thing remains to be said" (וַיֵּתֶר מִהֵמָּה) τὸ λοιπόν, ver. 12): "Of making many chapters (as we have rendered it in the Metrical Version), sections, cantos, or books, there is no end." Or, to make a great book of it, there is no need (as קִין, like the Latin *finis*, the Greek *τέλος*, and the synonymous Hebrew עֵקֶב will well bear to be rendered). Or, "there is no end" to such a train of reflections, if we choose to carry it on.* But enough has been said; "hear then the conclusion of the whole matter." If this be a right view, then all that learning and argumentation to which ZÖCKLER refers go for nothing. Along with it, becomes wholly irrelevant the dispute in respect to the literary era to which it is supposed to refer, whether the Solomonic, the Persian, or the Ptolemaic.

The most plausible arguments against the Solomonic authorship have been derived from certain words, which have been assigned (many of them on the slightest grounds) to a later time. There is, without doubt, something peculiar in the style of this book, but whether it is owing to the peculiar nature of the subject requiring a different phraseology, or to its meditative philosophical aspect demanding abstract terms with varieties of form or termination not elsewhere required, or to the royal position of the writer, giving him a more familiar acquaintance with certain words really foreign, or seemingly such [because not ordinarily used, or because they belong to a courtly dialect], or to all of these causes combined, it may all be reconciled with the idea of its true and Solomonic authenticity. WORDSWORTH has given a condensed but very thorough treatment of this question in the Introduction to his valuable Commentary, together with a close examination of all the words of this kind cited by ZÖCKLER. It is derived from L. V. ESSEN, *der Prediger Salomo*, p. 42-45, where they are all taken up as they are objected to by KNOBEL and others. To this is added some admirable reasoning by Dr. PUSEY, with a reference to a similar refutation by WANGEMANN. He gives, also, what to some would seem to be of still more value, if we consider their source, namely, from HERZFELD, himself a rationalist, refuting the philological views, in respect to these words, of other rationalists, and thus showing that, in regard to most of them, these critics have so differed as to refute one another.

* [The true grammatical construction is to take קִין אֵין, not as the predicate, but as qualifying סֵפֶרִים, books, or, a book, without end,—to make a never ending book, or to go on in this way *ad infinitum*. It is the Hebrew mode of expressing such negation—comp. אֵין כִּסְפָּר, *innumerable*, Joel i. 6, *et al.* So אֵל is used, and sometimes אֵל, as in Prov. xxx. 31 and Prov. xii. 28, אֵל-כִּוֹת, like a compound word—*no death*—Gr. ἀθάνασία—Lat. *im-mortalitas*. "An endless book; of course taken hyperbolically, as a mode of expressing the intillity of a prolonged discourse.—T. L.]

A great part of these words the present editor of ZÖCKLER has examined in exegetical notes appended to the translation; but there are two or three of so much importance, and so much insisted upon by the deniers of the Solomonic authenticity, that he has deemed them worthy of especial attention in this place. Great stress has been laid upon such words as פַּתְגִּים פָּרְדִּים and מְרִנָּה as proving the late date of Koheleth. The only proof is that they are found, besides their use here, in Ezra, Esther, Daniel, and Nehemiah. But certainly it cannot be pretended that the words themselves are of this late date, or that they were not known very widely, and at a much earlier time, and in such a way that the knowledge of them by a person in the condition of Solomon would be not only possible, but highly probable. In fact, these words, although, philologically, they may be assigned to some particular speech, rather than to others, belong, in use, to all the principal Oriental tongues allied to, or territorially near, the Hebrew. פָּרְדִּים, paradise, for example, may properly be called Persian, as the thing denoted, a magnificent garden, was more peculiarly Persian; but the word may be Shemitic too [פָּרַד, to *divide*, cut off in portions, lay out, or with another sense, like the Arabic *فرد* denoting something rare and costly as being separate], with a foreign termination. Though rendered garden, it denotes something more magnificent than the common Hebrew גֶּן. It is found in the Greek of ΞΕΝΟΦΩΝ, Παράδεισος, but used in such a familiar way as to show that it was very early imported into the language from the East, like other names of a similar kind. There is every probability that it had come in at the earliest intercourse, peaceful or warlike, between the Greeks and Persians, or the Greeks and Babylonians. Why, in making this transition to the remoter West, may it not have stopped, at a still earlier day, at the courts of David or Solomon, and been employed, in their courtly dialect, for things to which the more ordinary vernacular was not so well adapted? Certainly it was the very term wanted here (chap. ii. 5, גִּנות וּפְרָדִים) (*gardens and parks*) to express the higher luxury, and no other word, in the whole range of Eastern tongues, as they then were, could have been so well adapted to it. Splendid gardens, or parks, were more common among the Persians and Babylonians; but even should we grant that the word is wholly foreign, there is nothing strange in the idea of its being well known to Solomon, without our supposing that he intimately understood or could speak those foreign tongues. The word was certainly in the Chaldaic as well as in the Persian, and the former tongue must have differed less from the Hebrew in the days of David and Solomon, than in those of Ezra. As a term of luxury, its transference to the courtly or loftier language of another neighboring kingdom is just what might be expected. This justifies us in saying that its use by Solomon appears more natural than would have been its employment by an ordinary Hebrew writer of the later time of Malachi. The great king of Israel was the literary superior among the neighboring contemporary monarchs, and his knowledge of other royal terms and ideas was enough to warrant him in calling his own pleasure grounds by a foreign name that had been widely appropriated to such a purpose. Such a transference, in respect to things of luxury and magnificence, belongs to modern as well as to ancient times. The names of things rare or precious, such as gems, costly fabrics imported from abroad, or other things peculiar to certain lands, are retained in their native form, and easily pass into other languages. There is the term קַנְמוֹן (*cinnamon*) which we find Exod. xxx. 23; Prov. vii. 17. It must have come into Hebrew as early as the thing itself was known, which was doubtless coeval with the earliest Phœnician or Egyptian traffic. It came from the far East, yet how unchangeable its form (in this respect like the word *paradise*) even to the present day. So in 1 Kings x. 11, 22, we have the names of rare commodities brought by the ships of Solomon and the Phœnician king from the far land of Ophir. They have strange names, שֵׁנְהַבִּים (*shenhabbim*), קוֹפִים (*kophim*), תְּכֵיִים (*tukkiyim*), and are rendered in various ways—in our version, *ivory*, *apes*, and *peacocks*. They kept these names in Hebrew, for there were no others to be used. Now had it so happened that there had been occasion to speak of them by a late writer, like Ezra, or the author of the book of Esther, it would have been said that Kings too was a book of the later Hebrew (*Sequioris Hebraismi*)

The argument is an absurd one, though carried sometimes to an extravagant length. It is all the more inconclusive, this manner of determining the date of books, when there is taken into view the scanty literature to which it is so confidently applied.

A similar method of reasoning is applicable to the word פְּתוּם which is found ch. viii. 11. This word is Persian—that is, there is something like it in use in that language, though its derivation, as a native term, is by no means clear. It appears to have been still more ancient in the Aramaic, where it is used (especially in the Syriac branch) very frequently, and with such familiarity that we can hardly help regarding it as vernacular. It is not at all treated as a foreign term. The Syriac פְּתוּם or, in the emphatic form, פְּתוּמָא is as common as the Hebrew דָּבָר. It is used, however, in a higher sense, to denote *edict*, royal or *judicial* sentence. When the Babylonian or Assyrian was the greater power, it was more likely to have come from the Aramaic into the Persian, than the contrary way. How much more likely, then, its still earlier passage into the near Shemitic branch of the Hebrew, even as a word generally understood, and more especially as a courtly or *legal* term, such as it has ever been the way to introduce from foreign, though not remote, languages. Among all nations what is called their law language, and, in a more general sense, their technical language, is more or less of this kind. We go for our law terms to the Latin and the Norman French; the Latins had many words of this kind from the Greek. There seems a necessity for such a course in the case of things or ideas demanding peculiar exactness in their expression, because of the generality and indefiniteness which the attrition of very common use brings into words from native roots, though originally as clear as any that are thus received. There is, therefore, the same reason for the transference of such a word as פְּתוּם, as has been given in the case of פְּרִדָּם. It is a courtly term, and has, moreover, a judicial sense, which the most ordinary national intercourse would bring into notice. There was, besides, the extensive dealing of Solomon with the nations around, excelling in this respect any of the kings of Israel before or after him. This extended to Egypt, to Syria, to the remote Southern Arabians, or Ethiopians, and, doubtless, to Persia and lands still farther east. His ships went to Ophir, and his intimacy with the Phœnicians put him in possession of much of that wide knowledge which they possessed beyond all other peoples. See this fully stated 1 Kings v. vi. ix. and x. Such an intercourse must have not only increased his own vocabulary, but brought many new words into the common Hebrew language. In view of this, the wonder ceases that a few such words should be found in the Solomonic writings. It is in fact a proof, rather than a disproof, of authenticity. However surprised we might be to find such words in Amos, or even in the later Malachi, they appear perfectly natural in the learned and kingly Solomon, as they do also in the later writings of the courtly Daniel and Ezra, who, with all their foreign intercourse, were not perhaps equal in political and statistical knowledge to the ancient monarch. Their dialect marks their position rather than their time. And this is confirmed by what is well said by LUDWIG EWALD (*Salomo, Versuch*, p. 429): “Solomon had such a variety of knowledge and intercourse with foreigners, by his extensive commerce and dominions, and by his relations with strange women, that his style, especially in old age, must have been influenced thereby. With his paradise-like parks the word *paradise* came into the Hebrew language” (see WORDSWORTH, *Int.*, p. 3, note).

The word פְּתוּם, therefore, so much used in all the East, would be known to him from kingly and ambassadorial intercourse, in which juridical and diplomatic language especially occurs, and he would be more likely to use it in the ornate style of Ecclesiastes, than an ordinary term of less state and magnificence. Besides, it admirably suits the passage in which it is found in conveying an idea for which the common Hebrew מִשְׁפָּט would have been hardly adequate.

It is intended to be in the most precise style of forensic diction: “Because sentence against an evil work is not speedily executed,” *etc.* It is the figure of an *edict* issued from the royal chancery, but suspended over the head of the threatened subject—an “arrest of judgment,” as we say in our law language. It was a term probably much used in such a style of proceedings, though not common in the vulgar speech.

One more example of this kind may be given here. The word מְרִינָה as used ii. 8, and especially ver. 7 ("when thou seest injustice in a *province*," etc.), is cited as evidence of cotemporaneity with Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel, where the great Persian satrapies are expressed by the term. [It occurs, however, Lam. i. 1 and Ezek. xix. 8.] But besides the argument that no personator of Solomon, of ordinary intelligence, would subject himself to the charge of such a glaring anachronism, there is the strongest etymological proof to the contrary. There is no word in the Old Testament more purely Hebrew in *form*, as well as in *derivation*. מְרִינָה means literally *place of judgment*. Now Solomon gave great attention to the administration of justice. He had the land divided into administrative departments, as we learn from 1 Kings iv. 7, etc., and these, as appears from other places, and the practices of later kings, were also *judicial circuits*. Had a word for such a province not existed in the language before, this is just the one that must have been formed for that purpose from a root denoting judgment, and the usual prefix מ denoting place. The oppression mentioned is just that which would be likely to occur in the departments of Israel as described 1 Kings iv. 7 with the names of the governors or satraps there named, and such cases of wrong may have often come up before the higher chancery of the king, who, with all his fondness for power and magnificence, is represented to us as a great lover of justice, and noted for the equity of his decisions. If, afterwards, the same word, or one formed on the same model, came to be used by the Babylonians and Persians, it was because no one was better adapted to express the idea of provinces whose governors or judges represented the ultimate sovereignty. The word in the later language came from the older, to which, in its etymological purity, it so strictly belongs.—T. L.]

ECCLESIASTES.

TITLE:

WORDS OF THE PREACHER, SON OF DAVID, KING IN JERUSALEM.

FIRST DISCOURSE.

Of the vanity of the practical and the theoretical wisdom of men.

CHAPTERS 1, 2.

A. The theoretical wisdom of men, directed to a knowledge of the things of this world, is vanity.

2 Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher, vanity of vanities; all *is* vanity.
3 What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?
4 *One* generation passeth away, and *another* generation cometh: but the earth abideth
5 for ever. The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place
6 where he arose. The wind goeth towards the south, and turneth about unto the
7 north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his
8 circuits. All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea *is* not full, unto the place
9 from whence the rivers come, thither they return again. All things *are* full of labour;
10 man cannot utter *it*: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled
11 with hearing. The thing that hath been, *it is that* which shall be; and that which
12 is done *is* that which shall be done: and *there is* no new *thing* under the sun.
13 Is there *any* thing whereof it may be said, See, this *is* new? it hath been already of
14 old time, which was before us. *There is* no remembrance of former things; neither
15 shall there be *any* remembrance of *things* that are to come with *those* that shall
16, 17 come after. I the preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem. And I gave
18 my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all *things* that are done
under heaven; this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised
therewith. I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and behold, all
is vanity and vexation of spirit. *That which is* crooked cannot be made straight;
and that which is wanting cannot be numbered. I communed with mine own heart,
saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all *they*
that have been before me in Jerusalem: yea, my heart had great experience of
wisdom and knowledge. And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know mad-
ness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit. For in much wisdom
is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

[Ver. 4.—לְעוֹלָם. See the extended discussion on this and kindred words, p. 44 T. L.]

[Ver. 5.—רָחַץ: Primary sense, irradiation, scattering, like רָחַץ, and רָחַץ, to sow—scatters its rays—spargit lucem. Part. beaming, glowing. See Metrical version. Compare Virgil, frequent, aurora spargebat lumine terras. רָחַץ Zöckler would give it here the sense of running, going swift. It is better to preserve the primary sense of panting. It suits better the hidden metaphor, on which see note, p. 38 T. L.]

[Ver. 8.—הַדְּבָרִים: Rendered things in E. G. So the Vulgate, cunctæ res. Best rendering is the more common and

primary one of words: all words weary in expressing the vanity. Zöckler objects to this as making a tautology with לְרַבֵּר, following. The argument is the other way; such seeming tautologies or verbal parallelisms are rather regarded by the Hebrews as an excellency of diction.—T. L.]

[Ver. 10.—לֵעֵלְכֵי־בָּ. See extended note, p. 44.—T. L.]

[Ver. 14.—רָעָה. There is no need of resorting to the Chaldaic for this word; neither has it any connection with רָצָה. It comes easily from the very common Hebrew רָעָה, primary sense, to feed (transitively or intransitively), pasture (not a verb of eating, like אָכַל), then to provide, take care of, then to have the mind upon any thing as an object of care or anxiety. The order of ideas is exactly like that in the Arabic

عزى

or Greek *vému*. The form, as also that of רָעִיוֹן, ver.

17, is purely Hebrew. We have the masculine form, Ps. cxxxix. 2, 17, applied to man, and used in a good sense, רָעִי, *my thought*. "Thou knowest all my thought"—not in the sense of mere speculative thinking, but *all my cares*. And so in that still more tender passage, ver. 17, where it is applied to God anthropopathically רָעִיךָ, "how precious are thy thoughts," thy cares, or carings, for me. Compare 1 Pet. v. 7, "He careth for you." In the connection with it, most of the modern commentators read רִוּחַ, wind—a caring or striving for the wind. It is, however, by no means certain that the older rendering, *spirit*, was not the right one—a striving (a vain striving or vexation) of the spirit.

See a similar connection of רָעִיוֹן (precisely—רָעִיָּה) with לֵב, the heart, ii. 22. In that place it is not easy to distinguish לֵבֹן רָעִיוֹן, *anxiety of his heart*, from רִוּחַ רָעִיָּה, in this.—T. L.]

[Ver. 17.—הַלְלוֹת—שִׁכָּלוֹת, abstract terms in חַת, on which some rely as proving a later language, and, consequently, a later date to the book. They are, however, like others of the kind that occur in Koheleth, purely Hebrew in their derivation whilst they have an abstract form, because the idea required here, though unusual elsewhere, demanded it. If there were but few literary compositions in the English language, it would be just as *rational* to object to one because it had several examples of words ending in *ism*, though precisely adapted to the meaning intended; and this because such a termination was not found in other books, having little or nothing of a speculative cast. These words, הַלְלוֹת and שִׁכָּלוֹת, differ, as *madness or frenzy*, and *futility*.—T. L.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

TITLE: Ver. 1. **Words of the preacher, Son of David, King in Jerusalem.**—For the exposition of the name קֹהֵלֵת comp. the *Introd.* § 1. That this designation here takes the place of the historically known name, שְׁלֹכָה, has been justly acknowledged as an indication that a poetic fiction lies before us. "All the other works of Solomon bear his usual name at their head; the Proverbs, whose title is the Proverbs of Solomon, Son of David, King of Israel; the Song of Solomon, Ps. lxxii. and Ps. cxxvii. As indeed is natural, that he who will claim authorship uses no other name than that under which he is already known. Enigma and concealment would be quite out of place here. Now if Solomon is here called Koheleth, the author clearly indicates that it has only ideal value when he is quoted as author of the book, that he appears only as the representative of wisdom. The name, which is clearly an impersonal one, shows that the person to whom it is attached *belongs only to poetry and not to reality*" (HENGSTENBERG).—Moreover, in the peculiar designation, "King in Jerusalem," instead of "King over Israel" (comp. ver. 12), we may perceive a trace of later post-Solomonic origin. On the contrary, to find in this expression a hint that the author does not dwell in Jerusalem, but somewhere in the country (according to EWALD, in Galilee), is unreasonable and too far-fetched. See § 4, Obs. 2.

2. The whole *first discourse*, which we, with EWALD, VAH., KEIL, etc., extend to the end of chap. ii., treats of the principal theme, of the vanity of all earthly things *in general*; it is therefore of an introductory and fundamental character (comp. *Introd.* § 2). In harmony with Keil, we again divide them into two nearly equal parts, the first of which (chap. i. 2-18) presents

the vanity of the *theoretical*, and the second (chap. ii. 1-26) the vanity of the *practical* wisdom of men; or, of which, number one shows that the strivings of human wisdom after knowledge, and number two that the same efforts aiming at enjoyment and active control of reality, attain no genuine success. This division seems more simple and comprehensive than that of EWALD and VAHINGER, who lay down three main divisions, 1) i. 2-11; 2) i. 12—ii. 23; 3) ii. 24-26, according to EWALD, and 1) i. 2-11; 2) i. 12—ii. 19; 3) ii. 20-26, according to VAHINGER, giving to the middle division a disproportioned length.—The first half is occupied in proving the vanity and want of success of the theoretical striving of men after wisdom, and is again divided into two divisions. For it shows, 1) by the continually recurring circle of nature and history, permitting no real progress, that the objects of human knowledge are subjected to the law of vanity (ver. 2-11); and 2) then, that to this vanity of the objective reality, there corresponds a complete futility of effort at its comprehension on the part of the human subject, so far that even the wisest of all men must be convinced by experience of the emptiness of this effort (ver. 12-18). Each of these divisions includes two strophes of three verses each, together with an introductory half strophe or proposition, so that the scheme of the whole section perfected is this: I *Division*: The vanity of human knowledge in an objective point of view (ver. 2-11). Proposition or general preliminary remark (half strophe); ver. 2, 3. First strophe: ver. 4-7.—Second strophe: ver. 8-11. II. *Division*: The vanity of human knowledge in a subjective point of view (ver. 12-18). Proposition: ver. 12.—First strophe, ver. 13-15). Second strophe, ver. 16-18.—We follow in this strophical division the plan of VAHINGER (also that of KEIL and HAEN), which differs materially from that of EWALD. But the latter may therein be right, that from

ver. 9 the discourse approaches prose style, and only here and there, as in ver. 15 and 18, returns to loftier poetic diction. VAININGER also acknowledges this, in so far as he considers the two rhythmically constructed apothegms, ver. 15 and 18, as characteristic closing formulas of the two last strophes of the section (comp. *Introduct.* 2, p. 106).

3. *The general preliminary observation, or, if preferred, the theme of the first discourse; ver. 2, 3.—Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity.* This exclamation, containing the fundamental thought of the whole book, returns again at the close, chap. xii. 7, almost in the same words, after a previous examination has everywhere proved its truth. Nothing is wanting there but the repetition of

הַבָּל הַבָּלִים, which gives a specially solemn impression to the sentence here at the head of the whole. As to the expression "vanity of vanities" being a paraphrase of the superlative idea "extremest vanity," comp. the observation on שֵׁר הַשְּׁרִירִים Song of Solomon i. 1 (below, p. 1). For

the punctuation הַבָּל הַבָּל comp. אָבַל Ps. xxxv. 14, where the principal vowel is also pushed forward and lengthened to a tseri. הַבָּל "breath, steam"

(comp. CHALD. הַבָּל to become warm, to steam) is a very proper expression to mark the inconspicuity, unsubstantiality, and emptiness that characterize all earthly things.* To confine this predicate of nothingness to the actions of men (HAHN) is the less allowable since farther on, in verses 9 and 14, human action is expressly spoken of as participating in the emptiness of worldly things; and there is previously given a much more comprehensive description of this vanity, which clearly shows that the author would understand in the "all" that he declares as vanity, all earthly nature and the whole circle of temporal things, (in contrast to the eternal). It is also inadmissible to accept the double הַבָּל הַבָּלִים as subject of the sentence, instead of taking the independent, animated exclamation rather as a presupposed predicate לַהַבָּל; this pretended subject הַבָּל would then have in the following הַבָּל another predicate, whereby the whole expression would become awkward, and essentially lose in active force and emphasis, (against ROSENMUELLER, HAHN).—As cases similar to the contents of ver. 2, comp. the passages in Ps. xc. 3-10; Ps. cii. 25-28; also Ps. xxxix. 6, 7; and also what the patriarchs were obliged to experience and confess regarding the vanity of temporal life: Gen. iv. 12; v. 29; xlvii. 9, etc.

Ver. 3. **What profit hath a man of all his**

*[The idea denoted by this frequent word is *transitoriness, swift passing away*; rather than *nothingness* (Nichtigkeit). Things may be very transient, yet very important—like the present human life, which St. James styles *ἀμαρτος* (exactly equivalent to the Hebrew הַבָּל) "a vapor that soon passeth away." James iii. The writer does not mean to call vanity, in the sense of *nothingness or worthlessness*, that which he says elsewhere God will surely call to judgment with all its most secret deeds.—T. L.]

labor which he taketh under the sun?—(Ger., with which he fatigueneth himself). Now for the first time the preacher more especially touches the vanity of human things, but means it in connection with the toil of men, as thereby declared unprofitable and unsuccessful (עָבַד, difficulty, labor, exertion, comp. ii. 22; iii. 9; v. 14, etc.) not only his actions, but at the same time also his spiritual strivings and searchings, of which in the sequel he principally treats; he consequently mainly means the substance of his interests and efforts, the subjective human in contrast to the objective reality of all earthly life, to

which that הַבָּל in ver. 2 referred. Vers. 2 and 3 hold therefore, substantially, the same relation to each other as the two subsequent paragraphs in vers. 4-11, and vers. 12-18. יָתֵרוֹן. Synonymous with יָתֵר Gen. xlix. 3; Prov. xvii. 7; Job xx. 22, etc., is found only in this book, and indicates that which is left, what remains to one; hence *profit, advantage, success,* acquisition, ἀπὸ τῆς εἰργασίας*, 2 John, 8, not a superiority over others, which signification appears most fitting in

chap. ii. 13.—The עָבַד-עָבַלוּ, HAHN considers, according to Isaiah v. 25, equal to "notwithstanding, in spite of," which however is unnecessary, as the usual signification "in" or "through" affords a sufficiently good sense.—For the expression "under the sun," a characteristic and favorite form of the author, comp. vers. 14; 2. 11, 17, 20, 23; 3. 16, etc. The synonymous expressions "under the heaven," (ii. 3; iii. 1; i. 13;) and "upon the earth" (viii. 14, 16; xi. 2), are found elsewhere in the Old Testament. The preference of Koheleth for the form "under the sun," is doubtless explained by the fact that it instructively and clearly points to the contrast "between the eternal regularity which the sun shows in its course, and the fluctuating, vacillating, changeable doings of men, which it illuminates with its ever equal light."—(ELSTER).

4. *First division, first strophe, verses 4-7. In an objective view, human knowledge shows itself futile, in considering the continual change of human generations on the earth, ver. 4, and the steady course of the sun, the wind, and the water (ver. 5-7).—One generation passeth away,*

and another generation cometh. הָלַךְ to go away, *abire*, as v. 15; Job x. 21; Ps. xxxix. 13. For this sentence comp. Sirach, xiv. 19: *ὡς φύλλον θάλλον ἐπὶ δένδρου θάσσεος τὰ μὲν κατὰ βάλ-λει, ἄλλα δὲ φύει, οὕτως γενεὰ σαρκὸς καὶ αἵματος, ἣ μὲν τελευτᾷ, ἕτερα δὲ γεννῶνται*—a capital comparison, † which reminds us of Isa. lxiv. 5.—**But the**

*[The word which, both in composition and significance, most nearly corresponds to Koheleth's frequent יָתֵרוֹן, is the Greek *πλεονεξία*, so much used by Paul and poorly rendered covetousness. It rather means, *having the more*, having the advantage or superiority in anything, whether wealth, time, or ambition.—T. L.]

[It would really seem as though Sirach, though such a thorough Jew, as his book shows him to be, had known something of the poems of Homer. There is such a striking resemblance, both in particular words and in special points of the picture, between this passage and the lines, so frequently quoted from the speech of Glaucus, *Iliad* VI. 146.

ὄση περ φύλλων γενεή, τοῦδε καὶ ἀνθρώπων,
φύλλα τὰ μὲν τ' ἀέματος χαμαὶς χεεῖ, ἄλλα δὲ θ' ὄλη

earth abideth forever; (literal, "and the earth stands eternally"), (עָרַב as in Ps. xix. 19: Lev. xiii. 5, is of lasting existence, stands still). The copula expresses the simultaneousness of the two circumstances placed in contrast with each other: *whilst* the earth stands forever, human generations come and go incessantly. In the abiding of the earth, the poet doubtless thinks of its foundation on pillars over the water, to which Ps. xxiv. 2; civ. 5; Job xxxviii. 6, and other poetical passages allude. But whether, at the same time, the earth is considered the arena of the curse and sinful misery brought in by men (Gen. iii. 17-19), as a vale of sorrow, and a place of misfortune, so that the thought were: men effect nothing lasting on earth, new races of men must ever begin where the old ones ceased, must ever repeat the same Sisyphus labor as their fathers (HENGSTENBERG, HAHN): this is doubtful on account of the expression עָרַב. This certainly indicates not an endless eternity in the strictest sense of the word, but only "a future of unlimited length," (HENGSTENBERG); but it shows the intention to bring out, as a principal thought, the character of the continual and everlasting in contrast with the appearance of continual change, and points thus to the inability of human investigation and knowledge to hold any firm position in the midst of such change everlasting as the duration of the earth—Ver. 5. **The sun ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to the place where he arose.** The first half of this verse, is an exact parallel of the first clause of ver. 4, the second corresponds in substance to the thought in the second clause of that verse. For, as in the former, the earth, the scene of the coming and going of the generations of men, so in the latter the "place" of the sun (*i. e.*, its subterranean, heavenly dwelling-place, from which it daily enters upon its new course, comp. Ps. xix. 6), is contrasted as abiding in the presence of continual change. As the human race, with every change of its individuals, makes no advance, as its history presents no real progress, so is the motion of the sun apparently a continual circuit, without arrival at any fixed goal, or lasting place of rest. Contrary to the accents, the SEPTUAGINT, VULGATE, CHALDAIC, LUTHER, ELSTER, HITZIG, HAHN, *etc.*, connect אָרַב-מְקוֹמוֹ closely with the preceding; "and hastens to its place, and there ariseth again. But אָרַב belongs clearly to what follows, and also does not mean running, hastening, but (as אָרַב in Hab. 2, 3) *gasping after air, panting, longing*"—a sense which strikingly delineates the movement of the sun, striving to reach the vault of heaven, although in it there lies a conception somewhat different from this: "and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race," Ps. xix. 5. For HENGSTENBERG clearly brings into the text the joyous de-

sire, the pretended image of "the vigorous courage of the new generation." It rather points to the idea of the exhaustion of the sun on account of its ever restless motion, and this doubtless with the intention of directly showing the depressing influence produced by observing the ever recurring circuit of this body, and the discouragement in this endless uniformity, that presents itself to the comprehension of the human observer (comp. ELSTER on this passage).* Ver. 6. **It goeth to the South, and turneth to the North.** (Literal of the Ger. text). The sun is naturally not the subject (*Sept. Syriac, M. Geier, etc.*), but the wind named in the second clause, for only of it can it be said, "it turneth to the north." But south and north are here used with the wind, because the other cardinal points had been previously used with the sun, to prevent an unpleasant repetition. The author could scarcely have thought of anything like the law of the revolution of the winds (WOLFGANG MENZEL, in his Natural History conceived in the Christian spirit I. 270); for he had just asserted in ver. 4, that the earth stands eternally still. The opinion of HAHN is also objectionable, that the poet was desirous of showing the continual change between warm and cold wind, and this change from warmth to cold was to depict the vicissitude of happiness and unhappiness in human life, as, in the preceding verse, that from night to day. Such an allegorizing of the passage is the less justifiable because the circuit of the waters described in ver. 7 can only be con-

* [There is a concealed metaphor in this passage all the more beautiful because of its inobtrusiveness. It is contained in the words אָרַב and אָרַב, *beaming (radiating)*

glowing, panting.—See Metrical Version. It is the figure of the race-horse returning *panting* to his goal, whence he started—

All panting, glowing, there again he he.

Such a mode of conceiving was at the origin of the classical figure: the horses of the sun panting up the eastern steep [comp. Ps. xix. 6]. See both figures combined, as they are here, *Virg. Æn. XII. 113.*

*Postea viz summos sparcebat lumine montes
Orta dies, cum primo alto se gurgite tollunt
Solis equi, lucemque elatis naribus efflant.*

See also the Georgics, Lib. I. 250:

*Aur redit a nobis aurora, diemque reducit,
Nosque ubi primus equis oriens afflavit anhelis.*

To all thinking minds, the idea of the earth being a sphere, or a body lying in space, with space all round it, above and below—or having, at least, an under as well as an upper side—must have been very early. It was at once suggested by this constant phenomenon of sun-setting and sun-rising—going down below on the West (his tabernacle or sun-tent, as the Psalmist compares it, Ps. xix. 5), and rising in the East as one who came from below, and ascended "a steep, weary, yet glorious"—like a bridegroom coming forth from his chamber (Ps. xix. 6) or as a strong man (an athlete) to run a race. Compare the same image, though reversed, *Iliad. VI. 506.* It was the same sun, and he must have gone under (into his "subterranean heavenly abode," as Zöckler well calls it) and around again to his starting place. The heavens would be all round it, and, thus, as the Psalmist graphically paints, these under heavens would be his tabernacle, where he spends the night, as it *appears* to us. We detect the image in the early Epiœodian cosmogony, where it is said that "γαία (earth) gave birth to starry οὐρανός corresponding to herself." *Isav éavrh̄. Hes. Theog. 127.* It was almost obvious to sense, and the musing mind must have been very early familiar with the conception. It was not inconsistent with the other notion that appears in Scripture, of the earth as an extended plain. The latter was phenomenal, the former the product of reflection. Both were adapted to poetry—the one to the poetry of the eye, the other to that of the thought. Compare Job xxvi 7, "He hangeth the earth upon nothing," or, rather, "over emptiness."—T. L.]

τῆλεθόσῳα φύει ἔαρος δ' ἐπιγύγνεται ὄρη,
ὡς ἀνδρῶν γενεή, ἣ μὲν φύει ἣ δ' ἀπολλύει.

The race of man is like the race of leaves:
Of leaves, one generation by the wind
Is scattered on the earth; another soon,
In spring's luxuriant verdure, bursts to light.
So with our race; these flourish, those decay.
Lord Derby's Translation.—T. L.]

sidered a picture of the change from happiness to unhappiness by virtue of a forced and highly artificial interpretation. The more careful allegorical interpretation tried by HENGSTENBERG, according to which sun, wind, and water are all symbols of human existence moving in the circuit of vanity, is not indeed sufficiently justified by the context. **The wind goeth ever whirling** (Lit. Ger.). The twice repeated **טֹבֵב** expresses continual repetition, the everlasting, and the ever-returning change of the wind; comp. the reduplication of ideas with the same intent in Gen. xiv. 10; Dent. ii. 27; xiv. 22; Mark vi. 39. This double **טֹבֵב** is subordinate to

שׂוֹאֵף הַיָּלֶף presenting the main idea, just as **שׂוֹאֵף**

in ver. 5 is to **וּלְרֵחַ**. — **And the wind returneth again according to his circuits.** — That is, the circuits which it has already made, it ever makes again, it ever repeats the courses that it has previously described; for that is, properly speaking, the **כְּכִיבֹת**, not circles (Sept. Vulg., Ewald, Knobel, etc.). The translation "on its circuits or circles" (EWALD, KNOBEL, etc.) or also "according to its circuits" (ROSEN-MUELLER) is unnecessary; for that **עַל**, with verbs of motion, especially **שׂוֹבֵב**, has the sense of *to, until*, (exactly synonymous, in such case, with **עַד**) is proved by such passages as Prov. xxvi 11; Ps. xix. 7; xlvi. 11; Job xxxvii. 3, and also by the circumstance that, in the later Chaldaic style, **עַל** is mostly synonymous with **עַל**. [In the above passage Zöckler translates *zu seinen Wendungen*.—W.]

Ver. 7. **All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full, i. e.**, it does not overflow notwithstanding the immense masses of water that it constantly receives; it does not overwhelm and swallow up the land. In **הַיָּם**, the author doubtless refers to the ocean, not to the Dead Sea, as HIRTZIG arbitrarily supposes. The previous mention of the sun, the wind, and the four cardinal points, show conclusively that he deals with great cosmophysical ideas, and thus hardly thinks merely of the streams like the Jordan flowing into the Dead Sea, or indeed of the contracted relations of Palestine at all. Comp. also ARISTOPHANES in his "Clouds," v. 1294, *et seq.*:

αὐτῆ μὲν (ἡ θάλαττα) οὐδὲν γίγνεται ἐπιπρῶτον τῶν ποταμῶν πλεῖν, σὺ δὲ ἤστεις ποιῆσαι τὰργύριον πλεῖον τὸ σόν.

Unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again. Literal, "thither are the rivers to go returning," thither they always take their course again. For this construction examine 1 Sam. xx. 19; Hos. v. 11, etc.; as in the English, (they are going), the participle here expresses the continuous character of the action. For the construct state before the relative clause (which is, as it were, regarded as a single noun) comp. passages such as Gen. xl. 3; Lev. iv. 24; (EWALD, *Manual*, § 322, c.). — As it is not absolutely necessary that **הֵלֶךְ** must express the "going whither," but may also well express the going out, or the coming whence,

as ver. 5 shows, therefore, **מְקוֹם שֶׁהִנְחִילִים הַלְכִים** does not mean the ocean as the common collecting-place of all river-water (ELSTER, VAHNINGER, etc.), but rather as the occasional source and origin of the individual rivers. The return of the water from the ocean the author certainly thinks effected in a way corresponding to the natural course of things, namely, that of exhalations, and clouds, and falling mists, and not by means of secret subterraneous canals and passages, as LUTHER, ROSEN-MUELLER, *et al.*, pretend. See Gen. ii. 6; Job xxxvi. 27, 28.—Also UMNREIT, HIRTZIG, and HENGSTENBERG on this passage.

5. *First division, second strophe*, ver. 8-11. As the natural objects of human knowledge truly satisfy neither the eye nor the ear (ver. 8), so there predominates in the history of mankind a restless flight of events, crowding and following each other in endless circuit, which necessarily destroy, in equal measure, both the interest in new acquirements, and the endeavor to remember the things that are past (ver. 11).—**All things are full of labor, man cannot utter it.**—

The words **כָּל-הַרְכָּרִים יִגְעִים** are understood by exegetists to mean either: "all words are troublesome, weary" (SEPT., EWALD, ELSTER, HIRTZIG, HENGSTENBERG, HAHN, etc.), or: "all things fatigue, are full of burden and trouble" (HIERONYMUS, LUTHER, ROSEN-MUELLER, VAHNINGER, etc.). The ruling signification in this book, as every where in the Old Testament of **רָכַרַךְ** = *λόγος, sermo*, as well as the closely following remark, "man cannot utter it" (**יִכְלֵךְ**),

seem to speak in favor of the former meaning. But the word **רָכַרַךְ**, as meaning *thing*, is found also in ver. 10; chap. vi. 12; vii. 8; and it appears, in every view of the case, more appropriate that the quality of wearying, of producing discouragement and indifference, should be predicated of the things of the world, and the objects of human knowledge, than that the words relating to the naming and judging of these things, should be designated as feeble or exhausting. This first meaning would also produce a tautology of **הַרְכָּרִים** with **לְרַכֵּךְ**, which one could scarcely attribute to an author who, on the whole, expresses himself with such choice and delicacy. Thus the sense of the line remains in every case that which is accepted even by most of the defenders of the first conception; namely, to recount all objects of human knowledge and experience is fatiguing in the extreme, and is indeed impracticable; no speech can perfectly give the impression which is produced on our mind by the thought of physical endlessness, and of the never changing operations and life of the forces of nature (comp. ELSTER on this passage). For the active sense of **יִגְעִים**, which elsewhere, as in Dent. xxv. 18; 2 Sam. xvii. 2, expresses the passive thought, "faint," "weary," but here is clearly exhaustive, making weary, examine the similar significations of **אָנִישׁ נַחֲלֵךְ** in Isa. xvii. 11; Jer. xxx. 12; Micah ii. 10; and also the Latin

tristis in the sense of making sad, depressing; and the German "betrübt" in phrases like: "es ist betruht zu sehen," etc.—**The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.**—No remarkable quality is here affirmed of the eye or the ear; it is only intended to definite more closely the relation held to the expression, "all things are wearying." "If the eye should become satisfied, so that it would no longer see, then the narrating word must step in and be able in its turn also to master things. But the abundance of phenomena, which presses on eye, ear, and the remaining senses, is endless; there are always objects which the eye must see, does see, and brings to him who would gladly close his labors" (HITZIG). For parallel passages comp. Prov. xxvii. 20. For *מִשְׁמָעוֹ*, lit. "away from hearing," *i. e.*, so that it may hear no longer, comp. Gen. xxvii. 1; Ex. xiv. 5; 1 Sam. viii. 7; Isa. xxiv. 10, etc.—Ver. 9. **The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be;** or also; "what has happened, that will again happen, that will occur anew." *כִּה* *שֶׁהָיָה* cannot be considered a question (LXX. *τί τὸ γεγρονός*; Vulg. *quid est quod fuit*); for in this book *שֶׁהָיָה* is always equivalent to "that which," or "whatever;" see iii. 15; vi. 10; viii. 7; x. 14; and examine for the same Chaldaic style, Dan. ii. 25; Ezra vii. 18.—**And that which is done, is that which shall be done.**—As the former refers to the objective course of natural laws and phenomena, so this parallel expression alludes to the subjective efforts and actions of men; and the progress to any thing really new is denied of both.—**And there is no new thing under the sun.**—Lit. there is not in existence any thing new,

(*וְאֵין כֵּל-חֲדָשׁ*). For the placing of this negation before *כֵּל*, to indicate the total non-existence of any thing, comp. Judges xiii. 4; Ps. cxliii. 2; 2 Kings iv. 2; also similar Hebrew terms in the New Testament Greek, Matt. xxiv. 22; Rom. iii. 20; Gal. ii. 16, etc.—For this sentence comp. Seneca especially; Epist. xxiv.: *Nullius rei finis est, sed in orbem neza sunt omnia. Omnia transeunt ut revertantur, nil novi video, nil novi facio*; also Tacitus, *Annal.* III. 55: *Rebus cunctis inest quidam velut orbis, ut quemadmodum temporum vices, ita morum versentur*; and Marc. Aurel. *Comment.*, ad se ipsum, VI. 31: *ὁ τὰ νῦν ὄρων πάντα ἐάρακεν, ὅσα τὲ ἐξ αὐθιῶν ἐγένετο, καὶ ὅσα εἰς τὸ ἀπειρον ἔσται πάντα γὰρ ὁμογενῆ καὶ ὁμοειδῆ*; *Ibid.* VII. 1: *ὅσδεν καινῶν πάντα καὶ συβήθη καὶ ὄλεθρονά*; *Ibid.* VII. 26: *πάν τὰ γινόμενον οὕτως αἰεὶ ἐγένετο καὶ γενήσεται καὶ νῦν πανταχοῦ γίνεται*.

Ver. 10. **Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time which was before us.**—The first half of this verse is a hypothetical preliminary clause, introduced by *אִם*, to which is added the after clause without a copula, for the sake of greater emphasis; comp. similarly formed conditional sentences in ver. 18.—*כִּבְרַר*, *long ago, already long since* (Sept. *ἴδη*; Vulg. *jam*), is one of the characteristic

Aramaic * particles of the book, allied to *כִּבְרַר* "greatness, length," and the Arab. Kibar, great age; (comp. *Introd.* § 4, Obs. 2). The word *לְעֵלְמַיִם*, added as a more special definition, indicates that the meaning of "long ago" is to be understood in the sense of time of eternal length; or also that it continues in endless spaces of time; † for the preposition *לְ*, in the sense of "within," comp. Gen. vii. 4; Ezra x. 8, and Elster on this passage.—Instead of *אֲשֶׁר הָיָה* there stands at the close *מִלְפָּנֵינוּ* because *הָיָה* is used impersonally, in the sense: "there have been" (comp. Gen. xlvi. 24; Ex. xii. 49); an *enallage numeri*, that could easily occur with a neuter plural like *עֵלְמַיִם*. EWALD takes the words as subject of the sentence, and translates them thus: "what occurred before our eyes had already been long ago." But this position of the subject at the end of the sentence would be harsh and without motive; and for *מִלְפָּנֵינוּ*, which means according to Isa. xli. 26 simply "before us, earlier than we," would necessarily stand *לְפָנֵינוּ* if the translation "before our eyes, in our presence," were the correct one.—Ver. 11. **There is no remembrance of former things.**—Clearly an explanation of the thought of the preceding verse, which we need not (as HITZIG and ELSTER) connect with what precedes through the conception: "that our considering old things as new is because of the continual extinction of the remembrance of former things." For the construct state *וְזָכְרֵן* before a following noun with a preposition, comp. similar cases, as Ezek. xiii. 2 Sam. i. 21.—*רִאשֹׁנִים* and *אַחֲרֵינִים* signify every where the earlier and the later ones (Lev. xxvi. 45; Deut. xix. 14; Ps. lxxix. 8; Isa. lxi. 4; also chap. iv. 16 of this book, consequently ancestry and posterity. The neuter idea, "the earlier," would necessarily be expressed by the feminine *רִאשֹׁנוֹת* (Isa. xlii. 9; xlv. 9; xlvi. 3).—**With those that shall come after.**—

לְאַחֲרֵינוֹת in future, later. Comp. for the substantive *אַחֲרֵינוֹת*, Deut. xiii. 9; 2 Sam. ii. 26.

6. *Second Division.* Proposition and first strophe. Vers. 12–15. In a subjective view human knowledge proves futile and vain, in so far as all the desires and enterprises of men, to which it is directed, are empty and vain, and lead to nothing. **I, the preacher, was King**

*[There is no more reason for calling *כִּבְרַר* an Aramaic word here, than the feminine form, *כִּבְרָרָה*, Gen. xxxv. 16; xlviii. 7; 2 Kings v. 19. It means a considerable but indefinite amount whether of space as in the examples in Gen. xxxv. 16 or of time as here—*some distance off, or some time ago—long ago*. The same may be said of *מִקְבִּיר* Job xxxv. 16; xxxvi. 31.—T. L.]

†[*לְעֵלְמַיִם* is rather added as an amplification of the indefinite *כִּבְרַר*. It hath been already—long ago—yes, in some of the claims (or worlds), cosmical or historical, that have gone before in the immense past. See remarks in note on the olamic words, p. 41, &c.—T. L.]

over Israel in Jerusalem.—Observe the preterit, הָיִיתִי, I was—a clear indication that a later personage than the historical Solomon says this.* For even in his most advanced age Solomon, who, according to 1 Kings xi. 40-43, was reigning king until his death, could not have spoken of his kingdom as something belonging solely to the past. For the remaining allusions in this verse to a period later than the Solomonic, see above on ver. 1 (No. 1), and the *Introduction*, § 4. And moreover the author, assuming the character of Solomon, indicates for his own person a condition in life which affords him a broad view, rich experience, and knowledge of men; comp. Sirach xxxviii. 24 ff.—Ver. 13. **And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom.**—That is, I gave it entirely to that seeking, exerted myself zealously on that account; comp. שִׁים לִבִּי, Isa. xli. 42; לִבִּי שֵׁתָהּ, Ps. xlvi. 14; and הִבֵּינִי לִבִּי, Job xi. 13. “To seek” (רָצַח) and “to search” (הִיטָה) are distinguished from one another—the former by being less thorough, and the latter by penetrating more deeply and searching after the hidden. נְהַכְכָּה is not “wisely” (LUTHER, comp. *Vulgate*, *sapienter*), but “with wisdom;” for wisdom was the instrument with which he made his investigations; † (for the well-known old Hebrew sense, see the *Introd.* to the Solomonic books, Vol. XII. p. 7 of this work.)—**Concerning all things that are done under heaven.**—Thereby is clearly meant only the actions and lives of men, and not occurrences in the realm of nature, for which latter the verb נִגְשָׁה would be very unfittingly chosen. And what has happened in itself is not so much meant as its character, worth, aim and success as an object of seeking and searching; therefore, to search concerning all things that are done (עָלַ וְגוּ).—**This sore travail, etc.**—Human action itself is not designated here as רָעָה, as sore travail or pain (HITZIG, PAHNS), but the zealous searching, the critical endeavor of the wise observer of life, who every where meets only vanity and emptiness, and with all his theoretical and practical experimenting with life, reaches no lasting enjoyment and success (and thus with justice the most exegetists; see ELSTER

on this passage).—**God hath given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith.**—This unsuccessful and vain striving after wisdom, to which man feels himself impelled by a natural necessity, is imparted to him by God himself; it is a part of the salutary and disciplinary curse that God has laid on human nature since the fall, a “part of the whole system by which the Lord humbles fallen man, and therewith prepares the redemption” (LENGSTENBERG).—Ver. 14. **I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.**—(Lit. “windy effort,” i. e., “an effort of the wind”) (Sept. *προαίρεσις πνεύματος*) an effort without result, that effects no lasting good. Comp. Hos. xii. 2, which passage gives us at the same time the proper sense of the expression רָעָה. For the formula רָץ קָרִים there used parallel with רָעָה, “to consume wind,” really means to follow after the wind, to be in quest of it, a diligent striving after it (comp. רָעָה in passages like Prov. xiii. 20: xv. 14; Isa. xli. 20). רָעָה is consequently the bearing, the intention of one zealously aiming at, consequently striving, continuous direction of the will (thus also Ezra v. 7, 18), the same as רָעָה, which in i. 17; iv. 16 is also found connected with רָעָה. It is therefore erroneous to derive it from רָעָה = רָעָה, to shatter, to break into pieces (thus the *Vulg.* “*afflictio spiritus*,” also *Chald.* *Raschi et al.*).—Ver. 15. **That which is crooked cannot be made straight, and that which is wanting cannot be numbered.**—Clearly a proverbial sentence, which the author perhaps found ready made in the rich treasury of the proverbial wisdom of his people, and used here to strengthen what he had said in ver. 14. The sense is, as the parallel passage, chap. vii. 13, shows, that human action and effort, in spite of all exertion, cannot alter that which has once been arranged and fixed by God. “Man cannot alter what is (apparently) unjust in God’s arrangement of the world, nor make or regard its failures perfect; hemmed in within the narrow limits of the world as it is constituted, he is not able to perform the most important thing that he above all things should be able to do” (HITZIG). This thought is not fatalistic (as KNOBEL supposes); for, as numerous other passages of this book show (namely, iii. 17; vii. 20 ff.; xi. 9; xii. 14), the author knows very well that human sin is the cause of the incapacity here described in contrast with the unchangeable and divine order of the world, and considers this inability as one of self-guilt on the part of man—“That which is wanting cannot be numbered,” i. e., not completed, not be brought to its full number; comp. the Lat. *ad numeros suos redigi*—*perfecti*, and also our German proverbs: “Where there is nothing, nothing farther is to be counted;” or, “There the emperor has lost his right,” etc.

*[This is certainly a slender basis on which to build such an argument. The indefinite use of the Hebrew tenses will not allow it to have much force, and, moreover, it is perfectly consistent (even if rendered *was*) with the condition of an old man, an old king, who had seen the vanity of the world, and of royal estate, and wished to impress it on the mind of his reader, to speak of it as something past and gone. I who was king—or, when I was king—in the full exercise of power and dignity. Besides, if there is an inconsistency, it would be full as great in one who assumes to personate Solomon. Such a one would be even more careful to guard against obvious anachronisms, as this would be if thus regarded. See WORDSWORTH on the expression, and the argument drawn from it. The word *Kohleth* may be a scholium of the later compiler, to explain (though unnecessarily) what he deemed abrupt: I (*Kohleth*) was King; and so in other places like similar scholia in the Pentateuch.—T. L.]

† נְהַכְכָּה does not mean *wisely* in the sense of *knowingly*, or *skillfully*—neither does it mean *by*, or *with wisdom*, as an instrument, though that is nearer to it; but rather *in the way of wisdom*, that is *philosophically, speculatively, theoretically*, in distinction from *experimentally* or *practically*, as he did afterwards.—T. L.]

7. *Second Division, second strophe.* Vers. 16-18. Practically experiencing wisdom, striving after positive knowledge, is, as the critically observing, thoroughly futile, reaching no lasting result, because its acquirement is inseparably connected

with pain and discouragement.—**I communed with my own heart, saying,** *i. e.*, I entered inwardly into my own counsel; comp. the Lat. *cogitare cum animo suo*, and in the Hebrew similar phrases *בְּלִבּוֹ דָּבַר בְּלִבּוֹ*, Ps. xv. 2; *דָּבַר אֶל-לִבּוֹ*, Gen. xxiv. 45; *עַל לִבּוֹ*, 1 Sam. i. 13.—**Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom.**—The word *הִרְבֵּיתִי* (comp. Isa. xxviii. 29) intimates that he possessed great wisdom before; the word *הוֹסַפְתִּי*, that during his life he continually increased it. Comp. 1 Kings v. 9-11.—**Than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem.**—The first *עַל* is comparative, as in Gen. xlviii. 22; Ps. xvi. 2. From the second *עַל* before *יְרוּשָׁלַיִם* it appears that with the here mentioned predecessors of Koheleth real kings* are meant (comp. also ii. 7). The allusion here can scarcely be to the old Canaanitish princes (Adoni-zedek, Josh. x. 1; or, indeed, Melchisedec, Gen. xv. 18), but to the crowned heads of Israel, who alone were competent to the realization of the *הַכְרָה*. This passage contains, again, therefore, a reference to the difference between the author of this work and Solomon, but still not one of that kind that we are justified in reproaching him (with Hirtzig) of ignorance of history. He rather commits this offence against actual history with the same absence of suspicion and purpose which permitted him to adapt his work only loosely and distantly to the personal and temporal relations of Solomon, and every where to dispense with the strict carrying out of the historical fiction in question. (Comp. *Introd.* § 4).—**Yea, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.**—Concerning *רָעַת* as synonym of *חִכְמָה* comp. Prov. i. 2. “To see, to behold wisdom and knowledge,” is as much as acquiring it by experience, arriving at its possession and enjoyment. This beholding is attributed to the heart, because it is indeed the seat or instrument of aspiration after wisdom, † see vers. 13 and 17.—Ver. 17. **And I gave my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly**—that is, I applied myself to learning not only the positive and normal contents of human knowledge, but also its counterpart, error and perversion in their various forms: according to the principle: *contraria contraria intelliguntur*. *הוֹלִילוּת* = *הוֹלִלוּת*, chap. x. 13; comp. the similar formation *חִכְמָת*, Prov. i. 20; ix. 1, *etc.*, and EWALD, *Manual*, § 165 c), and *שִׁכְלוּת*, want of sense and folly are also thus placed together in chap. ii. 12 only, that the latter word is written *סְכָלוּת* with more etymological exactness (comp. also ii. 3,

13, *etc.*).—*I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit.* For *רָעוּן רָחַן* see ver. 14; and comp. *לָבוּ רָעוּן*, the striving of his heart, chap. ii. 22, as well as the same word in the Chaldee of the Book of Daniel (iv. 16; v. 6. 10; vii. 28), where it signifies thought. *וְהוּא הוּא*, a pleonasm, of which there are many in the book. Ver. 18. **For in much wisdom is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.**—Ger. Proverb: “Much wisdom causeth headache;” also CICERO, *Tusc.* III. 4: “*videtur mihi cadere in sapientem ægritudo*,” and what ELSTER remarks on this passage: “Such an enlargement of the practical knowledge of human life destroys the natural ease and simplicity of the individual life, and by comparisons with others, awaking the consciousness of being variously affected in one’s own existence through influences operating from without, produces a feeling of insignificance and feebleness of each individual life as such; and by exciting man to many aspirations and desires which remain unfulfilled, and therefore leave painful impressions behind. It is still more important to think of the manifold disillusion which a deeper insight of the moral arena in a stricter sense produces, because it not only teaches how confidence in the strength and worth of individuals is often unjustifiable, but also shows how in the great and sacred institutions of humanity, which have originally a purely ethical aim, this ethical object is frequently lost, and that those only exist in reality through a linking of interests that are entirely foreign to their real nature.”—*וְיָקִיף* is an antecedent: “and if one gathers wisdom, if one makes much wisdom.” EWALD, ELSTER, *et al.*, consider *וְיָקִיף* (here as well as in Isa. xxix. 14; xxxviii. 5) an active participle from the stem reverting from Hiphil, into Kal, with *וְ* instead of *וּ* (EWALD, *Manual*, § 127 b.; 169 a) while others find in it simply an impersonal future Hiphil, and compare it on account of the *scriptio plena* with *הוֹסַפְתִּי* ver. 16.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

Human effort, confined to the conditions of life and the objects of knowledge of this earthly world, can attain no enduring wealth of happiness or success, either in a practical or theoretical relation. For every thing that is accomplished under the sun, that is, in this contracted sublunary world subjected to the curse of temporality, is, like the great heavenly light of our planet, or, like the mysterious course of the wind and the water, confined to a changeless circuit beyond which there is no progress. All efforts after the attainment of a higher and more durable happiness, which man by means of his own natural power may institute, fail at this stern barrier of the earthly and temporal. Be it the cheerful enjoyment of life, and the active co-operation with it, be it fulness of knowledge and wealth of treasures, of intellectual truth and insight, as long as man, standing simply in his own strength as a mere child of earth, commanding no other than earthly and natural powers, endeavors to place himself in possession of these

* [This is entirely gratuitous. It may refer to any men of note and wealth, together with David and Saul, or the writer may well have had in view old Princes in Jerusalem, away back to the days of Melchisedec.—T. L.]

† [The word *לב*, heart, is used in Hebrew (especially in the Proverbs and Solomonic writings) as much for the mind or intellect as for the feeling—the affections.—T. L.]

treasures, will he be ever obliged to experience the utter vanity of his labors. Only in submission to the eternally Divine, which remains fixed and constant in all the vicissitudes of time, (Ps. cii. 25 ff.), does he obtain the power to overcome the imperfections and annoyances of temporal existence, or, at least, true consolation while suffering their pressure. Faith alone is the anchor of safety which is able to preserve the bark of life, tossed to and fro by the storms of time, from sinking into the awful depths of despair and inconsolable doubts regarding our temporal and eternal welfare.

Of these fundamental thoughts of the section before us, only those referring to the vanity of earthly life and its wisdom are specially treated. Of the religious solution of the conflict, which, according to numerous and prominent allusions in the subsequent pages, forms the deeper background for the grievous lamentations of the preacher, there penetrates, for the time, scarcely anything through his picture of the vanity of all earthly things. It is, substantially, only the sad contrast between human aspirations after wisdom, and the absolutely unsatisfying result in this world, to whose description the author directs his attention; that conflict between the ardent desire of life and its enjoyment, between thirst after knowledge and its failure, whose deep significance FAARR, in his work—“*Time and Eternity*”—has as strikingly as beautifully delineated when, in p. 10 f., in direct connection with the lamenting commencement of this book he says: “Who does not know, from his own thousand-fold experience, this wonderful feeling of a deep temporal grief that often, as an armed foe, overwhelms the spirit of man with a secret shudder in the midst of the loudest merriment? Who does not know the pressure and the pain of time, when we see it in steady flow hurrying quietly by us, nay, when we see ourselves, entirely helpless, carried away by its stream, and daily approaching nearer to the limits of life? Do we not then feel as the occupant of a frail boat, which, drawn into the current of a mighty stream, finds itself carried down with arrowy speed, and if not in its course dashed to pieces on the rocks, hastens with inevitable destiny to the cataract that is to bury it in that deep from which no one may ever rise and begin the course anew?” That is the *periculum vite*, the danger of life, of which the wise men of old have spoken, and have recognized as the inevitable destiny of every thing born into this lower world. Thus time, with its restless and continuous going and coming, appeals to the direct feelings of every man as an oppressive destiny, as a travail, as Solomon says, (ver. 13, 18), as a tragic conflict between what ought to be and what is.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

In the homiletical treatment of the section, the evangelical preacher should not be satisfied in merely presenting this sad conflict without its solution; he should rather connect with the lament concerning the vanity of earthly things, the consolation of the unchanging grace of the Eternal One; and thus regard the gloomy picture of the author in the light of divine revelation, to

which the entire course and contents of the book encourage us. In this intent we might use the entire chapter as a text for a connected view whose theme might be as follows: That which is visible is temporal, that which is invisible is eternal (2 Cor. iv. 17); or also—“For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.” “But when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away.” (1 Cor. xiii. 9, 10); or: The flight of earthly things, its cause and its cure, (with reference to the 90th Psalm, and appropriate spiritual hymns). In case the text is divided, there should not be more than two parts. Then make vers. 2-11 the text for the thought: “There is nothing new under the sun;” and from 12-18 for the thought: “In much wisdom there is much grief.”

With a view to the practical treatment of the individual passages, examine the following homiletical hints and helps from ancient and modern exegetical writings.

Ver. 2. LUTHER:—In the introduction he gives us the subject of the whole book, when he tells us that there is the greatest vanity in all human pursuits, to such a degree that men, neither content with the present, nor able to enjoy the future, turn even their best things into misery and vanity, all through their own fault, not that of the things themselves.

M. GEIER:—The more the vanity of the world is discovered, the more will the disgust of it increase in the true Christian; and on the contrary, a desire will arise for the heavenly and eternal.—

HENGSTENBERG:—The right solution of the problem is this: Between the assertion—“And behold, all was very good,” and that other: “All is vanity,” lies the fact of the fall. With this latter a whole new order of things has appeared. The creation, which was good in itself, was no longer fitting for degenerate man. “All is vanity,” is no accusation of God. It is rather, if we keep in view the nature of man, a praise of God. It is precisely in this doom of punishment, and in the adjustment of the economy of the Cross, that God shows Himself especially great and glorious.

Ver. 3. LUTHER:—The creature is indeed subject to vanity, as Paul testifies, Rom. viii., but nevertheless the things themselves are good. Otherwise he would have called the sun itself a vanity; but this he excepts, because he says, *under* the sun. It is not, therefore, of the works of God he treats, which are all good and true, and above the sun, but the works beneath the sun,—what we do here in this earthly life.—STARKE:—Since with decay the profit of all outward occupation vanishes, it is folly for men to be so absorbed with external things that they thereby forget the care of their own souls.

Vers. 4-7. CRAMEA:—That the world has not existed from eternity, one sees in all its parts, because these are not fixed and constant; the whole cannot, therefore, remain unchanged. But the constant order in creatures and their employments, proves that there is a God who sustains every thing.—STARKE:—In nature every thing is governed by the laws of motion; how much more should man direct his steps according to the rules of life prescribed to him by God (Gal. vi. 16; Ps. cxix. 9; e. 5).—WOHLFARTH:

—The existence of the world clearly depends upon the unchangeable order given to nature by God, and just because it follows these divine laws without deviation, is nature, yet to-day, as it was thousands of years ago, the inexhaustible dispenser of the blessings and joys of men. Let us herein acknowledge the wisdom, goodness, and might of the Eternal One, and adore him who once said: "Let there be!" and there was! who called the sun of the day, as well as the night, into existence, who prescribed to the waters their course, and gave command to the winds. Let us comprehend that we can only then be happy and make others happy, when, as nature unconsciously obeys natural laws, we obey with clear consciousness the commands of virtue and the laws of nature for the spirit world.

Ver. 8. ZEYSS:—The immortal spirit of man can find no real rest in temporal things, but only in God, the highest and eternal good, Matt. xi. 29.—HANSEN:—External things do not satisfy. David in Ps. xvii. 15 gives us clearly to understand that he recognizes the same truth; for he says: "I will behold thy face in righteousness," and adds, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." He hopes, therefore, in the contemplation of God, to obtain what he cannot have in the form of this world. And for this very reason Solomon calls all things vain that belong to this sensual life.—BERLEB. BIBLE:—"The avenues of the soul bear many thousand objects or things to the heart, with which man fatigues and distracts himself, as with a boundless mountain of sand. From these his mind forms numberless images, which he gazes at, and inwardly handles. From these come the manifold thoughts and the distracted spirit of poor man. Therefore, by apostasy from God, his Creator, he has gone out with his heart after many things, and now, instead of God, in whom he would eternally have had enough, he embraces so many thousand creatures in his desires, and cannot even then be satisfied. For the immortal essence of the soul can by no means repose in the empty creature; it seeks ever farther, and will ever have more; it is a fire that burns without ceasing, and would gladly seize all things."

Vers. 9-11. LUTHER:—If we understand these words, *nothing new beneath the sun*, of the things themselves, and of the works of God, it would not be true. For God is every day doing what is new; but *we* do nothing new, because the old Adam is in all. Our ancestors abused things, just as we abuse them. Alexander, Cæsar, had the same disposition; so had all Kaisars and Kings; so have we. As they could never be satisfied, so never can we; they were wicked; so are we.—CRAMER:—No man has so great a cross that he finds none like himself; for we are not better than our fathers, 1 Kings xix. 5.—HENGSTENBERG:—"There is nothing new under the sun;" let that serve to sober down the fantasies which gather grapes from the thorns of the world, but not discourage the friends of the Kingdom of God, which has its real seat, not under the sun, but above the sun, and whose heavenly protector, by ever creating new things (Jer. xxxi. 22) gives material to a new song, Ps. xl. 4.

Vers. 13-15. LUTHER [to ver. 14]:—All painful anxiety and care in making provision, whether in public or private, through our own counsels, and our own wisdom, are condemned in this book. God disappoints the thoughts and plans that are not grounded on His word. And rightly too; for why should we prescribe and add to His wisdom? Let us learn, then, to submit to His counsels, and abstain from those cares and thoughts which God has not commanded.—Ver. 15. Human concerns cannot be so managed as that all things should be rightly done, and that there should not still remain many evils. The best way, then, is to walk in faith, which lets God reign, prays for the coming of His Kingdom, tolerating in the meantime, and patiently enduring, all evils, or committing them to Him who judgeth righteously.

FREIBERG BIBLE:—In spiritual as in corporeal things, God alone can make the crooked straight and smooth.—HARMAN (to ver. 13 f.—*Bible Reflections of a Christian*, Vol. I., p. 103):—All human wisdom labors, and has care and sorrow for its reward; the farther wisdom looks, the greater is the labyrinth in which it loses itself. It is with reason as to the eyes with a magnifying glass, when the most delicate skin becomes disgusting, the most luscious dish a mess of worms, and the finest work of art a mere botch. We see the impossibility of removing all inequalities of human society, and we see in it an overwhelming number of faults and failings; yes, the weakness of our senses and judgment leads us to find faults in beauties, because we examine all things only fragmentarily.—Vers. 16-18. HANSEN (to ver. 17):—Many thousand actions are considered prudent and wise, which in reality are silly and foolish. It is an arduous task to correct one's error in respect to all this, and regard the world, and human life in the world, with just eyes.—(To ver. 18).—Wisdom, as such, is no cause for uneasiness of mind; it is rather a cause for contentment. It sometimes happens, however, that peace of mind is disturbed by wisdom. The deeper our vision, the more clearly we perceive the imperfections among the children of men, and that usually produces unrest in the mind.—STARKE:—But because knowledge easily puffeth up (1 Cor. viii. 1), wise and learned men have so much greater need to beg God to keep them in true humility.—Every righteous teacher, yes, every true Christian, must resign himself to many evils which must meet him in the endeavor to acquire genuine wisdom.

[OLAMIC OR ÆONIAN WORDS IN SCRIPTURE—ETERNITIES OR WORLD-TIMES—CYCLICAL IDEAS IN KOHELETH.—The passage, Ecclesiastes i. 3, rendered, "the earth abideth forever," is the one most commonly quoted as their key text by those who would not only give a limited sense to עולם here, which it undoubtedly has, but would, thereby, weaken the force of this whole class of words in all other parts of the Bible, and especially when they are used in reference to a future state of being. On this account, the whole subject has seemed worthy of a fuller discussion than it has generally received in Commentaries, and this the passage to which such an exegetical

examination can be most appropriately attached.

The best rendering of the word **לְעוֹלָם** i. 3, is "for the world-time," or "for the world," as we have given it in the metrical version annexed. It may seem strange to ears not accustomed to it, but it is the true translation, not only here, but in many other places, where its proper significance is concealed under general or inadequate phrases. In Ecclesiastes iii. 11 it has been once rendered by our translators, "the world," which is correct enough in itself, but may mislead by raising in the reader's mind the conception of a space world. For further remarks on that important passage see note, p. 67. The word **לְעוֹלָם** cannot here (Eccles. i. 3) mean *for ever*, in the sense of endless duration, though it may be used for such idea when the context clearly demands, as when it is employed to denote the continuance of the Divine existence, or of the Divine Kingdom, or any thing else connected with the proper Divine eternity as the word is now taken. It is, however, in that case, only the employment of necessarily finite language to express an infinite idea strictly transcending all language, unless poorly represented by a conceptionless, negative word, which, although logically correct, is far inferior in vividness and power to some vast though finite term, which, by its very greatness and immeasurability, raises in the mind the thought of something beyond, and ever still beyond, worlds without end. This effect is still farther increased by plurals and reduplications,

such as the Hebrew **עוֹלָם עוֹלָמִים**, and **עוֹלָם עוֹלָמִים**, the Greek *αἰῶνες*, and *αἰῶνες τῶν αἰῶνων*, the Latin *secula*, and *secula seculorum*, the old Saxon, or old English, of **WICLIFFE**, *to worldis of worldis* (Heb. xiii. 21), or our more modern phrase, *for ever and ever*, where *ever* (German *ewig*), was originally a noun denoting age, or vast period, just like the Greek, Latin, and Hebrew words corresponding to it. Another mode of impressing the idea of absolute eternity is by the use of language in the context, or general scenic representations, which bring up the thought of *finality* in the passage, giving it the aspect of something settled, never to be disturbed, having nothing beyond that can possibly change it, as in that most impressive close of Matth. xxv. In Ecclesiastes i. 3 it evidently expresses the duration of the earth as coeval with the great order of things called the *world*, whether in the time or space sense, and vastly transcending the **דָּוָר**, *generation*, or *life-time* (the *æon*, as we might call it in a still more limited sense) of man. There is a similar contrast, Ps. xc. 1, where **דָּוָר יוֹרֵד** "generation and generation," or "all generations," as it is rendered, refers to the human history, whilst **עוֹלָם עוֹלָם**, *from world to world*, *ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος καὶ ἕως τοῦ αἰῶνος*, *a seculo et usque in seculum*, *von Ewigkeit zu Ewigkeit*, refers to the Divine existence as measured, conceptually, by world times, even as our brief individual life-time is measured by years (Ps. xc. 10), and our own peculiar world-time by *dorim*, or generations.

These words correspond in all the languages referred to. They arise from a philological exigency, from the demand for some word to express

that *idea* of time, or rather *conception* of time (since all language is primarily for the sense want), which goes beyond any known historical and astronomical measurements,—some great period, cycle, or age, not having its measurement from without, but in itself, or, at least, seemingly independent of outward phenomenal measurement. It is something supposed to have its own chronology, separate from other chronologies. In a lower, or more limited, sense, an *olam*, *æon*, age, world, or world-time, may be historical; that is, such indefinite periods may be regarded as coming, one after another, during the continuance of the same earth or *kosmos*; truly historical, yet divided from each other by some intrinsic character, rather than by mere years or centuries. Thus we say the *old world*, the *new world*, the *ancient world*, the *modern world*, the Greek world, the Roman world, &c. This would correspond to our use of the word ages, and that would make a good sense, Ecclesiastes i. 10, "the worlds or ages (**עוֹלָמִים**) that have been before." They may also have a higher sense than the historical, regarded as the history of one earth or *kosmos*, continuing as it is without any great physical change. They may be cosmical *æons*, carrying the idea of a new dispensation, with a change in the space-*kosmos* with which they are connected, or some change in the human state or relation that is equally significant. It might be conceived as a decay, dissolution, and restoration,—a renewal, rather, instead of an absolute creation *de novo*. Such an idea of new cosmical worlds, or *æons*, is favored in a certain aspect of it by some passages of Scripture which speak of a new (or rather renewed) heavens and earth. Ps. cii. 26; Isa. lxvi. 22. Or it might be more like an idea which was certainly very ancient, of the same worlds coming over and over again, with all things and all events repeated, just as they had taken place. This was an old Egyptian and Arabian view, probably arising from the observations of astronomical cycles (see *Parreau de Notitius Vitæ Futuræ ab antiquissimo Jobi Scriptore*, etc., pp. 65, 66, etc.). Something like it was taught by Pythagoras and Plato in their doctrine of the *magnus annus*, as also by the Stoics in their doctrine of the cyclical return of the world, and all things in it, through a process of rarefaction and condensation (with a final conflagration), from which came again that rare elementary state which is in the beginning of each cycle,—a kind of thinking to which the modern nebular theories present a fair counterpart. These views of the Platonists and Stoics were sheer speculations. The old notions, however, of the Egyptians and Arabians seem to have had a different character, and as there is nothing incredible in the thought of their being known to this old writer, whether Solomon or any one else, so is it also admissible, to say the least, that some such view, in connection with others, perhaps, of a more indefinite kind, may have been included in the words of Koheleth, I., 9, 11. If some such thought had suggested the language, or been anciently suggested by it, the dogma would by no means have bound our assent, as though it were an inspired Bible truth, since it is only used by this contemplative writer as an illustration of the general cyclical notion of re-

turns in the world movement. This may be regarded almost in the light of an *a priori* idea, or one necessarily arising to every thoughtful mind in the contemplation of nature, whether we think of it as temporal or eternal. Just as the great nature is made up of lesser cycles (a thing obvious to sense), so, when viewed as a whole, and regarded simply as nature, without reference to its origin, it can only be conceived as a vast repeating cycle, having its birth, growth, increase, diminution, ortus, interitus, maxima, minima, ever going round and round, as the very law of its continued being. A straightforward movement in one direction *forever*, whether it be one of rarefaction, or condensation, of separation, or combination, must end in ruin, stagnation, death, or utter sameness, in some period far less than an absolute eternity, if we may make comparisons. To avoid this, nature, the great nature, as well as the smaller ones, must be thought of as having its *καμπή*, its *turning or bending*, as Plato holds, and may even be said to *demonstrate*, in the *Phædo*, 72, 73: "For if the one course of things should not give place to the other, in generation, but, on the contrary, there was ever a straightforward development (*εὐθεία γένεσις*) without any turning or circuit, it is certain that all things must finally get the same form (*τὸ αὐτὸ σχῆμα*), and have the same state or affection (*τὸ αὐτὸ πάθος*), and all things must cease becoming" (*παύσαι τὰ γιγνόμενα*)—that is, there would be an end of all generation; things would be brought to a stand. This would be universal death, he shows, whether an absolute immobility and stagnation, or an absolute rarefaction and incoherence, which would come to the same thing. Both terminations would be the death of nature, of all natures. Whether in the individual or the universal, it can only live by coming round and round again. This must be the law of all physical movement, whether we regard nature as eternal, or as having its great beginning, together with special beginnings, in a Divine Word. As a nature commenced, it must thus move in growth, maxima and minima, or it would not be a nature. Change, decay, death, revival, are the law of its life. ARISTOTLE thus presents the general cyclical idea (*Physica* IV. 14) as grounded in human language expressive of the natural human thinking. After speaking of time as motion in a circle, he thus proceeds: *ὅτι δὲ τοῦτο καὶ τὸ εἰσθὸς λέγεσθαι συμβαίνει· φασὶ γὰρ κύκλον εἶναι τὰ ἀνθρώπινα πράγματα, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν κίνησιν ἐχόντων φυσικῶν, καὶ γένεσιν, καὶ θανάτων ὅτι τὰντα πάντα λαμβάνει τελευτῆν καὶ ἀρχὴν ὥσπερ αἰετὶ κατὰ τινα περίουδον*: "On this account there arises the usual mode of speech. For they say that all *human things are a circle* (a wheel); and so of all other things that have a physical movement, both of generation and decay—namely, that they have a beginning and an end, or, as it were, a *period* (a going round)." This reminds us of the *τροχὸς γενέσεως*, "course of nature"

(*circulus naturæ*), of James iii. 6, and the *גִּלְגָּל*

הולדה "the wheel of generations," of the Talmudists and Rabbinical writers—also of Plato's splendid Myth in the *Politicus* (269 c) of the two great periods, in one of which the Divine super-

intendence carries nature forward in unbroken *progress*, and, in the other, it is left to itself, and, consequently, to ruin and decay. Compare also the citations made by Zöckler, p. 40, from Seneca, Tacitus, and Marcus Aurelian.

There is, however, a difference between the Greek *αἰών*, in its classical usage, and the Shemitic *עולם*. It consists in the fact that the latter is used for *world*—every where in the Syriac and Chaldaic, and much more frequently in the Bible Hebrew than our translation, or any modern version, would seem to show. There is a glimpse of such a meaning sometimes in the classical *αἰών*, as in ÆSCHYLUS *Supp.* 572: *Ζεὺς αἰῶνος κρείων ἀπαύστου*—"Zeus, king of the never ceasing (ever moving) world," as it may very appropriately be rendered, or of the never ceasing age or eternity. This world sense of the Hebrew, and of the Greek in the New Testament, does not, however, denote the world in *space*, more properly represented by the word *κοσμος*, but the world in *time*, or as a time existence. This is peculiarly a Shemitic conception, and yet it comes directly from our necessary thinking. The time of a thing enters into the idea of its true being as much as its extent or its energy in space; or, to express it more correctly, the movements *in succession*, of any true organism belong as much to its *reality* (that which makes it a *res*, or thing) as the matter or collected contemporaneous activities to which we give the name. So, too, in our Saxon *world* (*weorld*), the primitive etymological conception, we think, would be found to be *time* rather than *space*, as appears even in the later usage which we find in such expressions as *this world* in distinction from the *other world*, or the *world to come*,—besides the already referred to usage in WICLIFF'S translation, where it stands for *עולם* in the Old Testament, and for *αἰών* in the

New; as Psalm cxlv. 13 for *עולמים כל* *מלכות* *Kingdom of all worlds*, 1 Tim. i. 17 for *βασιλείαν τῶν αἰώνων*, *Kynge of worldis*, which puts us in mind of ÆSCHYLUS, *Ζεὺς αἰῶνος κρείων ἀπαύστου*.

The only place in the Old Testament where our English translators have rendered *עולם* by the word *world* is Eccles. iii. 11 [see note on that passage, p. 67]. It has been objected to this by STUART, HIRTZIG, and others, because it is the only place, and that, therefore, the rendering is to be regarded as contrary to the usage of the language. But to this it may be replied by turning the argument: It should not have been the only place. There are others in which *world* is the best rendering. Thus in the passages already cited, Ps. xc. 2, it is literally "from world to world," instead of the vague term everlasting;* Ps. cxlv. 13, "kingdom of all worlds;" Ps. cvi. 31, 45; Jerem. x. 10, "God of life, King of the world;" Hab. iii. 5, *הילכות עולם* "goings of

* This language is generally used of God, or His Kingdom. There are, however, cases where it is employed hyperbolically of the settlement in the promised land as in Jeremiah vii. 7: "And I will cause you to dwell in this place, which I gave to your fathers, *עולם ועד עולם* *למך עולם*, from age to age"—or *from world to world*, or *forever*, if we take, as we may, if we have faith for it, the higher spiritual sense of the eternal S. element, the eternal rest, of which the settlement in Canaan was the appointed type.—T. L.]

the world," Vulg. *itæna mundi*; Dent. xxxiii. 27, "the arms of the world"—that support the world movement. [See further on this, LANGE, *Genesis*, p. 140, *Six Days of Creation*, ch. xxvii.] From such usages came the Rabbinical sense so frequently found, and not vice versa, as some would have us believe; only that the Rabbins afterward, not fully understanding the old Hebrew conception as denoted by the plural forms of

עולם, or wishing to enlarge it so as to make it a term of science, gave it also the space sense, and used it for κόσμος. (See Buxtorf—*Lex. Chald. and Rab.*). The great thought underlying all the passages just quoted is that of the world movement, as an immense time, exhibiting God's great work, or plan, Eccles. iii. 14. So also in chap.

i. 3. לעולם may be rendered for the world, and, in fact, the context forces to that view: generations of men go and come, but the earth

stands, לעולם, for the world-time, as long as the world lasts, conveying the same idea that is given, Ps. lxxii. 5, "throughout all generations, as long as the sun and moon endure." It is a way some critics have, of refusing to see a sense in places where it occurs, and then asserting that it cannot occur in any specific instance, because "it is not found elsewhere," they say, in the Old Testament. Thus regarded, we see how it comes to be so common in the earliest Hebrew after the canonical,—not merely the earliest Rabbinical and Talmudical, but in Sirach, and other Jewish books, that much preceded them. This would never have been the case in the early Rabbinical writings, much less in these apocryphal books, had there not been some ground for it in the old Biblical Hebrew itself. And this may be said, generally, in regard to all other Rabbinitisms, as they have been called, in Koheleth. They are rather Kohelethisms which appear in the earliest Rabbinical and Talmudical writers, because the old book, on account of its having more of a philosophical aspect than other ancient Scripture, possessed great charms for them, making it a favorite study, leading them to imitate its peculiar style, and to make much use of its rarer forms and words. In the apocryphal books, so far as they were written originally in Hebrew, the use

of עולם for world, or world time, is beyond all reasonable doubt. It must have been so employed in Sirach xxxvi. 17, where we have the Greek *αἰῶνας* in the world sense, as also in Tobit xiii. 6, 10. In both cases the language is precisely similar to that Ps. cxlv. 13 and 1 Tim. i. 17. The earliest Syriac preceding the New Testament used

their emphatic form of the word [עלכא] in the same way, as appears from the Peschito version of the Old Testament, as well as that of the New, this same word being used in such passages as Ps. xc. 2, cxlv. 13, Ecclesiastes iii. 11, and Hebrews i. 3, xi. 3, as a rendering of *αἰών, αἰῶνες*, where the Greek has, beyond all doubt, the world sense, though in its time aspect. Again, there is no accounting for this idiom in the New Testament [this use of *αἰών* so different from the classical] except by regarding it as a Hebraism, which is simply saying that the world sense, thus viewed, was an old and established sense of the

Hebrew עולם. There was nothing in any science, or thinking, in the Jewish age immediately preceding, to occasion any change or departure from the old meaning. There is neither authority nor weight in Winer's remarks (*Idioms of New Testament*, § 27, 3) on the plural forms of *αἰών*,—that "they are used for worlds because the object denoted consists of several parts, e. g., *οἱ αἰῶνες*, the whole world, the universe," with which

he would compare the Rabbinical use of עולמים "The Jews," he says, "imagined several heavens, one above the other." That is true, but

they never use עולמים to express such a conception. It is ever שמי שמים, the Heaven of Heavens, or the Heaven and Heaven of Heavens, or some similar language, from which came afterwards the *third heaven* of the Jews, and the seven heavens of the Talmud and of the Mohammedans. But this was ever in the space sense—worlds above worlds—not the time sense, worlds after worlds, which was a conception peculiarly Shemitic, barely found, if at all, among other ancient peo-

ples, and giving rise to those pluralities of עולם, and afterwards of *αἰών*, which can be accounted for in no other way; since the conception of absolute endlessness as etymological in עולם, or *αἰών*, would clearly have prevented it. It is this idea which so refutes the assertion of Stuart (*Comment. Ecclesiastes* xii. 1) that "time divided is not strictly predicable of a future state." He means that all duration before or after the present world, as we call it, must be regarded as one continuous blank, or unvaried extension of being. There are not only no days and years, such as measure our *olam*, but no *αἰῶνες*, or world-times, in that greater chronology. This certainly is not the Scripture mode of conception, or such language as we find would never have arisen, or

such pluralities as עולמים, *αἰῶνες*, or their reduplications, ages of ages, worlds of worlds exactly like the space pluralities שמי שמים, heaven of heavens. Such is the Scripture conception, we say, and what right had Stuart, following Hitzig, to deny that it is a Scripture truth, or to affirm that it is only a mode of speaking *more humano*? And reason sanctions it. What a narrow idea that the great antepast, and the great future after this brief world or עולם has passed away, are to be regarded as having no chronology of a higher kind, no other worlds, and worlds of worlds, succeeding each other in number and variety inconceivable! Robinson seems to hold the view of Winer that when *αἰῶνες* is used for worlds in the New Testament, it is to be regarded as a space conception, "the upper and lower worlds, the heavens and the earth, as making up the universe;" and he refers to Heb. i. 2 and xi. 3, passages which should have convinced him (*pace tanti viri*, do we venture to say it) that the time sense (worlds after worlds instead of worlds beyond or above worlds) is not only predominant but exclusive, as it is in 1 Timothy i. 17, βασιλεὺς τῶν αἰώνων, the King of the worlds, the King eternal. This would seem, too, to be Zöckler's way of thinking, when he speaks of the rendering world (Eccles. iii. 11) as appearing first in the Talmudic literature, and

carrying the sense of kosmos, macrocosmos.

Neither עולם in the Old Testament, nor αἰών in the New, has ever the sense of kosmos, or any space conception attached to it. That idea, as was said before, did come in afterwards among the Talmudists and early Rabbins, but it was only after they had got a smattering of science, and wished to make some of their old words look more philosophical. See BUXTOFF'S *Lexicon* on the word. They still, however, retained the time sense, or the world-time, in their favorite expressions, הוּא עולם הזה *this world*, and עולם הבא *the world to come*, which are exact representations of the ancient usage, as it arose in that early day, when *time worlds* were so much more a source of wondering thought than *worlds in space*, the boasted conception of our modern knowledge.

It may be thought that this view of עולם and αἰών as having plurals, and, therefore, not in themselves denoting absolute endlessness, or infinity of time, must weaken the force of certain passages in the New Testament, especially of that most solemn sentence, Matth. xxv. 46. This, however, comes from a wrong view of what constitutes the real power of the impressive language there employed. The preacher, in contending with the Universalist, or Restorationist, would commit an error, and, it may be, suffer a failure in his argument, should he lay the whole stress of it on the etymological or historical significance of the words, αἰών, αἰώνιος, and attempt to prove that, of themselves, they necessarily carry the meaning of endless duration. There is another method by which the conclusion is reached in a much more impressive and cavil-silencing manner. It is by insisting on that dread aspect of *finality* that appears not in single words merely, but in the power and vividness of the language taken as a whole. The parabolic images evidently represent a *closing scene*. It is the *last great act* in the drama of human existence, the human world, or æon, we may say, if not the *cosmical*. It is the *συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος*, Matth. xiii. 39, the *end*, the *settlement*, the *reckoning* of the world, or more strongly, Heb. ix. 26, *συντέλεια τῶν αἰῶνων*, "the settlement of the worlds," when "God demands again the ages fled," Eccles. iii. 15 (see the Metrical Version, and the reasons for this translation). At all events, our race, the בני אדם, the Adamic race, the human αἰών, or world, is judged; whether that judgment occupy a solar day of twenty-four hours, or a much longer historic period. There comes at last the end. Sentence is pronounced. The condemned go away, *εἰς κόλασιν αἰώνιον*—the righteous, *εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον*. Both states are expressed in language precisely parallel, and so presented that we cannot exegetically make any difference in the force and extent of the terms. Αἰώνιος, from its adjective form, may perhaps mean, an existence, a duration, measured by æons, or worlds (taken as the measuring unit), just as our present world, or æon, is measured by years or centuries. But it would be more in accordance with the plainest etymological usage to give it simply the sense of *olam*ic or *æonic*, or to regard it as denoting, like the Jewish עולם הבא (*clam habba*), the *world to come*. These

shall go away into the punishment [the restraint, imprisonment] of the world to come, and these into the life of the world to come. That is all we can etymologically or exegetically make of the word in this passage. And so is it ever in the old Syriac Version, where the one rendering is still more unmistakably clear: "These shall go away לתשניקא רלעולם to the pain of the olam, and these לתחא רלעולם to the life of the olam"—the world to come. Compare the same Syriac expressions in a great many other passages, such as Matth. xix. 16; Mark x. 17; Luke xviii. 18; John iii. 15; Acts xiii. 46; 1 Tim. vi. 12, etc., in which αἰώνιος is ever rendered רלעולם or רלעולם (more emphatic) "that which belongs to the olam," in the singular.

They shall go away—the one here, the other there. The two classes so long mingled are divided, *no more*, as it would seem, to be again together. The "wheat is gathered into the garner," the "tares are cast into the fire." The harvest is over; there is no more to follow; at least, the language gives us no intimation of any thing beyond. The catastrophe has come; the drama is ended; the curtain drops. Shall it never rise again? Is this solemn close forever in the sense of irreversibility? Who is authorized to say that there will ever be an arrest of this judgment, or a new trial ever granted? Every thing in the awful scene so graphically depicted seems to favor the one thought of *finality*. Rash minds may indulge the thought of some change, some dispensation in still remoter "worlds to come," but there is no warrant for it in any of the language employed. If there be allowed the thought of change, it may be inferred of the one state as well as of the other. The ζωὴ αἰώνιος may have its interruption, its renewed probation, and exposure to evil; exegetically this may be as well sustained as the other. To rebut any such presumption, we have, too, our Saviour's words, John xiv. 2: "If it were not so, I would have told you." There would have been a similar ground for such language here as when he said, "Let not your hearts be troubled; in my Father's house are many mansions;" there would have been the same reason for allaying fears of change on the one hand, or preventing despair on the other, had there not been the intention to impress that thought of finality which the whole dramatic representation so vividly conveys: If there were ages of change coming somewhere in the vast future, in the infinite flow of the αἰῶνες τῶν αἰῶνων, "the ages of ages," when the ζωὴ should cease, or the κόλασις be intermitted, "I would have told you." He has not told us; and no man should have the audacity to raise the veil which He has so solemnly dropped before the vision both of sense and reason. Let it remain for a new revelation, when he chooses to make it. Till then it stands: They shall go away, the one into the life, the other into the imprisonment, of *the world to come*. There is no more; let no one add to it; let no one take away.

Some have thought to find the metaphysical idea of *timelessness* in the Scriptural *olam*ic words, and especially in the αἰών, αἰώνιος, of the New

Testament. That is a Platonic notion largely dwelt upon in the *Timæus* (37 c) where *αἰών* is represented as fixed, one of the "things that stand" [belonging to the class called τὰ ὄντα rather than τὰ γινόμενα] whilst *χρόνος*, *flowing time*, is its "moving image," or the revolving mirror which seems to set in motion the landscape of eternity, though, in reality, all is changeless and still. But this timeless idea is no etymological sense of *αἰών*; it is only the speculative notion of the philosopher which he represents by the word as supplying a supposed antithesis to *χρόνος*, *time*. We have no right to say, however, that there is no ground for it in the reason. It appears, sometimes, in the common thinking, as when we speak of time as contrasted with eternity, or of a state before time was, or that shall be when "time shall be no more." Such a style of speech has been favored by a wrong interpretation of the language, Rev. x. 6, *ὅτι χρόνος οὐκ ἔσται ἔτι*, and a severing it from its immediate context. Still its prevalence shows that it is not altogether alien to the human thinking. It is felt that there is a solid reason for predicating timelessness of God, of the Divine mind, and the Divine ways, as lying above the plane of the human, even "as the Heaven is high above the earth" [Isa. lv. 9]. To Deity all effects must be present in their causes, and causes seen in their effects, and all phenomena, or "things that do appear," must have their more real existence in the unseen seminal energies of which they are manifestations. They have their true being in the Logos or Word from whence they came. In this sense the Prophet most sublimely represents God as *יֹשֵׁב עַל יְסוּדֵי עוֹלָם*, Ps. lv. 20, *sedens antiquitatem*, literally, siting the everlasting antepast, and *עַל יְסוּדֵי* Isa. lvii. 15, *inhabiting eternity*, both of which expressions would seem to aim at denoting, as far as language can denote it, a timeless state, as opposed to movement or succession. And so even in regard to the human soul, our own finite thoughts may sometimes faintly present to us the image of successionless spiritual being, or of some approach to it. We can think of a condition of the spirit in which time, as movement, seems to disappear. It may be the conception of some "beatific vision" on the one hand, or of some "horror of great darkness" on the other, the one so enrapturing and absorbing, the other so dense and harrowing, that all division, or sense of such division, seems so wholly lost that existence, in this respect, may not improperly be said to be timeless. Again, there is the schoolmen's notion of eternity as given by BOETHIUS, *tota simul et interminabilis vite possessio*, or as it is defined by that quaint old Hebraist and Lexicographer, Robertson—"Eternity the everlasting and ever present, without futuration or preterition," as in the timeless name *הוֹיָה הוֹיָה*, the I AM (Jahveh or Jehovah) *ὁ ὢν, καὶ ὁ ἦν, καὶ ὁ ἔρχόμενος*. But such a timeless idea is hardly for our present thinking, in this present state of change and transition. "Such knowledge is too wonderful for us; it is high, we cannot attain unto it." The mere glimpse we sometimes get dazzles the vision, and casts us down to that mode of thinking, as necessarily involving succession, which God has made the law of our present

mental being. We cannot, therefore, believe that this timeless idea of *αἰών* is intended in those passages that are meant to impress us with the solemnities of our future existence. If it thus occurs any where in the New Testament, it would seem to be in such passages as 2 Cor. iv. 18, *τὰ γὰρ βλέπομενα πρόσκαιρα, τὰ δὲ μὴ βλέπομενα αἰώνια*—the things that are seen are temporal, the things that are unseen are eternal." We do not think that Paul got this, or other passages like it (such as Heb. xi. 1, 3; Rom. i. 20) from Plato, or that they were suggested to him by any study of the Platonic writings; but certainly there is a wonderful resemblance between it and some things in the *Timæus*, and the *Republic*. The *μὴ βλέπομενα, τὰ ὄρατα*, "the unseen things," of Paul, do strongly suggest, and are suggested by the *ἀείδη, τὰ ὄρατα, τὰ νοητά* of Plato, as all denoting, not merely things absent from present vision, but that which is, in its very essence, unseen, supersensual, above all the senses, for which seeing is simply taken as the higher and general representative. So *πρόσκαιρα* and *αἰώνια* suggest the same distinction that Plato makes in the *Timæus* between the *γινόμενα*, and the *αἰώνια, the becoming, the flowing, the changing, and the æonian*, in the sense of reality and immutability. We are strongly drawn to think that Paul has something of the same contrast, though presented in a far higher and holier aspect than the mere philosophical contemplation. *Πρόσκαιρα, temporal* would seem opposed to *αἰώνια, not in the sense of a short period (or periods) as contrasted with a long duration, or even an endless duration, but, rather, as time itself, or existence in time, as the antithesis of the timeless, that immutable, successionless being which even now we sometimes seem to see as in a mirror shadowily, (1 Cor. xiii. 12), or enigmatically, but which then the soul may behold, face to face, as the most real of all realities. Except, however, in such lofty passages as that, where the inspired writer seems to see, and strives to utter, things ἀρόρητα, or ineffable (2 Cor. xii. 4), it is best to be content with that other and more obvious sense, which is best adapted to our faculties in their present state, and which may, therefore, be rationally regarded as the sense intended for us by the divine author of the Scriptures. Even here, in 2 Cor. iv. 18, this lower sense, if any choose to call it so, satisfies every demand of our present thinking: the things that are seen, the changing transitory objects around us, belong to our present transitory being—they are *πρόσκαιρα, for a season*.—The things that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard," belong to the great world to come, as an advanced period in the vast successions of time. In this sense they are *ὀλιμία* or *αἰώνια*. A purely timeless state, it may be said, is above our conceptions, at least for the human or finite existence,—above our conceptual thinking even, though not altogether transcending, as an *idea, our highest reasoning.**

There are other passages in which the sense of *עוֹלָם* would seem even more limited (than in this verse of Ecclesiastes (i. 3), or rather, to be taken as a hyperbolic term for the indefinite or unmeasured, though of conceivably short duration. Compare Exod. xxi. 16, where it is said

of a servant in certain cases ויעבדו לעולם "and he shall serve him forever"—that is, in distinction from a *set time*. So also, Lev. xxv. 26. The same language is used of inheritances, and earthly possessions, as in Dent. xxix. 28. As an example of the immense extremes which the context shows in the use of the word, compare the language employed but a short distance from this latter passage, Dent. xxxiii. 40 חַי אֲנִי

לעולם "I live forever," spoken of God in such a way as to mean nothing less than the absolute or endless eternity. But it is the subject to which it is applied that forces to this, not any etymological necessity in the word itself.

"And they shall reign forever and forever," Rev. xxii. 5. Here is another example of an attempt to express the immeasurable, though in a different way, that is, by reduplications: καὶ βασιλεύσουσιν εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰῶνων, in

secula seculorum, לעולם עלמים, Syriac לעלמא לעלמא, or, in one word, לעלמא לעלמא, *leolam-olemin, for-ever-ever-more*, for ages of ages, worlds of worlds, eternities of eternities.—WICKLIFFE, "thei schulen regne in to worldis of worldis." It falls short, of course, in conception, as all language must, yet still it is conceptually aiming at the endless, or absolute eternity, and must be taken, therefore, as representative of it in *idea*. A negative term, in such case, like *infinite*, or *endless*, might have been used; but though correct, logically, it would have had far less conceptual, or even ideal power.

This is said of the future. There is a similar language used of the past; as Ephesians iii. 9, ἀπὸ τῶν αἰώνων, *a seculis*, מן עולמים, from the olams, from the ages, the eternities, WICKLIFFE, "*hidle fro worldis*," TYNDALE, "*from the beginning of the world*," the great world, including all worlds,—or, taken without division, the antepast eternity, before the present *aion*, *olam*, or world, began.

There is another method in which an attempt is made to represent the absolute eternity. It is by a phrase shorter than those before mentioned, but more emphatic, and, in some respects, more impressive. It is by adding to עולם, or to לעולם, the particle ער, or the noun ער, sometimes written ער. FURST makes this word, as a noun, denoting eternity, from a supposed root ער, to which he gives the sense *obducere, obvelare*, to conceal, &c., making it, in this way, like the verb עלם, the primary sense of which is *hiddenness, obscurity*, thus giving the noun עולם the sense of the unbounded, the indefinite. There is no authority for this in the case of ער. It might more plausibly be regarded as having the sense

of number, like the Arabic عَدّ; but the best view is that of GESSENIUS, who makes it, both as noun and particle, from ערה = Arabic عَد, which has the sense of *transition*. It is rather

(transition to, arrival and going beyond—a passing beyond, still farther, on, and on. Thus it becomes a name for eternity, as in those remarkable expressions, Isa. ix. 5, אֲבִי עֵר, poorly rendered everlasting Father, and עֵר שָׁכֵן עַד, inhabiting eternity, Isa. lvii. 15; with which compare עֵר הַרְרִי עֵר Hab. iii. 6, הוֹרִי עֵר, Gen. xlix. 29, and עֵר עֵר Isa. xlv. 17, where we have the same word as noun and preposition—the mountains of ad, the progenitors of ad—to the ages of ad—to the ages to which other ages are to be added, indefinitely. Hence the preposition sense to, making it significantly, as well as etymologically equivalent to the Latin ad et, the Greek ἐτι, Saxon at and to, in all of which there is this sense of arrival and transition. The idea becomes most vivid and impressive in this Hebrew phrase

לעולם ועד, for ever and yet, for the age, the world, the eternity, and still on, on, on; or as the quaint old lexicographer before referred to expresses it, "it imparteth this, *As yet, and as yet, and ever as yet, forever, and forevermore, as yet*"—as though there were, in this short word

thus added to עולם, the full power of Handel's Hallelujah Chorus, as it comes to us in the seemingly endless repetitions of that most sublime music. Unlike the others, the effect of this short addition to עולם is felt, in its very brevity and abruptness, as something that gives the impression of endless iteration. It is like the mathematician's abbreviating term + &c., or the sign of infinity ∞, or the symbol by which he would denote the supposed last term of an infinite series. These pluralities and reduplications, and other striking methods of representing the olamic ideas, are peculiar to the Shemitic languages, or they appear in our modern tongues only as derived from them through Bible translations, much changed, too, and weakened in the transfer. They are utterly at war with the thought of the great eternal past and future as blank undivided durations, according to the unwarranted dictum of HIRTZIG and STUART, which would confine all history and all chronology to this brief æon we call time. These peculiar terms, with their strange pluralities, would never have grown up in the language of a people who entertained such a blank conception. The fact, however, is just the other way. In these vast time ideas, and the manner of vividly representing them, the Shemitic mind went beyond the modern, although we boast, and with reason, of so far exceeding the early men in the vastness of our space conceptions. It is only lately that our science has had its attention called to the great time periods of the world, as transcending the ordinary historical. Under the influence of the new idea, we talk largely in our numerical estimates, though almost wholly hypothetical: but for real emotional power what are our long rows of decimals, our myriads, and millions, and billions, to the αἰῶνες τῶν αἰώνων, the ages of ages, the worldis of worldis, the olam of olams, the great world made up of countless worlds, not beyond each other, in space, but one after the other, in time?

There is still another aspect of the world idea, which seems to be presented, Ecclesiastes iii. 11,

14. The thought of the world, or of a world, when the mind receives it complete, comes to it in a trinal form of contemplation, like the three dimensions in geometry, breadth, length, and height. It is the world in space and force, (or the world dynamically), the world in time, and the world in rank or range of being. To use some of the language employed by Dr. LANGE, *Genesis*, 190, 191, it is the "world as *kosmos*, the world as *ων*," to which we may add, the world as the kingdom of God. The application of this thought, especially the latter view of it, to *Ecclesiastes* iii. 11, 14, gives those verses a force and significance which warrants great confidence in it as the true interpretation. On ver. 11 of that chapter, see some further remarks in the note adjoined. In ver. 14 it is said, "I know that all that God doeth," or "whatsoever God doeth, it shall be *forever*," says our translation, *in perpetuum* says the *Vulgate*, lxx. *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα* (for the *ων*), LUTHER, *das bestehet immer*. The Hebrew לעולם here may be rendered, as in ver. 11, for the world, but it can hardly be regarded exclusively, or mainly, as either the world in space or the world in time. The mind is not satisfied with the rendering *forever*, or for *eternity*, if there is understood by it simply endless duration. God's greater works, the heavenly bodies and their motions may have such a term applied to them, hyperbolically, as compared with the transient works of man, and this is the view which some excellent commentators take of the passage. There is a striking resemblance to it, well worthy of note, in CICERO'S Treatise *de Natura Deorum*, where the lower tellurian irregularities are contrasted with the heavenly order and permanency as manifested in the planetary movements, or, to use some of KÖNIG'S language, the flowing, changing world, בְּרֵהַת הַשָּׁמַיִם, "beneath the sun," and the world *supra solem*, the eternal sphere, unchanging, or forever constant, in its one unvarying movement: *Nulla igitur in cælo nec fortuna, nec temeritas, nec erratio, nec varietas inest; contraque omnis ORDO, VERITAS, RATIO, CONCORDIA: quæque his vacant, ementita et falsa, plenaque erroris, ea circum terras, infra lunam, quæ omnium ultima est, in terrisque versantur.* "There is, therefore, in the heavens neither chance, nor arbitrariness, nor erroneous movement, nor variability, but on the contrary, all is *order, truth, reason, constancy* (ratio in the sense of proportion, harmony); void of these, all is spurious, false, full of error, that lies *beneath the moon*, the lowest sphere, or that has its home here on earth" [Argument of the Stoic Balbus, *Cic. De Nat. Deor.*, II. 22]. "Beneath the moon"—compare it with the frequent Solsonian expression above referred to, and the sublime language, Job xxv. 2, עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּכִרְוֹבָיו, *faciens concordiam in sublimibus suis*—"who maketh peace in His high places." Thus regarded, the

heavens in their larger and higher aspect, are representative of the calmness, immutability, and untailling certainty of that divine Will which is ever one with the divine Reason. This is indeed a noble view of the passage, but we cannot think it the exclusively true one, not simply because it is said in other Scriptures (*Ps.* cii. 26, *Isa.* li. 6), that "the heavens themselves grow old" and "vanish away," but because it can hardly be made to suit with the expression לעולם, either in its cosmical or time sense, or those other words כל אשר "whatsoever God has made." Some things God has made to be transient, and they can, in no sense, be said to "be *forever*," or "for *eternity*," unless we take it, according to the view of ZÖCKLER, in their connections with other things that are eternal, or in their bearing upon eternal destinies. But this would be true also of the works and movements of man, or things "beneath the sun." The better view, therefore, and better satisfying the whole spirit of the passage, is that which regards לעולם as denoting the world, or world-time in God's sight—the great ideal, as it appears to Him, including not merely space and time, but the great range of being—or, to avoid the use of what might seem affected philosophical language, the divine plan of being, to which the smallest and most transient things contribute as well as the greatest,—in other words, the kingdom of God. To this "nothing can be added; from it nothing can be taken away." In this sense, all that God doeth is לעולם, for the *olam*, for the world, for the great whole of being, as distinguished from the human plans, the human doings, with their adapted yet transient seasons, as they are enumerated in the first part of the chapter—"a time for *every thing*," but every thing for the *olam*, or great world time, with its inconceivable range of being, transcending man, as man transcends the animal worlds below him. A somewhat similar view seems to have been entertained by that excellent old commentator MARTIN GEIER. He refers it to "the divine decrees"—God's ideal world, in fact, whose effects are determined in their causes, as the causes are all contained in the effects. "By God's doing here" he says, "we are not to understand simply the things produced by him, creatures which God has made; for they do not all remain forever, &c., but it is to be understood, *de facere Dei interno, i. e., de decretis divinis*, of the divine decrees (*in mente divina*) as they are forever in the divine mind, unchangeably, without addition or diminution, *nam consilium Jehovah in seculum stat, cogitationes cordis ejus in generationem et generationem*, *Ps.* xxxiii. 11: "For the counsel of Jehovah *stands*, the thoughts of his heart unto all generations" See also the note on the astronomical objections to the Bible; *Bibelwerk, Genesis, Eng. ed.*, pp. 183, 184.—T. L.]

B.—The practical wisdom of men, aiming at sensual enjoyment, and magnificent worldly enterprises, is vanity.

CHAPTER II. 1-26.

1. The vanity of practical wisdom in itself, proved by the example of Solomon.

(VERS. 1-19).

1 I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy
 2 pleasure: and behold, this also *is* vanity. I said of laughter, *It is* mad; and of
 3 mirth, What doeth *it*? I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine, yet ac-
 4 quainting mine heart with wisdom; and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what
 5 *was* that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven all the
 6 days of their life. I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me
 7 vineyards: I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all
 8 *kind* of fruits. I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bring-
 9 eth forth trees: I got *me* servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house;
 10 also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jeru-
 11 salem before me: I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of
 12 kings, and of the provinces: I gat me men-singers and women-singers, and the de-
 13 lights of the sons of men, *as* musical instruments, and that of all sorts. So I was
 14 great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wis-
 15 dom remained with me. And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them,
 16 I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour:
 17 and this was my portion of all my labour. Then I looked on all the works that
 18 my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and behold,
 19 all *was* vanity and vexation of spirit, and *there was* no profit under the sun. And
 20 I turned myself to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly: for what *can* the man
 21 *do* that cometh after the king? *even* that which hath been already done. Then I
 22 saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness. The wise man's
 23 eyes *are* in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness: and I myself perceived also
 24 that one event happeneth to them all. Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth
 25 to the fool, so it happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise? Then I
 26 said in my heart, that this also *is* vanity. For *there is* no remembrance of the wise
 27 more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now *is*, in the days to come shall
 28 all be forgotten. And how dieth the wise *man*? as the fool. Therefore I hated
 29 life; because the work that is wrought under the sun *is* grievous unto me: for all
 30 *is* vanity and vexation of spirit. Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken
 31 under the sun; because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me.
 32 And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise *man* or a fool? yet shall he have rule
 33 over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself
 34 wise under the sun. This *is* also vanity.

2. The aim of life to be attained in consideration of the empirical vanity of practical wisdom.

VERS. 20-26.

20 Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labour which I
 21 took under the sun. For there is a man whose labour is in wisdom, and in know-
 22 ledge, and in equity; yet to a man that hath not laboured therein shall he leave
 23 it for his portion. This also *is* vanity and a great evil. For what hath man of

all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under
 23 the sun? For all his days *are* sorrow, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh
 24 not rest in the night. This is also vanity. *There* is nothing better for a man than
 that he should eat and drink, and *that* he should make his soul enjoy good in his
 25 labour. This also I saw, that it *was* from the hand of God. For who can eat, or
 26 who else can hasten *hereunto* more than I? For *God* giveth to a man that *is* good
 in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail,
 to gather and to heap up, that he may give to *him that is good* before God. This
 also is vanity and vexation of spirit.

[Ver. 1.—א]. A particle of address or appeal, *come on now*, sometimes of entreaty. Here it denotes another trial with an ironical intimation of its failure. The address is to his heart, and the strong entreaty, or emotion, is shown in the paragogic ה אנככה. *O let me try thee again!*—T. L.]

[Ver. 3.—לכשון-הרתה. See EXEGET. and Notes. מכפר is sometimes used to denote paucity, as Num. ix. 20; Geo. xxiv. 30; Ps cv. 12, &c. Here the whole phrase may be read *red numbered days, i. e., few days*. See Metrical Version.—T. L.]

[Ver. 5.—פרקים. See EXEGET. and note to Introduction, p. 32.—T. L.]

[Ver. 8.—כרנות. *Int. Ap.*, p. 34, שרה, שרות. See EXEGET. and Note; also *Int. to Metrical Version*.—T. L.]

[Ver. 10.—אצלת. rendered *denied*, but more properly *withhold* from, primary sense to *separate, place by itself*, Geo. xxvii. 36.—T. L.]

[Ver. 13.—ראית. denotes more properly here the *judgment* of the mind than seeing stated as a fact. *I thought, I judged*. Such a sense is a very common one in the Arabic root, and in the Rabbinical usage. It occurs also in the oldest Hebrew, as in the language Gen. ii. 19, "He brought them unto Adam," לראות, for Adam to *see (judge)* what came he should give them. It is only an *opinion* expressed here. See *Metrical Version*.—T. L.]

[Ver. 14.—ככה. See EXEGET. and Note, p. 58.—T. L.]

[Ver. 16.—בשגבר. The full form would be כקר כגר. For an examination of such words, and the manner in which they have become abbreviated, whether in later or earlier Hebrew, or as a mere matter of orthography, see text note to Geo. vi. 3 [בשגבר].—T. L.]

[Ver. 20.—וכבות. See EXEGET. and Note.—T. L.]

[Ver. 21.—פשוך. One of the words relied upon to prove the late date; but it is most purely Hebrew, and a noun of the same root, and the same sense, is found in that old composition Ps. lxxviii. 7: כושרה *prosperity*, very wrongly rendered *chains* in E. V., as though from קשר. See HUFFELD.—T. L.]

[Ver. 24.—שיאכל. See EXEGET. and Note.—T. L.]

[Ver. 25.—חוש חזק. Literally *hasten beyond, go farther—more without*. There is the figure of a race. See *Metrical Version*; also the EXEGET. and Note, p. 45.—T. L.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Of the two divisions of this chapter, the *first*, (vers. 1-19), treats of the vanity of the practical efforts of men, and thus supplements the description of the vanity of the theoretical strivings after wisdom, whilst the *second* division (vers. 20-26) is of a more general character, and deduces a provisional result from the nature of human strivings after wisdom as therein set forth. Each of the two divisions contains two subdivisions or strophes within itself, of which, naturally, that of the first longer division (the one of nine, the other of eight verses) is especially comprehensive, and is, in addition to this, provided with a short introductory proposition (vers. 1, 2). The complete scheme of the contents of this chapter is therefore as follows:—I. *Division*. The vanity of practical wisdom aiming at sensual enjoyment and magnificent enterprises, proved by the example of Solomon: a. (proposition, vers. 1, 2), in general; b. (*first strophe*, vers. 3-11), in reference to that seeking after enjoyment and extensive activity; c. (*second strophe*, vers. 12-19) in reference to the uncertain and deceptive success of the efforts alluded to.—II. *Division*: The aim of life to be attained in consideration of the empirical vanity of practical wisdom; a. (*first*

strophe, vers. 20-23): Negative proof of the same, as not consisting in grasping after earthly and selfish wisdom, and after external worldly success; b. (*second strophe*, vers. 24-26): Positive showing of the life aim of the wise man, as consisting in the cheerful enjoyment of worldly benefits offered by God to those in whom he delights.

2. *First Division. Proposition or general Introduction*: Vers. 1, 2.—**I said in my heart.** אָנֹכִי with אָנֹכִי is essentially pleonastic, as also in i. 16; ii. 11, 14, 18; iii. 17, etc., for it is in no wise apparent that a special significance is in these passages to be given to the subject speaking (HENGSTENBERG), and pleonasm of all varieties are very characteristic in the somewhat broad and circumstantial style of the author. *Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, i. e., I will try whether thou wilt feel contented and happy in this new object of thy experience, namely, in cheerful sensual enjoyment, whether, on this path of pleasure and joy thou canst become a טוב* (chap. ix. 7). For the address to his own heart (or own soul) comp. Ps. xvi. 2; xlii. 5; xliiii. 5; Luke xii. 18, 19; for the construction, to prove one with something (נִכְּחַהּ), 1 Kings, x. 1.—**Therefore enjoy**

pleasure. (*Lit. Ger.*, behold pleasure). — This beholding is here considered as connected with an enjoyable appropriation of the object beheld, which sense the preposition strongly expresses by virtue of its reference to the conception of lingering with the beheld object; comp. רָאָה בְּ in Gen. xxi. 16; Job. iii. 9; and therewith the simple רָאָה בְּ in the expression רָאָה בְּנִיבָה Eccles. vi. 6, or in רָאָה הַיַּיִן , chap. ix. and in רָאָה שְׂנָה , chap. viii. 16, etc. Ver. 2. **I said of laughter, It is mad.** "Of laughter," does not mean as much as "in reference to laughter" (KNOBEL, VAH., etc.); but the laughter, *i. e.*, the unrestrained cheerfulness attending sensual enjoyment, seems here to be personified, just as

mirth in the next clause. כְּהוֹלֵל , *Part. Pool.*, as in Ps. cii. 9, means really one void of sense, one infatuated, and might more properly be considered masculine, than as neuter (with VAH., HITZIG, etc.), so that LUTHER'S translation: "Thou art mad," apart from the address, seems substantially justified. See HENGSTENBERG, who strikingly compares with it ἀπρον , Luke xii. 20, and I justly finds in this passage the germ of the Parable of the Rich Man, Luke xii. 16-21. **And of mirth, what doeth it? *i. e.*, what does it accomplish, what fruit does it bring forth (comp. רָאָה בְּ ?)** Luther, in imitation of the *Sept. Vulg.*, etc., considers the question as an address to mirth ("what doest thou?") but it is rather, as the word הִי shows, a bitterly contemptuous exclamation addressed to some third person, and an answer is not expected. For the form הִי instead of הִיא comp. v. 15; vii. 23, Kings vi. 19. Some exegetists, especially of the rationalistic period, have unjustly desired to find a contradiction in the fact that KOHELETH here despises cheerful sensual enjoyment, whilst in conclusion (ver. 24. f.) he vaunts it as the principal aim of life.* What he here blames and condemns as foolish, is clearly only that empty merriment which accompanies the wild exhilaration of sensual enjoyment, or sensual pleasure, as only end and aim of human effort, not a thankfully cheerful enjoyment of the benefits bestowed by God. Comp. LUTHER on this passage, and see the homiletical hints.

3. *First division, first strophe: Vers. 3-11.* — **I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine.** (*Lit. Ger.*, to comfort my flesh with wine). Of the sensual joy indicated in the first verse, a special kind is here named, by which the preacher first sought to obtain satisfaction, and then follow, to the 11th verse inclusive, still other such separate means of sensual enjoyment. The word רָאָה בְּ , therefore, recommences the account where the אֲנִכְנָה ver. 1, had begun it, and is in substance synonymous with that verb. Comp. Numb. xiii. 18; xv. 39; etc. where

* [There is no contradiction, real or apparent, to be reconciled, if ver. 24 is only rightly rendered as it simply stands in the Hebrew, without any addition. See Note on that passage.—f. l.]

[רָאָה בְּ], is very emphatic here. It denotes a deep and earnest search. The primary sense to go about, hence, *investigate*, appears very strong, Eccles. vii. 25; I went round about (רָאָה בְּ), "I and my heart, to know and to explore (לְדַרשׁ), and to seek out wisdom, etc." It is the

הִי is always used in the sense of trying, experimenting, and not in that of thinking, reflecting. (ELSTER). כִּשְׁן בְּשֶׁר is most justly explained by GESSENIUS, HITZIG, HENGSTENBERG, etc., as "to nourish the body," *i. e.*, to keep it in action or condition, to make it lasting and strong, so that the expression: "bread which strengtheneth man's heart" (Ps. civ. 15), seems parallel with it. Others explain it differently, as KNOBEL and VAHINGER: "To keep my sensual nature with wine;" EWALD, ELSTER: "to attach my sense to wine;" HERZFELD: "to entice my body by wine," etc. **Yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom.** (*Lit. Ger.*, my heart led me with wisdom), a parenthetical clause that clearly indicates what the inner man of the preacher did whilst his flesh rioted in pleasures and enjoyments. The sense is therefore: I did not plunge headlong into coarse, fleshly gratifications, but, true to the warning counsel in Prov. xxxi. 4, f., I tested with calm reflection, and in a composed way, whether real contentment was to be secured by means of sensual joys. The exposition of EWALD and ELSTER, which allies נָהַן with the Aramaic נָהַן , "to sigh," and the corresponding Arabic verb, in the sense of "experiencing disgust with something" ("whilst my heart was weary with wisdom"), is too far-fetched, and contradicts what is said in ix. 13: ff., which confirms our conception of the passage.* For

word us d of the spies sent out to search the land, Numb. xii. 2, 16, 17, 21, 25, 32; xiv. 6, 7, etc., also of traveling merchants, peregrinators (2 Chron. ix. 14; 1 Kings x. 15) seeking for precious merchandize. בְּלִבִּי not, with my heart as an instrument, but in my heart as the dark place to be explored. He resolves to act as a spy upon himself, or, to use the quaint language of Halliburton in detailing his religious experience, "to see what his heart was doing in the dark."—like those whom Ezekiel saw in "the chambers of imagery"—or to find out how it might be possible in this interior chamber of the soul, to reconcile a devoted pursuit of pleasure, and, at the same time, a true pursuit of wisdom. The language implies a most intense study, as well as effort, to solve a difficult problem.—T. L.]

* [Chap. ii. 3, לְכִשְׁן . This passage and word have given much trouble. ZÜCKLER'S view, though substantially that of GESSENIUS and HENGSTENBERG, is unsatisfactory. It is very remotely derived, if it can be derived at all, from the ordinary sense of כִּשְׁן , to draw, draw out, and is supported by little or no analogy in language. The Latin *tracto*, from *traho*, never has the sense *carere*, which would come the nearest to it. The Syriac כִּשְׁן with which GESSENIUS compares it, is a very rare and doubtful word, given by CASTELL without any examples, and nowhere found, either in the Syriac Scriptures, or in any well known Syriac writings. KNOBEL gives כִּשְׁן the sense of holding fast, which would have done very well had he attached to it the idea of restraining, holding back, and made flesh the object, instead of the contrary, of retaining, not renitening (the use of wine). HENGSTENBERG'S *trahere, attrahere, attract*, is inconsistent with the preposition בְּ in כִּשְׁן . MICHAELIS, sense of protracting is wholly unsuited to כִּשְׁן , flesh, as its object. EWALD'S *an den Wein zu heften meine Sinne, to fasten on the wine, etc.*, gives hardly any sense at all, and what little there is, is opposed to the evident context. The same may be said of HERZFELD: *anzulocken meinen Leib*; the flesh needs no alluring or drawing to the wine; besides the preposition בְּ is here also inconsistent with such a meaning. The *lxx.* $\text{ἡ καρδία μου ἐλάσει τὴν σάρκα μου ὡς οἶνον}$, wholly inverts the idea. The Syriac לְכִשְׁן delight my flesh, is a mere accommodating guess. The Vulgate *abstrahere, a vino carnem meam*, suits very well with לְכִשְׁן , but would require the preposition כִּי (כִּי) instead of בְּ (בְּ). Our

נָהַג in the sense of guiding, leading, comp. Isa. xi. 6; 1 Chron. xiii. 7; 2 Sam. vi. 3, etc.—**And to lay hold on folly, or also to seize folly.**—With “*folly*” (כְּכֹלֵית) cannot here naturally be meant as an exclusive contrast with wisdom; therefore not folly in the absolute sense, but mainly that foolish, sensual pleasure, which is referred to in ver. 2, or even that mentioned in ver. 3, “comforting the flesh with wine;” therefore a disposition which gives the reins to pleasure, and lives thoughtlessly in accordance with the assertion of HORACE: *Dulce est desipere in loco*. KOHELETH, from the beginning, recognizes this sentiment as folly, and thus designates it in contempt. But nevertheless he will prove it, and try whether it may not be relatively best for man, better than cold, fruitless, and wearisome wisdom, which when gained produces sorrow, and with which he was disgusted according to chapter first.” (ELSTER).—**Till I might see what was that good for the sons of men, etc.** Comp. vii. 19.—**Which they should do under the heaven all the days of their life.** There is in these words a kind of mournful resignation. Short as is the period of human life on earth, even for this little span of time it is not always clear to man what is really good and beneficial for him; and many, and mostly bitter and painful experiences, are needed to bring him to this knowledge.—**Ver. 4. I made me great works; I builded me houses.**

English version, “to give myself to wine,” is as safe a guess as any, but it leaves out the important word כֶּסֶף “my flesh,” unless it is intended to have its meaning conveyed in the word *myself*, as though it were equivalent to נַפְשִׁי.

This, however, is without warrant in the Scriptures. Besides, it destroys the contrast evidently intended between נֶשֶׁךְ and לֵב, the *body* and the *mind*, which לֵב more generally means (comp. Prov. vii. 7; xvii. 7, with most of the places where it occurs in that book and this), or the *soul* generally, as in Ps. lxxiii. 25, where it is in contrast with שָׁמַר—“my flesh and heart”—body and soul.

The ordinary Hebrew meaning of כֶּסֶף is to *draw out*.

Closely allied to it is the sense of the Arabic



to *hold*, lay hold of, which runs through all the Arabic conjugations. This is the primary, and the sense most likely intended here: to *lay hold of*, *hold back* my flesh, that is, to govern, check, restrain it. The unusual style of the language shows that there is a figure here, and what that figure is is suggested by the word נָהַג in the following clause.

The ordinary, and, we think, the primary sense of this word is *agit agit*. Hence it is applied to the driving of flocks, Gen. xxxi. 18; Exod. iii. 1; Ps. lxxx. 2, but more especially and significantly, to the *driving* or *guiding* of horses and chariots, as 2 Sam. vi. 3; 2 Kings ix. 24, where the noun כִּנְהָג is most graphically used to describe the *mad driving*

of Jehu. From this use in the Scriptures, the Rabbins have, very naturally, and according to the analogy of secondary senses as they spring up in other languages, employed it, with an ethical and philosophical meaning, to denote a *course of thinking, conduct (dactus)* or as a rule for the *guidance* of life. Thus viewed it strikingly suggests some such figure as seems hinted in כֶּסֶף, though there the metaphor may be said to lie concealed; all the more impressive, however, when seen, on account of its inobtrusiveness. It is noticed by HIRTZIO, who sees the figure, yet misapplies it, or falls back, after all, to the other idea of supporting, sustaining generally: “to draw with wine my flesh, that is, *die Maschine damit im Gange zu erhalten*, to keep the machine going, parallel with the expression to support the life with bread.” Here he seems to drop the metaphor, yet takes it up again when he says, “the wine here is compared to a draught horse, or as we say of one who drinks on the way, he hath taken a relay.” This is a vulgar view of the

We are here certainly to understand the structures of Solomon in a general sense (1 Kings vii. 1, ff.; ix. 19; x. 18, ff., but hardly a special allusion to the temple, which Solomon could not have counted among his houses.—**I planted me vineyards.** The Song of Solomon, chap. viii. 11, mentions one of these; and that Solomon had more of them, and had not overrated his wealth arbitrarily, and in violation of historic truth, (as KNOBEL supposes), is satisfactorily proved by the several vineyards of David enumerated in 1 Chron. xxvii. 27.—**Ver. 5. I made me gardens and orchards,**—in the environs of these houses or palaces, (comp. 1 Kings xxi. 2; Jer. lii. 7; also the Song of Solomon i. 16, f.). For the etymology of פָּרַד see *Int.* to the *Song*, § 3, obs. 2.—**And I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits;** therefore not merely one of one kind, but many of many kinds of fruit trees. The emphasis does not rest on פָּרַד as if it would declare the King's object to be to raise trees affording delightful and delicate enjoyment (KNOBEL), but on פָּרַל whereby the rich variety of fruit trees is pointed out.—**Ver. 6.—I made me pools of water;** perhaps those mentioned in the Song (vii. 4), as at Heshbon; perhaps also the king's pool at Jerusalem, mentioned in Neh. ii. 14, which a later tradition, at least, marked as a work of Solomon. (Josephus, B.,

comparison, resembling some common Americanisms beneath the dignity of the real figure. And then he interprets what follows, of “wisdom guiding,” by comparing it to the coachman sitting on the box. STUART follows him in this, but both may be said to err in making wine the unruly horse that needs guidance, instead of the *flesh* (כֶּסֶף). “On the whole,” says STUART, “there can be no doubt that the sense thus given by HIRTZIO is significant; the main difficulty is the seeming strangeness of the figurative representation.” With a little change, however, it is the same with PLATO's more full and ornate comparison in the Phaedrus 54 F, or as it may be called, the myth of the charioteer and his two horses. The body (the flesh with its lusts, its appetites) is the wild horse so graphically described as κρατεραιχην μελαγχροσος ἵππαιος κ. τ. Α, “strong necked, black, with bloodshot furious eyes, full of violence, coarse, shaggy, cruel, deaf, hard-yielding, either to the whip or the spur.” The gentle horse is the pure feeling, the “Platonic love,” or celestial Eros, and the charioteer is the Noös, or Reason, the

Hebrew לֵב *guiding* or driving with הִנְחִיחַ. If it seems strange to interpret KOHELETH by PLATO, it may be said that the figure is, in itself, very easy and natural, coming directly from primary analogies, and in accordance with the whole train of the preacher's thought: I sought diligently, when my flesh was furiously driving on *in wine*, or pleasure (בִּין

here not denoting the instrument, or figurative chariot, but the state or condition) to draw it, to restrain it, to bridle it, to keep it, in the path of temperance. On this account we have rendered it in the Metrical Version, “to rein my flesh in wine,” and this is in harmony with the figure, as we find it so deeply grounded in language generally—a fact which makes its use by KOHELETH so little strange when properly considered. It is frequent in the Latin, both in prose and poetry. Comp. *Hor. Carmina* iv. 15, 16, *evaganti freno licentia injecti*, *Sil. II.* 7, 74, *Jun. vaga propositet frenis natura remotis*; *Ep.* I. 25, *hunc (animam) frenis hunc tu compescere censes*, *Liv. xxxiv.* 2, *d'ie frenos impotentis naturae*; *Juv. viii.* 88, *pone irae frenis maduicque*, *S'neca*, *Ep. xxiii.* *voluptates teneat sub freno*; etc., etc. So the phrases *dare freno* and *dare habenas*—*to cis habenis*, etc. In the same way the Greek χαλκίβος and χαλκίδωβος. Its use is common in English, whether derived from classical examples or, as is more likely, having a spontaneous origin: “To give the reins to appetite.” The very expression that ZUCKERLA unconsciously uses, *der Lust die Zügel schlossen lassen* or the contrary—to “lay the reins upon the neck of pleasure,”—with the idea of the unruly horse. If, after all, it should be said that this is not in the ordinary Hebrew style, it may be replied that neither is KOHELETH in the style of other Hebrew books, and therefore, that kind of criticism, so assuming, but, oftentimes, so superficial, cannot, with certainty, be applied to it.—T. L.]

Jud. v., 4, 2); and certainly those situated in Wadi Urtâs, near Bethlehem and Erham, "*Pools of Solomon*," mentioned in the exposition of the Song of Solomon, and which are doubtless here principally meant.—**To water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees,** צֹנְחִים

intransitive* as in Prov. xxiv. 31; Isa. v. 6; xxxiv. 15. The object of these pools as artificial basins for irrigating the extensive orchards of the king, testify to the magnificence and expense of these grounds. Ver. 7. **I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house.** (*Lit., were to me, as in ver. 10*), namely, from the marriages of the men and maid servants

in my house. לִירֵי בַיִת Gen. xv. 2, or לִירֵי בַיִת Gen. xii. 27; Jer. ii. 14, are slaves born in the house (*vernæ, oikoyevic*), and on account of their natural fidelity and affection a very valuable possession; here, however, named mainly because their presence was the sign and necessary result of numerous servants, and, consequently, of a large and flourishing household — **Also I had great possessions, of great and small cattle.** After the wealth in men and maid servants, as in Gen. xii. 16; xxx. 43, directly follow the great possessions of cattle, and then comes his wealth in unproductive treasures, silver and gold, as Gen. xiii. 2. The historical books of the Old Testament mention not only David (1 Chron. xxvii. 29, f.), but also his son and heir Solomon (1 Kings v. 3; viii. 63), as wealthy possessors of herds. For the concluding words of this verse: **above all that were in Jerusalem before me,** see remarks on chap. i. 16—Ver. 8. **I gathered me also silver and gold.** צָנַחְתִּי, lit., "I heaped up," that is in treasuries, as in the gorgeous apartments of my palace. The result of this unceasing activity of Solomon in collecting treasures, is depicted in 2 Chron. i. 15, ix. 27; 1 Kings x. 27: "Silver and gold at Jerusalem were as pteuteous as stones."—**And the peculiar treasure of kings, and of the provinces.** For כְּרִינָה

province, district, comp. Int. § 4, obs. 2. כְּנִלָּה, lit. property, is here and in 1 Chron. xxix. 3, equivalent to wealth, treasures. By "kings" are naturally first meant those tributary rulers of the neighboring lands treated of in 1 Kings v. 1; x. 15; but farther on those friendly rulers, who, as the Queen of Sheba, 1 Kings x. 2 ff., brought voluntary gifts, or even sent them, (as through the ships of Ophir, 1 Kings, ix. 28; x. 11, 14, 22; 2 Chron. viii. 28). The provinces are those twelve districts into which Solomon divided the land for the purpose of taxation. 1 Kings iv. 7 ff.—**I gat me men-singers and women-singers;**—the latter doubtless belonging to the women used for courtly display, mentioned in the Song of Solomon under the name of "Daughters of Jerusalem," or "Virgins without number," (chap. vi. 8); the former were of course not singers of the temple (as in 1 Kings x. 12; 1 Chron. xxv. 1 ff.; 2 Chron. v. 12), but

singers of lively, worldly songs, as kept by David according to 2 Sam. xix. 35, and afterwards certainly by Solomon for enhancing the pleasures of the table, (comp. Isa. v. 12; Amos vi. 5).—For עָשָׂה to get, to keep, comp. 2 Sam. xv. 1; 1 Kings i. 5.—**And the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts** (ZÖCKLER has rendered שְׂרָה וְשָׂרוֹת *die Hülle und Fülle, in great abundance.*—T. L.

The words שְׂרָה וְשָׂרוֹת are most probably to be translated according to the Arabic by "multitude and multitudes," or also by "heap and heaps" (EWALD, ELSTER, etc.), whereby a very great abundance is meant, and indeed of רַעֲיָנוֹת *i. e.*, of caresses, of enjoyments and pleasures of sexual love, to which Solomon was too much given according to 1 Kings xi. 3; Song of Solomon, vi. 8. J. D. MICHAELIS, ROSENFELLER, HERZFELD, KNOBEL, HITZIG, etc., translate "mistress and mistresses," or "woman and women," a signification which they seek to justify etymologically in various ways from the Arabic, but which can no more be considered certain than the explanation resting on the Chaldaeal שָׂרָה "to pour," which ancient translators turn into cup-bearers, male and female* (*Sept. οἰνοχόους καὶ οἰνοχόσας, Hieronymus, ministros vini et ministras*). Ver. 9. **So I was great and increased.** (Lit. I became great and added thereto הִיכַרְתִּי as i. 16). This is meant, of course, in the sense of possessions and riches, consequently in the sense of Gen. xxvi. 13; Job i. 3.—**Also my wisdom remained with me:** לִי עָמְדָה Lit. (*It stood by me*), it remained at my side, left me not, notwithstanding the fact that my outward man yielded to these follies and vanities. Thus must it be rendered according to ver. 3, and not "my wisdom served me," (EWALD), or "sustained me," ELSTER. (Comp. the *Vulg. perseveravit mecum*).—Ver. 10. **And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them.** That is, I possessed not only an abundance of all earthly goods, but I sought also to enjoy them; I withheld from me no object of my pleasure. Concerning the eyes as seat and organ of sensual desire, consult Ps. cxlv. 15; 1 Kings xx. 6; 1 John

*[שְׂרָה וְשָׂרוֹת]. There is no need of going to the Arabic for this word. A great many different views have been taken of it, but the best commentators seem agreed that it refers to Solomon's many wives and concubines. This is the opinion of ALEX. EZRA, who thinks that it would have been very strange if such luxuries had been omitted from this list. He, however, would make it from שָׂרָה, with the sense of female captives, taken as the spoil in war. Others who render it wives, like HITZIG, STUART, etc., make it from

the Arabic *سند* to lean upon, Infic. i'f. conj. *سند*

to embrace. But there is a nearer Hebrew derivation from שָׂרָה *mamma*, the breast. The feminine form is used a more voluptuous.—שָׂרָה the swelling breast, *mammæ sororianæ*. The plural after the singular is intensive to denote the vast number of these luxuries that Solomon possessed. The dagesh is easily accounted for without making it from שָׂרָה,

or the Arabic *سند*. By the addition there is a sharpe

*[Although a participle in form, צֹנְחִים, has rather the force of an adjective denoting fulness, luxuriance, (see Metrical version); not bringing forth trees, as our English version has it, but *blooming, luxuriant with, or in trees.*—T. L.]

ii. 16.—* **I withheld not my heart from any joy.** KOHELETH does not mean thereby that he enjoyed every imaginable pleasure, but only that he kept his heart open for every pleasure that presented itself to him, and profited by every one; that he avoided no pleasure that presented itself to him, (comp. HIRZIG). That this is the sense is proved by the following: **For my heart rejoiced in all my labour; and this was my portion of all my labours.** KOHELETH allowed himself, therefore, those pleasures and enjoyments which resulted from his continued exertion and labor, which formed agreeable resting places in the midst of his painful and fatiguing life; he sought and found in the hours of cheerful enjoyment, that interrupted his mainly painful existence, a recompense for his troubles and sorrows.—a recompense, it is true, that was only of a transitory nature (consequently no lasting, but simply an apparent הִלֵּק), and which thus, just as the toil and labor, belonged to that vexation of spirit that formed mainly the sum and substance of his experience. For שָׂכַח כֶּן lit.: “to extract joy from anything,” comp. Prov. v. 18; 2 Chron. xx. 27. In opposition to the explanation of HAHN *et al.*—my heart rejoiced after all my labor, stands the following expression: This was my portion (*i. e.*, my profit, my advantage), of all my labor.—Ver. 11. **Then I looked on all the works, etc.** lit.: I turned to all my works (פָּנֵה אֵל as Job vi. 28); comp. ver. 12. **And on the labour that I had laboured to do, i. e., to produce these, my toilsome works. And, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit.** “All,” that is, the substance of all my efforts, those referring to the collecting of great riches, and the founding of a great dominion, as well as those aiming after cheerful enjoyment; “in nothing of all this did I recognise a lasting הִלֵּק, a real הִרְוֵן (comp. chap. i. 3); everything seemed to me rather as רֵעִיָה רֵחַ (see i. 14).” *In how far and why* this formed the result of his experience, is shown in the sequel (ver. 12-19); there only does this general conclusion: there is no profit under the sun, as here expressed in anticipation, find its full justification.

4. *First Division, second strophe:* Vers. 12-19. That there is no profit under the sun, appears above all clearly from the fact that the wise man, with reference to his final destiny, and the end

e-ning of the first syllable, which requires dagesh an the shortening of the vowel from patach to chirek. See Introduction to Metrical Version, p. 180. The Syriac has שְׂקִירָה שְׂקִירָה corresponding nearly to the *xx. oinochōtes kai oinochōtas, cup-bearers, or wine-pourers.* ZÖCKLER's rendering has but little or no support. The late Arabic translation of Dr.

VanDyke well renders it سيدة وسيدات ladies, mistresses; though from a different root, it comes to the same thing with the Hebrew.—F. L.
* For a most impressive statement of this, revealing the whole philosophy of will and choice (the will following the sense, or the sense in subjection to the will) see Job's declaration, Job xxxi. 27, אִם אַחַר יַעֲנֵי הָרֶגֶל לִפְי, If my heart, (the seat of moral power) hath gone after mine eyes (the sense generally), then, etc. It is an emphatic denial that he had permitted sense to govern him.—T. L.

of his life, has no advantage over the fool, in so far as he meets the same death as the latter through a necessity of nature, and is obliged to leave the fruits of his labor often enough to foolish heirs and successors.—Ver. 12. **And I turned myself to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly; i. e., to observe them in their relation to each other, and consider their relative value; comp. i. 17.** HIRZIG's conception that “madness and folly” are correlatives is altogether too artificial; he holding that by these the result of the consideration of wisdom is expressed, and that a connective (“and, behold, it was”) has been omitted. **For what can the man do that cometh after the king? even that which hath been already done.** This, “that has already been done,” consists naturally in a foolish and perverted beginning, even in the destruction of what has been done by a wise predecessor, and in the dispersion of the treasures and goods collected by him, (comp. for this negative, or rather catachrestic sense of the verb to do, Matt. xvii. 12). J. D. MICHAELIS, KNOBEL, and HENGSTENBERG, substantially coincide with this explanation of the somewhat obscure and difficult words; it is confirmed as well by the context as by the masoretic punctuation. Nearest allied to this is the conception of ROSENMUELLER: “For who is the man who can come after the king? Answer: For what has been he will do.” Thus also DE ROUGEANT: “Who is the man who could hope to be more fortunate in following after him (King Solomon) on this false path? We can try it, but it will be with us as it has been with all before us.” HIRZIG reads in the concluding line עֲשֵׂהוּ instead of עֲשֵׂהוּ, and therefore translates: What will the successor of the king do? “That which he hath already done.” LUTHER, VAHINGER, as also the *Sep-tuagint* and the *Vulgate*, only translating more concretely, do not take אִשֶׁר פָּנֵה יְשִׁיעֵהוּ as an independent, responsive clause, but as a relative clause: “What will the man be who will come after the king, who has already been chosen?” (LUTHER, “whom they have already made”). HAHN also says: “What is the man who will come after the king, in respect to that which has already been done;” and EWALD and ELSTER: “How will the man be who follows the king, compared with him whom they chose long ago,” *i. e.*, with his predecessor? Some Rabbinic exegetists, whom even DRUSIUS is inclined to follow, have referred עֲשֵׂהוּ to God as active subject, which is here expressed as a plurality (trinity): “with the One (or beside the One) who has made him;” for which sense they refer to Ps. cxlix. 2: Job xxxv. 10; Isa. liv. 1, etc.—Ver. 13. **Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.**—The poet recognizes the absolute worth of wisdom, just as in the first clause of ver. 14 he more clearly describes its profit for the individual. For the comparison of wisdom and folly with light and darkness, comp. Prov. vi. 23; Matth. vi. 33 f.; John viii. 12, etc. “As light is a creative power that bears within itself an independent life, and produces life wherever it penetrates, and darkness, on the contrary, is a negation of light, a numb and dead

element,—so is the real strength of life in wisdom alone, whilst folly is vain, empty, and unsubstantial" (ELSTER).—Ver. 14. **The wise man's eyes are in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness.**—An assumed syllogism, in which the conclusion is wanting: "therefore, it stumbles and falls;" comp. John xi. 10. By the eyes which the wise man carries in his head, *i. e.*, in the right place, are meant, of course, the eyes of the understanding (Eph. i. 18), the inward organ of spiritual knowledge, the eye of the spirit (Prov. xx. 27; Matth. vi. 23, *etc.*). Comp. Cicero, *de Natura Deorum*, 2, 64. *Totam licet animis tamquam oculis lustrare terram.*—**And I myself perceived also that one event happeneth to them all.**—כִּי אֲנִי adversative, as iii. 13; iv. 8, 16. כִּי אֲנִי literal: occurrence, accident or chance; comp. ver. 15; iii. 19, *etc.*, which here clearly designate death, the physical end of man, the return to dust of one born of dust, as a destiny resting on the Divine curse (Gen. iii. 19).*—Ver. 15. **As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me.**—The general assertion of the latter clause of ver. 14 is now specially applied to the person of Koheleth, as belonging to the class of wise men.—נִסְיָאֵי קִרְיָאֵי literally: "I also, it will happen to me." The person being made prominent by the isolated pronoun in the nominative, placed at the beginning, as in Gen. xxiv. 27; Ezek. xxxiii. 17; 2 Chron. xxviii. 10.—**And why was I then more wise?**—That is, "what profits me now my great wisdom? what advantage does it afford me compared with the fool?" For this expression comp. 1 Cor. xv. 30; Gal. v. 11.—אֲנִי now, therefore, if such is the case, is said in view of the dying hour, from which the author looks back on the whole of his past life.—יִתְרֵן a participle used substantively, synonymous with יִתְרֵן; advantage, profit, here an adverb, excessively, too much. comp. vii. 16.—**That this also is vanity.**—"*This*," namely, the arrangement that the wise man dies as the fool, that the same night of death awaits them both. Observe

*[The word כִּי אֲנִי, though it may be rendered *chance*,

does not denote that which happens without a cause, but simply that which *oc-curs*. The same may be said of the Greek τυχη. The Hebrew word, however, may be better compared with the Homeric κῆρ, which it resembles in having the same radical consonants (κ ρ), though doubtless, etymologically, different [in this respect it agrees better with κῆρα]. It carries rather the sense of the *inevitable*, or of *doom*, like the Greek αἶσα, μοῖρα, which, with κῆρ, are used to denote death as the great *doom* of our race. So the Latin *fatam*, and so of all those old words. The earlier we go up in language, the less do we find in these or similar words any thought of chance or fate, in the atheistic sense, but rather the contrary—namely that of *decree* (*fatum*), destiny fixed by an intellectual power. So Koheleth seems to use כִּי אֲנִי here and the verb קִרְה. There is, in the whole context, a recognition of something more than a "*debt of nature*," an atheistical kind of language which our Christianity does not prevent us from using. The whole aspect of the passage favors the idea of an inevitable *doom* (decree, sentence) fixed upon the race, from which no wisdom, no virtue exempts. "Death hath passed upon all men for that all have sinned." To one who views them in their true and earliest character, these old Greek words above mentioned are the very echo of such a sentence. They are all used for death and often, in Homer and elsewhere, may be so rendered. The epithets joined with them show the same idea, as something inconsistent with the thought of chance, or blind physical law.—T. L.]

that Koheleth does not declare this disposition an injustice, but only as vanity, for a new phase of that fullness of vain, empty appearances which his experience in life has made him acquainted with. הִכָּר here signifies, as at the end of ver. 19 (also chap. viii. 10, 14), something objectively vain, in contrast to the vanity of subjective human thoughts, knowledge and efforts hitherto indicated by it. It means the same objective παραίτης of this lower world, derived from the fall, of which Paul, Rom. viii. 20, says, that the entire earthly creature, like man himself, is subjected to it.—Ver. 16. **For there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool forever**—*i. e.*, as is the fool, so is the wise man forgotten after his death; posterity thinks of the one as little as of the other. This assertion is, of course, to be relatively understood, like the similar one in chap. i. 11; not all posthumous fame of men is denied; it is simply asserted to be ordinarily and most generally the case, that posterity retains no special remembrance of those who have previously lived, which, in reference to the great majority * of individuals is certainly wholly true.—עִם הַפְּכִיל lit., "with the fool," is equivalent to "as the fool;" comp. vii. 10; Job ix. 26; xxxvii. 18.—לְעוֹלָם belongs in conception with וְכִרְוֹן, "no remembrance for eternity," the same as, no eternal remembrance, no lasting recollection.—**Seeing that which is now in the days to come shall all be forgotten.**—הַיָּמִים הַבָּאִים is the accusative of time, comp. Isa. xxvii. 6; Jer. xxviii. 16.—כִּי is to be connected with the verb, as also chap. ix. 6, and is therefore to be rendered: "because every thing will have long been forgotten" (נִשְׁכַּח the future past).—**And how dieth the wise man? as the fool!**—(A simple exclamation in the Ger.). A painful cry of lamentation. †

*[The emphasis here is on the word לְעוֹלָם, and it is asserted, whether hyperbolically or not, of all. No memory lasts forever, or for the world. The greatest fame, at last, goes out. In this respect, or in comparison with עוֹלָם the differences of time, in human fame, are regarded by the philo-sophical Seer as of no moment. A remembrance ever lost is equal to oblivion.—T. L.]

† ii. 16. וְאֵיךְ "Aad O, how is it?" It is an exclamatory burst of irrepressible feeling, laying open the very heart of the writer. It is the great mystery that perplexes him, but for which he knows there is some cause consistent with the Divine wisdom and justice. Some great doom [כִּרְה] like the Greek κῆρ, αἶσα μοῖρα has come upon all the race, the wise, the foolish, the just, the unjust, the unholy, the comparatively pure (see ix. 2, and for some fundamental moral reason applicable to them all alike,—as a race rather than as individuals. "*O, why is it?*" It is no scepticism in regard to God's righteous government, no denial of essential moral distinction; it is not an assertion of Epicurean recklessness on the one hand, or of a stoical fatality on the other, but a cry of anguish at a spectacle ever passing before his eyes, and which he fails clearly to comprehend. It is as though he were arguing with the sovereign Omnipotence. Like the language of Job and Habakkuk, in similar seasons of despondency, it seems to manifest, almost, a querulous tone of interrogatory: "Why is there no difference? "Why dost thou make men as the fishes of the sea?" [Hab. i. 14, and comp. Eccles. ix. 12, "why dealest thou thus with us? "What shall I do unto thee, O thou Watcher of men?" [Job vii. 20]. It seems almost irreverent, and yet there is no want about it, no suppression of the honest feeling of surprise, no artificial humility imposed on itself in the use of any formal language of resignation. Koh. i. th here appe r

which, by an appeal to the experience of the reader, is to represent what is asserted as uncontested.—Ver. 17. **Therefore I hated life.**—אֲנִי does not indicate the strong effect of actual hatred or hostile feeling, but the feeling of disgust, weariness, antipathy towards a thing. Comp. the Vulg.: *tædium me vitæ meæ*, and also for this same milder sense of the verb, Isa. xiv. 1; Amos v. 13; Malachi i. 3.—**Because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me.**—That is, the view of every thing occurring under the sun bore painfully upon me, tortured me with an oppressive feeling; comp. EWALD, *Manual*, § 217, *i. y.*; comp. also chap. i. 14.—Ver. 18.—**Yea, I hated all my labor, &c.**—Not simply the doings of men in general, but also his own exertions, appeared hateful to the Preacher, because they were vain and fruitless.—**Because I should leave it to the man that shall be after me**—that is, to my successor, heir; comp. ver. 12. He must leave to his heirs not the labor itself, but what he had acquired thereby, its fruit, its result, and this grieves him—why, the following verse tells.—For the form אֲנִי Imp. IIiph. from נָח comp. EWALD, § 122, *c.*—Ver. 19 heightens the thought of ver. 18, and thereby leads back definitively to ver. 12, as the starting point of the present reflection on the uncertainty and transitory nature of all earthly possessions (for wise men as well as for fools).—**Wherein I have labored, and wherein I have showed myself wise under the sun.**—וְשֶׁמְצַלְתִּי וְשֶׁחֲכַמְתִּי lit., “which I have obtained by trouble, and in which I have employed wisdom.” A zeugma for: by whose weary- some acquirement I have showed myself wise.

5. *Second Division, first strophe.*—Ver. 20-23. On account of the painful truth of what has just been demonstrated, one must despair of all external earthly success of this earthly life, as does the Preacher at the evening of his life.—**Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair.**—(Lit. Ger., “turned around”). וּכְפַתְוִי

like one complain- ing,—not in anger, but in grief. He seems to say, as Job said, “Suffer me to plead with thee.” It is that sublime style of *expostulation* which so strikes us, and, sometimes, almost terrifies us, in the grand Old Testament men of God. Our English Version is very tame: “and how death,” &c. The conjunction ו has, in fact, an interjectional force, making more marked the exclamation וְאֵן, by showing an emotional rather than a logical connection; as though it were something suddenly springing up, or irresistibly prompted by the previous soliloquizing utterance [see remarks on Job xxviii., and on the particle וְ, in the Introduction to Metrical Version, p. 177]: “Since the days come when all is forgotten; but O how is it!” (as it should be rendered instead of *and* since the conjunction is rather disjunctive than merely copulative, and, therefore, the more suggest- ve of emotion)! Alas, how is it, that the wise should die as dies the fool! See the Metrical Version. It does not mean that the wise man dieth in the same manner as the fool—that is, recklessly, stupidly, or despairingly, but rather that he dies as well as the fool; he, no more than the other, escapes the universal sentence that hath passed upon all men “for the reasons” given Gen. iii. 19; Rom. v. 12. To truth הַפְּכֵל הַפּוֹל, [literally, with the fool) can hardly mean, *wie der Thor*, in like manner as the fool, as ZÖCKLER holds—but rather, *in company* with the fool. It is companion o-hip, rather than other resemblance; and so, too, does the preposition keep its original sense in Eccles. vii. 11; Job iv. 26; xxviii. 18, the places to which ZÖCKLER refers.—T. L.] 21

different from וְנִתְּי ver. 12, does not mean to turn in order to see any thing, but a turning around in order to do something, comp. vii. 25; 1 Sam. xxii. 17. 18. The idea of turning from a former occupation is also included.*—The Piel אֲנִי to permit to despair, to give up to despair, is only found here in the O. T.; the Niph. נִיאָשׁ *desperavit* is more usual (or also the neuter participle: *desperatum est*), whilst the Kal does not occur.—Ver. 21. **For there is a man whose labor is in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity.**—Lit., whose labor is with wisdom, &c. (שֶׁעָבַד בְּחֵכְמָה), or also: whose labor has been, &c.; for הָיָה the verb supplemented to עָבַד, can express both a present and a perfect sense. Wisdom is not here designated as the aim of labor, as EWALD supposes (“whose labor aims after wisdom”), but as the means whereby the aim of עָבַד, the fruit of human exertion shall be attained. Besides wisdom, knowledge and equity are also named as means to this end. (עָבַד comp. i. 16, 18; ii. 26); for this is what כְּשֶׁרוֹן here means, not success, favorable result, as chap. v. 9. The Sept. is also correct, *ἀνεπίετα*, and substantially so also the Vulg. (*solicitude*), and LUTHER (ability, capability).—**Yet to a man who has not labored therein shall he leave it for his portion.**—שָׁלַח עָבַד-בּוֹ; for בּוֹ refers to the principal thought of the preceding clause, and not to חֵכְמָה. For עָבַד בְּ, to labor for a thing; comp. Jonah iv. 10. The suffix יִתְּנֵנוּ also refers to עָבַד, and חֵלְקוֹ is a second object: “he gives it to him as his portion, his share”—Ver. 22. **For what hath man of all his labor.** הָיָה lit.: falls to, falls suddenly down upon (Job xxxvii. 6); in the later Chaldaic style, to happen, to become, to be appointed to; comp. xi. 2; Neh. vi. 6.—**And of the vexation of his heart.**—Herewith are principally, if not exclusively, meant these three synonyms: Wisdom, knowledge and equity, ver. 21. The aspiration of the heart is the essence of the plans and designs which form the motive of the labor and exertion of man, and give to them their direction and definite aim.—Ver. 22. **Wherein he hath labored under the sun.**

—The relative refers to עָבַדוֹ as well as to לְבוֹ. —Ver. 23. **For all his days are sorrows and his travail grief.**—עֲנִינֵנוּ comp. i. 13) bears here again the meaning of daily labor (HITZIG, ELSTER, VAHINGER, &c.), a stronger expression that would remind us of Ps. xlii. 3. Comp. also Ps. xc. 10.—**Yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night**—that is, it remaineth awake, troubled by anxious thoughts and plans, or tortured by unquiet dreams; comp. v. 12; Song of Solomon v. 2.

6. *Second Division, second strophe.*—Vers. 24-26. We are not always to remain in this aban-

*[It may be rather said that כָּפַתְוִי, here, is simply intensive of כָּפַתְוִי. It means to turn round and round—indicating perplexity, wanderings, or evolutions of mind—*Irresolve*. See Metrical Version.—T. L.]

donment of hope of external happiness, but to seek the necessary contentment of the heart in the cheerful and grateful enjoyment of the blessings of life, which God bestows on those of His children who find favor in His sight; and even this enjoyment is something vain and futile, so far as it does not stand in the power of man, but must be graciously conferred by God.—There is nothing better for man than that he should eat and drink, etc.—The words אֵין טוֹב

אֵין טוֹב בְּאֵדָם שֵׂאֵכֵל וְגוֹ permit a threefold conception: 1. Interrogative: "Is it not better for man to eat," etc. (thus LUTHER, OETINGER, HENGSTENBERG, and the Vulg.: "*Nonne melius est comedere et bibere,*" etc.). 2. Purely negative: "There is no happiness for the man who eats," etc. (thus the Sept., M. GELER, DATHE, KNOBEL, HAHN). 3. On the supposition of the omission of מִן or of אֵין טוֹב before שֵׂאֵכֵל, "there is no happiness for man but in eating." This last translation has the most to recommend it,* be-

*[This supposition that would supply אֵין טוֹב before שֵׂאֵכֵל, is a very old one, for it is referred to, although not fully endorsed, by RASHI and ABEN EZZA, and is also mentioned by the grammarian JONA BEN GANNACH (*Abul Fahlid*) to Sect. 26, on Ellipsis. It is admitted, however, that there is not a trace of it in any ancient manuscript, or in any various reading. It is maintained solely on the ground of a supposed exigentia loci. There is wanted, it is thought, the sense that such an insertion would give to bring it in harmony with some other passages, as they are mentioned by ZÖCKLER, and especially ix. 7-9. Now in respect to these it may be said, that if there were a real or seeming variance, such a fact would present no exegetical difficulty to one who takes the right view of this book as a series of meditations in which the writer, or utterer, to use his own expression, "*revolves*" (כִּכּוֹתָהּ ii. 20), goes round and round, trying and testing different views of human life,

"talking to his heart" (אִכְרַת אֵל לִבִּי), now taking up one supposition, then "turning again" to another, now responding, then again so sure that he says "דַּעְתִּי, "I know,"—at another time indulging what is evidently a sorrowing irony, such as especially characterizes ix. 7-9, as compared with xi. 9 (see the Exeget. and notes on these, and especially the two latter, in their respective places). The mere variance, therefore, whether seeming or real, is not sufficient to warrant so bold an interpolation into the text, unless there is a failure in obtaining any good sense at all from the passage as it stands. But this surely cannot be pretended. What better thought, and, at the same time, more literal as a version, than that given by the LXX., οὐκ ἔστιν ἀγαθὸν ἀνθρώπου ὃ φάγεται, κ. τ. λ.: "it is not good for man." or "the good is not for man what he eats," or "that he eat," etc., which is favored by DATHE, KNOBEL, and HAHN. Or perhaps, still better than this, if we regard the context, is the translation of MARTIN GELER which he gives from JUNIUS, non est bonum penes hominem ut edat, bibat, etc.: "the good is not in the power of man that he should eat and drink," etc. for this I saw is from the hand of God himself." Thus, says GELER, all things remain in their native sense, and there is no need of any ellipsis. It might be rendered, perhaps, "it is not the good for man (his summum bonum) to eat and drink;" or if that is regarded as too philosophical for Koheleth, and also as demanding the article, it may be rendered simply, "it is not good," or "there is no good in it" (of itself). TREMELLIS translates in the same way, non est bonum penes hominem, etc. The general sense then would be this: whatever good there may be in eating and drinking, etc. it is not in man's power to secure it, or to find enjoyment in it ("make his soul see good in it"); and this is in such admirable harmony with the context: "it is the gift of God." The preposition בְּ

בְּאֵדָם has this sense, as may be shown in many passages, and it corresponds exactly to our own most natural mode of speech: it is not in him. Even the power to enjoy comes from God. It is not strange that Rationalist Commentators should seek to give an Epicurean aspect to the passage, but it is rather of surprise that others called Evangelical should go out of their way to follow them. The interpretation thus given, as the most literal one, is also in perfect harmony with other passages, or rather, we might say, that the

cause the interrogative and the unconditional negative conception do not so well comport with the context, and because this latter especially would be in contradiction with the passages of chap. iii. 12, 22; v. 18 ff.; vii. 14; viii. 15; ix. 7-9, which recommend serene enjoyment of life as a means of acquiring happiness and contentment. And because, further, the ancient Aramaic translations confirm the omission of אֵין (compare iii.

positive unqualified commendation of the gross Epicurean sentiment which the interpretation would give is in direct contradiction to the many declarations of vanity and worthlessness in respect to all mere wealth and pleasure-seeking, which are elsewhere found. This might be set off against the other assertion of variance, if either can be regarded as a right mode of exegesis in this book.

At all events, the literal rendering is all sufficient here—whilst the fair interpretation of other seemingly Epicurean passages only shows, as we think, a difference of aspect under which the great question is considered, but no contradiction to that doctrine which the writer is throughout most earnest to put forth as one of the fundamental ideas of his book, namely, that all good is from God, and that nothing is good without Him. See the Metrical Version: The consciousness of this, not eating, etc., is the highest good.

RASHI interprets the אֵין טוֹב as meaning that "the good is not simply that man should eat, etc., or it is not in eating alone; as much as to say, he should give his heart to judgment and righteousness, together with his eating and drinking;" and then he proceeds to give historical illustration.

ABEN EZZA suggests the supplying (in the mind) of some such particle as אֵין, meaning, not this only good, or that it is not good, in man, or for man, that he should only eat and drink, etc. Again, he seems to lay emphasis on the word בְּעִמְלוֹ (in his toil), giving it as the general sense of the text, as it stands, that "this toil, with its weariness adds no other good (no higher good) than to eat and drink,"—thus shutting out any Epicurean idea and making it a deprivation of human effort rather than a commendation of sensual pleasure, in itself, as the best thing in life.

The Syriac inserts אֵלָא, unless, without any thing to correspond to it in the Hebrew, and having very much the appearance of an accommodation to some later view, since it will not answer as a rendering of מִן comparative

(כִּשְׂאֵכֵל) or מִן אֵין טוֹב, as proposed. Besides this, it would not give the bald Epicurean idea of our translation that "eating is the best thing for man," but only that there is no good in man's power (or as proposed in human toil), unless it be this,—a sense which would resemble that of ABEN EZZA.

So also the Targum has אֵלָהּ דִּי יֵכֹּל דִּי אֵיִן טוֹב, "unless that he eat," etc., but this version is of little or no authority, on account of its later date, and the paraphrastic absurdity of its midrashin. The sense given by it, however, is quite different from that given in E. V. or by ZÖCKLER: "There is nothing that is fair among men, unless to eat," etc.; and then it goes on to say לְמַעַן יֵבֶר יָת וְגוֹ

פְּקִירָה רַיִן "that they may do the commandments of the Lord, and walk in his ways." If it be said; that there is nothing in the Hebrew text to warrant this, it may be replied that so, also, is there nothing to warrant the insertion of אֵלָהּ (unless), by which he supports this paraphrastic sense. It all seems evidently done to get a middle way between two views deemed untenable or inconsistent,—one asserting, or seeming to asse, that there was no good at all in eating, etc., and the other that it was the highest and only good.

A strong argument for the literal rendering is derived from the context. The particle אֵין has an adversative and accumulative force; it denotes a rising in the thought. It connects itself here especially with the last part of what precedes: that he should make his soul see good (or find enjoyment in it): "The good is not in the power of man that he should eat, etc., and make his soul see good" (or "so that he may make his soul see good in it," taken as a collective object); "yea, what is more [אֵין], this

22) before שִׂאֵכֶל, an omission which, on account of the הֵן in אֲכָלְתֶּם, and the like ending, might so easily take place, and finally because the idea of הֵן in אֲכָלְתֶּם with the sense of ל, consequently in a sense designating an object, is confirmed by chap. iii. 12; x. 17; and the instrumental conception of this attempted by GEIER and KNOBEL, is therefore unnecessary.* To eat and drink, and let one's soul be merry, is therefore the triad of sensual life, which is sometimes used in a bad sense, of vicious excess and indulgence, and again in a good or morally unprejudicial sense. The former is found in Exodus xxxii. 6; Prov. xxiii. 7, 8; Judith xii. 13; 1 Cor. x. 17, etc., the latter in this passage, and in Eccles. iii. 13; v. 17; viii. 15; and also in 1 Sam. xxx. 16; Isa. lxx. 13; Song of Solomon v. 1, etc. Comp. ZÖCKLER, *Theologia Naturalis*, p. 651 f., where are also produced from the classics many parallels of this combination of ideas in eating, drinking, and being merry; (e. g., *Euripides, Alcest.*, 783; *Arrian, Anab.*, II. 5, 4; *Plautus, Mil. glor.*, III., 1, 83).—That these maxims, to eat, drink, and be merry, are not here meant in the Epicurean sense of 1 Cor. xv. 32, is proved by the important addition בְּעִצְלָתוֹ in his labor, in his toil, on which a special emphasis rests, and which excludes every thought of idle debauchery and luxurious enjoyment. See *Int.* § 5, and especially p. 24.—**This also I saw, that it was from the hand of God.** That is, not: I observed that as all else, so also this comes from the hand of God, but, at the same time with that truth, that eating, drinking, etc., is the best for man, I perceived also that only the hand of God can bestow such cheerfulness in toil, and such a joyous and contented feeling in the midst of the fatigues of worldly avocations.—**Ver. 25. For who can eat, or who else can hasten hereunto more than I?** Lit. Ger., and who enjoy, except from Him? הֵשֶׁה לִי, to make merry, to pass a life in carousing, *delicium affluere* (Vulg.) hence to enjoy, to delight, not drink, tittle (*Sept. Syr.*, EWALD).—Instead of הֵשֶׁה לִי הֵינִי כִּפְנֵי we must read with the *Sept.*, *Syr.*, *HERONYMUS* and eight manuscripts הֵינִי כִּפְנֵי *except from Him.* For הֵינִי כִּפְנֵי in the comparative sense, “except me,” or just as I, does not afford a thought in accordance with the text,

too [הֵן] emphatic [I saw was the gift of God,] the power of enjoyment as well as the means. If there is any good in the *n* (such is the implication), it comes from above. This clearly denotes that there is a higher good, even the consciousness and recognition of the truth thus stated. It is therefore in logical opposition to the idea that there is nothing better for man than eating and drinking thus unqualifiedly asserted. Every reader must feel that there is something disjointed in our common English Version. It does not bring out the contrast, nor the climax. The other is not only the plainer and more literal translation of the Hebrew, as it stands, but the assertion may be ventured that there is no obtaining any other sense out of it.—T. L.]

*[The sense given to הֵן by GEIER, JUNIUS, and TREMELIUS, is not only more common, but far more easy and natural. The references to iii. 12; x. 17, do not confirm the rendering given by ZÖCKLER. אֲכָלְתֶּם in iii. 12, more properly refers to the works of men taken collectively, above; or if it refers to one, it means there, as here, in *them*,—in *their power*.—T. L.]

and would not harmonize with the הֵשֶׁה לִי and אֲכָלְתֶּם (see *Vulg.*, LUTHER, etc.). But the translation of HAHN: “for who shall eat and who shall pine for food, is beyond me, is beyond my power,” is insufferably harsh. On the contrary, הֵשֶׁה לִי from *Him* (comp. the preposition מִן in 2 Sam. iii. 37; 1 Kings xx. 33), accords admirably with the connection, and furnishes that thought reminding us of James i. 17, which we here above all things need. And, moreover, the reading הֵשֶׁה לִי appears to coincide with the

equally faulty שִׂאֵכֶל for מְשִׂאֵכֶל of the preceding verse. See HIRTIG on this passage.*—**Ver. 26. For to the man that is good in his sight,** that is, to the just and God-fearing (comp. Neh. ii. 5; 1 Sam. xxix. 6), the opposite of הוֹטֵא. The idea of the retributive justice of God, meets us here for the first time in this book, but not yet so thoroughly developed as subsequently, e. g., iii. 17; xi. 8; xii. 14.—**But to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up.** לְחוֹטֵא stands absolute and is not to be supplemented by a new לִפְנֵי (like the טוֹב of the first clause of the verse), as if the sense were, to the one who is offensive to Him, who is a sinner in His sight. **That he may give to him that is good before God.** The object of לְחוֹטֵא is not the travail of the sinner, but the goods gathered by him through toil and travail, the treasures heaped up by him, but finally falling to the just. The same thought occurs in Prov. xiii. 22; xxviii. 8; Job xxvii. 17.—**This also is vanity and vexation of spirit,** namely, that one seeks his happiness in the cheerful enjoyment of sensual blessings, (according to the maxim in verse 24). This is also vanity, because the acquisition of goods and pleasures in this life, is by no means in the power of man, but depends solely on the free grace of God, which gives to its beloved while sleeping. (Ps. cxxvii. 2); but permits the wicked, instead of pleasures, to heap up vain wrath against the day of judgment, (Rom. ii. 5; James v. 3). Others consider the heaping up of travail on the part of the wicked, as the subject of the phrase (ELSTER and HENGSTENBERG), or that it designates the arbitrary distribution of the blessings of life on the part of God as vanity and vexation (KNOBEL), but thereby they depart equally far from the true train of thought which the author maintains since verse 24.

*[We cannot agree with ZÖCKLER and HIRTIG here. The sense they would give to הֵשֶׁה לִי is found nowhere else in the Hebrew, unless it is thrust into this place. Everywhere else, 1 Sam. xx. 33; Deut. xxxii. 35; Ps. cxix. 60; Hab. i. 18; Ps. xx. 20; xxxviii. 23; xl. 14; lxx. 20; lxxi. 12; Job xx. 2; Isa. v. 19; lx. 22, etc., etc.; it means simply to *hasten*, and there is no need of going to the

Arabic حَس or Syriac חֶש, which in form would correspond rather to חֶשֶׁשׁ. Besides, it requires a change in the text from כִּפְנֵי to אֲכָלְתֶּם which has no original *keri* to support it, and gives, moreover a very far-fetched sense. See *TEXT NOTE and Metrical Version*. Nothing could be more fitting than the sense which corresponds to the Hebrew as it stands.—T. L.]

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

(With Homiletical Hints.)

The transition of KOHELETH in the beginning of the chapter, especially in vers. 1-8, from the striving after wisdom and knowledge to enjoyment, and from that to action, to the organizing and artificially producing deed (vers. 4-8) presents a certain similarity with the progress of GOETHE'S *Faust* from knowledge to enjoyment, and from that (in the sec. act) to the more serious duty of laboring and producing. For the magnificent undertakings, structures, and extension of possessions and acquirements described in vers. 4-8, can scarcely be considered as mere means of sensual enjoyment in the sense of KOHELETH (as in ELSTER, p. 55). He expressly confesses to have connected therewith a certain ideal object, if not of a religious, at least of an ethical and human character: this lies in the repeated assertion (ver. 3 and 9), that in the midst of these endemonistic and practical efforts, wisdom remained the ruler of his heart. But the great difference between *Faust* and the Preacher, consists in the final solution of the grand enigma of earthly life, which in the former ends in an obscure, sentimental, and philosophical mysticism, whilst the latter returns from his wanderings in the sphere of effort after earthly wisdom, enjoyment and acquisition, into the safe haven of a clearly conscious, modestly practical, and filially pious faith in God's gracious and just government of the world. It is the humble, confidently trusting, and gratefully contented reliance on God's gracious hand, which, at the close of his vivid and almost startling description of the vanity of all earthly things, he recommends as the only true aim for the life and labors of man, (vers. 21-26). That all human exertions are vanity, even that modest striving after cheerful enjoyment and serene employment described in ver. 24, is firmly fixed in his mind, (according to ver. 26). But the acknowledgment of this fact does not impel him to a sullen despair of all happiness and peace, but rather leads from such a feeling of discontent and discouragement into the blissful repose of a heart wholly given to God, and thankfully enjoying the good and perfect gifts dispensed by Him. Not the indolent man of enjoyment, but the industrious, cheerful laborer; not the greedily grasping misanthropic miser, but the friend of humanity delighting in God, and well-pleasing to Him; not the sinner, but the pious child of God, strong in the faith, forms the ideal that he presents at the close of his observations on the vanity of human life, which, though agitated and complaining indeed, nowhere extend to despairing grief or frivolous scepticism.

A comprehensive homiletical consideration of the whole chapter, would, therefore, be able to present as its theme: "*The vanity of all earthly things, and the consoling power of a faithful reliance on God;*" or, in order to show more clearly the feature distinguishing this chapter from the preceding: "*The wrong and the right way to seek one's happiness on earth;*" or: "*Divine grace as the bestower of that happiness of men, vainly sought after by their own power and with earthly means,*"

(comp. the following passages in the N. T.: John vi. 65; xv. 5; Eph. ii. 8; James i. 17, etc.). The principal divisions for a discourse on these contents would be: 1. No earthly enjoyment or possession leads to genuine happiness, (1-11); 2. Even the happiest and wisest man remains subject to the curse of death, common to all the sons of men, (12-19); 3. Genuine and lasting happiness (surviving this life) can only be obtained for man by a childlike, contented, and grateful reliance on God's gracious and paternal hand, (20-26).

HOMILETICAL HINTS TO SEPARATE PASSAGES.

VERS. 1 and 2. LUTHER: Many a one arranges all his matters with much toil and trouble, that he may have repose and peace in his old age, but God disposes otherwise, so that he comes into affairs that cause his unrest then to commence. Many a one seeks his joy in lust and licentiousness, and his life is embittered ever after. Therefore, if God does not give joy and pleasure, but we strive after it, and endeavor to create it of ourselves, no good will come of it, but it is, as Solomon says, all vanity. The best gladness and delight are those which one does not seek (for a fly may easily fall into our broth), but that which God gives to our hand.

STARKE: The joy of the world is so constituted that it entails repentance, mortification, and grief (1 John ii. 17; Luke xvi. 19, 23); but the pleasure that the faithful find in God, is spiritual, constant, satisfying, and inexpressible, (Isa. xxxv. 10; John xvi. 22).

STARKE: Vers 3 ff.: Every natural man seeks, in his way, his heaven in sensual delights. But he too often sins thereby, and misuses the gifts of God (Wisdom 2, 6 ff.). God grants to man what is necessary to his body, as well as that which tends to his comfort. But how many forget God thereby!

GEIER: It is allowable to possess riches if they have been righteously acquired. But beware of avarice as well as extravagance.

WOHLFARTH: He who thinks to find the aim of his life in the highest measure of sensual enjoyment, is the victim of an error which will demand of him a fearful revenge in proportion as he tears himself from God, strives simply after false treasures, and neglects and despises the treasures of a higher world; he heaps upon himself a weighty responsibility on account of the misuse of his time, the wasting of his powers, and the evil administration of the goods confided to him by God, and by all this excludes himself, unconditionally, from the kingdom of God.

HANSEN:—9-11. The things of this world belong to the preservation, delight and convenience of external, sensual life. One may arrange them, therefore, with as much pomp, majesty and beauty as is possible; they can never, according to their nature, do more than delight our senses.—If we estimate their worth too high, they can take from us in inward ease of mind much more than they grant us in sensual delights and convenience, and become to us then a genuine scourge of the spirit.

STARKE:—If the children of the world are not without vexation and trouble in the accomplish-

ment of their sinful lusts, the children of God should be less surprised, if they in their work in the Lord meet experience various disappointments and vexations.

HAMANN (Ver. 10):—We here find a trace of Divine goodness, which, notwithstanding the vanity of all our works, has placed in labor, and especially in useful occupations, which strike the eye and gain our approbation as well as that of others, a species of joy, a spice of pleasure which delights us more than the work itself, because we often do not esteem that which was so agreeable to us in the process of production.

LURNER:—Vers. 12-19. (To ver. 15). Therefore it is better to commend the highest government of all things to the God who made us. Let every one perform his duty with all diligence, and execute what God places to his hand; if things do not always turn out as we expected, let us commend them to God. What God gives, that accept; and again, what He prevents, that accept also as good. What we are able to do, that we ought to do; what we cannot do, we must leave undone. The stone that thou art not able to lift, thou must leave lying.

GEATICH (to ver. 17):—If God has disappeared from the efforts of men, a disgust of life appears sooner or later (John iv. 8 ff.).

GEIER (to vers. 18, 19):—It is hard for flesh and blood to leave the fruits of its toil to others; but a Christian arms himself against this with the reflection that every thing that he has or does is given to him by God, 1 Cor. iv. 7.

WOHLFARTH (vers. 13-19):—What must we feel it our duty to do, on perceiving that the earth can afford no perfect satisfaction to our demand for happiness?—The wise man is pained on perceiving that all earthly things are vain and unsatisfactory; his eye indeed becomes serious, and his expression reflective. But for that very reason, he hears not only the cry of the grave, but also the words of consolation: "Lift up thy eye, citizen of heaven in the garb of a pilgrim; true as it is, that the world with all its treasures cannot satisfy thy longing for what is lasting and perfect, so foolish is it to seek therein peace and perfect satisfaction."

ZEYSS (vers. 20-23):—This life is full of trouble throughout, with all men and all classes. Why should we not, therefore, ardently long for a better life? (Phil. iii. 14).—**STARKE**:—The travail of soul, by which one obtains salvation through fear and trembling, is therein different from worldly toil, in bearing its profit unto eternal life.

OSLANDER (vers. 24-26):—It is pleasing to God that we should cheerfully enjoy our labor in His fear, so much as our calling may permit it, Ps. cxxviii. 1, 2.

JOACHIM LANGE:—According as man is virtuous or vicious, even his eating and drinking is good or evil. Because the natural man lives either in a state of fleshly security or of servitude, and there is nothing really good in him

that avails with God and satisfies the conscience.

STARKE (ver. 26):—Seek above all things to please God by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; else, with all external happiness, thou art still unhappy. The wicked often have worldly goods, and seek in every way to increase them; but they do not have real profit and lasting fruit from them, because their works do not proceed from the faith. He, on the contrary, who possesses the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. v. 22) and is faithful therein, is ever favored by God with greater mercy (Matth. v. 28, 29).

HANSEN (ver. 26):—If we examine it closely, the want of genuine wisdom and pure knowledge is the reason why many do not prosper in the blessings which they possess in the world. Men of impure and confused conceptions, who are fettered by dazzling imaginations, must suffer with all their abundance, and lead a miserable life.

HAMANN (ver. 26):—All the vanity, all the toilings of men after wisdom, happiness and rest, which in so many ways lead men to the grave, where ceases all the distinction which they strive to obtain on earth, are not allotted to the pious man by God; they are a curse which sin has laid upon man, but which God will make a blessing to His chosen ones. For these busy, restless creatures gather and heap up for those who are good in God's eyes. And these latter shall gratuitously receive by the sinner's labor what he (the sinner) seeks and finds not, what he labors for and cannot enjoy: wisdom, knowledge, joy.—What is the Divine word, and whence are taken this wisdom, knowledge and joy that in it exist? Are they not honey made by bees in the slain beast? What are the stories that they tell us but examples of sinners' toil, of the vanity and folly into which men have fallen?

HENGSTENBERG (ver. 26):—It is manifest that the expression: "This also is vanity" is not meant in the sense of an accusation of God, but as a cry of warning to human perverseness, that seeks its happiness only there where, according to God's will, it should not be sought.

[For reflections on this and other parts of the book, the reader is referred to **MATTHEW HENRY**. In no commentary is there to be found a richer treasure of most choice, discriminating and highly spiritual apothegms, rendered most pleasing and ornate by what may be styled a holy humor, or a sanctified wit. They are unsurpassed by any thing in the devout German writers here quoted, but the ready access to the work, for all English readers, renders it unnecessary that the volume should be swelled by inserting them. Besides, among such rich materials, it would not be easy to make a limited selection. Much also of a very rich homiletical character may be obtained from **WORDSWORTH**.—T. L.]

SECOND DISCOURSE.

Of Earthly Happiness, its Impediments and Means of Advancement.

CHAP. 3-5.

- A. The substance of earthly happiness or success consists in grateful joy of this life, and a righteous use of it.

CHAP. III. 1-22.

- 1 The reasons for the temporal restriction of human happiness (consisting in the entire dependence of all human action and effort on an unchangeable, higher system of things).

(VERS. 1-11.)

1 To every *thing there is* a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven :
 2 A time to be born, and a time to die ; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up *that*
 3 *which is* planted ; A time to kill, and a time to heal ; a time to break down, and a
 4 time to build up ; A time to weep, and a time to laugh ; a time to mourn, and a
 5 time to dance ; A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together ; a
 6 time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing ; A time to get, and a time
 7 to lose ; a time to keep, and a time to cast away ; A time to rend, and a time to
 8 sew ; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak ; A time to love, and a time to
 9 hate ; a time of war, and a time of peace. What profit hath he that worketh in
 10 that wherein he laboureth ? I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the
 11 sons of men to be exercised in it. He hath made every *thing* beautiful in his time ;
 also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that
 God maketh from the beginning to the end.

2. The nature of the temporally restricted human happiness.

(VERS. 12-22.)

12 I know that *there is* no good in them, but for a *man* to rejoice, and to do good in
 13 his life. And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all
 14 his labour ; it *is* the gift of God. I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be
 15 for ever : nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it : and God doeth *it*,
 16 that *men* should fear before him. That which hath been is now ; and that which
 17 is to be hath already been ; and God requireth that which is past. And moreover
 18 I saw under the sun the place of judgment, *that* wickedness *was* there ; and the
 19 place of righteousness, *that* iniquity *was* there. I said in mine heart, God shall
 20 judge the righteous and the wicked : for *there is* a time there for every purpose and
 21 for every work. I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that
 22 God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts.
 For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts ; even one thing befalleth
 them : as the one dieth, so dieth the other ; yea, they have all one breath ; so that
 a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast : for all *is* vanity. All go unto one
 place ; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth the spirit of
 man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the
 earth ? Wherefore I perceive that *there is* nothing better, than that a man should
 rejoice in his own works ; for that *is* his portion : for who shall bring him to see
 what shall be after him ?

[Ver. 1.—**זמן**: This is one of the words relied upon to prove the later Hebraic, or Chaldaic, period of the book. We have, however, no right to say that a word running through the Semitic tongues [as this is found in Arabic, Syriac, Ethiopic, as well as Hebrew] is peculiar to any one of them, or borrowed from any one of them, though circumstances may have made it rare in an early dialect, perhaps on account of a precision of meaning rarely needed, whilst it has become loose and vulgarized in another. It may have been well known in the days of Solomon, though seldom used when the more indefinite **עת** would answer. **עת** means time generally, **מועד** a fixed time (like a yearly festival), **זמן** in its earlier sense, before it became vulgarized, a time or an occasion precisely adapted to a purpose. Hence we see its very

probable connection with **זמן** *propositi*, and having also the sense of *binding*, like Arabic **زم** the purpose linked

to the due occasion. This suits all the acts following, as more or less the result of purpose in a time proposed. It has good support, too, etymologically, in the final **ז** changing to the **ז** as is the tendency in other words. Thus, besides other examples, Lam. iii. 22, according to Rabbi Tanchum, **תמוס** becomes **תמן** to avoid the harshness of the final **ס**, making **תמן** = **תמוס** "they are not consumed," or spent [that is, the mercies of the Lord], instead of "we are not consumed." We may be assured that the writer did not intend a tautology here **זמן** is more precise than **עת**, as it has more of purpose—thaa **מועד**, which relates to things immovable.—T. L.]

[Ver. 18.—**על-דברתם**. E. V. *On account of the sons of men*. Compare Ps. cx. 4, *after the manner of*. LXX., *περι λαλιᾶς* Vulgate, simply, *de filiis*. Syriac **על כמולא** *after the speech of men—more humano—humanly speaking*, which seems the most suitable of any, for reasons given in the Exeget. and Note.—T. L.]

[Ver. 18.—**המה להם** Literally, *themselves to themselves—in their own estimation*. **להם**, to prove them—make it clear, literally, (LXX., *διακριθεὶς αὐτοῦς*. Vulg. *ut probaret*) let them see from themselves, or from their own conduct to themselves, how like beasts they are. This qualified sense is very different from asserting that they are beasts absolutely. The key to it all is in the **על דברתם** above. The writer is speaking *more humano*—the judgment that must be pronounced if men were judged by their own way.—T. L.]

[Ver. 21.—**התלה**. It can only mean, as it stands in the text, "that which goeth up." An effort has been made to give it another turn by printing **ה** as interrogative. It is sufficient to say that it is against the text. For other reasons against it, see Exeget. and Note.—T. L.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

The unconditional dependence of man on God's government of the world, in all his efforts for happiness, which formed the concluding thought of the preceding discourse (chap. ii. 24-26), now becomes the starting point of a new and independent reflection, in so far as temporal conditions and restrictions of human happiness are deduced therefrom, and its essence is placed in gratefully cheerful enjoyment and a devout use of the earthly blessings bestowed by God. For Divine Providence in its controlling power here below will ever remain obscure and mysterious, so that man, in this its hidden side, can neither alter its course nor observe any other conduct than humble submission and godly fear (vers. 9-11, 14, 15). In the same way the view of the many wrongs in this life, and of the extreme obscurity and concealment of the fate that will overtake individual souls after death, obliges us to cling to the principle of a cheerful, confiding and contented enjoyment of the present (vers. 16-20).—In the more special development of this train of thought, we may either (with VAIBINGER and KEIL) make three principal sections or strophes of the chapter (vers. 1-8; vers. 9-15, and vers. 16-22), or, what appears more logical, two halves; of which each is divided into sections of unequal length. 1. Vers. 1-11 show the reason for the temporal restriction of the earthly happiness of man—a, as consisting in the dependence of all human action on time and circumstances (vers. 1-8); b, as consisting in the short-sightedness and feebleness of human knowledge in contrast with the endless wisdom and omniscience of God (vers. 9-11). 2. Vers. 12-22 describe human happiness in its nature as temporally restricted and imperfect—a, with refer-

ence to the awe-inspiring immutability of those decrees of God which determine human fate (vers. 12-15); b, with reference to the secret ways adopted by Divine justice, in rewarding the good and punishing the evil in this world, and still more in the world beyond (vers. 16-22).

2. *First Division, first strophe.*—Ver. 1-8. Every human action and effort are subject to the law of time and temporal change.—**To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven.**—"Every thing," namely, every thing that man undertakes or does on earth; a very general expression, more clearly defined by the following **בְּלִי-חֶפְזִין** every business, every undertaking, but more clearly illustrated in the subsequent verses in a number of special examples.—**זמן** lit., precision, limitation, indicates in later style (Neh. ii. 6; Esth. ix. 27, 31), a certain period, a term for any thing, whilst the more common **עת** (time) signifies a division of time in general.—Ver. 2. **A time to be born and a time to die.**—This is the original text. Zöckl. renders, "its time," to the 8th verse.* The Sept. and the Vulg. express this construction genitively (*καὶρὸς τοῦ γένεσθαι κ. τ. λ., tempus nascendi, etc*) The word **לָדַת** does not stand for the passive **לְהֵיבֵר** to be born (Vulg., LUTHER, EWALD, GESNIUS, ELSTER), but like all the following infinitives, is to be taken actively: to bear. The constant usage of the Old Testament favors this rendering with reference to the verb **לָרַב**, and also the circumstance that with **לָדַת** an un-

*[ZÖCKLER renders "its time to be born and its time to die," making it all dependent (this and the following verses) on the first "every thing has its time." On **זמן** see Text notes.—T. L.]

dertaking (הִרְצִי), a conscious and intentional action or business is to be named, which can only be said of the maternal part of the act of human birth, and not of that of the child. Death fittingly follows closely to birth. By this juxtaposition of the acts which mark the entrance into life and the exit from it, the whole arena within which the subsequent actions are performed, is from the beginning "marked by its fixed limits" (Hirtzig). **A time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted.**—For the affinity between these two ideas and that of birth and death, comp. Prov. xii. 12; Ps. i. 37; xxxvii. 35 f.; xcii. 13 f.; cxxviii. 3; Dan. iv. 11, 20; Matth. iii. 8-10; vii. 17 f.; xv. 18. לְעֵקֶר probably from Chald.* עֵקֶר "root," means originally to root out, to unroot, but is always elsewhere in the O. T. used metaphorically, e. g., of the destruction of cities (Zeph. ii. 4), of striking down horses or oxen, and making them useless by severing the sinews of their hind feet (Gen. xlix. 6).—Ver. 3.—**A time to kill and a time to heal.**—A negative thought here precedes, as also in the subsequent clauses, till the first of ver. 5, after which, until the end, the positive or negative idea alternately precedes. "To kill" (הִרְיֹג lit., cut down, or stab) indicates the inflicting of the very wounds whose healing the following verb points out.—Ver. 4. **A time to weep, etc.**—לְכַבֵּת appears only on account of similarity of sound to be placed immediately after לְבַנֹּת, as in the following clause: רָקוּד to leap, to dance, appears to be chosen on account of its like sounding ending as a contrast to כָּבַד to lament (κόπτεσθαι, plangere).†—Ver. 5. **A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together.**—In this first expression there is, of course, no allusion to the destruction of the temple, of which, according to Mark xiii. 2, not one stone shall remain upon another (as HENGSTENBERG and others think), and quite as little to the stoning of malefactors, or to the throwing of stones on the fields of enemies, according to 2 Kings iii. 19, 25 (HIRTZIG,

ELSTER, etc. But הִשְׁלִךְ אֲבָנִים is here identical with בָּקַל "to free from stones," Isa. v. 2; lxii. 10, and alludes therefore to the gathering and throwing away of stones from the fields, vineyards, etc.; whilst the latter expression naturally means the collecting of stones for the construction of houses (as VAHINGER justly observes).—**A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing.**—Whether the connection of the preceding expressions with חִבֵּק to embrace, is really effected by the fact that one embraces with the hand the stone to be cast, as HIRTZIG supposes, is very doubtful. At all events, however, חִבֵּק means the embrace of love (Prov. v. 20), and the intensive in the second rank is purposely placed there to indicate that every excess of sexual intercourse is injurious.—Ver. 6. **A time to get, and a time to lose.**—אָבָר as a contrast to שָׁבַט must clearly here mean to lose (or also to be lost, to abstain from getting, VAHINGER) although it every where else means to destroy, to ruin; for in all the remaining clauses of the series, the second verb asserts directly the opposite of the first. In contrast to the unintentional losing, the corresponding verb הִשְׁלִיךְ of the second clause then indicates an intentional casting away of a possession to be preserved (2 Kings vii. 15; Ezek. xx. 8).—**A time to rend and a time to sew.**—One might here suppose the rending of garments on hearing sad tidings (1 Sam. i. 11; iii. 39; Job i. 20; ii. 12; Matth. xxvi. 63), and again the sewing up of the garments that had been thus rent as a sign of grief. And also by the following "to keep silence" one would first think of the mournful silence of the sorrowing (Gen. xxxiv. 5; Job ii. 13).—Ver. 8. **A time to love, etc.**—Love and hatred, war and peace, forming an inter-relation with each other, are now connected with the contents of the preceding verse by the intermediary thought of the agreeable and disagreeable, or of well and evil doing.

3. *First Division, second strophe*—Vers. 9-11. In consequence of the temporal character of all worldly action and effort, human knowledge is also especially ineffective and feeble in presence of the unsearchable ruling of the Eternal One.—**What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?**—That is, what profit do all the various, antagonistic actions, of which a number has just been quoted (ver. 3-8) bring to man? The question is one to which a decidedly negative answer is expected, and draws therefore a negative result from the preceding reflection: There is nothing lasting, no continuous happiness here below.—Ver. 10. **I have seen the travail, etc.**—Comp. chap. i. 13. This verse has simply a transitional meaning; it prepares us for the more accurate description given in ver. 11 of the inconstant, transitory and feeble condition of human knowledge and effort, in the presence of the unsearchable wisdom of God.—Ver. 11. **He hath made every thing beautiful in his time.**—The principal emphasis rests on the word בְּצֵרוֹ "in his time," as the connection with the foregoing vers. 1-8 shows.

* The root, though not frequent, is common enough in Hebrew for this purpose; why go to the Chaldaic?

† [All such infinitives as *r-kadh* and *sophadh* have a like rhyming. The fact that accounts for the choice here is rather the similarity of primary sense which is found in verbs of dancing and mourning. All passions in early times were expressed by a violence of outward action, such as beating the breast, rending the garments, rolling on the earth, etc., that in these colder days of the world's old age would be deemed utterly extravagant. Thus, in the Greek κόπτεσθαι mentioned by ZICKLER II-mer's *παρρησιαστικὴ δόξα* (Ibid. XXII. 221. II-brew כָּבַד primarily to smite the breast. We still find traces of it in modern words, though almost worn out. Thus, our word *plaint* is but a feeble echo of the Latin *plangere*. In the Syriac this same root here rendered to *dance*, is used in the Aramaic conjugation for mourning. Thus in that children's ditty, or play upon words, recited by our SAVOIR, Matth. xi. 17, the word in the Peschito Version, for mourning is אַרְרָר, for dancing בָּקַר, in Roman letters,

ar-kol, kaked. A play upon words of this kind is proof that the gospel (of Matthew at least) is its oral form before any writing was Aramaic, and that our SAVOIR spoke It. Such children's ditties are very national, and it must have been of long standing. The play upon words that it gives could not have been original in the Greek, though afterwards early translated.—T. L.

God has arranged all things beautifully in this life (comp. Gen. i. 31), but always only "in his time," always only so that it remains beautiful and good for man during its restricted time, but after that becomes an evil for him; therefore always only so that the glory of this earth soon reaches its end.—Also he hath set the world in their heart.—(ZÖCKLER'S rendering, *eternity in their heart*).—That is, in the hearts of men; for the suffix in **בְּלִבָּם** refers to the children of men in ver. 11, whilst in the subsequent clause the individual man (**הָאָדָם**) is placed opposite to the one God. This clause clearly holds a rising relation to the contents of the preceding: God has here below not only arranged all things well for man in this temporal period; He has even given them eternity in their hearts. This is clearly the author's train of thought. With eternity given to the heart of man, he also means the knowledge of God's eternal nature and rule, innate even in the natural man, that *notitia Dei naturalis insita s. innata*, which Paul, Rom. i. 19 f., describes as an intellectual perception of God's eternal power and divinity, peculiar as such to man, and which develops itself in the works of creation. It appears as well from the word **בְּלִבָּם** (heart, here in the same sense as i. 13-17, etc.), as from the following: "So that no man can find out," that it is substantially this natural knowledge of God, namely, something belonging to the realm of human conception, a moral good from the sphere of intellectual life,—

that the author means by the expression **הָעוֹלָם** (consequently not simply the character of immortality)—although he must have considered this closely connected with the natural conception of God, according to chap. xii. 7. For this restrictive clause clearly expresses a restriction of human nature in an intellectual sense, an inability to find, which is equal to an inability to know. But as certainly as this inability to know refers to the extent and limits of Divine action, so certainly will also the knowledge of the human heart, expressed by **הָעוֹלָם** be a religious knowledge referring to God and Divine things. Therefore we would reject as opposed to the text those explanations of **הָעוֹלָם** which give to this expression the sense of "world" (Vulg., LUTHER, UMBREIT, EWALD, ELSTER, etc.), or "worldly-mindedness" (GESENIUS, KNOBEL), or "worldly wisdom," "judgment" (GAAB, SPOHN); also HITZIG, who, however, contends for **עוֹלָם** instead of **עוֹלָם**. And besides the connection, the style of the entire Old Testament and of this book is opposed to this rendering; according to them **עוֹלָם** is always eternity (comp. Eccles. i. 4, 10; ii. 16; iii. 14; ix. 6; xii. 5) and first receives the signification of "world macrocosmos" in the literature of the Talmud.—So that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.—That is, this one restriction is laid on this human conception of the Eternal One, that it can never obtain a perfect and truly adequate insight into the

Divine plan of the world, but rather, is only able to perceive the unsearchable ways and incomprehensible decrees of God, fragmentarily and in a glass darkly (Rom. ii. 32; 1 Cor. xiii.

12). **אֲשֶׁר מִבְּלִי** is here clearly in the sense of *only that*, "except that," therefore synonymous with **אֲפָס בִּי** formerly used for this (Amos ix. 8; Judges iv. 9; 2 Sam. xii. 14). Comp. EWALD, *Lehrbuch*, § 354 b. The deviating significations Vulg., GESENIUS: "*ita ut non*;" (Sept. HERZFELD: *ὅπως μὴ*; "in order not." KNOBEL: "without that;" HITZIG, UMBREIT, HAHN: "without which," etc.) are not only inconsonant to the text, but without sufficient linguistic authority, so far as regards the signification of **אֲשֶׁר מִבְּלִי**—The author is here silent in re-

*[Ver. 11. The strong objection to the interpretation of GESENIUS, DE WETTE, and KNOBEL, is that the New Testament use of the word *world* for *worldliness, love of the world*, is unknown to the Hebrew Scriptures. Equally unwarranted are HITZIG and STUART in first transforming **עוֹלָם** into **עוֹלָם** (not found in Hebrew in any such sense, but sup-

posed to be equivalent to the Arabic **عِلْم**) and then rendering it "*knowledge, without which,*" etc. The Arabic sense of the verb **علم** to know, is later than the pri-

mary Hebrew, to be *hidden or obscure*, though coming from it by a seeming law of contraries peculiar to the Semitic tongues; it is *knowledge as discovery, or science strictly, or the*

hidden fount. It is only in the Arabic **عالم** *mundus*, equal to **עוֹלָם**, that the old Hebrew primary appears.

Besides, this view of HITZIG and STUART is at war with the **אֲשֶׁר מִבְּלִי** which they have no right to render *without which*. The proper way of expressing that, in Hebrew, would be by placing **אֲשֶׁר** first, and following it with the personal suffix and a different particle, **אֲשֶׁר מִבְּלֵי עוֹלָם** (*which without it they cannot, etc.*). A plausible rendering is, "he hath put *obscurity* in their hearts;" but this, though agreeing with the primary sense of the verb, never occurs as a sense of the noun. The view of ZÖCKLER, substantially agreeing with one given by GEIER, that **עוֹלָם** here, or eternity regarded as in the heart of man, refers to the natural human recognition of the eternal power and Godhead, as spoken of by Paul, Rom. i. 20 presents an admirable meaning if it can be sustained. It may be said that it is giving **עוֹלָם** too much of an abstract sense, but it is certain that the writer intends here no common thought, and, therefore, the word employed may be fairly extended, philologically, to its utmost limits. It can hardly be reconciled,

however, with the **אֲשֶׁר מִבְּלִי** which ZÖCKLER, without any other warrant than his own assertion, makes equivalent to **אֲפָס בִּי** and then renders it *nur dass nicht, only that not*, thus turning it into a mere exceptive limitation, as is also done by TREMELLICUS and GROTIUS: *excepto quod non*. There are no Scriptural examples of such use of **מִבְּלִי** or **מִבְּלִי**, **אֲשֶׁר**, and this would be enough, even if every reader did not feel that there is something in it at war with the whole spirit of this profound declaration. In this compound particle **מִבְּלִי** the **מ** is negative, implying *hindrance*, and intensifying the negation in the other part. The LXX. have, therefore, properly rendered it *ὅπως μὴ, that not, or rather, in such a way that not* (*ὅπως*, in distinction from *ὡς*, referring to the manner of accomplishing rather than to the purpose itself). "He hath so presented it to their minds

spect to the profoundest reason why man cannot thoroughly know and comprehend the works and reign of God, that is the interruption of the original pure harmony of his Spirit by means of sin; he is so because he would seem rather, as it were, purposely to presuppose this fact than emphatically to express it.

4. *Second Division, first strophe.* Vers. 12-15. Human happiness is temporally restricted, consisting mainly in the cheerful enjoyment

that they cannot, *etc.* So the Targum אלא the Syriac אלאך, Rashi שלא כר, Aquila ως οὐχ, Vulgate, Pag-
nin. *Thrus. Merc. ut non.*

That other idea, however, of the word as *world, world-time, world-plan* (see ver. 14), which has been so fully dwelt upon in the *Excursus* on the Olanic Words, p. 44, harmonizes perfectly with the immediate context, and the whole tenor of the deeper reflections contained in this book: The *world-problem* hath God so put into their hearts (literally,

given in their heart, נתן כלבם)—presented to their minds,—or, as the Vulgate well expresses it, *tradidit disputationi eorum*, that, *etc.* Whether we take it in the cosmical or olanic sense, what a comment upon this is furnished by the ancient schools, Greek, Egyptian, Persian, or Oriental generally, in their endless cosmogonical disputations on the world, its first matter, its first moving principles, its origin,—on the question of its duration, whether it had a beginning or would ever live an end, whether it had any thing immutable (τὸ ὄντως ὄν) or was ever phenomenal and flowing,—whether there were more worlds than one, either in time or space—in short, whence it came, how it existed, and what was it all for, or what did it truly mean. These disputations were much older than Thales, and Solomon must have heard of them, at least, even if unacquainted particularly with all, or any, of the theories held. Let any one see, especially, how these disputations of the early ante-Socratic Greek schools are summed up by XENOPHON, *Memorabilia*, I. 14: τῶν τε περὶ τῆς τῶν πάντων φύσεως μεμνημένων κ. τ. λ., and he will well appreciate the force of the strong language: “so that they cannot find it out to the end from the beginning.”—especially as confirmed by the still more striking declaration, viii. 17: “yea, though a wise man (a philosopher) say that he knows it, yet shall he not be able to find it out.” In the *time* sense, or the olanic sense of the word world, it is still more clear, especially when regarded as the great *olam*, or *world period*, or world idea (ver. 14), compared with that list of brief *passing* times mentioned before as belonging to “things beneath the sun.” The writer had presented special seasons belonging to the chief occupations and events of human life—a time to plant, a time to love, a time to hate, to mourn, to rejoice, *etc.* The fitness of these man could study and perceive, but the great all-containing time, the encircling eternity or world time who could understand.—God had so presented this to the human thought, the human mind, that though it could reason well of passing events, it “could not find out the end from the beginning.” It could not discover the world idea (ver. 14), that higher wisdom than the natural from which it all depended, nor that deeper wisdom than nature to which it was all as a means to an end. Even in its highest state, taking the form of the most landed science, it was only the study of lipks (see remarks, *Int.*, *Met. Ver.*), of adaptations to adaptations, among which it could never find beginnings nor ends. Something greater might be divined by faith, but otherwise, it was as unsearchable as the wisdom so anxiously inquired after, Job xxviii: “The deep saith it is not in me,” *etc.* It was true even of physical knowledge, that it could not find out its own limits, when taken comparatively. The individual man occupies but a point in the great world cycle. As *things go round*, he sees, or may see, “how they are all fair in their season,” each fitting to the one next, and so on, as far as he may carry his researches; but what it is all about, or what it all means, that no science of nature can reveal to him. His angle of vision, even with the mightiest aid it has ever had, or may expect to have, is too small to take in more than a very few degrees, or a very few seconds of a degree, in the mighty arc we are traversing, or have passed during the longest known times that either history, or the observation of nature, has revealed to us. The thought is not beyond what may be ascribed to Koheleth, with his grand cyclical ideas, and nothing could be in better harmony with the contexts, or the peculiar particles by which they are united. There are some rich homiletical thoughts arising from such a view of verses 11th, 14th, and 16th, but they belong in another place.—T. L.]

and proper use of the moment, because it depends on the immutable decrees of divine laws, claiming fear and humble submission, rather than bold hope and effort.—**I know that there is no good in them**—namely, in the “children of men,” (ver. 10) to whom the כלבם ver. 11 already referred. בָּ “in them with them,”* is mainly synonymous with “for them;” comp. ii. 24. יָעִי is literally, “I have perceived, and I know in consequence thereof;” it means the past, in its result reaching into the future, here also as in ver. 14.—**But for a man to rejoice and do good in this life.**—Together with the gratefully cheerful enjoyment of life’s goods, the “doing good” is here named more distinctly than in chap. ii. 26, as a principal condition and occupation of human happiness. And therewith is also meant, as that passage shows, and as appears still more definitely from the parallels in Ps. xxxiv. 14; xxxvii. 3; Isa. xxxviii. 3, *etc.*, not merely benevolence, but uprightness, fulfilment of the divine commands (comp. xii. 13).

For the meaning of עֵשׂוֹת טוב in the sense of “be of good cheer,” to be merry (ANEN EZRA, LUTHER, DE WETTE, KNORR, HITZIG, *etc.*) there is not a single philological proof; for in chap. ii. 24; iii. 22; v. 7, *etc.*, there are similar phrases, but still materially different from this one, which express the sense of being merry.” † —יָעִי lit., “in his life” refers again to the singular אִי, ver. 11, so that in this verse the singular and the plural use of this verb alternates as in the preceding.—Ver. 13. **And also that every man should eat and drink, etc., it is the gift of God.** Clearly the same thought as in chap. ii. 24, 25. The particle וְ, introducing still another object of perception to יָעִי besides that named already in ver. 12, refers to the whole sentence. As to the peculiar construction of the first conditional clause without אִם, or other particle, see EWALD, § 357, e.—Ver. 14. **I know that whatever God doeth it shall be forever.** Herein it appears that all human action is dependent on the eternal law of God, and that especially all cheerful, undisturbed enjoyment of the blessings of this life, depends on the decrees of this highest law-giver and ruler of the world. Comp. the theoretical description of the ever constant course of divine laws in chap. i. 4-11.—*Nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it.* To it (עֵלְיָ) namely, to all that everlastingly abiding order which God

* [It is by no means clear that the pronoun in בָּ refers to persons. The most natural connection would be with the things mentioned above, and all summed up in the אֵת הַכֹּל of ver. 11: “No good in these things except to rejoice, *etc.*” The מִן in בְּלִבְּךָ would not, grammatically, sever this, since it does not belong to the main assertion.—T. L.]
† עֵשׂוֹת טוב, has not here, as Zöckler well says, the sense of “being merry;” neither can it be taken as denoting *beneficence*; or even good conduct (doing the divine commands), in a general moral sense. It strictly means to do well, in the sense of propriety, to live success—corresponding to the Greek εὖ πράττειν, rather than in to εὖ ποιεῖν, or εὖ παρῆεν.—T. L.]

makes, to all those eternally valid enactments of the Most High. For the construction אֲנִי לְהוֹסִיף, Comp. EWALD, § 237, c. For the sentence: Sirach, xviii. 5; Revelation xxii. 18.—**And God doeth it, that men should fear before Him.**—And this by those very immutable laws of his world-ruling activity, on which men, with all their deeds and destiny, depend; comp. ix. 12; 2 Cor. v. 11; and for the construction: Ezek. xxxvi. 27; Rev. xiii. 15. As in those places, so also here, the expression “doeth it that,” does not mean “in order that,” but “effecting that” “making it to be so,” accomplishing. By אֲנִי “to fear,” KOHELETH does not mean a feeling of terror and horror, but rather that sacred feeling of holy awe which we call reverence; but nevertheless “he here considers this reverence not as a beneficent blissful sensation, but rather as a depressing feeling of the vanity of man in contrast with the boundless fulness of the power of God, as an inward shudder at the bonds of the divine decree, which envelop him, and by which, in his conception, every spiritual movement is restricted in advance to a certain measure,” (ELSTER).—Ver. 15. **That which hath been is now, and that which is to be hath already been.**—(עָבַר הָיָה) i. e., is already long present, comes of old (not exactly; is something old, as HIRZIG translates, turning the adverb into a substantive). The second clause containing אֲשֶׁר לְהֵיטֵב says, literally, as in the English rendering: “that which is to be.” For the sentence comp. i. 9; vi. 10, and especially Job xiv. 5; Ps. cxxxix. 15, where still more clearly than here, is expressed the predestination of all the destinies of man by God.—**And God requireth that which is past.** (Lit., and God seeketh that which was crowded out). He again brings forth that which the vicissitudes of time had already crowded out, or pushed back into the past; *Deus instaurat, quod abiit* (Valgate). This signification alone of בָּקַשׁ יְבָרַךְ is in accordance with the context, not that given in the *Sept. Syriac*, TARG., HENGSTENBERG, etc., according to which the allusion here would be to the divine consolation and gracious visitation of the persecuted, (Matt. v. 10; Luke xix. 10, etc.).

5. *Second Division, second strophe.* Vers. 16-22. The restriction of human happiness appears especially in the numerous cases of unsatisfactory, indeed, apparently unjust, distribution of happiness and unhappiness, according to the moral worth and merit of men, as this mundane life reveals it, as well as in the uncertainty regarding the kind of reward in the world beyond, which ever exists in this world below. **And moreover I saw under the sun.**—The “moreover” (עוֹד) refers to ver. 12, and therefore introduces something which comes as a new conception to the one there described (and also in ver. 14 f.), and which holds the same relation to that as the special to the general.—**The place of judgment,** etc. Lit., at the place of judgment; for נִקְיָוִים here, and in the subsequent clause is strictly taken, not as the object of “I

saw,” but, as the accents indicate, is an independent nominative (or locative)—an abrupt construction which produces a certain solemn impression well adapted to the excited feelings of the poet. כִּשְׁכֶּנֶט and צֶרֶק judgment and righteousness, differ materially as objective and subjective, or as the judgment that must serve the judge as the absolute rule for his decisions, and as the practical judgment in the life of the normal man; the latter expression is, therefore, largely synonymous with “innocence,” virtue. In contrast to both ideas, KOHELETH calls הַרְשָׁע “the evil,” “the crime,” thinking of עוֹשֵׂה, in the first place, of objective, and in the second place of subjective wrong, or, the first time, of crime as a wicked judge practices it, the second time, of the wantonness of the wicked in general.—Ver. 17. **God shall judge the righteous and the wicked.**—He will appoint to them, therefore, that “judgment” which, according to ver. 16, is so frequently in human life, either not to be found at all, or not in the right place: comp. chap. v. 7; Deut. i. 17; Ps. lxxxiii. 1 ff.—**For there is a time there for every purpose, and every work.**—That is, in heaven above, with God, the just judge, there is a time to judge every good and every evil deed of men. אֲשֶׁר, pointing upwards, (as in Gen. xlix. 24, אֲשֶׁר אֶת, here as elsewhere, is the “time of judicial decision, the term;” comp. chap. ix. 11. 12, as well as the New Testament *ἡμέρα*, 1 Cor. iii. 13; iv. 2, etc. Others read אֲשֶׁר instead of אֲשֶׁר: “He has set a time for everything,” (HOURIGANT, VAN DER PALM, DÖDERLEIN, HIRZIG, ELSTER), but which is quite as unnecessary as the temporal signification of אֲשֶׁר=time, *in tempore judicii* (IHERONYMUS), or as referring the expression to the earth as the seat of the tribunal here meant (HAHN), or as the explanation of אֲשֶׁר according to the Talmud, in the sense of “appraising, taxing” (FURST, VAHINGER: “And He appraises every action”), or, finally, as EWALD’s parenthesizing of the words אֶת לְכָל-הַפְעוּלָה whereby the sentence acquires the following form: “God will judge the just and the unjust (for there is a time for everything), and will judge of every deed.”*—Ver 18. **Concerning**

*[אֲשֶׁר, ver. 17, there. This little word coming in such connection is most suggestive. The thought presented, though so unobtrusively expressed, is, in reality, one of the modulating key notes of this singular book. The connection between this verse, 17th, and the commencement of the chapter is unmistakable. In contrast with the particular times and occasions there mentioned, there is here placed the great time, the great day, to which all the particular times have reference, and in which they are all to be judged. For there, too, unto every purpose, and for every work, אֶת לְכָל-הַפְעוּלָה there is an אֶת, a time appointed. It immediately leads the mind away from this subsolar state (תַּחַת הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ) to that higher world that more remote state, or world beyond (Jenseits) to which all has reference, and which seems to be constantly in the writer’s mind as an *idea*, but without locality, or specific manner, or any assigned or assignable chronology,—as though it were something he firmly believed, but could not define, or even distinctly conceive. It is the basis of all his contemplations, the ground on which he so firmly rests in the concluding declaration of the book. אֲשֶׁר may mean any

the sons of men, that God might manifest them. As the introductory words: "I said in my heart," connect the verse with the preceding one, it assumes the same relation to ver. 16 as to that, and to **עַל-דִּבְרֵת כְּנִי הָאָדָם**, and, therefore, the principal thought of this 16th verse is to be thus supplied: "On account of the sons of men, does this unfinished toleration of wrong on earth exist, in order that God may manifest (try) them, *i. e.*, grant them their free decision for or against His truth (comp. Rev. xxii. 11). For **בָּרַךְ**, to test, prove, compare chap. ix. 1; Dan. xi. 35, as well as the Rabbinic style, according to which this verb means "to sift," "to winnow" (SCHEBIT, 5, 9). **לְכָרֵם הָאֱלֹהִים** is lit. "for God proving them," a somewhat harsh construction, but which has its analogy in Isa. xxix. 23.—That they might see, namely, the sons of men, for whose instruction the test is indeed instituted; since God, for His part, needs not to see it, for He knows in advance of what men are made, (Ps. ciii. 14).—That they themselves are beasts. Men are here declared to be beasts, that is, not better than the beasts of the field, not on account of their conduct (as Ps. lxxiii. 22), but on account of their final dissolution, and their inevitable sinking under the dominion of death; comp. ver. 19 f.; chap. ix. 12, and also Hab. i. 14; Ps. xlix. 20. Therefore, not the brutal disposition, and the lawlessly wild conduct of the natural mind (HITZIG, ELSTER, *etc.*), but his subjection to the rule of death, and the curse of vanity (Rom. v. 12 ff.; viii. 19 ff.), furnish the reason for this placing our race on a level with the brutes (as LUTHER, HENGSTENBERG, VAHNINGER correctly assume).—"They themselves,"

i. e., apart from God's redeeming influence, which can finally secure to their spirit eternal life and blessedness notwithstanding the subjection of the body to death (chap. xii. 7, 13).—**לְהִם** casts the action back on the subject, and serves to bring out this latter with special emphasis, comp. Gen. xii. 1; Amos ii. 14; Job vi. 19, *etc.* According to EWALD, § 315, *a.*—**לְהִם הִפְּהוּ** is a playful intensity of the sense something like the Latin *ip-sissimi*; but EWALD can quote no other proof than this very passage.—Ver. 19 affords a still further illustration of the comparison between men and beasts, which extends to ver. 21 inclusive, with the view of forcibly expressing the uncertainty of the destiny of the former in and after their death.—For that which befalleth the sons of men, befalleth beasts. (*Lit. Ger.* For chance are the sons of men, and chance the beasts); this because they are both equally under the dominion of chance (**כִּנְיָהוּ**, as chap. ii. 14, 15), because the lot of both is inevitably marked out for them from without, (HENGSTENBERG). But it is arbitrary to refer this appellation "chance," simply to the beginning of life in men and beasts, as "the issues of a blind fate," (HITZIG) and it is in opposition to the remark immediately following: (in the German) "and one fate, or chance, overtakes them all;" which shows that the end of both is death, striking them all the same inexorable blow; on which account it is, by a bold metaphor, called "chance."—As the one dieth, so dieth the other, that is, in external appearance, which is authoritative for the author's present judgment; for he is now disregarding that life which exists for man after death, as he simply wishes to call attention to the transitory character of the earthly existence of our race.—Yea, they have all one breath, so that man has no pre-eminence above a beast. **רוּחַ** is here as in ver. 21, not spirit, in the stricter sense, but breath, or force of life, the animating and organizing principle in general, and is therefore, in that more extended sense, applicable to men as well as beasts, as in Gen. vii. 21 f.; Ps. civ. 29, and chap. viii. 8, of this book. On account of the broader latitude of the conception **רוּחַ**, "breath," the following remark, that man has no preëminence (**כִּי־תֵרַךְ**) over the beast, is meant not in the sense of an absolute, but simply of a relative equality of both natures; the poet will place both on the same level only in reference to the external identity of the close of their life (and not as KNOBEL supposes, who here thinks materialism openly taught).* Comp.

great occasion, crisis, or eventually, as well as *place*. Comp. Gen. xi. 9; Ps. cxxviii. 3. As used here, it strongly calls to mind the Greek *ἐκεῖ*, and the manner in which the poets employ it to express a similar indefinite contrast with the present state or world in like characteristic manner styled *ἐνθάδε*, here, *Diesseits* (*this side of me*). Thus Melea (165) says to her children, *ἐνθάδε μὲν εἰσὶν ἡμεῖς*, as though giving them the usual maternal blessing, and then suddenly checks herself with the thought of what is coming—

Πατήρ ἀφείλετ'— **ἀλλ' ἔκει' τα δ' ἐνθά' ἄε**

"but THERE; all HERE your Father's hand has taken quite away." There in that other world, or time, or state. The expression seems to have little or no direct connection with their mythology, or the fabled regions of Hades, but rather to have come from this innate idea of the human soul, or the moral necessity that gives birth to the thought of some other world and time than this, but without known or any mythology or locality. Things must be balanced, some here, and somewhere, and at some time, the equation must be completed. For a similar use of *ἐκεῖ* and *ἐνθάδε*, compare Eschylus *Ik-tides* 230, *Pindar Olymp. II.* 105, and, especially, *Plato Republic*, 339 D., where both terms are used with mythological reference indeed, but carrying the same general and most impressive thought of an after world, or time of judgment,—as a correspondence to this: *οὐ γὰρ γὰρ λέγουμενοι μύθοι περὶ τῶν ἐν Ἄιδου, ὡς τῶν ΕΝΘΑΔΕ ἀδύκρωτα εἶναι* "EKEI ἄδύκρωτα εἰσὶν κ. τ. λ.": "For the myths that are told us respecting Hades (or the *uns enu*), how that the wrong doer HERE must make compensation THERE,—myths once derided,—now disturb the soul with fear lest they be true." This striking passage, taken in its remarkable connection, shows that there was, in the old Greek mind, the same fear of "a judgment to come," of something awful after this world, that is now felt by the common modern mind. It was before Christianity. It created myths, and was not created by them.—It is the voice of conscience, independent of all mythologies, but showing itself in all their varied forms, as though, without some such idea, religion would have no existence.—T. L.]

*[The key to the right interpretation of the whole passage, chap. iii. 18-21, together with a complete denance to the charge of materialism which Knobel brings against Kohe-

leth, is found in the phrases **עַל דִּבְרֵת לְכָרֵם**, and **לְהִם הִפְּהוּ**, in verse 18 above. The first is rendered in our version, "on account of;" Vulgate has simply *de filiis hominum*; Ixx. *περὶ λαλίας υἱῶν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου* ("concerning the talk of men"); So the Syriac **כְּמַלְלָה** "עַל" ("according to the speech of the sons of men");—that is "speaking after the manner of men," speaking humanly, or more humanly. The other rendering, "on account of," or "by reason of" (which is nearer to the sense of the phrase elsewhere), comes to very much the same thing, or expresses the same general idea. See Ps. cx. 4, where it is rendered "after the manner of." It is an intimation that the lu-

also the dogmatical and ethical section.—Ver. 20. **All go unto one place, i. e.,** men and beasts: for they both alike become dust, as they were formed of dust. The following clause shows that by the “one place,” is meant the earth as a common burial place for the bodies of men and beasts; and not Scheol, “the house appointed for all living,” (Job xxx. 23) —**All are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.** (Comp. Gen. iii. 19; Ps. civ. 29; cvii. 4; Strach xl. 11; xli. 10. All these passages, like this one, regard man solely as a material being, and, in so far, assert a perfect likeness in his death to that of beasts. The question whether the spirit of man shares this fate, is yet unanswered. The following verse refers to that, not to afford a definite answer, but to affirm the impossibility of an answer founded on sense-experience.—Ver. 21. **For who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward?**—The interrogative form of this and the following clause, is unconditionally required by the structure of the

sentence and the context. Therefore **הַעֲלֶה** is not, as in the masoretic text, to be written with the **ה** *articuli*, but with the **ה** *interrogativum*, (thus, **הַעֲלֶה**) and the same way in the following, or **הַיִּרְדָּה**. The construction is therefore not, as in Joel ii. 14, that of an affirmative question, but rather that of a doubtful one, expressing uncer-

tainty of the following verses is hypothetical, or adapted to a supposed state of things, such as Koheleth had called up before his own mind, that is, “said in his heart.” It is the language of human action. The Arabian rhetoricians and

critics have a peculiar phrase for it, **لسان الحال**.

“the tongue of the condition;” or “the case speaking.” See RABBI TANCHUM, *Arabic Commentary on Lamentations*, II. 36: also marg. note Genesis, p. 361. This they get from the Rabbinical grammarians and interpreters who have a similar Hebrew phrase, **לשון הרבר**, for such cases as this.

All the language following, which seems to represent man as having no supremacy over the beast, is affected by this hypothetical impression. It is man's judgment upon himself as pronounced by his own conduct. The writer, in this “*bitting to his heart*,” takes men as they are, as they appear, fallen, worldly, sensual, animal. It is the language of their lives. It is all that could be gathered by one who confined himself to this view, or who had nothing to go by but the observation of the general human conduct,—the way of the world. Such an interpretation is fortified by what follows

in the same verse: “that God might prove them,” **לִבְרֹא** **הָאֱלֹהִים**, “make it clear to them” by their own experience, their own ways, how much like beasts they are, or rather, how much like beasts they live and die, though He had created them in His own image. It calls up Ps. xlix. 12, 21: “Man that is *in honor*, and understandeth it not, is like the beasts that perish.” In both cases it may be said: “this their way is their folly,” and we have no more right to charge Epicureanism, or materialism, on the one passage than on the other. The same impression of hypothetical speaking is produced, and, perhaps, still more strongly, by the pronouns **לָדָבָר**, **הַכֹּהֵן לָדָבָר**, at the close of that verse. Zöckler's opinion that this is simply an intensive phrase equivalent to *insistent* is not satisfactory. The Rationalist Hutzig connects it to the true view of these pronouns. He connects them with **בָּרָב**, “to arrive them,” or “to try” (or *test them*), to let them see (*zur Einsicht zu bringen*) how like beasts they are. So Stuart: “That they might see for themselves.” As is often the case, however, in Hebrew, the sense is best brought out by the most literal interpretation the words will bear: “Themselves to themselves,” or, “to let them see that they are beasts, *themselves to themselves*,” not in their treatment of one another, as Geier and some others take it (*homo lanus homini*), but rather “in their own estimation” (see Metric Version), as they are, or as they

tainty. As in Ps. xc. 11, or above in chap. ii. 19, **כִּי יִרְעֶה ה'** points out that the matter is difficult of conception, not, at first view, clear and apparent, but rather eluding the direct observation of sense. This verse does not, therefore, assert an absolute ignorance (as KNOBEL supposes), but rather some knowledge regarding the fate of the spirit in the world beyond, though wanting certainty and external evidence. Concerning the return of the spirit of man to its Divine Giver, it maintains that no one, in this world, has ever seen or survived it, just as emphatically, and in like manner, as John [i. 18 and 1 Epist. iv. 12] asserts of the sight of God, that it has never been granted to any man. A denial of the immortality of the spirit of man, as an object of inward certainty of faith [as later testimony from this standpoint of faith shows, chap. xii. 7], is as little to be found in this passage as in the assertion of John, “no one has ever seen God,” is to be found a doubt of the fact, certain to faith, of the future beholding of God (1 John iii. 2). Ignoring this state of the case, the Masora, in order to destroy the supposed skeptical sense of the passage, has punctuated the twice repeated

ה, before **עֲלֶה** and before **יִרְדָּה** as articles, and so reached the thought maintained by many moderns (GEIER, DATHE, ROSENMBUELLER, HENGSTENBERG, HAHN): “Who knoweth the spirit of man, that which goeth upward? and the spirit of the beast, that which goeth downward to the earth?” The only just conception, according to connection and structure, is that given by the Sept., Vulg., Chald., and Syr., which not only the “rationalistic exegesis,” as HENGSTENBERG supposes, but also LUTHER, STARKE, MICHAELIS, ELSTER, and many others, have adopted, who are very far from attributing to the Preacher skeptical or materialistic tendencies.*—Ver. 22.

must appear, to themselves, in the light of their own general conduct,—the *speaking* of their own lives. This view at once clears Koheleth himself from Knobel's charge of materialism; though we see not how, in any other way, it can be denied. It is so far from materialism that, to the devout reader, it immediately raises the opposite thought. What Koheleth “*says in his heart*,” throughout this passage, is a mournful rebuke (we will not call it by the heartless name of satire) of the worldly, sensual, beastlike life of man; whilst, by this very aspect of it he points to a higher destiny which the animal life of mere sense so directly contradicts: “Who knows it,” who thinks of it (see the next marginal note)? and yet the bar-thing of such a super-solar destiny, though carrying with it no knowledge of condition, lifts man above the earth and the beasts who descend wholly into it. There is, also, an evident anamnesia, here, of

עֲלֶה וְיִרְדָּה with the two words **נִהְיָה** **הַכֹּהֵן לָדָבָר**, just preceding; and this also furnishes some reason for the peculiar style of expression, linking it all the more forcibly to the Hebrew vers a dressed.

This also must we render ver. 22, by giving **רִאיוֹת** the sense of *judgment* (as in many other places) instead of *sight* as a fact. It is the same hypothetical judgment, founded on human action, or what one must conclude as to “the supposed good,” and the human destiny, if determined from such a standpoint of human conduct.—T. L.]

*[Ver 21. **כִּי יִרְעֶה ה'**, “who knows,” etc. ZÖCKLER disposed of this important passage too easily. From the Hebrew text as it stands there can be made no other translation than that given in our English Version. The **ה** in **הַעֲלֶה** and in **הַיִּרְדָּה** [that goeth up, that goeth down] is the article.

This cannot be overthrown, as STUART and others attempted to do, by examples of **ה** interrogative having patach with dagsh, every one of which, if not wholly anomalous, depends on peculiar conditions that do not here exist. The old Jewish

A return to the maxim already given in ver. 12, that one must cheerfully and joyously seize the present as now offered by God, and use it to get a sure path into the future.—**Than that a man should rejoice in his works**—בְּמַעֲשָׂיו, *i. e.*, in his labor and efforts in general, in his works as well as in their fruits; comp. v. 18. This “rejoicing in his own works,” is not materially different from the passage in chap. ii. 24, that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labor [HITZIG thinks otherwise], nor from the expression (ver. 12, 13) “to rejoice and do good,” *etc.*—**For that is his portion**—*i. e.*, for nothing farther is allotted to him here below, comp. ii. 10.—**For who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?**—That is, not into the condition after death, into the relations of human life in another world, but, as shown by the parallel passages, ch. vi. 12; ii. 19: into the future conditions of human life, into the relations as they shall be on earth after his departure from life (especially in his immediate surroundings and sphere of activity, comp. ii. 19). This sentence involves, therefore, neither a denial of the personal continuance of man (HITZIG), nor an authorization of the Epicurean principle: “Enjoy before death, that you may not go out

empty” (KNOBEL), nor, indeed, any reference to the world beyond, but simply an exhortation to profit by the present in cheerful and diligent occupation, without being anxious and doubting about the future, which is indeed inaccessible to our human knowledge. HENGSTENBERG justly observes: “Man knows not what God will do,” ver. 11. Therefore, it is foolish to chase after happiness by toilsome exertion, or to be full of anxiety and grief, ver. 9, 10; and quite as foolish (chap. vi. 12) to engage in many wide reaching schemings, to chase after the ἀθλιότητα πλοῦτος (1 Tim. vi. 17) to gather and heap for him to whom God will give it, ii. 26; but, on the contrary, it is rational to enjoy the present. Properly understood, therefore, this verse draws its practical consequence not from the verses 19-21 immediately preceding, but from the contents of the entire chapter.

APPENDIX TO THE EXEGETICAL.

[INTERPRETATION OF VERSES 11, 14, 15; THE INQUISITION OF THE AGES, VER. 15. הַרְאֵה לִי וְיָדָעֵנִי בְּקֶסֶת אֵת נִרְדָּךְ. This remarkable language is rendered, in our English Version, “God requireth that which is past,” or, as given in the

grammarians, who have never been surpassed in their thorough knowledge of these minutiae of their language, have reduced the matter to rules by an exhaustive induction that leaves no doubt. One of these rules is, that every קְמוּצָה הַ

or *he kamezatus*, to use their technics [or הַ with קְ] before הַ, is every where the article of sp-cification (הַ יְדִיעָה), never the interrogative. It might have been so said in respect to the gutturals generally, with a very few exceptions having their peculiar reasons not here found. But in the case of הַ there are no exceptions. This settles the question

for the word הַעֲלָה even if it had stood alone. But there

is the participle הַיִּוֵּרֶת presenting a still stronger case for the article. Here הַ cannot be interrogative. The attempt to make it so would only interfere with another rule which is settled without exception, namely, that הַ interrogative may cause dagesh in a radical following if it has *scheva* (שׁוּוֹה) but never without it, so that the הַ in הַיִּוֵּרֶת [the radical י having its vowel-hole] must be the

pronominal article (*that which* goeth down). This is confirmed by ABEN-ESRA, RABBI SCHELOMO, BEN MELECH, KIMCHI, and others. In fact, the best Jewish authorities are here all one way. But then, it is gratuitously said, the authors of the Masora changed the punctuation. There is neither reason nor authority for such an assertion. The LXX. indeed has *ei avasives* (*if it ascends*), but this Version was made from unpointed Hebrew, and, on such a question, settles nothing against the better understanding of the Masorites. The Vulgate follows the LXX. (*si ascendat*), and the Syriac has every appearance of having been here conformed to the Greek as in many other places. Besides the LXX. and Vulgate rendering would not correspond to the הַ interrogative, but rather to the participle אֵם (if), which would be the best word in Hebrew if such a doubt were to be

expressed: הַיִּוֵּרֶת הַיִּוֵּרֶת אֵם עֲלָה הִיא וְאֵם יִוֵּרֶת.

If we look at the internal evidence, the case for the article will be found still stronger. Taking the passage as STUART does and HITZIG; or as it is somewhat qualified by ZÜCKLER, we find ourselves involved in terrible difficulties. We cannot rest with ascribing to Koheleth merely ignorance, or non-recognition, of the doctrine of the soul's survival. That might, with some reason, be said of an Old Testament writer generally, namely, that he says nothing about it, and seems to have no knowledge of it. This is not, however, the case with Koheleth. He had doubtless heard an echo of the old belief, held, beyond all doubt, by nations cotemporary, and so early expressed in the Greek Drama, as something that had come down from ancient days:—

πνεῦμα μὲν πρὸς αἰθέρα,

τὸ δὲ σῶμα δ εἰς γῆν.

He shows his knowledge of the dogma, as a belief existing, and then denies its truth, or attempts to throw doubt upon it. This is certainly strange, unexampled, we may say, in the Old Testament. Worse than all, he not only denies it, but scoffingly denies it, as though it were an absurd thought, should it even chance to occur to one of these poor creatures whose vain condition he is so graphically describing—a foolish hope, itself a *vanitas vanitatum*. He sneers at it as something which might be vainly held by a few—some early *Essene dreamers* perhaps—but was wholly contrary to sense and experience. No one knows anything about it. It would be something like the sneer that used to be heard from the coarsest kind of infidels—who ever saw a soul? This cannot be the serious KOHELETH, the man, too, who so expressly, so solemnly says, xii. 7, “that the spirit does go up to God who gave it.”

How then shall we take the question הַיִּוֵּרֶת מִי? There is

but one way, and that seems conclusive of the view presented in the note page 71. It does not express the disbelief or even doubt of KOHELETH, but is, in fact, his reproof of men in general, as he sees them living and acting in his day. Their lives are a denial of any essential difference between man and the brute. Who among them knows—who recognizes—the great difference? Moreover, the expression הַיִּוֵּרֶת מִי must be taken as an universal or a partial negation,

according to the ideas that necessarily enter into the context; as in chap. ii. 19, it is equivalent to *no one knows*. So in Ps. xc. 11, “who knoweth the power of thine anger,”—a thing most real, yet hard to be appreciated. Compare also Joel ii. 14; Jon. iii. 9, וְיָדָעֵנִי יְשׁוּבָה וְנַחֵם.

expresses a hope, “who knows but he may turn and repent.” In Isaiah liii. 1, a precisely similar expression, “who hath believed our report,” denotes what is most rare. So in Ps. xciv. 16, “who will rise up for me against the enemy?” in Fam. xi. Agaia, “who hath known the mind of the Lord,” Fam. xi. 34 (τίς γὰρ ἐγνώσκει, cognovit recognovit). This, says S. BA-IL, *significant non quod absurdum est, sed quod rarum*. So here: How few, if any, recognize the great truth, the great difference between man and beast? The context, the general aspect of the passage, together with what the writer most seriously affirms in other places, must all be considered; and it would show, we think, that in uttering this complaining query, he was only the more strongly expressing his individual opinion, or feeling rather, of the mighty, yet unheeded difference. There must surely be for man something better than all this dying vanity, if he would only recognize it. That הַיִּוֵּרֶת may have this sense, is shown by the use of the verb in many places, and especially by the infinitive noun הַיִּוֵּרֶת, which often means *belief, opinion, trust, etc.* ZÜCKLER's reference to John i. 18: “No man hath seen God at any time,” we cannot help regarding as containing a fallacy of interpretation, and as being, in reference to this passage, quite irrelevant.—T. L.]

margin, "that which is driven away."—ZÖCKLER has *das Verdränge*, that which is pushed away, crowded out. None of these give the exact force of נִרְדָּף, nor do they seem to recognize the very peculiar figure which is so strongly suggested by נִרְדָּף and בִּקְשׁוּ when thus taken together. Pursued, the true rendering, is something different from being driven away, or crowded out. The expression does, undoubtedly, refer to time past, but not after the common representation of something left behind us, but rather of something sent before, or gone before, which is chased and shall be overtaken. It is more like an idea very frequent in the Koran, and coming undoubtedly from the ancient Arabic theology, that the lives of men, and especially their sins, are all gone before to meet them at the judgment. The flight of time is a common figure in all languages, and especially its great swiftness—*sed fugit interea, fugit irreparabile tempus*. The representation of the ages driving away their predecessors, and taking their places, is also a familiar one, as in *Ovid Met.* XV. 181:

*ut unda impellitur unda,
Urgeturque prior venienti, urgetque priorem,
Tempora sic fugiunt pariter pariterque sequuntur.*

The figure here, however, although presenting this general image, has something else that is both rare and striking. We know it from the words נִרְדָּף and בִּקְשׁוּ which, as thus used, immediately call up the idea of the flying homicide with the avenger or the inquisitor [בִּקְשׁוּ] behind him. See how רָדַף is used in such passages as Dent. xix. 6; Josh. xx. 5 [רָדַף גֹּאֲלִי].

[הַרְגָה אַחֲרָי הַרְצִיחַ וְגו',] and בִּקְשׁוּ, denoting inquisitor (pursuer or avenger), in places like 2 Sam. iv. 11 [אַבְנֵקֶשׂ אֶת דָּבִי], Ezek. iii. 18, 20; xxxiii. 8, and, without רָדַף [blood], 1 Sam. xx. 16, besides other places where this old law of pursuit is referred to. They all show that the words [and especially בִּקְשׁוּ] had acquired a judicial, a forensic, or technical sense. The figure here, however strange it may seem, can hardly be mistaken: God will make inquisition for that which is pursued, that which has gone before us, seemingly fled away, as though it had escaped forever. They are not gone, these past ages of wrong; they shall be called up again. They shall be overtaken and made "to stand up in their lot," at some "latter day" of judgment and inquisition. There can be no severance of times from each other; כָּהֵן שָׁהִירָה יָבֵר הוּא:

What was is present now;
The future has already been;
And God demands again the ages fled.

The thought is closely allied to the cyclical idea so prominent elsewhere in this book (see i. 9, 10; vi. 10), and the idea of the *olam* as the unity of the cosmos in time. As each power or thing in space, according to an old thought existing long before Newton, is present dynamically and statically in every other part of space, so is every

time present in every other time, and in the whole of *olamic* duration. The cosmos is one in both respects. It is the עוֹלָם of God "to which nothing can be added (ver. 14) and from which nothing can be diminished." But besides this cyclical idea, which would seem like asserting an actual reappearance, it may be said, with equal emphasis, that the ages come again in judgment, and as really, too, in one sense, as when they were here, in the events to be judged. God shall arraign these homicidal centuries; "He shall call to them and they shall stand up, and say here we are" (Isa. xlvi. 13; Job xxxviii. 35). It is the same great idea of judgment that seems to pervade all the writer says, and which comes out so clearly, and so solemnly, at the close: "For God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." It is that great thought which has ever been in the souls of men, and which they cannot get rid of. It appears in the

Old Testament, Ps. i. 5 [לֹא יִקְוּנוּ רָשָׁעִים] בְּפִשְׁטָא, "the wicked shall not stand in the judgment];" Daniel xii.; Eccles. xii. 14; Job xxi. 30 [בְּיָ לַיּוֹם אֵירֵחְשָׁן רַע]; Proverbs and Prophets sparsim. How prominent the idea, though indefinite as to time and manner, in the Greek dramatic poetry: there must be retribution for wrong, however it may take place, and however long delayed,—retribution open, penal, positive, and not merely as concealed in blind physical consequences. It presets itself more or less in all mythologies; but its deepest seat is in the human conscience. If there is any thing that may be called a *teutet* of natural religion, it is this, that there *will* be, that there *must* be, a righting of all wrongs, and a way and a time for its manifestation. It holds its place amid all speculative difficulties; it rises over all objections that any philosophy, or any science, can bring against it in respect to time, place, or manner; it remains in the face of all doubts and questions arising out of any doctrine of eschatology, so called. Deeper than any speculative reasoning lies in the soul the feeling that tells us *it must be so*. We cannot bear the thought that the world's drama shall go on forever without any closing act, without any *συντέλεια*, reckoning, or winding up, whether final, or preparatory to some higher era. We cannot read a poor work of fiction, even, without feeling pain if it does not *end well*,—if right is not made clear, and wrong punished, even according to our poor fallen standard of right and wrong. The worst man has more or less of this feeling. We have all reason to fear the judgment; but when the mind is in something of a proper state, or when reason and conscience are predominant, the soul would rather suffer the pain arising from the risk and fear of the individual condemnation, than obtain deliverance from it by the loss of the glorious idea.

This doctrine of judgment is not in harmony with that cyclical idea which is strongly suggested by the general aspect of the passage, and especially by what immediately precedes in this same verse, but may be regarded, in some respects, as identical with it. If any choose so

to view it, the ages past may be said to be judged in the ages that follow, though still in connection with the thought of some general and final manifestation. Such is the view which is most impressively given by Rabbi SCHÉLOMO in his comments on the passage. He deduces from it a notion similar to one that is now a favorite with some of our modern authorities. It is, that history repeats itself; the events in one age being types of succeeding events on a larger scale in another. The Jewish writer has the same thought, though he gives it more of a retributive aspect, as though these types came over again in judgment. As we should expect, too, he draws his examples from the Scriptural history, or from traditions connected with it. Thus Esau pursues Jacob. It is the same thing coming over, on a larger scale, when Egypt pursues the children of Israel. Other examples are given from other parts of the Jewish history, and then he says, generally: "that which is going to be in the latter day is the exemplar [רִיבּוּכָה, it should be רִיבּוּכָה, a Rabbinical word formed from the Greek *δείγμα*, *parádēigma*] of what already has been; as in the first, so it is in the last" [בְּאֲחֵרֵי הַיָּמִים כְּאֲשֶׁר בְּרִאשׁוֹנֵיהֶם]. He means that the first event is the *δείγμα*, the *parádēigma*, or paradigm, to which the latter is adapted, either retributively, or for some other purpose, and taken, generally, on a larger scale.

The commentary of ABEN EZRA on the passage is also well worthy of note. His general remark on the whole verse is that God's way is one—that is, that the world, whether regarded in space or time, has a perfect unity of idea, מְעֻשָׂה

אֱלֹהִים עַל רוּחַ אַחַת, and then he thus proceeds to explain the verse: "What was (or is), already had there been like it, and that which is to be, of old there had been the same; and that which is pursued (נִרְדָּף), or the past, is that which is present, and that (the present) lies between the past and the future. The meaning of it is that God seeks from time that it shall be pursued, time pursuing after time, and never fail; for the time that is past again becomes the present [הַיְעוֹרָדִים that which stands], and the time that is to be, shall be again like that which was, and so it is all *one time*. If we divide time into the future and the past, then, in the course of things

(נִלְגַל the wheel, or mundane orbit), it becomes clear that every portion ever *pursues* after one point (or towards one point), and that is the centre, so that the portion that was in the East appears again in the West, and conversely; and to the place of the world's revolution there is no beginning from which such motion commences; for every beginning is an end, and every end a beginning, and that *which is pursued*, that is the centre, and so it is clear to us that all the work of God is on one way,"—or, as we would say, on one idea, ever repeating itself. See something like this in the Book of Problems, ascribed to ARISTOTLE, Vol. XIV., Leip; Prob. XVII., Sec. 3, on the question, "How shall we take the terms Before and After?" (on the supposition of an eternal repeating cycle).

It is the idea in ver. 14 which seems mainly to have influenced ABEN EZRA, and other Jewish

commentators [such as LEVI BEN GERSON, in his profound book entitled *Milchamoth ha-Schem*], in the interpretation of these words of the 15th: "I learned that all which God made is for eter-

nity [for the world time, לְעוֹלָם]; to it there is no adding, and from it there is no diminishing, and God made it that men might fear before him." This, in their view, would seem to refer not merely to the amount of matter in the cosmos, or the amount of force, or motion, or even to the amount of space and time assigned to it, but to the amount of eventualities making up the *olam*,—or, as we might rather say, the amount of historical action, as one great drama, having a perfect unity, both of movement and idea, so that any change would be a diminution or an addition, out of harmony with the one great spiritual thought to whose manifestation it is devoted. This is shown, "that men might fear be-

fore him," מִלִּפְנֵי, in the presence of such a God; as though there was something more awful in such an exhibition of the eternal *thought*, than in any display of mere *power*, whether in the natural or the supernatural. See remarks on the Divine constancy in the greater movements of Nature, and the quotation from CICERO in Note on the Olamic Words, p. 51.

Some modern writers who dogmatize about the supernatural, and deny its possibility, might, perhaps, regard the philosophizing author of Koheleth, especially when thus interpreted by these Jewish doctors, as being of the same opinion. Thus, in ver. 14, he would seem to say, that there is no change out of a fixed law and fixed idea of the universe, whatever may have been his conception of the world's extent. There is no addition, no diminution, and this would seem to exclude every thing that was not provided for in the original arrangement of forces, and in the system of causation which it embraces, with all its machinery, great and small. Now we may say that these venerable Rabbis, although sincere and devout believers in the supernatural, understood the nature of this argument as well as any of its modern, English, French and German propounders. No where has it ever been more profoundly discussed than by LEVI BEN GERSON in the Sixth book of the work before referred to, where he treats of Miracles and Prophecy,—although written nearly six hundred years ago. If by the supernatural is meant any departure from the *system of things* which God arranged from the beginning, or any change in the great series of causes and effects, antecedents and consequents, which constitute the *sum of things*, including the Divine will, thought, and action, among them,—then is there no supernatural. But this would be reducing the whole great question to a trifling play upon words. If, however, by the words supernatural, or miraculous—though they do not mean exactly the same thing—there be intended the changes which God Himself may introduce into the visible nature, "according to the counsel of His own will," but which are physically connected with no prior working of cosmical dynamical agencies, then *there is a supernatural*, although this supernatural belongs as much to the *one* great idea, or system of things, as the most seemingly regular

causation, or most familiar sequence of antecedents and consequents ever presented to our senses. Far more than this—it is not merely a part of that one great idea, but truly constitutive of it, as its very essence. The supernatural, as differing from the merely miraculous, is something eternal, lying above nature, upholding nature in its origin, regulating its creative days, sending into it new creative words to raise it to higher and still higher planes, deflecting, if need be, its general course, and, at times, interrupting its movements, thus producing what we call miracles, prodigies, signs, *etc.* These, however, in distinction from originating or creating acts, must be regarded as belonging to a world, or to a department of the world, where evil, or moral irregularity, predominates. We may feel warranted in saying, that in a state sinless in the beginning, if God had so willed to secure it, or which had continued sinless, if God had so willed to keep it, or in one which had reached a sinless condition, and where the moral order was unbroken, there would be no miracles, so called, no interruptions in the constant harmonious series of things and events. There would be no need of them; for nature itself would be religious, ever manifesting instead of hiding God. In such constancy of movement there would be, for holy souls, no dimming of the Divine glory, no defying of second causes, no veiling of a personal Deity under the sheltering name of natural law. There would be sublimity, admiration, exalted contemplation, reverence never lowered, adoring study never tiring, wonder never diminished by familiarity,—all *miranda*, yet no *miracula*, as we now use the term, no prodigies, portents, *σημεία, τέρατα*, arresting signs, startling displays of power, such as may be demanded in the regulation of that lower sphere where moral and spiritual disorder have their mirrored counterpart in a dark and refracted nature. In such a fallen world, however, miracles, signs, *etc.*, may be parts of the Divine plan, having their proper place, and to be brought in at such intervals of time, with such intermissions, and in such ways, as the eternal wisdom may decide. They are all in the great idea, together with all such means, if need be, for their bringing out in time. If not *regular*, in the sense of calculable recurrence, they are all *regulated*. They belong to the

עולם, the world, or whole (ver. 14), which cannot be added to nor diminished. "God hath done it that men may fear before him." To a fallen race there is ground for fear both ways. There is something awful for them, both in the constant and in the portentous. To such a moral state there is something terrible in this fixedness of nature; it so shows us our impotence, our dependence, notwithstanding all our boasts of what our reason, or our science, are going to achieve; it gives us such just reason to fear, if we have no higher faith to allay it, lest we may perchance be crushed in some unknown and unknowable turning of its mighty wheels,—and this, too, notwithstanding the petty victories which we now and then seem to obtain over it, but which may be only a deflecting of its resistless movement into some more destructive channel. On the other hand, there is the dread of

the portentous, the "coming out from his (hiding) place" of the spiritual power that men would so gladly forget, or veil from themselves under the denication of nature and natural law.

It is thus that Rabbi SCHELOMO interprets the language as referring to the fear of the portentous: "The Blessed One, in the beginning of His work, had purposed how the world should be, and no change can take place in it either by way of increase or diminution. When it is changed (or appears to be changed) it is God that does it. He commands and effects the change, that *men should fear before him*." That is, the belief in the supernatural, or in some higher power and will that can, and does, change the visible course of nature as presented to our sense and our experience, is, for us, the ground of all religion—that is, of all "*fear of the Lord*"—the term יראת ה' being the Hebrew name for religion in its essential definition, as יראת ה' (the way of the Lord) denotes its practical action. And then he proceeds: "Thus it was that Oceanus broke its bound in the generation of Enosh, and inundated one-third of the world; and this God did that men might fear before Him. Again, for seven days the course of the sun was changed in the generation of the flood, and this was that men might fear before Him." After these semi-scriptural, semi-traditional instances, he mentions the turning back of the ten degrees in the days of Hezekiah. "All this was done that men might fear before Him." And then he concludes, as the Jewish writers generally do, "that it is not good for man to engage in useless physical

disputation (לעסוק), or to study any thing but the commands and ways of God, and thus to fear before Him." See Job xxviii. 21-28.

In rendering the 15th verse, the Vulgate presents the idea of cyclical renovation: *quod factum est ipsum permanet; quæ futura sint jam fuerunt, et Deus instaurat quod abit*—"God renews what is past." The LXX. seems to have in view the idea of retribution in its very literal rendering, ὁ Θεὸς ζητήσεται τὸν διακόμενον, where there would appear to be an allusion to the fleeing homicide. The Syriac: "That which was before is now, and all that is to be has been, and God seeks for the pursued that is pursued." The tautology arose, perhaps, from some dim perception of the idea, but in the attempt to make it clear, the Syriac has only made it the more obscure.

It would seem to have been an old Rabbinical fancy to represent one world, or עולם, thus following another, or one cycle of events making way for another, by the birth of Jacob with his hand upon Esau's heel. We have this imagery of the idea in a strange passage from the Apocryphal book of 2 Esdras chap. vi. 7: "Then answered I and said, what shall be the parting asunder of the times; or when shall be the end of the first and the beginning of it that followeth? And he (the angel) said unto me, from Abraham unto Isaac, when Jacob and Esau were born of him, Jacob's hand held fast the heel of Esau; for Esau is the end of the world [the עולם אילון] and Jacob is the beginning of it that followeth. The hand of man is betwixt the

heel and the hand. Other question, Esdras, ask thou not." The book is apocryphal, but it shows the reasoning of its day, and how some of the old language was understood.—T. L.]

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

(With Homiletical Hints.)

The two halves of this section, of which the one (vers. 1-11) presents the reason for the temporal restriction of earthly happiness, and the other (vers. 12-22) the nature of this earthly and temporal happiness, are to each other as the *theoretical and practical* part of a connected series of reflections on the theme of the temporal nature of all human efforts and deeds. The clause, that "to every thing there is a season," or the theoretical principal part of the reflection, is subservient to the clause, "rejoice and do good in thy life," as a foundation sustaining the practical. The illustrations of the immutability of the eternal decrees of God (vers. 14, 15), of the ever just distribution of human destinies in the next world (vers. 16, 17), and of the total uncertainty of the fate of the spirit of man after death (vers. 18-21), are but subsequent glances from the practical to the theoretical portion, whereby is specially shown, in various ways, the necessity of a joyous and diligent use of the present, in order thus to lend more emphasis to the final exhortation to rejoice in the works of this life. The entire contents of the chapter are therefore, substantially, of an exhortatory character, a reference to the eternal rule of the Highest, that insures to the man, who walks in His paths, happiness in the next world, if not in this, and thus encourages him to grateful and cheerful enjoyment of present blessings, and to unalloyed confidence in the benevolent and assisting hand of God. The theme of KOHELETH'S present section, according to the just observation of HENGSTENBERG, is mainly in unison with the expression of Jeremiah (x. 23): "I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," or, with the ground thought of the hymn of consolation in affliction,

I know, my God, that all mine acts,
And doings rest upon thy will,—

or of the verses,

Why, then, should I repine,
And on the future think?

or this,

On Heaven's blessing, and its grace,
Is all my care reposed,

and others similar. Only in this text there is no necessity of referring the consoling tendency of the section specially to the people of Israel as an *Ecclesia pressa*, suffering amid stern persecutions and ill treatment on the part of external enemies. For if the chapter presents also some allusions to sufferings and wrongs as prevalent occurrences in the epoch and surroundings of the author, (vers. 16-18, and comp. also for the impossibility of the origin of these descriptions from the Solomon of history: *Int.* p. 13) nothing at all can be discovered in illustration of these sad events, from the stand-point of the theocratic and redemptive pragmatism of the prophets. The descriptions in question maintain, rather, a very

general character, and nowhere reflect on the individual position, or the redemptive calling of the people of Israel. For which reason, also, these must be condemned as forced and artificial, that allegorical conception of the introductory verses 1-8, by virtue of which HENGSTENBERG and some predecessors would discover here special allusions to the changing destinies of the people of God, and explain "to be born," and "to die," in the sense of Isa. liv. 1; Hab. i. 12; and "to plant," and "to pluck up," in the sense of Ps. lxxx. 8, 12; "to kill," and "to heal," in the sense of Hos. vi. 1; "to break down" and "build up," in the sense of Jeremiah xxiv. 6; xxxi. 6; xlii. 10. In the practical treatment of this section, this specific redemptory reference, together with others, may certainly have its due influence, but it can lay no claim to exclusive attention.

In the practical and homiletical treatment of this chapter, we are to give special care to the consideration of the very characteristic assertions regarding the world that is set in the hearts of men, (ver. 11.), and the equality of the final destiny of men and beasts in death (vers. 18-21). On the basis of the former passage we should develop the elements of the doctrine of the knowledge of God, to be derived from nature, and the eternal nature and calling of man, (comp. FABRI, "*Time and Eternity*," already quoted, especially pp. 60 ff.). In connection with the second part, on the contrary, we demonstrate that double character of human nature, belonging in the body to time, but in the Spirit to God and eternity, and point out the practical consequences resulting therefrom for the feelings and the conduct of the children of God. In addition to the homiletical hints quoted below from TAULER, MELANCHTHON, etc., comp. especially KLEINERT, on the Old Testament doctrine of the Spirit of God (*Annual for German Theology*, 1867, No. 1, p. 13): The enlivening and elevating truth, that our flesh lives through the Spirit of God (Gen. ii. 7), becomes in KOHELETH a two-edged sword, that turns against its own rejoicing: since all life is from God, that of man as of beast, (iii. 19, 20); our life is that of something foreign to us, and belongs not to us (comp. viii. 8), but must again give up its substance at another's behest, to become what it was—dust, (iii. 20; xii. 7).

To treat the unity of thought in a comprehensive and homiletical style, one might most fittingly take up vers. 11 and 12, and make a formula of them, something in the following manner: "*As a citizen of the world, and an heir of eternity, man should thankfully enjoy the pleasures of this life, and by a conscientious performance of its duties gather fruits propitious for eternity.*" Or, "*Live nobly in time, and eternity will crown thee.*" Or, "*Seek in time to live thy eternal life; then will it, in the future, certainly be thine.*" Comp. also these lines of BÖUME:

From conflict ever freed is he,
To whom the eternal is as time,
And time is as eternity.

HOMILETICAL HINTS ON SEPARATE PASSAGES.

VER. 1. BRENZ: Solomon condemns in the beginning of this chapter all anxious reflection

and care concerning earthly things, above all, useless worldly anxiety. For this is so deeply rooted in the minds of many, indeed of most men, that it can scarcely be eradicated. This is a torment not only of a very painful, but of an entirely useless character. Nearly all other trials and troubles can be easily borne, and oppress only the body; but anxiety ruins both body and soul.—Therefore Solomon here says: Act ever so justly or unjustly, and torture thyself with care till death, thou wilt travail in vain before the completion of the time fixed by God. For, everything occurs according to His divine arrangement, in His own time, without our intervention.

LUTHER: That nothing occurs before the hour arrives which has been determined by God, Solomon proves by examples drawn from all human affairs, and says: There is a time to build up and a time to break down, *etc.*, and concludes therefrom that all human resolve in thought, reverie, or effort, is simply a phantom, a shadow, an illusion, unless it be first resolved in heaven. Kings, princes, lords, may hold their councils and resolve what they will; the thing whose hour has come, will occur; the others stand still and hinder and impede each other. And although it may seem that the hour is now come, nothing will take place till the hour does come, although all men on earth should tear themselves to pieces. God permits neither kings, princes, lords, nor wise men on earth to set the dial for Him. He will set it; and we are not to tell Him what it has struck. He will tell us. Christ says in the gospel: My hour is not yet come, *etc.*—HAMANN: We find here a series of contradictory things and actions which occur in human life, but which cannot possibly exist together, and hence each has its special time. That moment is fixed for everything which is the best and the most fitting for it. The beauty of things consists in this moment of their maturity which God awaits. He who would eat the blossom of the cherry to taste the fruit, would form a faulty judgment regarding it; he who would judge of the cool shade of the trees from the temperature of winter, and their form in this season, would judge blindly. And we make just such conclusions regarding God's government and its purpose!

Vers. 2-8. GEIER (ver. 2): Plants and trees are set and tended on account of their fruits, and the unfruitful are rooted up. Art thou then, O man, planted in the garden of the Lord, but unfruitful, beware, and reform, else wilt thou also be rooted up? Luke xiii. 6ff.

STARKE (ver. 3, 1st clause): God is so gracious that He wounds and lacerates the hearts of men for their own good, but heals them again by the assurance of His grace, and the pardon of sins, Hos. vi. 1.

HENGSTENBERG (ver. 3, second clause): The people of God have the advantage therein that the *destructive* activity is ever a means and a preparation for the *constructive*, and that the final purpose of God is ever directed to the latter. Therefore one can be cheerful and consoled in the kingdom of God, during the momentary activity of destruction.—(Ver. 8): The epoch in which this book was written, was mainly a "pe-

riod of hatred," as the faithful learned it by daily and painful experience. But they were assured by the word of God that, in some future time, a "period of love would come, such as they had not seen" (Isa. xlix. 23; lx. 16; lxvi. 12), and while hoping for this it was more easy for them to accept the seeming hatred from the same dear hand that would dispense the love. . . . The whole finds its end in the sweet name of peace, which is so engraven on the heart of the church militant. Peace, peace, to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord, Isa. lvii. 19. Vers. 9, 10. LUTHER: Before the hour comes, thought and labor are lost. But we are, nevertheless, to labor, each in his sphere and with diligence. God commands this; if we hit the hour, things prosper; if we do not, nothing comes of it, and thus no human thought avails. They, therefore, who would anticipate God's hour, struggle, and have nothing but care and sorrow.

STARKE (ver. 10): Sin causes man to have many cares, dangers, and vexations in the employments of life, Gen. iii. 17. It is not the active but the permissive will of God, that permits sinful men to experience these various evil results of their sins.

Ver. 11. BAENZ:—Although God has created all things in the best and wisest way, and fitted them to our needs, our own will, and our short-sighted earthly wisdom nevertheless prevent us from deriving the profit and enjoyment therefrom which the beasts find in the works of God.

GEIER:—In searching out the works and ways of God be careful not curiously to seek things hidden of God, and on the contrary to neglect His revealed will to the injury of our souls.

STARKE:—The indwelling desire of the human soul to live eternally is a remnant of the divine image. O that we would endeavor to calm this feeling in the right manner, how happy then would we be!

ELSTER:—The ability of man to reflect in himself the harmony of the world (? more correctly, the eternal power and divinity of the Most High mirrored in the things of the world) is indeed a power in whose perfect exercise the individual is impeded by individual weakness. Because the original, pure harmony of the spirit, is obscured in the inner man, he cannot comprehend that which exists without him in its full purity and truth; and that which is highest he is only able to comprehend imperfectly, namely, the eternal, divine, creative thoughts which form the innermost essence of things.

Vers. 12-15. MELANCHTHON (vers. 12, 13):—These words are not intended satirically to illustrate the principles of a man of Epicurean enjoyment, but to express the seriously meant doctrine that the things of this world are to be used and enjoyed according to divine intent and command, and also to impart directions for the happy and temperate enjoyment of them. We must, therefore, look in faith to God, perform the works of our calling, implore and await God's help and blessing, bear patiently the toils and burdens that He sends, and then certainly know that, so far as our labor is crowned with success, this comes from the guidance and protection of God.

LUTHER:—Because so many obstacles and

misfortunes meet those who are diligent and mean to be faithful and upright, and because there is so much unhappiness in the world, there is nothing better than cheerfully to employ the present that God gives to our hand, and not to worry and grieve with cares and thoughts about the future. But the skill lies in being able to do it; that is the gift of God.

OSIANDER, (vers. 14, 15): God acts immutably that we may therein perceive His majesty and power, fear Him, and serve Him with piety and highest reverence. However God deals with us, we must accept it, and consider it good, Job ii. 10.

BERLEBURG BIBLE:—You must not hesitate and let yourself for that reason (by sorrows and tribulations) be drawn away from the highest good. For God will not let the injustice and violence that are done to the pious, go unpunished.

Vers. 16, 17. HANSEN:—As there is here a certain period when men follow their inclinations, so there is, beyond, a fixed time when they will be summoned before a tribunal.

HENGSTENBERG:—The sentence on the wicked may be expected with so much the more confidence, when they have assumed the place of judgment and justice, and from thence practised their iniquity, thus abusing magisterial power.

Vers. 18-21. TAULER:—Man is composed from time and eternity; from time as regards the body, from eternity as regards the spirit. Now everything inclines towards its origin. Because the

body is composed from earth and time, it inclines to temporal things, and finds its pleasure therein. Because the spirit came from God, and is composed from eternity, it inclines therefore to God and eternity. When man turns from time and creatures to eternity and God, he has an inworking in God and eternity, and thus makes eternity from time, and from the creature God in the godly man.

MELANCHTHON:—Solomon speaks thus of external appearances. If one questioned only the eyes and the judgment, without listening to the word of God, human life would appear to be governed by mere chance, to such an extent that men would seem to be, as it were, like a great ant-hill, and like ants to be crushed. But the revelation of the divine word must be placed in contrast with this appearance.

STARKE:—As thou desirest, after death, a better state than that of beasts, see to it, then, that in life thou dost distinguish thyself from the beasts by a reasonable, Christian demeanor, Ps. xxxii. 9.

Ver. 22. WOHLFARTH:—Only the moment that we live in life, is our possession. Every hour lived sinks irrevocably into the sea of the past: the future is uncertain: therefore is he a fool who lets the present slip by unused, wastes it in vain amusement, or grieves with useless lamentations.

HENGSTENBERG:—See the exegetical remarks on this passage.

B. The Impediments to Earthly Happiness, proceeding partly from personal misfortune of various kinds, and partly from the evils of social and civil life.

CHAP. IV. 1-16.

1. The personal misfortune of many men.

(VERS. 1-6.)

1 So I returned and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and behold the tears of *such as were* oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the
2 side of their oppressors *there was* power; but they had no comforter. Wherefore I
3 praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive.
4 Yea, better *is he* than both they, which had not yet been, who hath not seen the
5 evil work that is done under the sun. Again, I considered all travail, and every
6 right work, that for this a man is envied of his neighbor. This *is* also vanity
7 and vexation of spirit. The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own
8 flesh. Better *is* a handful *with* quietness, than both the hands full *with* travail and
vexation of spirit.

2. The evils of social life.

(VERS. 7-12.)

7, 8 Then I returned and saw vanity under the sun. There is one *alone*, and *there*
is not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet *is there* no end of all
his labour, neither is his eye satisfied with riches: neither *saith he*, For whom do I

labour, and bereave my soul of good? This is also vanity, yea, it is a sore travail.
 9 Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour
 10 For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but wo to him that is alone when
 11 he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together,
 12 then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against
 him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

3. The evils of civil life.

(VERS. 13-16.)

13 Better is a poor and a wise child, than an old and foolish king, who will no more
 14 be admonished. For out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also he that is born
 15 in his kingdom becometh poor. I considered all the living which walk under the
 16 sun, with the second child that shall stand up in his stead. There is no end of all
 the people, even of all that have been before them: they also that come after shall
 not rejoice in him. Surely this also is vanity and vexation of spirit.

[Ver. 1. וָאֵרָאָה אֲנִי וְשָׁבַתִּי אֲנִי: I turned and saw, or I returned and saw, I looked again—שָׁבַתִּי used adverbally, to denote repetition.—T. L.]

Ver. 2. וְשִׁבַּח אֲנִי the participle piel with כ omitted, מְשַׁבַּח. The examples ZÜCKLER brings in support of its being the infinitive, do not bear him out. Comp. כִּבְהָרָה for כִּבְהָרָה Zeph. i. 14, in like manner the Pual participle without כ, as לָקַח 2 Kings ii. 10, for כִּלְקַח, מִיָּלֵךְ for מִיָּלֵךְ Jud. xiii. 8, and מִיִּקְשִׁים Eccles. ix. 12, for מִיִּקְשִׁים.

[Ver. 5. פִּשְׁרוֹן. See remarks, p. 53.—T. L.]

[Ver. 8. וְלִמָּוֶה: "and for whom." The apparent conjunction ו, here, seems rather to have the force of an interjection, as in וְאֵיךְ ii. 16 (see remarks on it, p. 58). Alas! how is it; so here, Ah me! for whom. Our conjunction has sometimes a similar emphatic instead of a mere copulative force. Or, it may be doubted whether, in such cases, instead of being copulative at all, it is any thing more than the exclamation וَا in Arabic, which is, in like manner, joined to other

words, as waika, vae tibi, or wa laka, cheu tibi, and sometimes to exclamatory phrases, as wa-sawa tu hu, in one word, proh dolor, O what a calamity! The abrupt exclamation is much more impressive and significant than the filling up of our English Version, "neither does he say." This is, moreover, false, since the writer does mean to represent the solitary rich man as thus saying. It is pressed out of him by a sudden sense of his folly. DR. VAN DERK, in his late Arabic translation, makes it thus abruptly follow, which is the more easily done, since his Arabic word so nearly resembles the

Hebrew, whilst the conjunction ف instead of و gives it more of subjective connection. In such cases as this

the Hebrew particle was doubtless pronounced wa, instead of the mere vowel sound u. In like manner, wa is ua, or ova, like the French oui. Compare Greek οὐά, Mark xv. 29 (also found in classical Greek), and the more frequent οὐά; also the Hebrew וְאֵי, וְ, woi, or ou-oi. Even as a conjunction it has an emotional power: "and O, for whom, etc"—T. L.]

[Ver. 14. הַכְּסִיִּים evidently a contraction for הַאֲכִסְיִים. It is written according to the sound,—the א with its light shewa, becoming a quiescent and disappearing, as in אֲשֶׁר when it becomes אֵש. This writing words according to the sound may mark an earlier period, when some changes had taken place, but attention had not been much drawn to the radical orthography as in later times. It is, however, very unsafe to draw any inference from it as to dates, either way. In Jeremiah xxxvii. 15, we have בֵּית הַתְּאִסְרִים, the singular of the word written in full, and used as synonymous with בֵּית הַבְּלָא, house of restraint.—T. L.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

The plan of this section is extremely simple and clear. Each of the three divisions or strophes, as given above, is again divided into two smaller parts or half strophes, with which, each time, new turns of thought commence. The complete scheme is as follows: *First strophe:* The personal misfortune of men: vers. 1-6; first half strophe: vers. 1-3; second half strophe: vers. 4-6. *Second strophe:* The evils of social life: vers. 7-12; first half strophe: vers. 7, 8; second half strophe: vers. 9-12. *Third strophe:* The evils of civil life: vers. 13-16; first half

strophe: vers. 13, 14; second half strophe: vers. 15, 16.—Comp. VAHNINGER, *Comment.*, p. 32 f., and also the DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL portion of this section.

2. *First strophe:* vers. 1-6. It is not the really unfortunate men that alone suffer sorrows, oppressions, and violence of the most various nature (vers. 1-3); the fortunate also find the joy of their life embittered by envy and want of true repose of soul (vers. 4-6).—So I returned—namely, from the previous course of my reflections (which, according to chap. 3, had dwelt upon the foundation and nature of the earthly happiness of men). HENGSTENBERG justly claims for this passage, as well as for ver. 7 and chap.

ix. 11 (and also for Zech. v. 1), the acceptance of אָרְרָה אָנִי שָׁבַרְתִּי in the sense of: "And I turned back and saw," which is the same as: "And again I saw" (EWALD), and indicates the transition to a new object of reflection, not the repetition of a reflection already made, as HAHN contends. LUTHER, ELSTER, VAHINGER, etc., are not correct in saying: "And I turned," etc.; for שָׁבַר expresses a sense different from שָׁבַר or כָּבַד (ii. 12, 20, etc.).—**And considered all the oppressions.**—As in Amos iii. 9, אָרְרָה אָנִי שָׁבַרְתִּי, must here also be taken in an abstract sense: "oppressions," "violence;" for אָרְרָה אָנִי does not harmonize with the concrete sense, "oppressed," whilst in the following clause the concrete sense "oppressed" appears from the context.—**And behold the tears of such as were oppressed.**—In the original, tear of the oppressed (הַיָּסוּרִים) a collective). The description presents a vivid reality, and does not magnify the actual conditions in a fantastic or sentimental manner, or from a bitter and peevish misanthropy, but simply reports facts: and facts such as the author had frequently experienced in consequence of the civilly dependent and depressed condition of his people.—**And on the side of their oppressors there was power.**—הָיָה here is equal to הִזְקָה (1 Sam. ii. 16; Ezek. xxxiv. 4) violence. The repetition of the expression, "but they had no comforter," realizes, with striking emphasis, the hopeless and desperate condition of those who suffer. Comp. the similar repetitions of the same tragic turn in Isa. ix. 11, 16, 20; x. 4; Mark ix. 44, 46, 48.—**Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead.**—הָיָה is not a participle with אָנִי omitted, but an infinitive absolute, which here contains the finite verb, as in chap. ix. 11, and in 1 Chron. v. 20 (comp. BERTH. on this passage, and also EWALD, § 351 c).—**More than the living which are yet alive.**—הָיָה אָנִי אָדָּמָה אֲדָמָה אֲדָמָה אֲדָמָה *adhuc, yet*. For the sentence comp. vii. 1 f.; also Herodotus i. 31: ἀμεινον ἀνθρώπων τεθνάναι μάλλον ἢ ζῶειν, as also ver. 6 of MENANDER: Ζωῆς ποιητῆς θάνατος αἰρετώτερος.—**Ver. 3. Yea, better is he than both they, which hath not been.**—For this intensifying of the previous thought, comp. chap. vi. 3-5; vii. 1; Job iii. 13ff.; Jer. xx. 18, and THEOGNIS, *Gnom.*, v. 425 ss.:

Πάντων μὲν μὴ φῖναι ἐπιχθονίους ἀριστον,
Μηδ' εὐδεῖν αὐγὰς ὀξείος ἡλείου,
Φύττα δ', ὅπως ὠκίστα πύλας 'Αἴδαο περιῆσαι,
Καὶ κείσθαι πολλῶν γῆν ἐπαμφομένους.

Other parallels will be found in the classic authors, as SOPHOCLES (*Ed. Col.*, 1143 s.), EURIPIDES, (*Cresphontes fragm.* 13) CHALCIDAMUS, POSIDIPP, PHILEMON, VAL. *Maxim.* II. 6; SOLINUS (*Polyhist.* c. 10), etc. EXAMINE also KNOBEL on this passage, and HENGSTENBERG, p. 160 f. The difference between such complaints in heathen authors, and the same in the mouth of our own, is found in the fact that the latter, like Job and Jeremiah, does not stop at the gloomy reflections expressed in the lamentation, but, by proceed-

ing to expressions of a more cheerful nature,* announces that the truth found in them is incomplete, and only partial.—**Ver. 4. Again—I considered all travail and every right work.**—בְּשָׂרוֹן, as in ii. 21, not of the successful result of work, but of its excellence in kind and manner; the Septuagint is correct: ἀνδρεία, and mainly so the Vulgate: *industriæ*. But it is clear that the author is thinking mainly of such excellent and industrious people whose exertions are crowned with success, so that they can become objects of envy or jealousy. He is therefore now no longer regarding simply the unhappy and the suffering, as in vers. 1-3, but also the relatively happy.—**That for this a man is envied of his neighbor.**—[קָנְיָתָא אִישׁ בְּרֵיבֵיהּ] *i. e.*, jealous endeavor to anticipate another in available effort and corresponding success; consequently envious disposition and action, *invidia* (comp. ix. 6, where קָנְיָתָא has the same meaning, and also Isa. xi. 13, etc.).—**This is also vanity.**—Because in the uncertainty of all earthly circumstances, it is of no true profit to surpass one's

*[There is a still more striking contrast, a double antithesis, it may be said, between the classical and the Scriptural poets. In their descriptions of nature and of human life we often find the former class of writers beginning in the joyful or major mood, and ending in the minor. It may be called the melancholy of Epicureanism. Thus it is with ANACREON, though he lived before the time of the general philosopher. How often does he begin with "flowers, and love, and rosy wine"—

Ἐπὶ μυρσίναις τερεῖναις
Ἐπὶ λυτίναις τε παῖαις κ. τ. λ.

On beds of softest fragrance laid,
Soft beds of lote and myrtle shade.

And so goes on the joyful strain—but not far before the modulation changes into the mournful key—into a wail of despair, as it would almost seem:

Βίος τρέχει κυλισθεῖς
ὀλίγη δὲ κεσόμμεθα.

So swiftly runs the wheel of life,
And we shall lie—a little dust—
A heap of mouldering bones.

See also how similar jovial strains are closed by his sad picture of old age, and the still darker one of the dreadful Hades:

Ἄιδου γὰρ ἔστι δεινὸς
καθόδος—

For dreadful is that gloomy vale;
And then the dark descent so deep,
That none can reascend the steep.

This peculiarity is no less striking in HORACE. Thus, in the 4th ode of the 1st book, there is a most charming picture of spring, continuing for some distance, till it closes with the exulting strain—

Nunc deest aut viridi nitidum caput impedire myrto;
Aut flore terræ quam ferunt solute.

And then, without any warning prelude, there comes the mournful minor:

Pallida mors æquo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas,
Regumque turres.

Pale Death, with equal step, at kingly tower,
And at the poor man's cottage, knocks.

Again, Ode 7th, Lib. IV., commencing with—

Diffugeret nives, redeunt jam gramina campis.
The snows are fled the flowers again return.

Then the picture of the dancing Graces, when immediately a different voice seems to meet our ears:

Immortalia ne speres,
Damna lumen celeres reparant celestia lunæ—
Nos ubi decidimus.
Pulvis et umbra sumus:

Hope not for immortality—
The waning moons again their waste repair;
But we, when once to death gone down,
Are ought but dust and shadow.

neighbor in diligence and skill.—Ver. 5. **The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh.**—Probably a proverb of like tendency with those of Prov. vi. 10; xxiv. 33, *i. e.*, directed against idleness; it is therefore not the expression of the author, but a quotation of an envious person who endeavors to defend his zealous effort to surpass his neighbor in excellence, but which is immediately refuted in ver. 6. HIRZIG is correct in this view (comp. also the *Int.*, § 1, Obs. 2), whilst LUTHER, GEIER, OETINGER, BAUER, VAHINGER, *etc.*, see rather the *jealous man* designated as a fool, who folds his hands in vexation and despair, and consumes his own flesh in wild passion, and EWALD, HENGSTENBERG, ELSTER, *etc.*, think that the author is contrasting idleness with envy as its opposite extreme, in order to warn against the former; this were manifestly to presuppose a very abrupt and obscure mode of presentation. Concerning the phrase “foldeth his hands” as a Biblical expression for idleness, comp. Prov. vi. 10. “Eateth his own flesh” is to exhaust one’s strength, to use one’s fortune, to ruin one’s self, as occurs on the part of the idle; comp. Isa. xlix. 26; Ps. xxvii. 2; Micah iii. 3; Numb. xii. 12.—Ver. 6 **Better is a handful with quietness, than both hands full with travail**

In contrast with this, how joyfully rings out the prophetic strain, Isaiah xxvi. 19:

Awake and sing, ye dwellers in the dust.

How different, too, in these respects, from HOBAC and ANACRION, are the lyrics of the Psalmist. The most mournful descriptions of the frailty and transitory state of man on earth are so frequently succeeded by assurances of some future blessedness, which, although not clearly defined, and containing little or no direct allusions to an after life, do ever seem to imply it as the ground of confidence in the Divine goodness. “He is not the God of the dead, but of the living.” Thus in the ciii. Psalm, ver. 15, *etc.*:

Fool man—like grass his days;
As the flower of the field, so he flourishes.
For the wind passes over and it is gone;
Its place knoweth it no more.

Immediately hope rises:

But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting—
Even unto everlasting, upon those who fear him;
His righteousness to children’s children.

Again,—encouragement in the contemplation of human weakness is derived from the thought of the Divine permanence and eternity, Ps. cii. 1:

My days are like a shadow that declineth;
I am withered like grass;
But thou, Jehovah, dost endure forever.
Thy remembrance unto all generations.

Again, Ps. cxv. 17:

The dead praise not the Lord—

and immediately the language of hope, implying something more than that mere selfish thought of survivorship, which the rationalist would give it:

But we will bless the Lord,
From henceforth and forever—hallelujah.

A similar transition, Ps. lxxiii. 26:

My flesh and heart do fail:

Body and soul both suffer from their connection with a fallen spiritual state, and a degenerate nature.

But God is the rock of my soul;
He is my portion for ever.

Similar illustrations of these affecting contrasts might be derived from Job, as in chapters xiv. and xix., especially the latter, where the triumphant strain, “I know that my Redeemer liveth,” follows so soon after what might seem almost a piteous cry of despair. In Kobleth there are no such vivid bursts of joy and hope, but there is to be found in him a species of transition similar, and equally striking. It is when he rises from the seemingly doubting mood, to a firm faith in the ultimate Divine justice, and to a most con-

and vexation of spirit.—This is plainly * the answer which a defender of a contented, quiet spirit, void of envy, would give to that feverish jealousy which in ver. 5 he had rebuked as foolish indolence, the disposition not to rival one’s neighbor in skill and diligence.—קָלָא כָךְ, lit., “to be filled, to be full of hand.” It means “a little,” as taken in contrast with קָלָא חֲפִנִים “both hands full,” *i. e.*, superfluity of any thing, great abundance. “Quiet” (נְרִיָה) and so also מְקָלָא “travail,” do naturally present, not only the respective dispositions and demeanors, but, at the same time, the casual circumstances connected with them, and forming their background; at one time a modest portion of worldly goods, at another a great fortune, collected with much exertion, but bringing only care and sorrow.

3. *Second strophe.* Vers. 7-12. By avarice, the nearest relative and affiliated vice of the envy just described, man brings himself into sad isolation and abandonment of friends, which is the greatest misfortune in social life, as it not only embitters all enjoyment of the amenities of this life, but robs us of all protection against men of hostile intent. For ver. 7 compare what is said above of ver. 1.—Ver. 8. **There is one alone, and there is not a second**—*i. e.*, one standing entirely alone, without friends and companions, also without near blood relations (according to the following clause), consequently so much the more isolated and obliged to make friends by the free use of his riches, but which he does not do.—Neither is his eye satisfied with riches, *i. e.*, he does not cease to crave new treasures; comp. ii. 10. The K’tib מְנַיִן must be retained, and need not be exchanged for מְנָיִן. Comp. 1 Sam. iv. 15; 1 Kings xiv. 6, 12; Ps. xxxvii. 31.—**For whom do I labor and bereave my soul of good?**—Lit., “let my soul fail of the good,” a pregnant construction like that in Ps. x. 18; xviii. 19. This question is put into the mouth of the covetous, but as one finally arriving at reflection, and perceiving the folly of his thus collecting treasures; comp. ii. 18-21; Luke xii.

fidest expression of his belief that somehow, and somewhere, and at some time, every wrong shall be righted. Conceding to him this, we are led, irresistibly, to infer something else which is necessary to give meaning to the announcement,—namely, that there shall be a real forensic manifestation, with a conscious knowledge of it on the part of every intelligent subject or object, of such righteousness.—T. L.]

* [This is not so clear, although ZÖCKLER has with him most of the commentators. There is good reason for regarding it as the language of the idle envious, who would justify his sloth by making a pretended virtue of it. “Why all this labor? Better take the world easy.” It has something of the look of the “sour grapes” fable; or it may be compared to the bacchanalian song of the shiftless idler, assuming to despise what he has not the talent nor the diligence to acquire.

“Why are we fond of toil and care?”

The view taken by ZÖCKLER and others seems very confuse. It is not easy to discover any true connection in it. The perplexity, we think, comes from assuming that ver. 5 is a quoted proverb, and not the very language of the author, setting the idle envious fool on his words (in ver. 6) in contrast with the diligent and prosperous laborer whom the fool envies but cannot imitate. This is the view presented in the Metrical Translation:

The fool [in envy] folds his hands, and his own flesh devours
For better [with he] is the one hand filled with quietness,
Than both hands full of toil and windy vain desire.

It seems to make a clearer connection.—T. L.]

16-21. But it does not follow from this sudden revulsion from foolish to sensible views, without further explanation, that Koheleth means himself (as above chap. ii. 18 ff.) in the person here described (as HIRTZIG contends).—Ver. 9. **Two are better than one.**—That is, it is better, in general, to be associated than isolated, comp. Gen. ii. 18, and the saying of the Talmud: "A man without companions is like the left without the right hand" (*Pirke Aboth*, f. 30, 2).—**Because they have a good reward for their labor.**—Lit., who have a good reward for their labor. What this good reward consists of, the three subsequent verses show by three examples, which point out, in a similar manner, the pleasure as well as the profit and protection afforded by socially living and cordially co-operating with one's fellows.—Ver. 10. **For if they fall, i. e., the one or the other.** We cannot think of both falling at the same time, because they then would both need aid.—**But woe to him that is alone when he falleth**—וְאֵלַי "woe to him!" comp. פֶּן אֵלַי x. 16, and also the kindred וְאֵלַי Ezek. ii. 10.—Ver. 11. **If two lie together, then they have heat.**—The conjugal lying together of man and wife is certainly not intended, but rather that of two travelling companions who are obliged to pass the night in the open air. The necessity of this in Palestine,* on account of the prevalence of cold nights there, can easily cause great embarrassment, especially as poorer travellers have no other covering with them than their over-garment; comp. Ex. xxii. 26; Song of Solomon, v. 3.—Ver. 12. **And if one prevail against him.**—וְאֵלַי means to overcome (comp. the adjective וְאֵלַי powerful, vi. 10), not to attack (KNOBEL, ELSTER), or fall upon (EWALD). וְאֵלַי is an indefinite singular with an object presupposed in the suffix: "if one overwhelmed him, the one;" comp. 2 Sam. xiv. 6; Prov. xiii. 24; and Eccles. ii. 21, which passages satisfactorily show that EWALD's proposition to read וְאֵלַי is unnecessary.—(Comp. EWALD, *Lehrbuch*, § 309 c).—**Two shall withstand him.**—Of course not the one mentioned in the first part, but rather his opponent, who forms the unnamed subject in וְאֵלַי. Comp. similar cases in chap. v. 18; vi. 12; viii. 16; as well as the phrase וְאֵלַי "to oppose somebody," to resist one; 2 Kings x. 4; Dan. viii. 7. EWALD and ELSTER are not so correct in saying: "thus stand two before him," namely, the attacked one himself and his companion—which clearly affords too weak a thought.—**And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.**—That is, if three of them, instead of two, hold together, then so much the better. The symbol is taken from the fact that a cord of three strands holds more firmly than one consisting of a simple

strand, or of two only. Comp. the well-known fable of a bundle of arrows, and the German proverb: "Strong alone, but stronger with others." There is no allusion to the sacredness of the number three, and still less to the Trinity, which a few older commentators thought to find herein. Moreover, the title of several books of devotion is derived from this passage, e. g., the celebrated book of the Priest of Rostock, NIKOLAUS RUSS, about the year 1500: *de triplici funiculo*, in which faith, hope and love are described as the three cords of which there must be made the rope that is to rescue man from the abyss of ruin. And so of later works, as (LILIENTHAL) "A Threefold Cord," a book of proverbs for every day in the year (for every day a saying containing a promise and a prayer).—New. Ed., Ilamburg, Sigmund. A threefold cord, woven out of the three books of St. AUGUSTINE: *Manuale, Soliloquia, et Meditationes*, 1863. 4. *Third strophe.*—Vers. 13-16. That fortune often shows itself deceptive and unreliable enough in civil life, and in the highest spheres of human society, is illustrated by the double example of an old incapable king whom a younger person pushes aside, and that of his successor, an aspirant from a lower class, who, in spite of his transitory popularity, nevertheless falls into forgetfulness, like so many others. Like the fact alluded to in chap. ix. 13-16, this example seems to be taken from the immediate contemporary experiences of the author, but can only, with great difficulty, be more nearly defined on its historical basis. Only the first clause of ver. 14 suits the history of Joseph, and, at most, ver. 13 contains an allusion to David as the successor of Saul; ver. 15 may allude to Rehoboam as successor of Solomon, and ver. 14 perhaps to Jeroboam. But other features again destroy these partial resemblances every time, and demonstrate the impossibility of discovering any one of these persons in the "poor but wise youth." Thus, too, the remaining hypotheses that have been presented concerning the enigmatical fact (e. g., the references to Amaziah and Joash, and to Nimrod and Abraham), can only be sustained by the most arbitrary applications. This is especially true of HIRTZIG's supposition that the old and foolish king is the Onias mentioned by Josephus (*Antiquities* xiii. 4) as High Priest and *προστώτης τοῦ λαοῦ*, and that the youth supplanting him was his sister's son, Joseph, w. o., if he did not succeed in robbing him of the priestly office (which his son Simon inherited) [see Sirach l. 1 ff.], at least wrested from him the *προστασία*, i. e., the lucrative office of a farmer of the Syrian revenues that he had then exercised twenty-two years, not indeed to the satisfaction of the people, but in a very selfish and tyrannical manner. This hypothesis does all honor to the learned acumeu of its originator, but has so many weak points as to forbid its acceptance. For in the first place the ruler of a realm is portrayed in vers. 15 and 16, and not a rich Judaic-Syrian revenue collector; secondly, Onias was high-priest and not king, and lost only a part of his functions and power by that Joseph; thirdly, the assumption that the author exaggerates petty circumstances and occurrences in a manner not historical, is destitute of the necessary proof; fourthly, the supposition forming

* [One of the best illustrations of this is to be found in Captain KANE'S *Journal* of his *Arctic Voyage*, Vol. II, p. 144. He describes his camping out in the snow, in company with the Esquimaux Chief, KALATUNAR, and the agreeable warmth arising from the close contact of their bodies, at a time when the thermometer showed a most intense degree of cold. The comfort of the position overbalanced all the repulsiveness that, under other circumstances, he should have felt towards his squalid companion.—T. L.]

the base of the entire hypothesis of an authorship of Koheleth towards the end of the third century B. C. is quite as arbitrary and bare of proof; comp. *Int.*, § 4, Obs. 3. We must, therefore, refrain from specially defining the event to which these verses allude; in which case the two following suppositions remain possible: either the author feigns an example, or, in other words, has presented the contents of vers. 13-16 as a possible case (thus think ELSTER, HENGSTENBERG, VAHINGER, *et al.*), or he refers to an event in the history of the nation or State, at his period, not sufficiently known to us (the opinion of UMBREIT, EWALD, BLEEK, *etc.*). In the latter case, we could hardly think of a change of succession in the series of Persian monarchs; for the history of the rise of the eunuch Bagoas about the year 339 B. C. harmonizes too little with the present description to be identified with it, but we would sooner think of such a change in some one of the States subject to Persia, as Phœnicia or Egypt.—**Better is a poor and wise child, etc.**—Clearly a general sentence for the introduction of the following illustration: “better” not here said of moral excellence, but “happier,” “better off,” just as טוב in vers. 3 and 9. “Wise” here is equivalent to “adroit, cunning,” comp. Job v. 13; 2 Sam. xiii. 3.—**Who will no more be admonished.**—לֹא יִרְעָה with the infinitive, as v. 1; vi. 8; x. 16; Ex. xvii. 16.—**Ver. 14. For out of prison he cometh to reign.**—בֵּית הַחַיִּיּוֹת contracted from בֵּית הַחַיִּיּוֹת (comp. similar contractions in 2 Chron. xxii. 5; Ezek. xx. 30), also synonymous with בֵּית אֲכָרִים, Judges xvi. 21, 25 (comp. Gen. xxxix. 20). Or else this reading בֵּית הַחַיִּיּוֹת must owe its origin to the opinion that Joseph’s elevation from the prison to the throne (Gen. xli.) is here alluded to, in which case we should read בֵּית הַחַיִּיּוֹת, and explain this either by “house of the outcast” “of the degraded” (EWALD, comparing Isa. xlix. 21), or “by house of the fugitives” (HITZIG, comparing Judges iv. 18; 2 Sam. iii. 36). But these varied meanings would produce very little difference in the sense.—**Whereas also he that is born in his kingdom becometh poor.**—כִּי נִסְבַּח, after the כִּי of the preceding clause, introduces not so much a verification of it, as an intensification, by which is expressed that the prisoner (or fugitive) has not merely transiently fallen into adversity, but that he was born in poor and lowly circumstances; and this נִסְבַּח “in his kingdom,” *i. e.*, in the same land that he should afterwards rule as king (HITZIG, ELSTER, VAHINGER and EWALD, who are mainly correct). ROSENMUELLER, KNOBEL and HAHN translate: “ALTHOUGH he was born poor in his kingdom;” HENGSTENBERG: “for although born in his kingdom, he becomes poor nevertheless”—both of them less suitable meanings, of which the latter should be rejected as too artificial and contrary to the accentuation.—**Ver. 15. I considered all the living which walk under the sun, with the second child, etc.**—A somewhat inflated description of the dominion and adherents

which that youth (or child) had acquired. For the same child is doubtless meant as that named in vers. 13 and 14, as the repetition of the expression יָלֵד shows, as well as the words יָלֵד יָלֵד at the end, which indicate clearly enough the prospective introduction of the child into the place of the old and foolish king. The imperfect יָלֵד marks the future in the past—comp. 2 Kings iii. 27; Ps. lxxviii. 6; and יָלֵד in the same sense, as *e. g.*, (Dan. xi. 2, 3). HAHN, in connection with some older writers, considers the יָלֵד הַשֵּׁנִי different from the יָלֵד in ver. 13, and identifies it with the Messiah child or the Christ child of Isa. ix. 5; xi. 1 ff.; Micah v. 1; but the contents of the following verse, which characterizes the splendor of the child most clearly as transitory and vain, are very decidedly against this position as something that would never be in accordance with the rule of the Messiah.—And moreover, from the expression: “All the living which walk under the sun,” it is by no means necessary to deduce that the author had in his eye one of the great Asiatic empires, as HENGSTENBERG supposes with reference to Dan. iv. 7 ff.; but the language here, as in the following verse, is largely hyperbolic, and is intended merely to give an idea of the numberless masses adhering to the usurper; comp. similar hyperboles in the Song of Sol. vi. 8; Joshua xi. 4; Judges vi. 5; vii. 12; Ex. x. 4 ff.—**There is no end of all the people, even of all that have been before them.**—הָיָה לְפָנָי denotes here, as in 1 Sam. xviii. 16; 2 Chron. i. 10, the headship or leadership (comp. also Micah ii. 13). [ZÜCKLER says this to support his translation, *an deren Spitze er stand*, “all at whose head he stood,” notwithstanding all the connections of the passage show that priority in time is meant here by לְפָנָי, and not priority of position. The references he makes to 1 Sam. xviii. 16, *etc.*, do not, at all, sustain him, since, in every one of them, there are other words (such as “going in and out before them”), which wholly change the case.—T. L.] EWALD, following the Sept., Vulg., and LUTHER, translate: “all that have been before them,” and indicate an antagonism between these earlier ones and those immediately after called אַחֲרָיוּתִים but he thereby violates the connection, which clearly shows that the generations later, not those earlier than the king in question, were compared with him. It is said of them לֹא יִשְׂכַּחוּכוּ —They also that come after shall not rejoice in him.—That is, they have no pleasant experiences of him whom they once greeted with joyful hopes, either that he deceived the just hopes of his people by later misrule, or that the fickle breeze of popularity became untrue to him without his fault. In either case, Koheleth could and must find a confirmation of his favorite expression concerning the vanity of earthly things. This clause is therefore again composed of the strain with which he closes his reflections.

[ALLEGED HISTORICAL ALLUSIONS IN KOHELETH.—See the general remarks on the passages here alluded to, in the Appendix to the Introduction, p. 30. The older commentators who were firm in respect to the Solomonic origin, first began this kind of speculation. The Jewish Rabbis were excessively absurd in some of their midrashin. And so the older Christian interpreters were very fond of treating such passages as describing real historical events. They referred them to Rehoboam, Jeroboam, Joseph, Abraham, or any body else, because they thought it for the honor of the book, or of the Scriptures generally; as, in this way, one part confirmed another. The attempts to verify such hypotheses, however, only led to confusion, and tended rather to discredit than to increase confidence in the production. What was still worse, the Rationalists, whose interest it was to bring the book down to a very late date, began, in like manner, to use these supposed references for their own purposes. The result has been a still greater confusion; and the great difficulty of making any thing clear out of them, ought to satisfy every sober mind of the falsity of the entire historical theory. Regarded as general illustrations, they are in perfect harmony with the authorship of Solomon; whilst the attempts of another kind show the insuperable difficulty of settling upon any other date than the one claimed in the book itself. The most extravagant hypothesis is that of HITZIG, as is shown by ZÖCKLER and STUART. A priest has to be turned into a king, and when even that fails, the taking away of a very subordinate office is to be treated as a dethronement. What an outcry would be made by EWALD and his school, should they find similar wrenchings of language and history in commentators called orthodox! As presented by HITZIG and others, it becomes all a mass of rationalistic confusion. Even if the author was of so late a date, he certainly means to personate the old king of Israel. He must, therefore, himself have been "old and foolish," or consistency would have kept him from using as an illustration an incident so evidently anachronistic, as compared with any historical example likely to be given by Solomon. A writer assuming to personate some one in the days of Queen Elizabeth, and then using an illustration, insignificant in itself, and savoring wholly of the time of Gladstone, Bright, and Queen Victoria, would not have acted more absurdly.]

The confusion and difficulty which such a mode of treatment (whether by Orthodox or Rationalist) has made in the interpretation of ver. 13, have been greatly increased by a wrong translation of ver. 14th. It has been most commonly held that the pronoun in מְלִכְתּוֹ (*his* kingdom) refers to the young man, and נוֹלָךְ, to some one, or to the subjects generally, born under his usurped power. This certainly destroys the contrast which the arrangement and the particles of the two verses seem to intend. Again, נוֹלָךְ (as a participle), or נוֹלָךְ, has been taken as referring to the young man himself, born in *his*, that is, the old man's, kingdom—said young usurper

himself afterwards becoming poor. Such seems to be ZÖCKLER's view partially. All sorts of twists are resorted to by others to make this applicable to Jeroboam, or HITZIG's "young man" Joseph, or to somebody else. Our E. V. is ambiguous as to which is meant, and leaves the sense in total darkness. There is a striking contrast intended here, as is shown by the order of the words, and the particles וְיָבִי. There is meant to be the most direct antithesis, as best illustrating such a vicissitude of fortune. The one born to a throne and becoming poor, is put in strongest contrast with the one born in obscurity and rising to power: "For out of prison (out of servitude or some condition of restraint, it may be actual imprisonment) the one comes forth to reign, whilst the other, though born in his kingdom (in his royal state), becomes a pauper." The particle וְיָבִי has an emotional force; it expresses astonishment at such a case: *yea, more—what is stranger still!*—the royally born becomes poor." There is good authority for such a view, although most of the commentators wander after something else. The Vulgate renders it most clearly and literally: *De carcere et catenis quis egredietur interdum ad regnum, et alius, natus in regno, inopia conuenatur.* "From prison and from chains one may sometimes come forth to a kingdom, whilst another born in a kingdom may be reduced to want." It is clear, from the mode of expression, that the Latin translator looked upon it as a general illustration of the changes in human fortune. A still better authority is the old Greek Version of SYMMACHUS, the best of the Greek interpreters: 'Ο ΜΕΝ γὰρ ἐκ φυλακῆς ἐξῆλθε βασιλεύσας, ὁ ΔΕ, καίπερ βασιλεὺς γεννηθεὶς, ἔστιν ἐνδοξός: "The one comes from prison to reign, the other, born a king, becomes needy." This is confirmed by the Syriac translation of ORIGEN'S *Hexapla*, which follows the Greek of SYMMACHUS, word for word. See it as given in the Syriac marginal translations to MIDDLEBORFF'S edition of the *Codex Syriaco-hexaplaris*.

Ver. 15. "I beheld all the living walking beneath the sun," etc. ZÖCKLER may well call this "a somewhat inflated description of the dominion which that youth had acquired." It is indeed *überschwänglichlich*, high-flown, most extravagant, as thus applied; and the thought should have shown him that there must be something false in the application. It is barely suggested by what was said before (ver. 14) about the vicissitudes of the individual life, but has no other connection with it. It is a rising of the view to a higher scale, so as to take in the world, or race at large, and its olamic vicissitudes, as they might be called. רָאִיתִי, I saw, I surveyed, or contemplated. It is presented as a picture of the mind taking in not single events, but *all the living*, כָּל הַחַיִּים. No where else in the Bible is this most sweeping language applied to such narrow uses as are here supposed. Where it is not used abstractly for life, as the plural חַיִּים often is, it is never found in any less sense than the human race, or of the living as opposed to the dead. Comp. Job xxviii. 12; Isaiah viii. 20, "Land of the living," Ps. lvi.; cxlii. 6, "Light

of the living," similar expressions, Ps. cxvi. 9 ; also Eccles. vi. 8 ; ix. 5, and other places. Here

כל joined with it (and it is the only place where it is so joined) makes it still more difficult to restrict it to such a narrow sense. The language rises beyond this: "I surveyed, I contemplated, all the living, as they walked beneath the sun," *cunctos viventes ambulantes sub sole*. These are certainly very lofty words to apply to a crowd running after Jeroboam, or Mirza's ambitious youth, or any other personage of that kind. No artificial rule of criticism, *de universalibus restringendis*, etc., can justify the use of such language, in such a case. The true idea, moreover, is in-

tensified by the participle **מְהַלְכִים**, in *piel*, *marching, stately stepping*, denoting a bold and proud movement, as in Eccles. xi. 9 הֵלֵךְ "march on in the ways of thine heart." The *piel* does, indeed, seem, sometimes, to be used like the *kal*, but here every thing calls for its intensive or

frequentative force. Comp. **מְהַלְךְ**, the *bold invader*, Prov. vi. 11, in parallelism with **אִישׁ כִּנְיָן** "man of the shield." In this intensive sense of *marching* it would seem to picture the grand procession of the race, moving on, squadron after squadron, the countless multitude that has already passed, **עַם הַיָּלֵךְ הַשֵּׁנִי**, together "with the second generation," as we do not hesitate to render it, that shall stand in its place,—the **עַם** here simply denoting the connection between the different parts of the picture or survey. The old procession that he thus *saw walking beneath the sun* (a term every where else used for the theatre of the human race), or the old part of it, is disappearing, whilst a younger world is now coming upon the stage and continuing the same ceaseless movement. As this rises before the mental vision

of the seer [הַרְאָה], he cries out, **אֵין קֵץ לְכֹל הָעָם** "there is no end to all the people."—there is no numbering the ranks of this vast host, as they ever come and go. As applied to Jeroboam, such language as this would not be a mere hyperbole, but a transcendental bombast, unworthy of the author and his most serious book. It calls to mind that sublime picture which Addison presents in his *Vision of Mirza*, the countless multitudes on the broken bridge of life, as they are ever coming out of the dark cloud on the one side, and passing away with the great flood of eternity on the other. It is this evident pictorial element in the verse, when rightly rendered, that strongly opposes the idea of any such comparatively petty historical references, and forces us to regard it as a representation of the great human movement through time into eternity. "No end to all that were before; yea, these that come after shall not rejoice in it" [בְּנֵי] that is, the **עַם** the people, *the all*, that were before it, now regarded collectively as the past in whom there is no more delight,—each generation satisfied with itself, and boasting of itself, as ours does, deeming itself, as it were, the all on earth; for what are all the ages past to this nineteenth century! Now the pronoun in **תְּהָיִי** though sin-

gular in form, may have a collective antecedent, a case too common in the Hebrew language to require citations. The only antecedent of this kind, or of any kind, in the verse, is the

אֶת-כָּל-הַחַיִּים *the all of the living*, and which the *makkephs*, and the accents, show to be taken as one: "all the living, etc., with the second generation that shall arise in its stead." The evident parallelism favors this choice of the singular pronoun; but if we are to overlook all this for the purpose of maintaining a historical reference, then we must go back two verses, and find the antecedent in "the old and foolish king," in whose place this second child, with "all the living beneath the sun, and the people without end," marching with him, is to stand! The common sense of the reader must judge in this matter. If, then, the pronoun in **תְּהָיִי** has for

its antecedent the **אֶת-כָּל-הַחַיִּים**, grammatical consistency would demand, as the antecedent of the pronoun in **בֵּי** (in *it*, instead of in *him*), the **אֶשֶׁר** just before, especially as joined with the singular substantive verb **הָיָה**. Besides the desire to find historic allusions, two verbal peculiarities here seem to have had much influence upon translators. One is the use of this singular pronoun which has just been explained, and which the parallelism of the picture so strongly demands. The other is the somewhat peculiar use of the word **יָלַד** in ver. 15, and its contiguity

to **יָלַד** in ver. 13, leading to the false inference that they must be used in precisely the same manner. Now though the use of **יָלַד** for generation is not found elsewhere in the Bible Hebrew, yet it is perfectly natural and in harmony with the frequent generic use of **בֵּן**. It is, too, highly poetical, thus to regard one generation as the offspring, the child, of the preceding. It is only using **יָלַד** for the cognate **תּוֹלְדָה** from the same root, and the unusual expression may have been suggested by the **יָלַד** in ver. 13, giving such a turn to the thought and the language. The order of ideas would be this: as the "young man" succeeds the old, so does the young race succeed its progenitor. So the primary sense of *γένος* in Greek is *child, offspring*, and from this comes its use for *race, generation*. Whilst, then, it may be said that the word, etymologically, fits the thought, nothing could be more graphic than the mode of representation.

Agreeing with this is an interpretation given by that acute Jewish critic, ABEN-EZRA, except that it takes the pronoun in **בֵּי** as referring to the **עוֹלָם** or world, so frequently mentioned. After stating the other view, he proceeds to say:

"There are those who interpret **הַיָּלֵךְ הַשֵּׁנִי** the second child, as denoting the generation that comes after another (**הַדּוֹר הַכֹּהן אַחֲרָיו**) and the meaning as being, that he saw the living as they walked beneath the sun, and they, with their heirs that shall stand in their place, are

like those who went before them, and these, as well as those, shall have no joy (בִּצְרָה) in it, that is, בְּעוֹלָם in the world." It is the same procession so curtly, yet so graphically, described ch. i. 4: "generation comes, and generation goes,"

לְעוֹלָם. RASHI regards לָךְ as meaning generation, but strangely refers it to the generation of Noah, and the אֲחֵרֵינוּ or "they who come after," to that of Peleg.

The Hebrew preposition עִם like the Latin *cum* and the English *with* when used for *And* may denote a connection in thought, or in succession, as *præterea*, *besides*, *as well as*, like the Arabic

مَعَ: "I saw all the living walking, etc., and together with, or along with them, or besides this, I saw the second generation." This is a well established use of the preposition. Comp. 1 Sam. xvii. 4 and xvi. 12: עִם יָפֶה "ruddy as well as fair," and in this book, ch. ii. 16, חָכֵם עִם הַכּוֹלֵם "the wise man as well as the fool," 1 Chron. xxv. 8, עִם כְּבִין

תַּלְמִיד "teacher (with) as well as the disciple," Ps. cvi. 6, "we with our fathers," we and our fathers, or we as well as our fathers; also Neh. iii. 12; Ps. cxv. 13; Dan. xi. 8; Ps. civ. 25, "the great as well as the small," and other places. The great difficulty in the way of the common view is the word הַשֵּׁנִי. "The second child," "the child the second," must denote one of two or more. A concordance shows that there is no exception to this. To take it in the sense of *successor* to something of a different kind (a second one) is without an example to support it. No mention is made of any other "child," or "young man." The difficulty has led some to give לְהַשֵּׁנִי the sense of חֹבֵר, *companion*, for which they seek a warrant in the 10th verse; and then they refer it to a son of Hiram, who was Solomon's friend or companion; "I saw the child (the son) of my friend." See Notes to Noldius Heb. Part. No. 1023. This is very absurd; and yet the one who defends it denounces the absurdity of the more common reference to Jeroboam. Whoever wishes to see "confusion on confusion heaped," in the treatment of these passages, and in the attempt to restrict the extent of this language, may consult DE DIEU, *Crit. Sac.*, p. 183. Take these verses, however, as general reflections on the vicissitudes of the *individual* and of the race, and all this confusion immediately gives place to harmony.—T. L.]

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

(With Homiletical Hints.)

Among the examples in proof of the imperfection and inconstancy of earthly happiness, which the Preacher communicates in the above section from the rich treasures of his own experience, we find the relation of an ascending grade from lower to higher and more brilliant conditions of happiness. From the sad lot of victims innocently suffering from tyrannical persecution and oppression (1-3), the description proceeds directly to the more lucky but not more innocent

condition of persons consumed with envy, dissatisfaction and jealousy, and who with toilsome efforts chase after the treasures of this earth, looking with jealous envy on the successful rivals of their struggles, and with scorn on those less fortunate, who are contented with a more modest lot (4-6). Then follow reflections regarding the happiness of such persons as have risen through the abundance of their goods to a distinguished and influential position in human society, but who, in consequence of this very wealth, run the risk of falling into a helpless, joyless, and isolated condition, destitute of friends and adherents (vii. 12). The illustration hereby induced of the value of closer social connection of men, and harmonious co-operation of their powers to one end (9-12) leads to the closing reflection; this is devoted to the distress and disaster of the highest circles of human society, acknowledging the fate even of the most favored pets of fortune, such as the occupants of princely or kingly thrones, to be uncertain and liable to a reverse, and thus showing that the sentence against the vanity of all earthly things necessarily extends even to the greatest and most powerful of earth (13-16).

"There is no complete and lasting happiness here below, neither among the lofty nor the lowly," or: "Every thing is vanity on earth, the life of the poor as of the rich, of the slave as of the lord, of the subject as of the king;"—this would be about the formula of a theme for a comprehensive consideration of this section. The effort of HENGSTENBERG to restrict the historical references of this section to the sufferings of the children of Israel mourning under the yoke of Persian dominion, is quite as unnecessary as the corresponding position in the preceding chapter; yet still the most of the concrete examples for the truth of the descriptions given, may be drawn from the history of post-exile Israel, which are therefore thus to be chosen and arranged in the homiletical treatment.

HOMILETICAL HINTS ON SEPARATE PASSAGES.

Vers. 1-3. BRENZ:—The word of God teaches us that crosses and sufferings pave the way to eternal bliss, and that the Lord grants to the wicked in this world a free hand for the exercise of their crimes and violence, with the view of sinking them ever deeper in their lusts; but it teaches also that the faith of the pious is to be maintained through suffering, and to be finally brought to light in the judgment of the last day, in the great decision of all things.

STANKE:—Thou miserable one, who sighest and weapest at violence and wrong, know that the Lord sees and counts thy tears (Ps. lvi. 9). Beware of impatience, distrust, and self-revenge against thy persecutors (Rom. xii. 19)!

HENGSTENBERG:—Such an experience of human misery (as is here depicted, and also in Jer. chap. xx.) is not only natural, but it lies in the purpose of God, who brings about the circumstances that call it forth. God wishes to draw us to Him, by making this world thoroughly distasteful, and nothing but vanity to us. We must be liberated from earthly things through many trials, and thus enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Vers. 4-6. BRENZ:—The world greatly errs in always demanding for its satisfaction a superfluity of goods and treasures, and in regarding modest possession as deprivation and misery. And yet one can live contented and satisfied just as well with a little as with rich superfluity, if one only aims, in a proper manner, after contentment, or in such a way that one lets God the Lord be his treasure and highest good.

GEIER:—One should not consider a rich man happier than a poor man, because of his many possessions. He who has much, has also much unrest and care, and is moreover greatly envied by others.

WOHLFARTH:—With true wisdom, Solomon warns us just as much against a passionate and excessive effort after a lofty aim, as against that indolence which folds its hands in its lap and waits for miracles. He admonishes us rather to a sober and well-ordered labor in our vocation, and thus, in every respect, recommends the just medium in our activity.

Vers. 7-12. MELANCHTHON:—Solomon here shows how necessary for human life is the social combination of men for the advancement of the arts, industries, and duties of life. All classes need such mutual aid and assistance, and each individual must prosecute his labor for the welfare of the whole, must advance their interest, and make every effort to prevent division and separation.

CRAMER (vers. 7 and 8):—The slaves of mammon are blinded, and are their own tyrants. They do not leave themselves space enough to enjoy their blessings; therefore the rust of their

gold and silver is a testimony against them (Jas. v. 3).

ZEVSS (vers. 9-12):—If a community of the body is so useful a thing, how much more useful must be a community of spirit, when pious Christians with united strength of spirit withstand the realms of Satan.

WOHLFARTH:—It is not merely a sacred desire that draws men to men, brings together souls of like inclination, and binds kindred hearts. We can neither rejoice in our happiness, nor finally bear the trials that meet us, nor joyfully advance in the way of piety and virtue, if we have not true friends. Oh how sacred, therefore, is the union of wedlock, of parents and children, of relatives and friends!

VON GERLACH:—Joy shared is two-fold joy; grief shared loses half its pain.

Vers. 13-16. BRENZ:—Faith has here a good probationary school, in which it can learn and try its powers. For when God elevates the lowly, faith can cherish hope, but when He bends and overthrows the proud necks of the rich, it learns to fear. God presents such examples to the eyes of His chosen, that they may increase and be exercised both in the fear of His holy wrath, and in hope of heavenly glory.

WEIMAR BIBLE:—We should never depend on large possessions and great power, and much less seek true happiness therein, Ps. lxxv. 5, 6.

STARKE:—It is a clear indication of Divine Providence, that in no place, and at no epoch, is there a failure of children and posterity to fill the places of the aged as they disappear.

C. Means for the Advancement of Earthly Happiness.

CHAP. V. 1-20.

1. First means: Conscientious devotion in the worship of God, in prayer and vows.

(VERS. 1-7.)

- 1 Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear,
- 2 than to give the sacrifice of fools; for they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter *any* thing before God: for God *is* in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.
- 3 For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice *is known*
- 4 by multitude of words. When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it;
- 5 for *he hath* no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better *is it* that
- 6 thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it *was* an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine
- 7 hands? For in the multitude of dreams and many words *there are* also *divers* vanities: but fear thou God.

2. Second means: Abstaining from injustice, violence, and avarice.

(VERS. 8-17.)

8 If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for *he that is* higher than the highest regardeth; and *there be* higher than they. Moreover, the profit of the earth is for all: the king *himself* is served by the field. He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this *is* also vanity. When goods increase, they are increased that eat them: and what good *is* there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes? The sleep of a labouring man *is* sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep. There is a sore evil *which* I have seen under the sun, *namely*, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt. But those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and *there is* nothing in his hand. As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand. And this also *is* a sore evil, *that* in all points as he came, so shall he go: and what profit hath he that he hath laboured for the wind? All his days also he eateth in darkness, and *he hath* much sorrow and wrath with his sickness.

3. Third means: Temperate and contented enjoyment of the pleasures and treasures of life granted by God.

(VERS. 18-20.)

18 Behold *that* which I have seen: *it is* good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for *it is* his portion. Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; *this is* the gift of God. For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth *him* in the joy of his heart.

[Chap. v. ver. 1. שָׁמַר רְנָנִיךְ in the Hebrew Bibles, the German and Dutch versions, the Vulgate, and some others, this is absurdly placed as the last verse of the iv. chapter. In the English, Tremellius, and others, it commences the v., where it evidently belongs; although the division of chapters, as given in this book is, in any way, of little value. The Masora has pointed רְנָנִיךְ for the singular, corresponding to lxx. and Vulgate, though the sense is equally good in the plural. For the connection of this part with the preceding, consult Wordsworth, who sees in the train of thought, in all these remarks about rashness in the divine service, and in respect to vows and rash religious speaking, something closely connected with the true Solomonian experience, and therefore furnishing evidence of the Solomonian authorship of the book. As intimated by any one else, it would seem disconnected and chaotic, just as some critics have pronounced it. For remarks on קָרוֹב and כִּרְתָּה see Exeg. and Marginal Note.—T. L.]

[Ver. 6. לְהַטִּיא לְהַחֲטִיא, *Hiph. Infinit.* הַפְּלִיאָךְ see Exeg. and Marginal Note.—T. L.]

[Ver. 7. וּבְרִירִים, the same.—T. L.]

[Ver. 8. הַפֵּן a very general and indefinite word, here rendered, in E. G., *matter* (thing), lxx. *πάγια*, Vulgate *negotio*.

It never, however, loses its sense of *purpose, will, etc.*, either as positive or permissive,—as it may be rendered here, *allowance, God's permission* of such a thing; see Met. Version.—T. L.]

[Ver. 9. וַיִּבְכֶּר. See Exeg. and Marg. Note.—T. L.]

[Ver. 10. רֵאִיתָ: The Keri has רֵאִיתָ. It is one of those words in רָאָה that have been cited as evidence of a later language. It is, however, one of those more *studied* Solomonian words, denoting something philosophical, ethical, or abstract, demanded by the very subject and style of his writing. They are a higher class of words than were needed by the plainer historian, or prophet. They may have been invented by Solomon as to form (from old and common roots), and afterwards have become vulgarized in the later writings,—thus giving rise to the later Aramaic forms, instead of having been derived from them: *Vision* of the eyes, a somewhat more polished, or loftier word, than the infinitive to see, or sight.—T. L.]

Ver. 16. רֵעָה חוּלָה Gesenius makes חוּלָה from חָלָה to be *sick, weak, etc.*, but this does not seem to give a sense strong enough. Rabbi Tanchum makes it from חָנַל, to be in *great pain, torqueri doloribus*, and compares it with the participle כְּתוּחָלָה (Jerem. xxiii. 13), *overwhelming*, or a "*storm hurled* (כָּעֵר) on the head of the wicked"—a very sore and "*overwhelming evil*," is this, if man has to return just as he came, *e tenebris in tenebras, out of darkness into darkness*. See TANCHUM *Comm.*, Lam. iv. 6. Same verse פְּלִעֵפֶת: The grammarians, Jona Ben Ganaach, in his *Sepher Harikma*, p. 39, regards this as one word, or as an example of כּ added (as it sometimes is with slight addition to the meaning) to לֵעֵבֶת, (as in direct contact). פְּלִעֵפֶת is cited as one of the words *Sequoris Hebr. ismi*, but the root

עִי, although only occurring as a verb, Ezek. xxviii. 3; xxxi. 8, is very old in the language, as appears from עִי people, the preposition עִי with, עִי, society, companion, all denoting, radically, comparison, one thing along with,

or laid by the side of another (compare the Arabic عَم and many Greek words commencing with συμ such as συμικός.

ὄμοιος, ὁμοίως, ὁμοίος, with their numerous derivatives, all implying comparison, society, likeness, etc.). This word עִי occurs in Exod. xxv. 27; xxviii. 27; Ezek. lxxv. 7.

Ver. 18. עִי: [On the effect of the accent here see Exeg. and Marg. Note. The same on הִי ver. 19.—T. L.].

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Of the three divisions of this section, the first two are divided each into two strophes of about equal length, and each of the two strophes of the second division, being very full in sense and rich in clauses, is again divided into two half strophes. The third division consists of only one not very comprehensive strophe. The complete scheme of the section stands, therefore, thus:— I. Division: Of true piety; a. (1 strophe): in worship and prayer, v. 1-3; b. (2 strophe): of vowing and the fulfilment of vows: vers. 4-7.— II. Division: On avoiding various vices; a. (1 half strophe): of injustice and violence: vers. 8, 9; b. (half-strophes 2-4): of avarice: vers. 10-17.—III. Division: Of the temperate and thankfully contented enjoyment of life: vers. 18-20, strophe 5.—VAUINGEA combines vers. 8-12, and then 13-20, each as a principal division or strophe, and overlooks the fact that the theme of avarice does not begin at verse 13, but at verse 10 (consequently with the first half strophe of strophe 3d, comprising vers. 8-17), and that, therefore, with verse 13, introduced by the words הִנֵּה אֲנִי רֹאֵתִי, begins an entirely new series of thoughts, which bears a concluding relation to the main contents of the chapter.

2. First division, first strophe: Chap. v. 1-3. Of true piety in the worship of God, and in prayer.—Keep thy foot when thou goest to the

house of God. The k'tib רַגְלֶיךָ is to be preferred to the kerī רַגְלֶךָ. The latter appears to be modeled according to the passages in Prov. iv. 26; xxv. 17, and others, which present "foot" in the singular. For "feet" in the plural in similar expressions comp. Prov. i. 16; vi. 13; Ps. cxix. 59, etc. The sense of this exhortation is: "guard thy steps when thou goest to the house of the Lord, that thou mayest enter it with sacred composure, and carefully avoid everything that would interfere with thy devotion." See HENGSTENBERG: "The object is to preserve the heart, but as he goes, the heart receives its impressions, and is thus affected by it. The author doubtless speaks of the feet because by them has often been discovered the tendency of the heart." And be more ready to hear, etc. (Ger., to approach in order to hear is better). The preposition עִי, without עִי, may in itself express the preference of one thing over another; comp ix. 17; Isa. x. 10; Ezek. xv. 2.* קָרוֹב

is not here for the imperative "be near," (LUTHER, HENGSTENBERG, etc.), but is an actual infinitive absolute, and as such subject of the sentence; comp. Prov. xxv. 27; Isa. vii. 15, 16. "To hear" does not mean to listen to the reading of the Thora during the service, (HIRZIG) but "to obey, to regard the voice of God with the heart, to do His will;" comp. 1 Sam. xv. 22; Jer. vii. 23. We have here the same contrast between external sacrifice and holy intent as in Prov. xxi. 3, 27; Isa. i. 11 ff.; Hosea vi. 6, etc. —Than to give the sacrifice of fools. This sacrifice (זֶבַח) is specially pointed out from among the number of sacrifices, as also in Ps. xl. 6; Hosea vi. 6; 1 Sam. xv. 22. "To give the sacrifice," does not mean to give a sacrificial feast, (HIRZIG), but to offer a sacrifice to God in order to satisfy him, or in order to appease one's conscience.—For they consider not that they do evil. Fools, whose sacrifice is an offence to God on account of their evil dispositions (comp. Prov. xxi. 27; and also the exegetical illustrations of this passage) do evil in sacrificing to Him, and nevertheless know it not, but rather suppose, in their folly, that their conduct is well pleasing to Him. As this thought (comp. Luke xxiii. 34) exactly fits the passage, and there is no linguistic difficulty in the explanation (for the construction יָדְעוּם לֹא יָדְעוּם לֵעֲשׂוֹת רָע "they know not that they do evil." comp. Jer.

position sense. If any comparative word might be thus omitted it might be the familiar word טוֹב, but there are other ways of explaining the apparent grammatical anomaly without any such harshness, which would be like leaving out, in English, any comparative word before than—to hear than to give. If we regard קָרוֹב as an adjective it may have the sense of fit, suitable, appropriate, coming very easily from its primary and usual sense of nearness: to hear is more appropriate than to give; it is nearer in the sense of better. That such a connection of senses is natural, is shown from the Latin prope propior, as HORACE, Sat. I. 4. 42, sermōni propiora, better for prose; Terent. Heaut. nullū alia delectatio quæ propior esset; Ovid. Mel., cura propter iustitiae. It might be proved still more clearly from the Arabic use of

a comparative from this very root (أَقْرَبُ = אֶקְרַב)

in the sense of better—that which is nigher, more appropriate. Of this there are frequent examples in the Koran, as in Su-

rat. II. 233, أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى better for piety, more

pious; so xviii. 80, أَقْرَبُ رَحْمًا better for com-

passion, more compassionate. See also Surat III. 160; iv. 12; v. 11; xvi. 79; xx. 13. Thus in Hebrew קָרוֹב-בְּהִיטָה, nearer, more appropriate, more acceptable (a better קָרְבָן, or offering) than to give, etc.—audire propius esset quam dūce

*[The examples that Zöckler gives of עִי comparative, without any comparative word before it, will not bear him out. In chap. ix. 17, it is dependent on עִי; in the other cases עִי is either partitive or has its usual pre-

xv. 15; 1 Kings xix. 4; Neh. xiii. 27) the renderings of the passage that vary from this are to be condemned. They are such as that of HAHN, (and many older commentators): "in their ignorance they can only do evil," or of KNOBEL and VAHINGER: "They are not troubled about doing evil," or of HIRTZIG: "For they know not how to be sorrowful" (for which sense reference is made to 2 Sam. xii. 18; Isa. lvi. 12, etc.). The nearest to our view is that of the VULGATE, and of LUTHER: "for they know not what evil they do," which, however, cannot be philologically justified.

Ver. 2. **Be not rash with thy mouth.** This censure of outward sacrifice is immediately followed by that of thoughtless words, and empty babbling in prayer, the next important element of divine worship in the temple. "To be rash with thy mouth" is essentially the same as that *βρατολογεῖν* against which Christ warns us, perhaps with conscious reference to this passage, Matt. vi. 7, f.—**And let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God.** "Before God," *i. e.*, in the temple, in the place of the special presence of God, comp. Ps. xlii. 2; Isa. i. 12. This warning against rash, thoughtless, and unnecessary words in prayer, is as little in contradiction with apostolic directions as found in 1 Thes. v. 17; Col. iii. 17; Phil. iv. 6, as is the warning of Christ against idle words, at war with His own repeated admonitions to zealous and continuous prayer, *e. g.*, Luke xi. 5 ff.; xviii. 1, ff.; John xiv. 13; xvi. 23, etc.—**For God is in heaven, and thou upon the earth.** The majesty of God, in contrast with the lowliness of men, is here made clear by the contra-position of heaven and earth, as in Ps. cxv. 3, 16; Isa. lv. 7 ff.; lxvi. 1; Matt. v. 34, f.—**Ver. 3. For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice is known by a multitude of words.** That is, just as a too continued, exciting, and anxious occupation of the mind (יָגַד) produces the phenomenon of confused and uneasy dreams, by which the sleep is disturbed, so the habit of an excess of words, causes the speech to degenerate into vain and senseless twaddle. The first clause of the verse serves solely as an illustration of the second; the comparison, as in chap. vii. 1; Prov. xvii. 3; xxvii. 21; Job v. 7, etc., is effected by simply placing the sentences in juxtaposition, merely putting the copulative conjunction *he-*

etc. It may be objected to this that such an infinitive with ל as לְשַׁמְעֵנִי is not used subjectively, or very rarely. It, however, comes very much to the same thing, if we take קָרוֹב directly as an infinitive, or as used for an imperative: *be nigher to hear*, that is, more ready, more prompt (*proprior facilius*) to hear, than fools are to offer sacrifice (taking נְכִילִים as the subject of הָרָה). Or the comparative מ may depend on שָׁמַר in the first clause, the influence of which may be regarded as extending; to the second: *be more careful (שָׁמַר-מ) to hear*, or to draw nigh to hear, etc. In such case, we get a governing word for the infinitive קָרוֹב. If it be said that it is implied or understood; that is always the case where the infinitive seems thus used for the imperative. Some familiar word of admonition, or warning, is ever implied (*look out. take care, etc.*), as sometimes in the animated language of the prophets, and as is frequently the case in Greek and Latin.—T. L.]

fore the second (comp. the Int. to Proverbs, § 14 p. 32). EWALD assumes a continuous train of thought, asserting that from too much annoyance come dreams, from these, all kinds of vain and superfluous words, and, finally, from these, foolish speech; but this is decidedly opposed to the fact that הַחֲלוֹם is necessarily to be understood as a designation of the actual dream, not of a dreamy, thoughtless nature, and that the derivation of a wordy nature from the latter would be in violation of all psychological experience.

3. *First Division, second strophe.*—Vers. 4-7. Of pious conscientiousness in vowing and the fulfilment of vows. For Vers. 4 and 5 see Deut. xxiii. 22-24, whose ordinances are here almost literally repeated.—**For he hath no pleasure in fools.**—כְּסִילִים are frivolous men, who are equally ready to make vows of every kind, but then delay their performance from indolence or selfishness. Of them it is said: אֵין תִּפְנֵן בְּהֵם "there is no pleasure in them," namely, with God; for the context obliges us thus to finish the thought.—**Ver. 5. Better is it that thou shouldst not vow, than, etc.**—Comp. Deut. xxiii. 22: "But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee;" also Acts v. 4. **Ver. 6. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin.**—נִפְטָר here marks the body as the seat of desire, therefore of sensuality and fleshly sense in general, as the New Testament *σάρξ*; as also above, chapter ii. 3. The description of James, in iii. 6 f. of his Epistle, gives a clear testimony that the sensuality of man is sinfully excited by the sins of the tongue, or the mouth, and can be enkindled by the fire of evil passion; and HENGSTENBERG should not have quoted this passage as a proof of his position that "flesh" here signifies the entire personality. HIRTZIG translates: "Let not thy mouth bring thy body to punishment," but fails to give the proof for the possibility of the rendering of הַחֲטָאִים in the sense of "bringing to punishment, atoning for."—**Neither say thou before the angel that it was an error.**—[ZÖCKLER here renders

מַלְאָךְ *messenger*, to accommodate to his exegesis.—T. L.]. מַלְאָךְ, Messenger, *i. e.*, Jehovah's [Comp. Haggai i. 13; Malachi i. 3], is here the designation of the priest* or announcer and ex-

*[This is another case where those who maintain the 1ste date of the book give a word an unusual sense, and then build an argument upon it. There is no reason why מַלְאָךְ should not be taken in its usual meaning, as an angel of God, visible or invisible, supposed sometimes to appear in terror, the avenging angel, as 2 Sam. xxiv. 16, who came to punish Israel and their king for his rash words. There may be an express reference here by Solomon to his father's fatal error; and the words וְאֵל הַאֲמַר may be rendered very easily as a caution, *that thou mayest not have to confess thine error*, as David did (2 Sam. xxiv. 17). It must have made a deep impression on the young mind of the Prince. It is perfectly in accordance, too, with the belief and the recorded facts of the Solomonic times; and this would be the case even if we regard the מַלְאָךְ mentioned in Ecclesiastes, as being Gad, the messenger sent to David. Or it may refer to the belief in the presence of angels as invisible witnesses to our sins and our improprieties—a belief belonging not only to the

pounder of the divine law; comp. Malachi ii. 7, the only passage of the O. T. where this expression is used of the priest; and see also in the N. T. Rev. i. 20; ii. 1 ff., where ἀγγελος is used essentially in the same sense. "That it was an error" [שגגה] as in Numb. xv. 27 ff.] is the characteristic evasion of religious superficiality and levity, which seek to excuse unfulfilled vows by declaring the neglect of them a mere error or precipitation [an unintentional error]; comp. Malachi i. 8; Matth. xv. 5, etc. HITZIG: "it was a thoughtlessness,—that is, that I made the vow at all." But a vow solemnly declared before the priest could not thus be recalled without further ceremony by declaring that it was vowed in a thoughtless manner. The thoughtless delinquent will wish to represent the evasion of its fulfilment as simply a sin of weakness or precipitation, whilst it is in reality a crime of a very serious character [comp. ELSTER and HENGSTENBERG on this passage].—**Why should God be angry at thy voice** [which thou dost misuse in a vile, sophisticated and God-tempting evasion] **and destroy the work of thy hands**—that is, punish thee, therefore, by a failure of all thy undertakings, and destruction of all treasures and goods? For the warning sense of the question with פהל comp. vii. 16, 17; Ps. xc. 17; 2 Chron. x. 37; Ezra iv. 22; vii. 23. Verse 7. **For in the multitude of dreams and many words there are also divers vanities.** Just as in verse 3, dreams are here also to be taken only as examples of the vanity of making many words, and of its bad consequences. As we can reasonably conclude that one who has much to do with dreams [comp. Jer. xxiii. 33; Zech. x. 1] is an unreliable man, little fitted for the duties and affairs of sober reality, therefore the wordiest babbler will inspire in us the least confidence. EWALD and HELIGSTEDT'S view: "for in too many dreams are too many vanities and words," is opposed by the connection, which shows that no information is to be imparted here concerning the nature and signification of dreams, and then also the circumstance that it is not very clearly to be seen in how far dreams may cause much useless prattle.—**But fear thou God**, so that thou dost really try to fulfill what thou hast vowed to Him. כ, because co-ordinate with the preceding, is to be translated by "but," and not "thus;" for it expresses in a conclusive manner the contrast to verse 6.*

Old Testament, but also in the New, as appears from 1 Cor. xi. 11, διὰ τοῖς ἀγγέλους;" because of the angels" (invisible), in Ecclesiastics in the Church were to be avoided.—T. L.] * [Ver. 7. The simplest and most literal rendering here would seem to be the best, taking the conjunction ו, in each case, as it stands, and in the usual way. The copulative ו has, indeed sometimes an assertive force, but then the context will always clearly demand it. Here there is no need of it: "Though in multitude of dreams," or "though dreams abound, and vanities, and words innumerable, yet (כ) fear thou God." The first כ may be rendered for, and regarded as connective, causally, this verse with what precedes, or they may both be regarded as assertive, giving the reason against, or notwithstanding. See explanation of כ Int. l. Metrical Version, p 176. The word ונכרי we have rendered, in the Metrical Version, presagings (idle predictions, fortune tellings, such as go

4. *Second Division, first strophe, a:* vers. 8 and 9.—On avoiding injustice and violence—**If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province.** Comp. iii. 16; iv. 1, ff. (Ger., robbery of judgment and justice). This is a robbery committed against these objective and divine laws, a violation of them by executions, and other violence. Such violations of judgment are most likely to be practiced in the provinces, far from the seat of the king and the highest courts, by governors and generals. Therefore here נִרְיָה, by which is doubtless meant the province in which the author lives, that is, Palestine. Comp. Ez. v. 8; Neh. i. 3; vii. 6; xi. 5, and also the Int. § 4, Obs. 2.—**Marvel not at the matter.**—וְאַתָּה [Comp. iii. 1], is neither absolutely the same as "cause, matter," [HITZIG] nor does it indicate the divine pleasure, the execution of divine decrees, (as HENGSTENBERG). It is rather the violent doing of the thieving officials that is meant, the "such is my pleasure," of rulers, "who usually commence their edicts with these words: it seems good to me, it is good in presence of the king, Dan. iii. 22; vi. 2; iv. 22; Ez. v. 17." (HENGSTENBERG). For the exhortation not to marvel at such things, not to be surprised, comp. 1 Peter iv. 12: ἀγαπητοὶ μὴ ξενίζεσθε κ. τ. λ.—**For he that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they.** That is, over the lofty oppressor stands a still higher ruler, the king; and even over him, should he not aid suffering innocence in its rights, is a still higher one, the King of kings, and Supreme Judge of the world. וְנִרְיָה is, as it were, a plural of majesty,* serving for a most with dreams). נִרְיָה is used, Numb. xxiii. 5, 16, for oraculum. It is the oracle given to Balaam, and though, there a divine message given to a bad man, yet there is nothing in the word itself to prevent its denoting a false, as well as a true prediction. If the view taken be correct, there must be meant, here, false or superstitious presagings, like the Greek βασις, which is used by Aristophanes for the false predictions of the oracle-mongers, by whom Greece was lusted. נִרְיָה is used in the same manner, Eccles. x. 14, where the context shows that it means either pretended oracular words or fortune-tellings, or some such rash sayings about the future as are condemned James iv. 13. The other rendering: "in multitude of dreams and vanities there are also words," besides having seemingly but little meaning, puts its main assertion in the first clause, and thus makes the second: "fear thou God," a merely incidental or rhetorical addition, though really the important thought: "notwithstanding the abundance of (all these superstitious) dreams, vanities and fortune-tellings without number, yet fear thou God. In the other rendering, too, besides being less simple and facile, there is lost, or obscured, the contrast evidently intended between θεωροῦμαι, in the bad sense, or superstition, and εὐσεβεία, true religion, reverence, יָרֵא יְהוָה, "the fear of the Lord." For an illustration see the picture of the superstitious man (θεωροῦμαι) as given by THEOPHRASTUS in his Characters, sec. 16.—T. L.] * [The plural intensive undoubtedly exists in Hebrew, but a great deal that is said about the pluralis majestatis is very questionable. The best Jewish commentators deny its existence. The plural וְנִרְיָה, here, may easily be taken as a sort of summing up, denoting all the powers that stand above the petty oppressor, from the earthly king, through "principities in the heavens" up to God Himself. Our English Version gives it well, "and there be higher than they," leaving the application indefinite. STUART regards it as intensive: "Yet there be higher than they,"—the petty oppressors. Or it may be an assertion that there is a vast series of ascending powers in the domain to be regarded in its rank, rather than its time or space

emphatic designation of the fullness of eternal power in the Godhead; it is the same construction as בּוֹרֵאֵם, "Creator," chap. xii. 1; קְרוֹשֵׁי; Prov. ix. 10; xxx. 3; Hosea xii. 1. עֵינַי; Dan. vii. 18, 22, etc. Comp. EWALD, § 178 b. We cannot let this expression refer to the king as the highest earthly judge and potentate, on account of its analogy with other plural names of Deity. It is extremely unfitting, indeed almost absurd, to refer the second high one to a supreme judge, and the בְּנֵיָהּ to the governor (HITZIG). For a poor consolation would be offered to the oppressed by a reference merely to these courts, as certain as "that one crow does not pick out the eyes of another," (a very poorly sustained proverb, quoted by HITZIG himself). Ver. 9. Moreover, the profit of the earth is for all; the king himself is served by the field. That is, notwithstanding that God alone rules as highest judge and avenger over all the destinies of men, we are not to despise the protection and safety which an earthly authority affords, especially a strong kingly government, that can protect the fields from devastation, and their boundaries from intrusion.

אֵל בְּכַל הָיָא [so is it to be read, as in the K'tib, instead of הָיָא בְּכַל] is of like meaning with בְּכַל זֹאת, "in all this"—or "notwithstanding all this," as is Isa. xi. 11. The concluding words כִּלְכֵל לְעֵינֵי הָאָרֶץ נִעְבֵּר can neither mean: "a king honored by the land" (KNOBEL and VAHINGER), nor: "a king honored throughout the whole land" (HAHN), nor: "a king to till the field" (LUTHER, STARKE, etc.), nor: "a king subject to the field" (HERZFELD), nor: *rex agro addictus*, (ROSENMUELLER, DATHE, etc.), nor: "a king to the tilled field," namely, "a profit and advantage to it," (HITZIG, HANGSTENBERG, comp. also the Sept.). נִעְבֵּר is here used rather in the sense of "made, installed, placed," in accordance with the Chaldaic signification of עָבַר=עָבַר, Dan. iii. 1, 15, 20; vii. 21; Ezra iv. 19, etc., and עָבַר, field, is a poetical synonym of אָרֶץ (Comp. Gen. ii. 5; iv. 7; Ruth i. 6), here undoubtedly chosen because agriculture, this principal occupation of the provinces (comp. ii. 8) can only prosper through the protection and propitious influence of the king. Compare the very close connection in which the religion of the Chinese, Persians, Egyptians, and Romans placed the royal office with agriculture. It does not militate against the view sustained by us that there is no definite article before שָׂדֵה. Comp. EWALD § 277, b; and quite as little does this view disagree with the verbal collocation, as will be seen by comparing ix. 2; Isa. xlii. 24; Dan. vi. 8.*

aspect. See note on Olamic Words, p. 51. The reader may imagine the gradation of ranks for himself. Of course, God is at the highest, however great it may be. This would accord with the simplest rendering of the words:

Height over height are keeping watch,
And higher still than they.

These vile oppressors, with all their boasts of rank, are away down in the lowest parts of the scale.—T. L.]

* Ver. 9. The interpretations of ZÖCKLER, HITZIG, STUART,

5. *Second Division, first strophe b, and second strophe a. b:* vers. 10-17. On avoiding avarice and covetousness.—As in Deut. xvi. 19; Amos viii. 4 ff.; Prov. xv. 25-27; Sirach x. 8, so we have here the condemnation of the coarser form of covetousness, which does not shun open injustice and violence, and, directly afterwards, that of the love of money and desire of gain operating with more delicate, more genteel, and apparently more just means.—He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver, i. e., not satisfied in mind, and consequently not happy. Comp. the Horatian line: *Semper avarus eget* (Ep. I, ii. 20); also Ovid *Fast. I, 211 S.:*

"Creverunt ut opes et opum furiosa cupido;
Et cum possideant plurima plura volunt;"

Nor he that loveth abundance with increase. Lit., "loveth tumult;" הִרְבּוּן in other places, "noise, turmoil of a great multitude of people," here means, as in Ps. xxxvii. 16, the multitude of possessions; and אֵהָב means as elsewhere חֲכִין לֵךְ.—Ver. 11. When goods increase, they are increased that eat them. Lit. "their eaters, their consumers." The meaning here is clearly the numerous servants of a rich household. Comp. Job i. 3; 1 Kings v. 2, ff.—And what good is there to the owners thereof?—כִּשְׂרוֹן here, "fortune, gain," different from ii. 21; iv. 4. The plural בעֵלִים has here a singular meaning, as in ver. 12; vii. 11; viii. 8; Prov. iii. 27.—Save the beholding of them with their eyes, i. e., only the empty, not really satisfying feeling of pleasure at the sight of heaped up treasures. In place of רֵאִיתָ read רֵאִיתָ with the Keri.—Ver. 12. The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much; i. e., whether he enjoys a generous food, or must be satisfied with a scanty nonishment.—עֹבֵד "laborer" is different from עֶבֶר "slave," and also from עֵבֶר "serf;" it means in general every one, who according to

etc., though differing from each other, seem forced. They all destroy the parallelism, making only one proposition of what evidently contains two clauses, one an illustration of the other. Their rendering of הָיָא בְּכַל, as though it were equivalent to בְּכַל זֹאת, Isa. ix. 11, 20, cannot be supported. הָיָא is a feminine use of the neuter, and may have, in such case, an antecedent masculine in form, if it expresses what is feminine or impersonal. "The profit of the soil, in everything is it,"—כִּי הָיָא הָיָא, "an error is it," just above. "It is in all," in everything, in every rank of life. The word נִעְבֵּר has more of a dependent than of a passive sense. In other cases, Deut. xxi. 4; Ezek. xxxvi. 9, 34, it is applied to the field that is made use of, worked, in distinction from the barren. This is the only case in which it is applied to persons, and according to the same analogy, it does not mean served as a master, which would be the direct passive of the Kal, but subservient to, or made to serve, coming near to the Kal sense, or the sense of the noun: made useful, or devoted to use. The connection, then, is very clear. The oppressor is reproved, not by extolling the king as the guardian of justice, and patron of agriculture, but by setting forth the value of the lowly cultivators of the soil, to whom the highest ranks, and, ultimately, the king himself, are subservient,—on whom they are dependent, and to whom they may be said, in the last resort to owe homage. This more Republican idea, and so much more in harmony with the whole spirit of the passage, is sustained by WORDSWORTH. The resort to the

divine direction in Gen. iii. 19; Ex. xx. 9, must earn his bread in the sweat of his brow, be he vassal or freeman.—But the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep. Hieronymus justly says: *incocto cibo in stomachi angustiis restuante*.—הַשֶּׁבַע לֶעֱשֶׂר, a

paraphrase for the genitive like הַצִּיּוֹפִים לְעֵשָׂאֵל 1 Sam. xiv. 18, etc.; comp. Ewald, § 292, a.—For this sentence comp. Horace, Sat. I., l. 76 ss.; Juvenal, Sat. X., l. 12 s.; XIV., 304; also Publ. Syrus: “*Avarum irritat non satiat pecunia*.”—Vers. 13-17. *Second strophe*: The annoying and inconstant nature of wealth. There is a sore

evil; lit., “a painful evil;” חוּלָה equivalent to the participle נֶהְלֶה* Jer. xiv. 17; Nah. iii. 19.—Riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt. Carefully guarded wealth proves a misfortune to the possessor when the latter loses this transitory and unreliable possession, and becomes, thereby, more unhappy than if he had never possessed it. The only correct illustration of this thought is afforded by ver. 14. Ver. 14. But these riches perish by evil travail.—גִּנְיָן, lit., “annoyance, hardship,” as in i. 13; iv. 8, does not here mean the unprofitable business, the unfortunate administration of the affairs of the rich, but any misfortune, an evil occurrence of the nature of those in Job i. 14-19, caused by robbers, tempests, storms, etc.—And he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand.

רוּחִיר is correctly taken as a preterit in the Sept., Vulg., and Syriac; for after the failure of his means, he who was rich leaves off begetting sons.—Ver. 15. As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came.—יָשָׁב לְלֶבֶת, lit., “he repeats his going,” i. e., he goes away again, namely out of this life. We find the same reflection concerning the inexorable operation of death in Job i. 21; Ps. xlix. 10; 1 Tim. vi. 7, and also in the classics, e. g., Propert, Carm. III., 3, 35 s.:

*Haud ullas portabis opes Acherontis ad undas;
Nudus ad inferna stulte, vehere rate!*

Comp. P. GERHARD in the hymn: “Why should I then grieve?”

Chaldaic signification of עֲבָר = to the Hebrew עָשָׂה, is wholly needless and unsatisfactory. If the monarchial interpretation, as we may call it, fails, then as it falls to the ground what is said about the Persians, and “the king's protection of agriculturists in the provinces,” together with the inference that would then be drawn in respect to the date of the book. Such a dependence of the king upon the field is just a truth which would be perceived by the wise Solomon, but would be unheeded by a Persian monarch, or any writer who would wish to extol him. HESZELD's interpretation is very nigh this. Our English Version, “the king is served by the field,” or from the field, would require a different preposition.—T. L.]

*[See the explanation in the text note.—T. L.]
†[עֲבָרָן רֵעִי may mean here the labor and travail expended in acquiring the riches. “That wealth perishes with all the labor,” etc., it took to get it. Such is the more literal sense of עֲבָר, as well as the more expressive. He has lost all his labor and travail as well as his wealth. Compare the Metrical Version.

With the sore travail [it had cost] that wealth departs.
T. L.]

Naked lay I on the earth,
When I came, when I drew
At first my breath.
Naked shall I pass away,
When from earth again I flee,
Like a shadow.

And shall take nothing of his labor. Lit., “does he lift up through his labor;” שָׂא as in Ps. xxiv. 4.—Which he may carry away in his hand. הָרַךְ is optative Hophil [=הָרַךְ] Mich. iii. 4; vi. 13, etc.], and need not be changed into הָרַךְ, as Hltzig does in accordance with the Sept. and Symmachus. For the thought that a rich man at his death can take none of his treasures with him, is extremely fitting here, in case one does not think of the rich man described in ver. 14, who, previously to his death, was bereft of all his possessions by misfortune. And this is so much the less necessary, since before this verse death has not been considered the final end of all wealth and desire of acquiring it.—Ver. 16 emphatically repeats the thought of the preceding verse, in order to show more strongly the entire fruitlessness and folly of toiling after earthly wealth, and to prepare for the closing description in ver. 17 of the tortured existence of a rich miser.—And this is also a sore evil, namely, not simply that named in ver. 13, but also that added in ver. 15; consequently not merely the πλοῦτος ἀνηλόγως there described (1 Tim. vi. 17), but also death, that places an unconditional limit to all wealth, and toiling after riches. The views of HENGSTENBERG, VAHINGER, etc., are correct, whilst Hltzig wrongfully supposed that the second “sore evil” is not named until the last clause of this verse, and that it consists in the miserable existence of the miser, full of vexation and profitless. This “having no profit,” and “laboring for the wind,” coincides rather (like the contents of ver. 17) with the vanity of this world, and its inconstancy and hardship, as described in vers. 13 and 14, so that the reflection at its end again leads back to its beginning. Ver. 17. All his days also he eateth in darkness, that is, in a gloomy, peevish state of mind, in subjective darkness as described in

Matt. vi. 23; John xi. 10. כָּל-יְמֵי can be very easily taken as the object of אָכַל, although the phrase “eateth his days” does not appear again,* and therefore the meaning of “all his days” seems the more likely to be merely used as defining the time; but comp. for this view the instances at least approximately analogous in Job xxi. 13; xxxvi. 11. The Sept. seems to have read אָכַל instead of אָכַל, and so in the following clause, instead of וַיִּכְעַס they must have read וַיִּחְלִי, and for וַיִּכְעַס they must have read וַיִּחְלִי; for they translate: *καίτε πᾶσαι αἱ ἡμέραι αὐτοῦ ἐν σκότει καὶ ἐν πένθει καὶ θυμῷ*.

*[We have the similar phrase in English—“consumeth his days”—but it is questionable whether אָכַל is ever thus used in Hebrew. In Job xxi. 13; xxxvi. 11, the verb is different.—T. L.]

πολλῶς καὶ ἀρρήστια καὶ χόλω. EWALD and some other moderns follow it herein; but certainly with regard to the change of אָכַל, at least without sufficient reason; comp. HIRTZIG and ELSTER on this passage. But nothing obliges us, in the second clause, to deviate from the Masoretic text, as HENGSTENBERG has correctly shown in opposition to the authors last named. For כָּעַס as 3d, præterite, suits the adverb הִרְבָּה better than does the substantive כָּעַס; but the closing words וְהָלִיוּ וְקִצְרָה give an excellent sense as an independent animated exclamation: "and he hath much sorrow and wrath with his sickness!" What is meant is the sickness of soul produced by the annoyance and dissatisfaction felt as against those things that oppose his striving after riches, [in substance the same as that darkness in the preceding line] a sickness which can eventually extend to his body and then torment him only the more severely.*

6. *Third Division*: vers. 18-20. Concerning a moderate and gratefully contented enjoyment of life, as the only true and wise conduct for the poor and for the rich; comp. the exactly similar closing sentence of the first discourse, chap. ii. 24-26, and also the close of the first part of the second discourse, chap. iii. 22.—Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely, etc. HIRTZIG and HANX say: "What I have found good, and what beautiful;" HENGSTENBERG: behold what I have seen, that it is good and handsome, etc. This latter translation is the only one that corresponds exactly to the accentuation, † which (by a

* [HIRTZIG regards the text here as corrupt, and proposes to read כְּחִלּוֹ and כָּעַס. There is no serious difficulty in taking כָּעַס as a noun [the first patach lengthened, as JONA BEN GANNACH shows may be done]. The other correction, and HIRTZIG's charge of corruption, only show that a very acute critic, not having much imagination, may not sympathize with the poetical style, or the emotional earnestness of such a writer as Koheleth, and must therefore, often fail in interpreting him. The apparent irregularity of the sentence shows a vehement utterance, the thoughts crowding together, coming in, some of them out of their order, as though anticipated, or in danger of being forgotten. The most literal, therefore, is the rendering which is most true to this subjective emotional state: "great grief, sickness his, and wrath;" or to give it something of its rhythmical order:

Yea, all his days, doth he in darkness eat;
Abundant sorrow, sickness too is his, and chafing wrath.
T. L.]

† [Those noble scholars, the BUXTOFFS, and the learned as well as devout BOSTON, were not altogether without reason in their belief that the Hebrew system of accents, as found in our Hebrew Bibles, partok, in some degree, of the Biblical inspiration. There is a critical acuteness, a spiritual-mindedness, we may say, manifested by those early accentuators from whom came the traditional masora, that is truly wonderful. There are many examples in the Psalms. There is an instance of it, we think, in this passage, vers. 18 and 19. They have placed a rebia, a disjunctive accent, over אָנִי ver. 18, thereby separating it from טוֹב that follows. This our English translators have observed, as also HANX, HENGSTENBERG and others, who, after all, do not make the right use of it. ZÜCKLER acknowledging though disregarding the accents, renders: "behold what I have seen as good, that it is fair to eat," etc.—making אֲשֶׁר a conjunction. To follow the accentuation, however, is the only way to bring out the sense in all its force and clearness. The other method makes

rebia over אָנִי) strongly separates the טוֹב from what precedes, but scarcely expresses the sense originally intended by the author himself. Our own view corresponds rather to this original sense, which alone is rightly in accordance with the position of אֲשֶׁר before יָפֵה.—To eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labor. The suffix in עָבַל belongs to the previously unexpressed subject of the infinitive clauses לֵאכַל, etc.; comp. vii. 1; Ps. iv. 9; lxx. 9, etc. The eating, and drinking, and enjoying the good [lit., "seeing the good," comp. ii. 24] is as little meant in an Epicurean sense here as in similar earlier passages; it expresses simply the normal contrast to the grasping avarice previously censured.—For it is his portion. [כִּי הִיא חֶלְקִי: "that it should be his portion;"] כִּי denoting end, purpose, or, as it is rendered in the Metrical Version, "to be his portion here,"—so as not to interrupt the flow of the sentence.—T. L.] It is his lot divinely appointed unto him for this life, that he cannot take with him into the world beyond (ver. 15) and which he must consequently properly profit by here below (comp. iii. 22).—Ver. 19. Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth. HIRTZIG unnecessarily renders

טוֹב וְיָפֵה synonymous, and represents eating and drinking as the good *per se*, without qualification; the assertion afterwards made, about its being the gift of God, having no effect in changing, or modifying this positive declaration. On the contrary, the accental rendering, makes the perception and the consciousness of this [הַטוֹב] the very thing that constitutes the "good which is fair" [טוֹב אֲשֶׁר יָפֵה], in distinction from the mere pleasure which the Epicurean would call good. Thus it reads, according to the accents: "good that is fair, to eat and drink, etc. (that is, in eating and drinking), and to see the good," etc.—intimating that there is a good, or seeming good, that is not, fair, or beautiful. A טוֹב that is not יָפֵה. To take אֲשֶׁר thus as a relative pronoun, is the only way to avoid a tautology; for the other rendering makes no distinction between טוֹב and יָפֵה, or rather regards the one as but a repetition of the other. It is true that, in such use of אֲשֶׁר, the personal pronoun generally follows [יָפֵה הִיא: טוֹב אֲשֶׁר יָפֵה הִיא] but not always, as

Gen. vii. 8, הָעוֹף וְכָל אֲשֶׁר רָמַשׁ, and similar cases, especially Hosea xii. 8, "he shall not find in me, עוֹן עוֹן, iniquity that is sin,"—meaning by הָטָא a qualification of the general term עוֹן, or a known and willful sin, one deserving of punishment, as both KIMCHI and ASSEZ EZRA explain it. Grammatically and logically it is precisely similar to this case. It is not easy to resist the conclusion that a logical differentiation, some qualification of טוֹב, was here intended. It is, in fact, that same distinction which is made by the ordinary mind, it devout, and which we find in Plato the mystical as the same styl: him, but who is, in reality, the clearest, and in the truest sense of the term, the most common-sense of all the philosophers. It is the ἀγαθόν that is καλόν (since the sensualist also has his ἀγαθόν, so called, which is not καλόν, but only ἥδον) the βέλτιστον, or to use similar language of CICERO the bonum that is pulchrum, the dabo that is honestum. It is the word used chap. iii. 11 to denote the beauty of everything in its season, as God made it,

אֶת-הַכֹּל יִשָּׂה יָפֵה בְּעֵתוֹ, or as the world was pronounced all good, all fair, at creation, whilst still in union with the

לֵאמֹר אֲשֶׁר נָתַן "that God gives him," (or "if") etc. The anakolouthon between the nominative absolute "every man" and the final clause: "that is the gift of God," cannot be thus removed.—**And hath given him power to eat thereof,** etc. For הַשְׂרִיט "to cause to rule, to empower any one," comp Ps. cxix. 133; Dan. ii. 28, 48. That is the gift of God. The emphasis does not rest on אֱלֹהִים as in the similar thought in chap. ii. 24, but on בְּרַחֲמָיו, which here therefore means a noble gift (δόσις ἀγαθή, δῶρημα πλεον, Jas. i. 17) a gracious present, as the following verse teaches. Comp. also HORACE, Ep. 1., 4, 6:

Di tibi divitias dederunt, artemque friendi.

Ver. 20. **For he shall not much remember the days of his life.** That is not as EWALD says: "Memory and enjoyment of this life do not last long," which would clearly give a totally foreign thought, but he now forgets all toil and vexation of his former life,* and learns, in consequence of the divine beneficence which he

divine name and presence. The טוב that is יָפֶה, the good that is FAIR, must have some other element in it than mere FAIRNESS—enjoyment, or voluptas (velle quod optat). This appears by another accentual mark. The same acute critics have placed a zakeph gadhol, another strong disjunctive accent,

upon the demonstrative pronoun הַיּוֹם in ver. 19, thereby making it more emphatic, by separating it from the adjoining words, thus constituting it a clause by itself, as it were, to which special attention is called. By being thus separated from what is near, it goes back to the טוב mentioned some ways above or to the idea contained, and carries it through all the clauses: "good that is fair, to eat and drink, and see the good," etc., (through all that follows in the liturgical recital) "this—this (good) I say—is God's own gift." The meaning is, that the recognition and the consciousness of this are necessary to make it good, or the good emphatical *y-*—"the good that is fair"—and that, without this it would not be יָפֶה; καλόν, honestum, etc., but sheer worthless d-

ism, which in itself, he so often pronounces worthless and vanity. The whole passage, 18-20, has the air of a solemn recapitulation in which the writer means to express his deepest and truest feeling: "And now, behold what I have seen: good that is fair, etc.; all such good is from above, and there is really no other that deserves to be so called. It is imbued throughout with the name of God, as though His name were inseparably from any true idea of the good. Taking the accents in their intended form, the passage has a most eloquent fullness; disregarding them we have sheer Epicureanism, expressed in what seems a verbose style, tautologous, unmeaning and, without out of harmony with the general scope of the book. The earnestness of the writer in his desire of fully setting out the thought is shown by the repetition in the beginning of the

19th verse: יָבֹא כָל הָאָדָם "yea every man, as God has given him word, he hath power to eat thereof, and bear his portion," etc., and then the strong accentuated הַיּוֹם making the repetition of the whole; so that the Epicurean or sensualist could claim no fragment of it as, in the least, favoring the godless philosophy. See the Metrical Version. It is all idle to put the most naked Epicureanism in the mouth of the writer, as ZÜCKLER and STUART do, and then deny it is such, or attempt to weave for it some possible evangelical robe.—F. L.]

* [EWALD's view is to be preferred, though with a modification. In the recognition of the higher good (see marginal note, p. 94), or the gift and blessing of God, this moral-sensual pleasure, the mere living, as an enjoyment, is not much remembered, nor the time it lasts. The higher aspect makes the lower seem less, though not undervalued.

Not life itself, with all its joys,
Could we abst. from passions move,
Or raise so high my cheerful voice,
As Thine endearing love.

Compare it with Psalm iv. 5: "Thou hast put joy in my

gratefully and contentedly enjoys, to forget the "miserable life" (LUTHER) that he previously led, and cares no more concerning the rapid flight and short duration of his earthly days, (comp. vi. 12). **Because God answereth him in the joy of his heart.** The second בְּ is subjoined to the first one in the commencement of the clause, and is therefore better translated with "because" or "since" than with "for." בְּיַגִּידָהּ lit. "he answers him with," i. e., he hears him by vouchsafing, etc.; for this signification of the Hiph, of יַגִּידָהּ comp. 1 Kings viii. 35; 2 Chron. vi. 26; IIos. ii. 23. All other meanings are contrary to the language and connection, e. g. HITZIG: "he makes him ready to serve;" KÖSTER: "he makes him sing with the joy of his heart;" VAHNINGER (according to the Sept. and Vulg.): "he occupies him with the joy of his heart," etc.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

(With Homiletical Hints.)

The threefold means given in this chapter for obtaining and advancing earthly happiness, are the fulfilment of duty towards God, our neighbors, and ourselves; or the three virtues corresponding to these three kinds of duties.—*εὐσέβεια, δικαιοσύνη, and σωφροσύνη* (Tit. ii. 12; Matth. xxii. 37-39). Among the duties to God, special attention is directed to proper demeanor in regard to prayer and vows; among the duties to our neighbor, the avoiding of injustice and covetousness, and as duties to ourselves, temperance and serene cheerfulness in the enjoyment of the pleasures of this life. Each of these special directions regarding moral demeanor is so presented that its relation to the happiness and peace of men's souls clearly appears. And thus, especially, in the sphere of religious duties, the necessity of pure truthfulness, sacred earnestness, and careful bridling of the tongue (in prayer as in vows), or, in a word, the just fear of God is insisted on as the essence of all those conditions on which depends the preservation of the Divine favor (ver. 4), and thus the foundation of all internal and external happiness. In the obligations of justice and unselfishness towards our neighbor (vers. 8-17) special reference is

heart more than [the joy of] the time [מִיָּמֵינוּ], when their corn and their wine increase;" and especially with the verse preceding (Ps. iv. 7) "Many are saying" (it is the great inquiry among men) "who will show us good" (the good, the summum bonum, the טוב אֲשֶׁר יָפֶה, the good that is beautiful), and then how full of light, and power, and meaning, is the answer: "Lift Thine upon us the light of Thy countenance, Jehovah." That was the good which philosophy, whether Epicurean or Stoical, could never find: "The Light of Thy countenance," or of Thy presence! We have become so familiar with this precious Hebraism, that we lose sight of its glorious beauty. In what other language, or literature, can we find anything like it? With the sentiment of Kokeleth that it is the thought of God's grace that makes the good, compare also the language, Ps. xxx. 5: "In His favor is life," and Ps. lxxiii. 4: "Thy loving kindness is better than life"—טוֹב חַסְדְּךָ כִּי־יָחִי

—a good that is more than life. It is the same idea, though the language of Kokeleth is more calm, more philosophic, we may say, than the impassioned diction of the Psalms, made more striking and emotional by the use of the second person.—F. L.]

made to the certainty of judicial visitation on the part of God or the King (vers. 8 and 9), to the freedom from stinging avarice and torturing care (ver. 10 to 17), and to the superiority of heavenly treasures, which one is not obliged to leave here and sacrifice at death, as is the case with earthly treasures (vers. 13-16); and these are represented as just so many sources of real inward happiness and peace. With regard to the serenity of life recommended at the close as a means of properly fulfilling the duties to one's self (vers. 18-20), sensual enjoyment in itself is not so much praised as a principal means of happiness, as is the grateful consciousness that all joys and blessings of this life come from God, together with the diligence and zealous activity in vocation that truly give flavor to the enjoyment of these pleasures ("to enjoy the good of all his labor," ver. 18; "to rejoice in his labor," ver. 19); and just in this manner is demonstrated the way of acquiring genuine and lasting happiness, in contradistinction to Epicureanism and all that philosophy which declares pleasure to be the chief good. In a comprehensive homiletical treatment of the section, the theme might be presented as follows: "Of a godly, just, and chaste life in this world, as the foundation of all genuine happiness in this world and the next;" or: "Of a right truthfulness, in prayer before God, in administration of earthly goods before men, and in the wise enjoyment of the pleasures of life in presence of one's own conscience;" or also (with special reference to contents of verses 8 and 9): "Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king" (1 Pet. ii. 17).

HOMILETICAL HINTS ON SEPARATE PASSAGES.

Chap. v. I. **HIERONYMUS:** *Non ingredi domum Dei, sed sine offensione ingredi, laudis est.*

MELANCTHON:—Solomon declares that the principal and best worship of God is to listen to His word and faithfully follow it. But it has always been the case that men have invented a multitude of sacrifices, and various ceremonies; thus the heathen, the Pharisees and the monks have falsified the proper way of reverencing God. This audacity of man is here condemned as a deep sin, however much its originators may defend it and praise their superstition as a glorious virtue.

STARKE:—We must visit the church as creatures who humble themselves before their Creator, as subjects doing homage to their Lord, as paupers begging for spiritual gifts, as sick men imploring aid, as Christians ready to serve Him with willing and pure heart.

BERLEBURG BIBLE:—One must not be satisfied with simple hearing, else it is this and nothing else, and this was not meant. The outward is simply outward; the true object of external worship must only be to lead to the internal.

Chap. v. 2, 3. **BREXZ:**—Because God alone dwells in heaven, *i. e.*, is alone true, wise and just, and we live on the earth, and are, therefore, liars, fools, and sinners, it in no manner becomes us with our human wisdom, which in God's eyes is folly, to judge of divine and hea-

venly things, and to indulge in many words with God concerning our worldly affairs, experiences and knowledge. But we must listen to God; leave to Him every decision, and silently obey His word as the only true wisdom.

GEIER:—Think at all times in thy prayer of the majesty of God with whom thou speakest, and of thine own unworthiness, this will then strongly move thy heart in pious devotion.

BERLEB. BIBLE:—"Let thy words be few;"—how far-reaching is this precept, in teaching, in preaching, in prayer, and in ordinary life! How many a long sermon would be condemned by this censorship, although it might fulfil all the requirements of the preacher's art! And how few spiritual things would be found in many discourses, if they were purified of all useless, unedifying, vain, annoying, and improper words, as they indeed should be!—The Saviour has regarded this counsel, and hence has given a very short formula of prayer, in the very beginning of which He impresses on the suppliant the majesty of God who is in heaven, but tempers it with the loving name of father, *etc.*

VERS. 4-7. BREXZ:—Vows, which proceed from unbelief, or violate the precepts of brotherly love, the Christian should neither make nor fulfil if he has made them. But if the vow proceeds from faith and love, and accords with their commands, then it must be kept; else God will judge thee as the fool, *i. e.*, as the ungodly.

LANGE:—Dear man, seek to maintain thy baptismal vows, therein hast thou vows enough.

HANSEN (ver. 6):—The mouth causeth the flesh to sin when it promises what the flesh neither can nor will perform.

STARKE (ver. 7):—The fear of the Lord is the essence of all true virtue, and it also teaches how one should wisely use his tongue (James i. 26).

HENGSTENBERG:—He who really fears God will say nothing concerning Him but that which proceeds from his inmost heart, and vow nothing but that which he is resolved inviolably to keep.

VERS. 8 and 9. LUTHER:—This book teaches thee to give thy heart to rest, and not to fret and pine too much when things go wrong, but, when the devil engages in malice, violence, injustice and oppression of the poor, to be able to say: "this is the course of the world; God will judge and avenge it." Let each one, therefore, in his sphere do his work with best diligence, according to the command of God: the rest he may commit to God and suffer. Let him await then what the godless and unjust men may do!—

The stone thou canst not lift, let lie;
Thy strength upon some other try.

MELANCTHON (ver. 8):—Observe here the difference between a king and a tyrant. A tyrant devastates and destroys; a good ruler cherishes his country, protects and furthers the interests of agriculture, the prosperity of the Church, the arts and industries, and all good things.

STARKE:—God is the ruler of all nations (Ps. lxxxii. 8). The loftiest noble and the meanest peasant must alike humbly acknowledge Him as his Lord, and reverence and obey Him.

WOHLFART:—What Solomon says we see yet

to-day. Although Church and State make every effort to advance the cause of righteousness and retard that of sin, the realm of evil is nevertheless wide-spread, and covetousness, pride, envy, deceit, voluptuousness, every where raise in oppression their repulsive heads. But let us remember that the earth is ever a land of imperfection; then this will not surprise us; but we shall rather be inclined to find in the contrast in which the reality stands with the belief in Divine justice, a reason for our hope of immortality and final reward, and, while we seek according to our strength to prevent evil, we will ourselves shun every sin, that we may hereafter stand rejoicing before God's throne.

Ver. 10 ff. LUTHER:—What is a miser but a poor, tortured, uneasy soul and heart, that is always looking after that which it does not possess; it is therefore vanity and wretchedness. Are not those happy people who are satisfied with the present favors of God, and comfortable nourishment for the body, and who leave it to God to care for the future?—If now God gives thee riches, use thy share as thou usest thy share of water, and let the rest flow by thee; if thou dost not do so, thy gathering will be all in vain.

GEIER:—The best inheritance that a rich man can leave to his children is Christian instruction in the discipline and admonition of the Lord, and thorough education in the arts and sciences.

ZELTNER:—How happy are hearts that are heavenly inclined, that are contented with what

the beneficent hand of God has bestowed on them, and enjoy it with His blessing in gratitude.

WOLFFARTH:—How foolishly do those act who live solely for their earthly existence.

Vers. 18-20. LUTHER:—To "eat in darkness" is nought else than to pass one's life in melancholy. All avaricious and troublesome people find something that does not please them, where they can fret and scold. For they are full of care, vexation, and anxiety; they cannot joyfully eat, nor joyfully drink, but always find something that annoys and offends them.

LANGE:—A true Christian uses the nourishment and needful supplies of his body, to the especial end that he may recognize the goodness of God in all his labor under the sun.

HANSEN:—In order to enjoy the good that there is in the riches of this world, it is necessary that one have a perfect rule over them, *i. e.*, that in the use of them he may at all times act in accordance with the Divine purpose, Ps. lxxii. 10.

BERLEB. BIBLE:—As "to the pure every thing is pure" (Tit. i. 15), so also wealth may be used by such a one in purity, and it will therefore depend mainly on each one's own heart how it stands in the presence of God. But if one does not remain contented and quiet when house and home burn up, or some other injury happens to his possessions, then is he not yet rightly placid and tranquil; this is the proof of it.

THIRD DISCOURSE.

Of true practical Wisdom.

CHAP. VI. 1—VIII. 15.

A. It cannot consist in striving after earthly sources of happiness.

CHAP. VI. 1-12.

1. Even those most richly blessed with earthly possessions do not attain to a true and lasting enjoyment of them.

(VERS. 1-6.)

- 1 There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it *is* common among men:
- 2 A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honor, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat
- 3 thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this *is* vanity, and it *is* an evil disease. If a man beget an hundred *children*, and live many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and also *that* he have no burial; I say,
- 4 *that* an untimely birth *is* better than he. For he cometh in with vanity, and de-
- 5 parteth in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness. Moreover he hath not seen the sun, nor known *any thing*: this hath more rest than the other.
- 6 Yea, though he live a thousand years twice *told*, yet hath he seen no good: do not all go to one place?

2. He who strives most zealously after earthly happiness, never gets beyond the feeling of the vanity of all earthly things, and the hope of a totally obscure future.

(VERS. 7-12.)

7 All the labour of man *is* for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled.
 8 For what hath the wise more than the fool? what hath the poor, that knoweth to
 9 walk before the living? Better *is* the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the
 10 desire: this *is* also vanity and vexation of spirit. That which hath been is named
 already, and it is known that it *is* man: neither may he contend with him that is
 11 mightier than he. Seeing there be many things that increase vanity, what *is* man
 12 the better? For who knoweth what *is* good for man in *this* life, all the days of his
 vain life which he spendeth as a shadow? for who can tell a man what shall be
 after him under the sun?

[V-r. 3. **הַנֶּפֶל** (**נֶפֶל**) this peculiar word occurs Job iii. 16, Ps. lviii. 9, as well as here; in all which places it has the same meaning of premature birth, or abortion. It comes from the Hiphil sense of the verb as used in such places as Isaiah xxvi. 23, where it is applied to the earth as giving birth. For a similar use of the Greek *πρωτο*, compare HOMER, *Iliad*. xix. 110.—T. L.]

[Ver. 4. **וְ**; See Remarks in Introduction to Metrical Version, p. 177.—T. L.]

[Ver. 6. **וְ** said to be a particle *Siquioris Hebraismi* (See GESENIUS) but it is only a matter of pronunciation. It is only what **וְ** would be in sound if written in full—the **ו** in such cases, where the words are pronounced rapidly together, being elided in sound. This belongs to the Hebrew, as well as to the Syriac and Arabic, and its appearance or non-appearance in writing is only a peculiarity of orthography which is not determinative of date, any more than the abbreviations of **אשר** which are found in the ancient as well as in the later Hebrew writings. It would easily come from a copyist following the sound.—T. L.]

[Ver. 10. **וְ**, the point intended here requires that this should be rendered as the proper name. The reference is to the naming, Gen. ii. 7.—T. L.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

This section contains firstly the negative of the illustration relative to the nature of true wisdom, which forms the contents of the third discourse, or a censure of the vain and perverse efforts of those who seek that wisdom in the way of external and earthly happiness. In two clearly marked sections or strophes of equal length, the author first shows that all worldly blessings are of no avail to him who is not able to enjoy them (vers. 1-6) and then that this very incapability of enjoyment depends partly on the perception of the vanity of earthly things, and partly on the necessity, affecting all men, of depending on a totally dark and uncertain future, while dissatisfied with the present (vers. 7-12). The latter of these two sections (especially in its second half, vers. 10-12) reminds us of previous reflections, as i. 2-11; iii. 1-9; and partially also of v. 12-16. But that the last named passage reappears in its principal thoughts in the present place, is an unjustified assertion of some commentators (also of VAUINGER, p. 34). For, as HIRTZ properly observes, there the rich man loses his blessings without having enjoyed them; here, on the contrary, he retains them.—EWALD, ELSTER, HAHN, and some others, begin a new leading section with ver. 10 of this chapter (EWALD, indeed, a new discourse, which he extends from vi. 10; viii. 15). But since vers. 10-12 clearly belong to the description of the vanity of earthly happiness commenced in ver. 1, whilst the admonition to walk in the ways of true wisdom does not commence until chap. vii. 1, *etc.*, our division, which corresponds with the division of the chapters, is to be preferred.

2. *First strophe.* Vers. 1-6. The unhappiness of not being able to enjoy present earthly blessings. **There is an evil which I have seen under the sun.** In words similar to chap. x. 5: and in like manner to chap. v. 13.—**And is common among men.** (ZÖCKLER's translation, and it bears heavily on man). Literally: "And is a great thing on man." **וְ** cannot here have been intended to show the frequency of the evil (LUTHER, "and is common among men;" Vulg. "*malum frequens*"), but only its extent and weight, as is shown by the expression **וְ** in the parallel passages ii. 21; and viii. 6.—**Ver. 2. A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honor.** The same triad of sensual goods: 2 Chron. i. 11; comp. similar combinations in Prov. iii. 16; viii. 18; xxii. 4. HENGSTENBERG is arbitrary in the assertion, that by the rich man is meant the Persian, and by the "stranger," named immediately afterwards, the successor of the Persian in the dominion of the world. This discourse is much too general in its character to permit us to seek in it such special historical and political allusions. For the doubtful propriety of affirming such political allusions in this book, see *Introduction*, § 4, *Obs.* 3.—**So that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth.** (ZÖCKLER, "of any thing"). This is clearly the meaning of **וְ** as is shown partly by the suffix in **וְ**, and partly also by the construction of **וְ** with **וְ** occurring in chap. iv. 8. Therefore not: "he wanteth for his soul nothing of all" (*Vulg.*, DRUSIUS, BAUER, *etc.*), but "of any thing." The Septuagint is more correct, *καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἵστερῶν τῆ ψυχῆ*

airois, also LUTHER and nearly all the modern commentators.—Yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof. This incapacity of enjoyment can proceed from the sickness of the wealthy possessor, or from the burden of heavy cares which rob him of his sleep (comp. v. 12), or from a soul made gloomy by melancholy or dejection (comp. v. 17). The author can only mean such an inability to enjoy blessings as is connected with a steady continuance of their possession, as more clearly appears in vers. 3 and 6; consequently not an inability caused by the deprivation of them, by some other misfortune, or by early death, as EWALD and VAHINGER suppose.

For הַשְׁלִיט, to empower, to enable, *i. e.*, “to allow or grant,” comp. v. 19. God must grant us the possession of goods, and also the power to enjoy them—the same God who in an ethial sphere provides all in all, the *Posses*, the *Velle*, and the *Perficere*.—But a stranger eateth it—*i. e.*, not some robber of his goods, (EWALD, VAHINGER) or the successor of the Persian in the rule of the world (BENGSTENBERG), but the reckless heir* of the rich man, who, during the lifetime of the latter, and when he is tortured by disease, sorrow, or foolish avarice, already begins to riot and revel with his goods, and after his death will exhaust them in feasting and merry-making. (Comp. ii. 18).—This is vanity, and it is an evil disease. “Evil disease” is an expression originating perhaps in Dent. xxviii. 39, which here signifies an evil resembling a very malignant disease. The word

חָלִי, however, has no sort of etymological connection with cholera (*cholera* from *cholē*, gall). Ver. 3. If a man beget a hundred children. For the high appreciation, in the old covenant, of the blessing of many children, comp. Gen. xxiv. 60; Ps. cxxvii. 3-5; Job xxvii. 14; and for the value attached to long life, Ex. xx. 12; Dent. xi. 9, 21; Ps. xlix. 9.—And live many years, so that the days of his years be many. Herein is meant the sum of all the days of which all his years consist (Ps. xc. 10). To the first clause, “and live many years,” is added the latter equivalent one, as explanatory and emphatic, without producing an absolute tautology—And also that he have no burial, that is, an honorable burial, that testifies of the real love of his posterity, and therefore truly deserves the name of “burial.” The opposite of such an honorable burial is that found in Isa. liii. 9.—“He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death;” or in Jer. xxii. 19.—“He shall be buried with the burial of an ass;” or in the neglect of burial and the lying on the face of the earth like dung (Jer. viii. 2; ix. 21; xxv. 33; Isa. xiv. 19, 20; Ps. lxxix. 3). The cause of such dishonorable burial, קְבִירָה, which is not truly קְבִירָה, we are clearly to find in the

absence of filial piety and esteem on the part of the posterity of the avaricious rich man, and not in the sordid meanness of the latter himself, who “*ex turpi tenacitate non audeat aliquid honeste sepulture destinare*” (SCHMIDT, RAMB., and VAHINGER). HENGSTENBERG unnecessarily assumes for קְבִירָה the signification of “grave, tomb,” a meaning elsewhere quite common. As in this passage, so also does the context in Jer. xxii. 19 rather demand the sense of *exequiis, funus*. HIRZIG’s position that the words: “and also that he have no burial,” is simply a note originally written on the margin of verse 5, is pure caprice.—I say that an untimely birth is better than he;—because such a birth has enjoyed no pleasure in this life, but has also experienced no suffering; comp. iv. 2 f., and especially Job iii. 16. Verses 4 and 5 continue the comparison of the untimely birth.—For* he cometh in with vanity, *i. e.*, falls into nothingness from his mother’s womb. And his name shall be covered with darkness, *i. e.*, he receives no name, “but is given over to absolute oblivion.” (ELSTER). Moreover he hath not seen the sun:—this sun which shines brightly and lovingly, but also shines on a great deal of vanity and vexation, of woe and misery; wherefore it may be considered a good fortune not to have seen it. This hath more rest than the other. “Rest,” *i. e.*, freedom from the annoyances, toils, and troubles of this life. We are certainly not to think with HIRZIG of that passive, dreamy rest so desired by the Orientals.† For the use of the comparative יָקָר here, comp. Ps. lii. 3; Hab. ii. 16. Ver. 6. Yea, though he live a thousand years twice told; therefore twice as long as the life of the oldest patriarchs from Adam to Noah. HERONYMUS is correct in saying: “*et non ut Adam prope mille, sed duobus millibus vixerit annis*,” “Not lived, as Adam, near a thousand, but two thousand years.”—Yet hath he seen no good. Comp. ii. 24; iii. 12, etc. Do not all go to one place? namely, to Scheol, in which all arrive equally poor, and where we cannot regain what we have failed to enjoy on earth; comp. ix. 10; xi. 8. As an extension to the principal clause, this question might be introduced with the expression: “I ask then.”

3. Second strophe. Vers. 7-12. The cause of this inability to enjoy earthly blessings, consists

*[It should be rendered “though it cometh in with vanity,” etc. See the remarks on יָקָר, as denoting a reason notwithstanding, as well as a reason for, *Introd. to Metrical Version* p. 177. The rendering for completely changes the sense and makes the reader think of the rich man, until the context forces to the other conception. The same effect is produced in our E. V. by the rendering *he* instead of *it*, which is more properly applicable to the *abortion*, conceived of us impersonal. See *Met. Ver.*—T. L.]

†[The word נָחָה does not primarily mean *rest, repose*, in either sense, but simply a *lying down*. It refers to the state or condition taken as a whole. So כִּינֵי־הַיָּם, from the same root, means a place of rest, rather than rest itself, as in Ps. xxiii. 2, כִּינֵי־הַיָּם means not “the still waters,” but the streams by which the sheep lie down to rest. It does not refer to the *quality* of rest, much less to its *quantity* as our E. V. would make it: “More rest than the other;” but is simply an affirming that the state or condition, on the whole, of the *vanity born* is better, more desirable, than that of the man who *vainly lived*. The one is better off than the other.—T. L.]

*[The phrase אִישׁ נָכָר, “a stranger man,” cannot possibly mean here an heir, or one of kin, either next or remote. Besides the context, and especially the mention of his having no funeral, shows an utter dispossesion, in whatever way it may be supposed to have taken place. He, and his hundred sons, are all reduced to poverty, and there is none to do him the honor of such a funeral as his estate might have demanded. This is the soreness of it.—T. L.]

in the vanity of the present and the uncertainty of the future conditions of the happiness of men. **All the labor of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled.**—(ZÖCKLER, "the soul.") That is, all human life is a grasping after enjoyment, but after an enjoyment vain in itself, and affording no true satisfaction. "Mouth and soul" stand in contrast to each other as representatives of the purely sensual and therefore transitory enjoyment (comp. Job xii. 11; Prov. xvi. 26) as compared with the deeper, more spiritual, and, therefore, more lasting kind of joy. The clear sense of this verse, in essential harmony with chap. i. 8, is, that the necessity of the inner man for a more substantial and lasting enjoyment is not satisfied by pleasures of that kind, namely, by eating and drinking (ii. 24; iii. 13; v. 18; viii. 15); and therefore **צָרָה** here cannot be translated by "desire, sensual desire;" and this same remark applies to ver. 2, or ver. 9, notwithstanding the opposite view of HIRZIG, VAHINGER, ELSTER, etc. LUTHER's translation is also unfitting; he gives "heart," but his entire conception of the verse is grammatically inaccurate: "Labor is appointed to every man according to his strength, but the heart cannot abide by it." Ver. 8. **For what hath the wise more than the fool?** That is, one may strive after the more earnest and real, instead of the mere sensual pleasure, and thus, by a desire for food for his soul, show himself a wise man in contrast with the fool who seeks only to satisfy his mouth: but the former has no real advantage over the latter, since neither attains to the desired "satisfaction of the soul." This sentence clearly holds a confirming relation to the preceding, and not an opposing one, as ELSTER holds; he translates **צָרָה** by "nevertheless," as does HIRZIG, who regards this verse as opposing the contents of the verse preceding. HENGSTENBERG affirms an extravagant comparison between the wise man and the fool, when he supposes that both are here equally accused of avarice. On the contrary, a distinction is here clearly drawn between the desire of the fool, aiming at possession and enjoyment, and the more thoughtful, more self-possessed, more honorable and worthy conduct of the wise man.* The latter is indicated in the second clause by the words: **The poor that knoweth to walk before the living.** Here the word poor (**עָנִי** humble) shows the moral condition and demeanor of the wise man, by virtue of which, with a more just conception of himself as an humble "quiet one in the land," he leads a modest and retired life (comp. Ps. x. 2; xxxiv. 6; xxxvii. 2; Zech. ix. 9, etc.); but "knowing to walk before the living," is

* [Stuart's view here is worthy of consideration. "It is the **צָרָה** apodictic," he says, "i. e., such as is employed in sentences of this nature: If—so and so; then (**צָרָה**) this or that consequence." He takes it as an objector's language, or the author personifying an objector, thus: "The appetite is not satisfied—then (asks the inquirer) how do the wise have any advantage, etc.?" STUART says "the question is not answered here;" but it may be regarded as having a suggested if not a direct response in the verse following: *better the sight of the eyes, that is, the contented enjoyment of the wise, than the fool's ever roving desire.* This is the view adopted and expressed in the Metrical Version.—T. L.]

understanding the correct rule of life, and the true and godly intercourse with one's fellow-men, and is, therefore a circumlocution to express the idea of "wise" in the solemn Old Testament sense. Ewald, following the masoretic accentuation (which is here not authoritative), separates **יָדָע** (knowing) from the following infinitive clause, and regards this as the subject: "What profits it to the patient man, to the understanding man to walk before the living (i. e., to live)?" But the adjective conception of **יָדָע**, "knowing, intelligent," is neither sustained by Prov. xvii. 27, nor Eccles. ix. 11, and the parallel passages iv. 13, 17, and many others, support the direct connection with the following word **יָדָע**. The explanations of Luther are ungrammatical. "Why does the poor man dare to be among the living?" and the Vulg. "*Et quid pauper, nisi ut pergat illuc, ubi est vita?*" Ver. 9. **Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the desire,** (ZÖCKLER, "of the soul"). That is, because the wise man with his strivings after higher aims, has nothing better than the pleasure-seeking fool, therefore a contented enjoyment of the present is the most desirable, more to be desired than a restless striving without satisfaction, or than the wearying one's self with manifold designs with no hope of their success. The "sight of the eyes" is here, as in ver. 11, 7, the pleasant enjoyment of that which is before the eyes, or of the good and the beautiful which are present. (See LUTHER on this passage, in the Homiletical Hints). The wandering of the soul (not of the desire, see ver. 7), is the uneasy scheming of the man dissatisfied with his modest lot, the passionate *μετρωρίζεσθαι* (Luke xii. 29) or the *φρόνειν τὰ ὑψηλά* (Rom. xii. 16), consequently the same as the expression: "His soul shall not be filled" in vers. 3 and 7, only marking more clearly than this the self-caused guilt of the want of spiritual contentment. This sentence has many parallels among the classic authors; e. g., HORACE, 4 *Ep.* I. 18, 96 ss:

*Inter cuncta leges, et percontabere doctos,
Qua rationes queas traducere leniter ævum,
Ne te semper inops agitet velleque cupido,
Ne pavor et rerum mediocriter utilium spes.*

Comp. Marcus Aurelius III., 16; IV., 26; *Juvenal. Sat.* XIV., 178; *Lucian, Necromant.* I., 194, etc.—This is also vanity and vexation of spirit; namely this maxim: "Better is the sight of the eyes," etc., and a life and conduct in accordance with it. A partial reference of **יָדָע** to the "wandering of the soul" (LUTHER and HENGSTENBERG) corresponds quite as little to the sense as the extension of the thought to everything from ver. 7 onward [VAHINGER and ELSTER]. Comp. the case precisely similar to this in chap. ii. 26. Ver. 10. **That which hath been is named already.** This remark, reminding us of chap. i. 9 f., proves the author's way for the description of the total uncertainty and obscurity of the future of man, in so far as it points to his banishment into the fixed circle of all creature life and action. "That which hath been is named already," i. e., it has already

been, in the past, something in its nature manifest and well-known. The exclusive reference of the clause to man, by means of which Gen. v. 2; Ps. cxxxix. 16, etc., would become parallels of this passage, is forbidden by the neuter כִּי. The discourse does not make special reference to man until we reach the following clause. **And it is known that it is man,** [ZÖCKLER, "the man"]. Here EWALD and ELSTER are correct; it is not "that he is a man" (KNOBEL, VAHINGER, HENGSTENBERG) or, "what the man is" (ROSENMUELLER), or, "who the man is" (HAHN), or finally, "that if one is a man he cannot contend," etc., (HITZIG),—these are all conceptions that militate against the connection, and do not correspond to the simple expression אָרַם אִשְׁרֵהוּ אָרַם. * **Neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he.** That is with God, namely, with Him who is הַקָּיִף or שֵׁר [Job v. 17; Ruth i. 20, 21,

etc.], who is superior to man just because He is mightier than man [הַתְּקִיף כִּכְנִי] or because He has ordained man the whole circle of human existence with absolute creative power, so that man may neither contend with Him nor break through the limit to which he is assigned. For the word קָיִף, "to contend with any one," compare קָיִף 2 Sam. xix. 10, which there, as elsewhere, has this sense. For the sentence compare also the question (originating perhaps in this very passage): μή ἰσχυρότεροι αὐτοῦ ἐσμέν? 1 Cor. x. 22.—Ver. 11. **Seeing there be many things that increase vanity.** That is, human life abounds in possessions, chances, vicissitudes of fortune, trials and dangers which strengthen in us the feeling of the vanity and weakness of this earthly existence, and show us that we are absolutely dependent on a higher power against which we cannot contend. The context decides against the ordinary rendering: "for there are many words which," etc., [Sept., Vulg., and also EWALD, HITZIG, ELSTER and HAHN], for the reference to useless talk, etc., is foreign to it.* **What is man the better?** Namely, that he possesses, experiences, or enjoys these many things that simply increase

*[Ver. 10. "That which hath been is named already, and it is known that it is man." This rendering of our English Version seems to have little or no meaning, and points to no connection with the following verse. STUART's is little better. ZÖCKLER sheds no light upon it. He has no right to regard so distinct and emphatic a phrase as נִקְרָא שְׂמוֹ,

as meaning simply a known existence in the past. The other interpretations, of EWALD, ELSTER, KNOBEL, VAHINGER, HENGSTENBERG, ROSENMUELLER, HAHN, fail to satisfy. Their very discrepancies as to the rendering of so simple a phrase as נִקְרָא שְׂמוֹ, show that they have missed some fundamental idea which would at once take away from it all uncertainty. HITZIG's is the most unmeaning of them all. The older commentators, such as MENESTERUS, MERCERUS, FIRINUS, PINEDA, AB. MONTANA, GEIES, and even GROTIUS (see PLE'S *Synopsis*) saw in it an allusion to the narrative, Gen. ii. 19, of Adam's giving names to things (*nomen inditum eorum rei cuiusque nature*) and to the name of a man itself, as derived from Gen. ii. 7 and ver. 2. They fail however to bring it clearly out. Among the moderns, WORDSWORTH distinctly favors this view. See also the remarks of the spiritually minded MATTHEW HENRY. The key of the passage would seem to be given in the words נִקְרָא שְׂמוֹ (comp. Gen. ii. 19 הוּא שְׂמוֹ), "its name was named of old." There is no need of departing here from the most close and literal rendering, or for seeking any foreign idea in the word *naming*, as though it were a mere expression for existence (STUART and ZÖCKLER) or for being well-known. The reference is to the supposed fact, or idea, that names denote (as the best philology shows they were originally intended to denote) the nature of the thing named,—an idea which certainly seems to be implied in the account Gen. ii. 19. Keeping this in view, we get a clear meaning from the most literal rendering: כִּי נִקְרָא שְׂמוֹ "what a thing is" (כִּי here used indefinitely like the Greek τι, Latin quid, abique, see Job xiii. 13; Prov. ix. 13; 2 Sam. xviii. 27; Eccles. i. 9; iii. 15, 22; vii. 24; viii. 7; x. 11; c., with אִשְׁרֵהוּ or שְׂמוֹ, *what each thing is*," or, "each thing. what it is, its name was named of old,"—that is, it was named according to what it is (comp. ARISTOTLE's peculiar expression for the idea, or individuality, of a thing, ἡ τῶν ἑἶναι, *its being what it is*, or its being something). And then what follows is stated by way of explanation; the conjunction ἵ being used comparatively as it often is: וְנִקְרָא שְׂמוֹ "and so, known what he is (אִשְׁרֵהוּ), is man," or rather "Adam" (keeping the proper name in translation as the only way of giving force to the play upon the name. Thus known for what he is (by his name), or thus made known (denoted what he is) is Adam (made from earth). Then there is seen immediately the connection with the next verse, expressing his weakness as well as earthliness. The whole, then, may be thus paraphrased: "Names of old were given to things, to each thing, according to their nature; so man was denoted, made known, or simply, known, from what he is, his earthliness and frailty." The objection of ZÖCKLER in respect to the gender of כִּי has no weight. It is taken indefinitely, and so what (that which) was used instead of who. Compare Ps. viii. 5 אֲנֹכִי כִּי. Ps. cxliv. 3 כִּי אָרַם, "what is man?" The Metrical Version follows a close literality at the expense of smoothness,—the words in brackets not at

all adhere to the sense, but necessary to give the English reader the play upon the name. It is as though there had been used the word *mortal*, which is taken in English for a name or epithet of man, or the Greek βροτός, which is so much used in HOMER for the same purpose. There is probably some allusion to the peculiar language of this passage in the Midrash Rabba (on Num. vi. xix.) where we have the following account: "When the Holy One had created Adam, He brought before him the animals, and said of each, see this (כִּי נִקְרָא שְׂמוֹ) what is this), what is its name (שְׂמוֹ)?" Adam said, this is שׂוֹר, shor, (ox)—this is חַמּוֹר, chamor, (ass)—this is סוּס, sus (horse), and so on. And thou—what is thy name? He answered, I should be called אָדָם (Adam) because I was taken from adamah. And I,—כִּי נִקְרָא שְׂמוֹ is my name? Thou shouldst be called אָדוֹנָי, Adonai, for

Thou art Adon (אָדוֹן לְכֹל בְּרִיּוֹתַי), the Lord of all Thy creatures." There can be good reasons given for Kobolet's philology here, but its correctness or incorrectness is of no account to reference to the allusion, or the idea of humanity which it conveys. See Genesis, p. 203, marginal note.—T. L. * [On the contrary the contrast seems clearly to point to the rendering *words*, although ZÖCKLER agrees here with our English Version, and with that of LUTHER. It is confirmed by what follows: "who knows"—"who can tell." It indicates the disputations which had commenced in the speculative or philosophical world, and which Solomon had doubtless heard of, although perhaps not familiar with them. His intercourse with the Egyptians, Phœnicians, Sabæans, and Arabians (perhaps with some of the more eastern people to whom his ships had gone), was sufficient for this purpose. The speculative mind began very early to inquire concerning the design and end of human life, de finibus bonorum et malorum. Philosophy was then rising in Greece; though, at this early time, its schools had not yet assumed shape.—"Many were saying רַבִּים אָכְרִים, Ps. iv. 7) who will show us the good." We have seen how the Psalmist answers the questions there (Marg. note p. 95) by directing to the real good, אֱוֹר פְּנֵיךָ, the true εὐδαιμονία, the favor of God, or blessedness in distinction from mere happiness,—"the light of Thy countenance." Kobolet here regards as vanity all merely human disquisitions of this kind. They only "increase vanity" (see 1 Cor. vii. 1, ἡ ἐπιθυμία οὐκ ἐστὶν σοφία, "knowledge puffeth up," *bloweth up*), or as it may be read, taking ἄρְבֵּי adverbially, they multiply in vain." What is man the better for all this talk? Who knows what is good for him? Who can tell him what shall be after him? By way of contrast compare Ps. cxix. 129, 130: "Thy testimonies are wonderful; the entrance of THY words giveth light; they give understanding to the simple."—T. L.]

vanity.—Ver. 12. **For who knoweth what is good for man in this life?**—Namely, what of earthly things, whether happiness or unhappiness, wealth or poverty, the fulfilment of his desires or their disappointment. The concealed nature of man's own future is expressed by this question.—**All the days of his vain life.** Literally: “the number of the days,” etc. כִּסְפָר (Com. v. 18) is the accusative of measure or duration.—**Which he spendeth as a shadow.** Literal: “and he passeth them,” etc. Because יָמֵי (days of) is separated from יָשָׁם כְּצֶלֶל by a compound genitive, the copula is placed before this clause which is to be considered as relative (HITZIG). With יָשָׁם יָמֵי compare *χρόνον πατείν* Acts xv. 33, *dies facere*, *Cicero ad Attic.* v. 20.—**For who can tell a man?** אֲשֶׁר, here, is not equivalent to “so that,” but is substantially synonymous with כִּי “for,” (comp. Deut. iii. 24; Dan. i. 10), expressing an affirmative and intensified sense. Comp. Ps. x. 6; Job v. 5; ix. 15; xix. 27. In the present clause the effort is certainly to intensify the truth that man is not permitted to look into the future of his earthly existence.—**What shall be after him under the sun.** “After him,” *i. e.*, after his present condition, not after his death; comp. iii. 22; vii. 14; and see the exegetical illustrations to the former passage.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

(With Homiletical Hints.)

The theme of this section is too narrowly drawn, if, with STARKE, we find only therein depicted “the extremely unhappy nature of the miser,” or, with HENGSTENBERG, “the vanity of wealth,” [and indeed, as HENGSTENBERG supposes, illustrated by the example of the rich Persians* and the poor Israelites]. That which in the present chapter is discountenanced, and presented as incompatible with true wisdom, is not merely the striving after money and possessions, but also the desire for honor, long life, many children (vers. 2, 3, 6), and, in short, *the struggle for earthly happiness in general.* And firstly, in vers. 1-6, wealth without a cheerful and contented feeling in the heart, then in vers. 7-9 sensual enjoyment without satisfaction of soul, and finally in vers. 10-12, a happy present with an obscure and uncertain future, are named as those things which must bring men to the consciousness of the vanity of all earthly goods and pleasures, and forbid them to strive after them. All the conditions and circumstances named, belong to those “many things that increase vanity,” as found in ver. 11, and which, according to vers. 3-6, permit the longest life, and the one most richly blessed with posterity, to seem scarcely any better than the lot of an untimely birth that has not even

* A false historical hypothesis, especially if it be in the face of the claim made by the writing itself, produces great mischief by continually warping exegesis. Nothing shows this more than HENGSTENBERG'S continually turning the most general remarks into something about the Persians and the Persian times.—T. L.]

seen the light of this world. It is a bitter and cutting thought, which, like the similar one in chap. iv. 2, f., is only softened and, as it were, excused by the admonition to a contented, resigned and grateful enjoyment and use of life, which clearly forms its background [distinctly visible in ver. 9], and again practically takes away the one-sided character of the apparent accusation of the Creator and Ruler of the world. Only the insatiable, ever-dissatisfied chasing after earthly means of happiness is thereby forbidden, as in opposition to the divinely-appointed task of human life. A temperate and modest striving after a cheerful and useful course of life, (which verse 8 expressly praises as the characteristic of the wise man) is emphatically recommended, not only in the preceding chap. v. 18-20, but in those immediately following [especially in chap. vii. 11 ff.] It is the cheerful and noble form of *σωφροσύνη*, that cardinal virtue, not merely of the ancient classical but also of biblical ethics, which forms the framework of this mainly gloomy and admonishing picture, and presents a corrective to contents so apparently dubious, and easily misunderstood.

The principal thought of this chapter might be well represented by the following quotations: “*Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth;*” or, “*Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth,*” etc.; or, “*And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.*” (Col. iii. 2; Matt. vi. 19; 1 John ii. 17)

HOMILETICAL HINTS ON SEPARATE PASSAGES.

Vers. 1, 2. BRENZ: The scheming and striving of our old Adam is of such a nature, that it measures the happiness of this life solely according to the abundance of treasures and riches. Let this old Adam go, for it is of no use! Dost thou think that nothing would be wanting to a happy life if thou only hadst an abundance of riches and honors? The matter is very different, as daily experience teaches.—WEIMAR BIBLE: The lamentations of the miser are not removed by excess of riches, by the number of children, or by long life; they are rather increased by these things (1 Tim. vi. 10).—LANGE: The desire for temporal things clings to us all, and when we cease to watch and pray, we can soon be put to sleep, and charmed to our ruin, by such earthly love.

Ver. 3-6. GEIER: A long life without rest and peace in God, is nothing but a long martyrdom.—STARKE: To have many children is a special blessing of God (Ps. cxxvii. 3; cxxviii. 3, f.); but apart from the enjoyment of divine favor, this also is vanity.—LANGE: What the untimely birth loses of natural life without any fault of its own, that the miser wantonly robs himself of in spiritual life. . . . Because his soul has no firm foundation in communion with the good God, it goes to ruin. (Gal. vi. 8).

Vers. 7 and 8. TUBINGEN BIBLE: Above all things let us strive that our immortal spirit be filled with heavenly treasures, which alone can truly satisfy it.—LANGE: He who cares not to appease and satisfy his soul, finds his proper

place among fools, Luke xii. 19 f.—HENGSTENBERG: That the soul of man is never satisfied, notwithstanding his narrow capacity for enjoyment, is very strange, and a mighty proof of the degree to which our race, since Gen. i. 3, has yielded to sin and folly, producing "many foolish and hurtful lusts," (1 Tim. vi. 9).

Ver. 9. LUTHER: It is better that we use what is before our eyes, than that the soul should thus wander to and fro. Solomon means that we use the present and thank God for it, and not think of other things, like the dog in the fable that seizes the shadow and drops the meat. And he therefore says: what God has placed before thine eyes (the present) that use contentedly, and follow not thy soul which does not become filled.—Therefore let every Christian and believer rest with what he has, and be satisfied with what God has given him in the present! But the ungodly are not thus; all that they see is a torture to them; for they use not the present, their soul is never filled, and it wanders hither and thither. He who has immense sums of money has not enough; he does not use it but desires more; if he has one wife he is not satisfied but wants another; if he has a whole realm, he is not contented; as Alexander the Great could not be satisfied with one world.—CRAMER: Be contented with what thou hast; this is better than in greed to be ever desiring other things.—BERLEN. BIBLE: This is the wandering of the soul, that runs about among creatures, and, like Esau, on the field of this world, chases after a palatable food, which wisdom finds only at home, and in the repose of contentment.—HENGSTENBERG: It is better to rejoice in that which is before our eyes, however humble it may be, since man really needs so little, than to yield to the caprices of one's lusts, and to torture one's self with plans and hopes that so easily deceive us, or, if they are fulfilled, afford so little happiness.

Vers. 10 and 11. CRAMER: That man should leave a pleasant name and memory behind is not unchristian; but the highest good does not consist therein. For as time discovereth all things, so it covereth all things up. (Ps. xxxi. 13; Ex. i. 8).—HANSEN: All human things are subjected to God. He often deposes the highest

from the throne of their glory where they least expect it, Dan. iv. 27-30.—HENGSTENBERG: If man is in a state of unconditional dependence on God, he should not permit to himself many vagaries, and should not torture himself with schemes and stratagems; because he cannot protect what he has acquired, and is not for a moment certain that he may not hear the cry: "thou fool, this night thy soul will be demanded of thee;" therefore it is foolish to envy the heathen because of their wealth, which can so soon wither away, like the flower of the field, James i. 10, 11.—The rich man has, in truth, no more than the poor one; what the former seems to have over the latter, proves, on closer inspection, to be but show and vanity. It disappears as soon as the judgments of God pass over the world.

Ver. 12. LUTHER: Men's hearts strive after all sorts of things: one seeks power, another wealth, and they know not that they will acquire them; thus they use not their present blessings, and their hearts ever aspire to that which they have not yet, and see not yet.—Why do we thus annoy and torture ourselves with our thoughts, when future things are not for a moment in our power? Therefore we should be contented with the present that God gives us now, and should commit all to God, who alone knows and rules both the present and the future.—RAMBACH: From all which it appears, that there is nothing better than to proscribe base avarice, be content with the present, and enjoy it with a pious cheerfulness.—ZEYSS: Although a Christian may not know how it may be with the things of this world after his death, yet he can be assured by faith that he, after death, will be with Christ in heaven.—HENGSTENBERG: One would only be justified in esteeming wealth in case he knew the future, and had it in his power. The merest chance can suddenly rob one of all that has been gathered with pain and toil. A great catastrophe may come and sweep everything away as a flood. The practical result therefore is that one should strive after the true riches. As P. GERARD says: "*Earthly treasures dissolve and disappear, but the treasures of the soul never vanish.*"

B. The true Wisdom of Life consists in Contempt of the World, Patience, and Fear of God.

CHAP. VII. 1-22.

1. In contempt of the world and its foolish lusts.

(VERS. 1-7.)

1 A good name *is* better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the
2 day of one's birth. *It is* better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the
house of feasting; for that *is* the end of all men; and the living will lay *it* to his
3 heart. Sorrow *is* better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the

4 heart is made better. The heart of the wise *is* in the house of mourning; but the
5 heart of fools *is* in the house of mirth. *It is* better to hear the rebuke of the wise,
6 than for a man to hear the song of fools: For as the crackling of thorns under a
7 pot, so *is* the laughter of the fool: this also *is* vanity. Surely oppression maketh
a wise man mad; and a gift destroyeth the heart.

2. In a patient, calm, and resigned spirit.

(VERS. 8-14.)

8 Better *is* the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: *and* the patient in spirit *is*
9 better than the proud in spirit. Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger
10 resteth in the bosom of fools. Say not thou, What *is the cause* that the former days
11 were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this. Wisdom
12 *is* good with an inheritance: and *by it there is* profit to them that see the sun. For
wisdom *is* a defence, and money *is* a defence: but the excellency of knowledge *is*,
13 *that* wisdom giveth life to them that have it. Consider the work of God: for who
14 can make *that* straight, which He hath made crooked? In the day of prosperity
be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over
against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.

3. In earnest fear of God, and penitential acknowledgment of sin.

(VERS. 15-22.)

15 All *things* have I seen in the days of my vanity: there is a just *man* that perisheth
in his righteousness, and there is a wicked *man* that prolongeth *his life* in his
wickedness. Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why
17 shouldest thou destroy thyself? Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish:
18 why shouldest thou die before thy time? *It is* good that thou shouldest take hold
of this; yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand: for he that feareth God
19 shall come forth of them all. Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten
20 mighty *men* which are in the city. For *there is* not a just man upon earth, that
21 doeth good, and sinneth not. Also take no heed unto all words that are spoken;
22 lest thou hear thy servant curse thee: For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth
that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others.

[Ver. 3. חַיָּה. The primary sense is *excitement* of mind, or *feeling*, of any kind, or from any cause. Fuerst, *commotum, concitatum esse*. It is like the Greek θυμός, or όργή, in this respect. It may be *grief* (sorrow), or *anger*. The context determines. Here, in ver. 3, it evidently means the opposite of חִנּוּן laughter, mirth, joy. In ver. 9th, on the other hand, it must have the sense of *anger*, though both ideas are probably combined.—T. L.]

[Ver. 7. אָשָׁר means the *disposition* or state of mind from which oppression comes (όβρις, insolence, pride) rather than the act. It is also to be determined from the context whether it is violence, insolence, etc., exercised upon the wise man, or by him, that is, whether it is objective, or subjective. The latter sense, here, best suits the context. Such a spirit in the wise man may make mad even *him*, or make him decide wrong, if we regard אָשָׁר, here, as meaning a judge.—T. L.]

[Ver. 12. בָּצֵל is regarded by some of the best critics as a case of beth essentialis, or as having an assertive force, as in the Arabic, but there is no good reason for this.—T. L.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

1. This section, which describes the nature of genuine, practical wisdom, just as the preceding one presents the contrary, is clearly divided into three divisions or strophes. The *first* of these (vers. 1-7) treats of the contempt of worldly pleasure, and the sacred earnestness of life,—the *second*, (vers. 8-14) of a forbearing, patient, and resigned disposition,—the *third*, (vers. 15-22) of godly demeanor, and humble self-appreciation, as conditions and essential characteristics of that wisdom. A division of these three strophes into half strophes is super-

fluous (VAHINGER); there is only observable a sharper and deeper incision in the train of thought, in the middle of the last strophe, or in the transition from the fear of God to self-appreciation, after verse 18.

2. *First Strophe:* Vers. 1-7. Of the advantage of a stern contempt of the world over foolish worldly pleasure.—**A good name is better than precious ointment.** Comp. Prov. xxii. 1, where אִשָּׁר signifies, just as in this passage, a good name, a good reputation or fame; see also Job xxx. 8, and for the paronomasia in אִשָּׁר and שִׁמְךָ see Canticles i. 3. [In this place ZÖCKLER gives us specimens of play

upon words in German, such as arise from *Gerücht* and *Wohlgeruch*, etc., which are not translatable, except by a general reference to the metaphors to be found in English and other languages, wherein *character*, *reputation*, etc., is said to have its good or evil odor. It might be compared with the opposite Hebrew word **הַבְּאִישׁ** he stank, *odiosus fuit*, 1 Sam. xxvii. 12.—T. L. —**And the day of death than the day of one's birth.** For the suffix in **הַיּוֹמָהּ** comp. v. 18; viii. 16; Isa. xvii. 5; Jer. xl. 5 and similar cases of relation of a definite suffix to an indefinite subject. The sentence is the same as chap. iv. 3; vi. 3-5. It here serves as a preparation for the following sentences, whose aim is to heighten the duty of a sacred earnestness of life, just as the commendation, in the first clause, of a good name as something better than precious ointment, is to pave the way for this recommendation of a serious disposition despising the pleasures of the world. In this common relation of the two clauses to the fundamental thought of the necessity of a serious purpose, lies the inward connection, which we may no more deny [with HENGSTENBERG and many others] than erroneously assert on the basis of the false assumption that the second clause refers specially to the fool, or through any other similar subtilities. ELSTER is correct in saying: "Because a good and reputable name, which secures an ideal existence with posterity, is more valuable than all sensual pleasure, such as is obtained through precious ointments, therefore the day of death must seem to bring more happiness than the day of birth; for this ideal existence of posthumous fame does not attain its full power and purity until after death: but external pleasures and enjoyments, which we are accustomed to desire for a man on the day of his birth, pleasures which are dependent on his sensual life, prove to be more empty and vain than the joy afforded by the thought of a spiritual existence in the memory of posterity."—Ver. 2. **It is better to go to a house of mourning.** That is, a house wherein there is mourning for one deceased, "a house of lamentation" (LUTHER). The connection of the expression favors this sense of the significant **בֵּית אֲבֵל**, taken backwards as well as forwards; and also with ver. 3 f. For the expression for **בֵּית מְשֻׁתָּהּ** "house of carousal," of drinking (not specially a drinking resort) compare the similar expression in Esther vii. 8. For the entire sentence comp. the Arabic proverb (SCHULTEN'S *Anthology*, p. 48, 73): "If thou hearest lamentation for the dead enter into the place; but if thou art bidden to a banquet pass not the threshold." **For that is the end of all men.** "That," (**הַזֶּה**) *i. e.*, not the mourning, but the fact that a house becomes a house of mourning. It is therefore **הַזֶּה** for **הַזֶּה** on account of the attraction of **סוף** as HIRZIG rightly regards it.—**And the living will lay it to his heart.** Ver. 3. **Sorrow is better than laughter.** **דַּעַז** here, does not, of course, mean that passionate sorrow or anger against which we are

warned as a folly in ver. 9, but is essentially the same as **אֲבֵל** in ver. 2, consequently a grief salutary, and nearest allied to godly sorrow spoken of 2 Cor. vii. 10. For **שְׂחוק** "laughter," boisterous, worldly merriment, comp. ii. 2, and also ver. 6.—**For by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.**—**רַעַן פְּנִים**, like **רַעַן רַעַיִם** Gen. xl. 7; Neh. ii. 2, signifies not an evil countenance, but a sad, sorrowful one, and **טֹב לֵב** is not to be understood of the moral amendment, but of the cheering up and gladdening of the heart;* comp. the Latin, *cor bene se habet*, as also the parallels chap. xi. 9; Judges xix. 6, 9; Ruth iii. 7; 1 Kings xxi. 7. But cheerfulness and contentment of the heart, with a sad countenance, can only be imagined where its thoughts have begun to take the normal direction in a religious and moral aspect; moral amendment is therefore in any case the presupposition of **לֵב הַיָּטִיב**, and there is, therefore, no contradiction but the clearest harmony with Prov. xiv. 13; xv. 13; xvii. 22; xviii. 14.—Ver. 4. **The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning.** Drawing his conclusion from vers. 2 and 3, the author returns to the expression of the second sentence. Because a serious disposition is everywhere more salutary than boisterous worldly merriment, it is plain that the former will be peculiar to the wise man, as the latter to the fool. VAHINGER observes very correctly, "that one perceives from this passage that the preacher, however often he recommends enjoyment of life, never means thereby boisterous pleasures and blind sensual enjoyment, but rather worthy and grateful enjoyment of the good and the beautiful offered by God. Such an enjoyment is not only possible with a serious course of life, but is indeed only thereby attainable."—Ver. 5. **It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise.** For **נִקְרָה**, "rebuke," censure, reproof on account of foolish or criminal behaviour, comp. Prov. xiii. 1. Intercourse with wise men, *i. e.*, strictly moral and religious individuals, who can easily impart those censures, belongs to those expressions of a serious, world-contemning spirit, of which a few other examples have been cited, such as to "go into the house of mourning," to "be of a sad countenance."—**Than for a man to hear the song of fools.** Literal: "Than a man hearing the song of fools." Flattering speeches are not specially meant here (*Vulg. adulatio*), but the extravagant, boisterous and immoral songs that are heard in the riotous carousals of foolish men, in the **בֵּית מְשֻׁתָּהּ** or "house of feasting." Comp. Job xxi. 12; Amos vi. 5; Isa. v. 11, 12.—Ver. 6. **For as the crackling of thorns under a pot.** The fire of dry thorns, quickly blazing up, and burning with loud crackling and snapping, and also quickly consumed (comp. Ps. lvi. 9; cxx. 4; and especially cxviii. 12) is here chosen

*[See Metrical Version, and the remarks on this passage Intro. to Met. Vers. page 179—T. L.]

as the emblem of the loud, boisterous, and vacant laughter of foolish men, who are at the same time destitute of all deeper moral worth. **This also is vanity**; namely, all this noisy, merry, vacant and unfruitful conduct of fools.—Ver. 7. **Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad; and a gift destroyeth the heart.** **בַּי** in the beginning of this verse can neither be considered as containing a cause or a motive [this is the opinion of the most commentators, also of HITZIG, VAHINGER, HENGSTENBERG, HAHN, *etc.*], nor as an adversative equivalent to “yet,” or “but” [EWALD, ELSTER]. Like the **אֲשֶׁר** in chap. vi. 12, it here clearly expresses an intensifying sense (comp. **בַּי** in Isa. v. 7; Job vi. 21, *etc.*). The connection with the preceding is as follows: So great is the vanity of fools, and so powerfully and rapidly does it spread, like the blazing fire of thorns, that even the wise man is in danger of being infected by it; and deluded from the path of probity in consequence of brilliant positions of power, striving after riches, offers of presents or bribes, *etc.* **עֵשֶׂק** (for which EWALD in his *Biblical Annual* 1856, p. 156, unnecessarily proposed to read **עֵשֶׂר**—a conjecture abandoned by him afterwards) does not mean in a passive sense the oppression of the wise man by others, but rather the “pressure” which he is tempted to exercise, just as **כְּתִיבָה** means a “present,” or bribe which is offered to him. The wise man is regarded as a judge, who, in the exercise of his functions, needs true wisdom, so much the more because he may easily be deluded by bribery and be tempted to misuse his official power. For the expressions **הוֹלִל** “to delude, to make a fool of,” and **אָבַד לֵב** “to corrupt the heart,” *corumpere*, comp. Isa. xlv. 25; Jer. iv. 9.* For the sentence see Deut. xvi. 19; Sirach xx. 27; [but not Prov. xvii. 8; xviii. 16; xix. 6, *etc.*, where allowable giving is meant].

3. *Second strophe.* Vers. 8–14. Of the value of patience, tranquillity, and resignation to the will of God. **Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof.** The sense is not the same as in ver. 1, but rather, according to the second verse, as follows: it is better quietly to await the course of an affair until its

*The common view of this passage as given in E V., which makes the wise man the *object* of oppression, is unquestionably wrong, though so often quoted and used as

historical illustration. It does not agree with **הוֹלִל**, which does not mean the madness of frenzy caused by a sense of wrong, but vain glory, extravagance, inflation, coming from inward wrong-feeling. ZICKLER is doubtless right in saying that it does not denote *passively* the oppression which the wise man suffers from others; but his rendering “pressure” seems forced and far from being clear. **עֵשֶׂק** may denote a state of soul leading to wrong and oppression, as well as the outward act itself; as in Ps. lxxiii. 8, **וַיִּרְבֵּעַ עֵשֶׂק**, is parallel to **בְּפָרוֹם יִרְבֵּר**, “they speak lofty,” arrogantly. Compare also Isaiah lix. 13, where it is joined with **כִּרְהָ** “perverseness,” and falsehood. See also Ps. lxxii. 11. The connection, then, is with ver. 5: “To hear the reproving of

issue, and not to judge and act until then, than to proceed rashly and with passionate haste, and bring upon one's self its bad consequences. The peculiar sense of **אָרָךְ-רִיחַ** corresponds to the calm demeanor expressed by the term “long-suffering” in the sense of the New Testament *μακροθυμία* (Col. i. 11; Heb. vi. 12, 15; James v. 7, 8); and for the violent temper described in the second place, we have the state of mind denoted by the word **גְּבַה־רִיחַ** “haughty,” or “presumptuous.” Comp. 1 Kings xx. 11.—Ver. 9. **Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry.** The word **יָעוֹס** “to be morose,” sensitive [see remarks on ver. 3 above], is a peculiar species of haughtiness mentioned in the previous verse, and one very frequently and easily occurring; it is not fully expressed by **גְּבַה־רִיחַ**, as HENGSTENBERG supposes [quite as little as **אָרָךְ-רִיחַ** is expressed by **אָרָךְ-אֲפִים** *βραδύς εἰς ὀργήν*, James i. 19]—**For anger rests in the bosom of fools**; that is, a fretful, irritable disposition is mainly found in fools, is deeply rooted in their nature and has its home there. For **גִּיחַ**, in this sense see Prov. xiv. 33; Isa. xi. 2; xxv. 11. For the sentence see Job v. 2; Prov. xii. 16.—Ver. 10. **Say not what is the cause, *etc.*** Finding fault with the present, and a one-sided praise of past times, is a well-known characteristic of peevish and fretful dispositions, and of those surly carpers at fate of ver. 16, and those *difficiles, queruli, laudatores temporis acti* of the Horatian *epistola ad Pisones*, (line 173). **For thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this.** That is, not so that thy question is made on the basis of wise reflection, and therefore proceeds from this source. Comp. the similar use of the preposition **בֵּן**, chap. ii. 10; Ps. xxviii. 7.—Vers. 11 and 12. The praise of wisdom, in so far as it is in harmony with a thoughtful, patient, and even soul.—**Wisdom is good with an inheritance.** [ZICKLER: as an inheritance].

יַחְלָה עִם גַּם יְהִיָּה does not mean “with an inheritance or fortune,” as if the sense were the same as that in chap. v. 18 (Sept., Vulg., LUTHER). The connection decides against this, as well as against the view of EWALD: “in comparison with an inheritance,” and against the still more unfitting view of HAHN: “wisdom is good against destiny.” (!) **עִם** is undoubtedly used in the same sense as in chap. ii. 16; Gen. xviii

the wise is better than to listen to the song of fools.” Ver. 6 is simply an illustration of what is meant by the song of fools, and then follows the brief clause, “this too is vanity,” which, although connected by the accents with ver. 6, must refer to the whole context that precedes: since it would seem superfluous thus to characterize simply the empty talk of fools. It is frequently the case in Koheleth that an admonition, or serious maxim, given in one sentence, is afterwards qualified, it not wholly modified or retracted, in another; as though there were some vanity even in the gravest of human words or acts. **גַּם-זֶה הִבֵּל**, “this too may be vanity,” that is, “the reproof of the wise,” or of the judge, (as ZICKLER from the context, correctly regards him); for his own arrogance, or perverseness of temper, may lead him astray, or a bribe may corrupt his heart. And thus there is brought out, what seems evidently intended, a contrast between the inward and outward deranging power. —T. L.]

23; Ps. lxxiii. 5; Job ix. 26.*—**And by it there is profit to them that see the sun;** *i. e.*, for the living (comp. vi. 5; and the Homeric ὄραν φῶς ἡλίου, also the Latin, *diem videre*). HERZFELD, HITZIG, and HENGSTENBERG unnecessarily take הָרַן in the adverbial sense of “more, better still,” in order to let the second clause appear as an intensification of the first. The adjective or rather the substantive sense, corresponds better to the poetical character of the passage, and is equivalent to הָרַן: in support of which chap. vi. 8 may be quoted, and in which the second clause becomes the exact parallel of the first.—**Ver. 12. For wisdom is a defence, and money is a defence.** (Lit. Ger., in the shadow of wisdom, in the shadow of money). That is, he who dwells in the shadow of wisdom is just as much protected as he who passes his life in the protection of much money; therefore an exact parallel in sense with ver. 11, first clause. SYMMACHUS is correct: σκέπει σοφία ὡς σκέπει τὸ ἀργύριον; but the Vulgate is not wholly so: “*Sicut enim protegit sapientia, sic protegit pecunia.*” KNOBEL and HITZIG are too artificial in saying that בְּ is here in the *beth essentive*, which would be therefore translated: “Wisdom is a shadow, (that is a defence) and money is a shadow.” בְּצַל is rather to be taken here as in Ps. xci. 1, where it is parallel with בְּכַתֵּר. The shadow is here used as a symbol of protection, with the subordinate idea of the agreeable, as also in Ps. cxxi. 4; Isa. xxx. 2, 3; xxxii. 2; Lamentations iv. 20, *etc.*—**But the excellence of knowledge is;** *i. e.*, the advantage that knowledge (עֵצָה comp. i. 16) has over money, that which makes it more valuable than money. עֵצָה here alternates with הַכְּנָה simply on account of the poetical parallelism.—**Wisdom giveth life to them that have it;** lit., “it animates him” (הַחֲיָה). הַחֲיָה is not “to keep in life” (HITZIG), but “to grant life,” *i. e.*, to bestow a genuine happy life. Comp. Job xxxvi. 6; Ps. xvi. 11; xxxviii. 9; Prov. iii. 18; especially the last passage, which may be quoted as most decisive for our meaning. HENGSTENBERG lays too much stress on הַחֲיָה, in claiming for it the sense of reanimating, of the resurrection of that which was spiritually dead (according to Hosea vi. 2; Luke xv. 32, *etc.*); and KNOBEL too little, when he declares: “wisdom affords a calm and contented spirit.”**

* [There seems no good reason for departing here from the usual sense of בְּ with, in connection with. The other passages referred to explain themselves. The word נַחֲלָה, as used in many places, does not mean inheritance generally, like רֶשֶׁת, but a rich and ample possession, in a most favorable sense, as one given by the Lord, or inherited from one's father, an estate, or property. The sense is obvious: Estate is a good alone, but when joined with an ample estate, as a means of doing good, that is especially an advantage to the sons of men. See Metrical Version.—F. L.]

† [Ver. 12. הַחֲיָה הַחֲכִימָה, rendered “wisdom giveth life.” We cannot help thinking that Koboeth means more here than ZICKLER'S interpretation would give, or any of the others he mentions. There is a contrast, too, giving the connection of thought, which they all fail to bring out. “In the shade of wisdom, as in the shade of wealth;” that is, in both is

—**Ver. 13. Consider the work of God; for who can make that straight which He hath made crooked?** A return to the exhortations to a calm, patient spirit (vers. 9 and 10), with reference to God's wise and unchangeable counsel and will, to which we must yield in order to learn true patience and tranquility. The connection between the first and second clauses is as follows: In observing the works of God thou wilt find that His influence is eternal and immutable; for who can make that straight which He hath made crooked, *i. e.*, harmonize the defects and imperfections of human life decreed by Him; comp. i. 15; vi. 10; Job xii. 14; Rom. ix. 9. As this connection of thought is evident enough, one need not, with HITZIG and others, take בְּ in the sense of “that,” to which indeed the interrogative form of the second clause would be unfitting.—**Ver. 14. In the day of prosperity be joyful.**—בְּטוֹב is equivalent to בְּלֵב טוֹב. Comp. chap. ix. 7; 1 Kings viii. 66; Sir. xiv. 14.—**But in the day of adversity consider.** “Behold, look at, observe” [namely the following truth]; comp. רָאה in ver. 13. EWALD is harsh and artificial in his rendering: “and bear the day of misfortune,” taking רָאה in a sense that he claims is sustained by Gen. xxi. 16.—**God also hath set the one over against the other.** This is the substance of that which one must consider in adversity, fully corresponding with what Job says in ii. 10.—**To the end that man should find nothing after him;** *i. e.*, in order that he may fathom nothing that lies beyond his present condition (אֲחֵרָיו as in iii. 22; vi. 12), or in order that the future that lies behind him, or, according to our more usual expression, that lies before him, remain hidden and concealed from him, and that he may, in no wise, count on it, but rather remain in all things unconditionally dependent on God, and His grace (ELSTER, VAHINGER and HENGSTENBERG are correct on this point). עַל הַכְּרַת שְׁלֵא, lit.: “on account of that, that not” (comp. עַל הַכְּרַת, “on account of,” chap. iii. 18; viii. 2) is not equivalent to “so that not,” [LUTHER in his *Commentary*], or, “therefore, because not” [HITZIG and LAHN], but clearly introduces the divine dispensation in assigning sometimes good and sometimes evil days; therefore it should be rendered “to the end that.”

there a defence. Defence of what? Of life evidently. In this they both agree; but knowledge, wisdom (variety of expression for the same thing), does more than this. Its great pre-eminence is that it giveth life to its possessors (הַחֲיָה makes them alive). This means something more than mere animating, in the ordinary sense of cheering, enlivening, or making happy, *etc.* Knowledge is life. *Fluxus est cogitare.* It is, in a high sense, the soul's being. It is true of mere human knowledge, science, philosophy, intuition. Much more may it be said of divine or spiritual knowledge. “Man lives not by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God,” Deut. viii. 3; Matt. iv. 4 “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life,” John vi. 63. It is not merely spiritual, that is, moral reanimation, as HENGSTENBERG would have it, but the very life of the soul. It is a sufficient argument against the other interpretations given, that in falling short of this they lose the contrast, and fail to exhibit that connection to which the antithetical nicety of the proverbial diction evidently points.—T. L.]

4. *Third strophe.* Vers. 15-22. Of the value of the fear of God and humble self-appreciation. **All things have I seen, etc.** "All," *i. e.*, not all kinds [LUTHER, VAHINGER, HENGSTENBERG], but everything possible, everything that can come into consideration, everything to whose consideration I could be directed (according to vers. 13 and 14). **In the days of my vanity.** *i. e.*, since I belong to this vain, empty life of earth. There is no indication that these vain days passed completely by during the life of the speaker,* and this passage cannot, therefore, be used as a proof that Solomon, who became repentant in his old age, is the speaker.—**There is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness.**—שׁ, "there is,"

does not belong to אֲבָרָה, but to צַדִּיק, therefore the meaning is not "the just man perisheth." אֲבָרָה is not "through his righteousness" (UMBREIT, VAHINGER, HITZIG); but *in it*; comp. EWALD, *Lehrbuch*, § 217, 3. f. The intention here is to announce something which Koheleth saw, an evident fact; but this is only the external connection, the association of righteousness and misfortune; not, on the contrary, the misfortune effected through righteousness. The same thing occurs in the following clause, where בְּרִיָּתוֹ is not to be understood as "through," but *in*, that is, *in spite of* his wickedness. But the author desires by no means to present that righteousness in which one perisheth as blameless, but has doubtless here in view, as in the subsequent verse, that self-righteousness, that apparent outward righteousness which our Lord so often had to censure in the Pharisees (Matt. v. 20; Luke v. 32; xv. 7, etc.) and which appeared quite early in Old Testament history as a religiously moral tendency, comp. Int. § 4. Obs. 3.—**And there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness.** אֲבָרָה with כִּי understood, comp. viii. 12, 13; Dent. xxii. 7; Prov. xxviii. 2, 16, etc.—Ver. 16. **Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thyself overwise.** Clearly a warning against that strictly exact, but hypocritical and external righteousness of those predecessors of the Pharisees to whom the preceding verse referred. הִתְחַבֵּר (Reflexive of חָבַר "to make wise") can scarcely here signify anything else than as in Ex. i. 10; therefore *sapientem se gessit*, not *sapientem se putavit*. This expression "make thyself not over wise," is consequently not a warning against vainly imagining that one is wise, but against the effort to appear eminently wise, and against a pretentious assumption of the character of a teacher of wisdom, in short, against that Pharisaical error† which Christ

*[There is no indication to the contrary, it should rather be said. The Hebrew is remarkably plain, and there is no way of making it mean "since I belong to this vain empty life." This is too much practised by those who deny the Solomonic origin of the book, thus to take away the force of certain passages that plainly speak for it, and then to reason on their own false hypothesis. Had this expression not occurred at all, the whole book furnishes evidence that it was written by one who had an unusual experience of the vanities and vicissitudes of a life. A more personator could never have expressed it so feelingly.—T. L.]

†[Ver. 16. "Be not over-righteous," etc. There is no reason

censures in Matt. xxiii. 6, 7: *φιλῶσιν—κατείσθαι ὑπὸ τῶν ἀθροῦσων ῥαββί, ῥαββί.* **Why shouldst thou destroy thyself?** Namely by the curse which God has put upon the vices of arrogance and hypocrisy; Comp. Christ's expressions of woe unto you Pharisees! in Matt. xxiii. HITZIG says: "Why wilt thou isolate thyself?" This is a useless enfeebling of the sense; for ver. 15, as well as vers. 17 and 18 show that the warning of the author is meant in all seriousness, and that he refers to divine and not merely human punishment. Comp. also the sentence of Ezekiel xxxiii. 11, so closely allied with this present one: "Why will ye die; O

for regarding צַדִּיק, in the 15th verse, as having any other than its ordinary sense, or the truly righteous man. It is the same experience that Koheleth presents elsewhere, the just man in this world having the same lot as the wicked, and sometimes suffering when the wicked seems to escape with impunity,—like the experience of the Psalmist, Ps. lxxiii. 4, 5. The צַדִּיק, in the 16th verse, is, doubtless, suggested by that in the preceding, but such a fact would not necessitate their having precisely the same meaning; since the connection may be poetical, or suggestive, rather than logical. ZÖCKLER'S idea, therefore, of its meaning here the self-righteous, or Pharisaical, might be sustained, perhaps, without carrying the idea into the preceding verse. His view of the צַדִּיק הַיָּדֵר, צַדִּיק, the over-righteous, is very similar to

that of JEROME, who interprets the passage as a condemnation of one who over-judges, *rigidum et truceum ad omnia fratrum peccata*,—the worthy father, perhaps, little thinking how badly distinctly he was giving a feature of his own character. "Do not," he says, "in this respect, be too just (that is, too rigid), because 'an unjust weight' be it too great or too small, 'is an abomination to the Lord.'" And then he cites our Lord's precept, Matt. vii., Judge not, etc. The being over-wise he refers to proud or curious inquiring into the hidden works and ways of God, such as Paul condemns, Rom. ix. 20, and the confounding to the effect produced by God's rebuke, or such an answer as the Apostle gives: "Nay, who art thou, O man?" STUART renders it, "do not overdo." RABBI SCHELOM, following the Targum and Jewish authorities so early as to be referred to by JEROME, regards צַדִּיק as meaning *kind or merciful*, and alleges the

example of Saul, who through mistaken clemency, spared the life of Agag. Others refer it to a too strict judging of the ways of Providence, or the arraighing them for what seems to us unjust; as when we see the righteous perish and the wicked man living on in his wickedness. An argument for this interpretation is the support it seems to have from ver. 15. Another interpretation regards it as a caution against asceticism and moroseness, in denying one's self innocent pressures or fear of finding sin in them. This is the view of MAIMONIDES in the *Yad HaChozakah*, Part I., Lib. IV., Sec. III., 3, 4. Akio to this is the view, stated by him, which regards it as rebuking works of supererogation,—as when a man attempts to do more than the law requires.

If we keep in view, however, the general scope of this musing, meditative, book, it will be found we think, that the two members here mean very much the same thing: Do not view the world, or the ways of God, too narrowly, as though we, from our exceedingly limited position, could determine what it would be just or unjust for God to do, or permit. This is in harmony with the preceding verse. It furnishes us with a key to the transition in the train of thought: When you see the righteous suffer, and the wicked prosper, do not let the thought, or even feeling, arise in your mind that you could, or would, be more equitable, if you had the management of the world. This is agreeable to the general style of Koheleth,—one thought correcting what seems too strongly stated, or which may be liable to misunderstanding, in another. It is also in perfect harmony with what follows: "Be not over-wise;" that is do not speculate too much, or theorize too much, אֲבָרָה אֲבָרָה, do not play the philosopher too much; you know too little; your Baconianism (as he might have said had he lived in these our hoasting times) has too small an area of inductive facts from which to construct systems of the universe (especially in its moral and spiritual aspects) out of nebular hypotheses. This corresponds with what is said chap. iii. II, about "the world so given to the minds of men that they cannot find out the work that God worketh, the end from the begin-

house of Israel?" and also Eccles. iv. 5. Ver. 17. **Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish.** Koheleth does not recommend a certain moderation in wickedness as though he considered it allowable, but simply and alone because he recognizes the fact as generally acknowledged and certain that in some respects at least, every man is somewhat wicked by nature; see vers. 20-22. He who is "over much wicked" is the maliciously wicked or downright ungodly one (הרשע), who sins not merely from weakness, but with consciousness of evil (comp. Lev. xlii. 27; Numb. xv. 27; Eccles. v. 6). Such a one is *eo ipso* "foolish"

(כָּפֹל) *μανθόμενος τῆ ἀδίκια*, that is, a fool in the sense of Ps. xiv. 1; liii. 1.—**Why shouldst thou die before thy time?** That is, before the time assigned thee by God. For this thought of the shortening of the days of the wicked through divine justice,* comp. Prov. x. 27; Ps. lv. 23; Job xv. 32; xxii. 16.—Ver. 18. **It is good that thou shouldst take hold of this; yea, from this also withdraw not thine hand.** A recommendation to avoid the two extremes of false righteousness and bold wickedness (of the Pharisees and Sadducees) harmonizing with the thought of HORACE: "*Medium tenere beati; medio tutissimus ibis.*" and this is not meant in the superficial sense of the ethical eclecticism of the later Greeks and Romans, but in that stern religious sense, which the Lord expresses when, in Matt. xxiii. 23, in words most nearly allied to these, (*ταῦτα δὲ εἶδει ποιῆσαι κακείνα μὴ ἀφιεναι*) He demands the most conscientious connection between the outer and the inner fulfilment of the law.—**For he who feareth God shall come forth of them all.** Namely from the bad consequences of false righteousness and those of indecent contempt of

ning." It is the same idea that we have chap. viii. 17: "Man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun, and even if a wise man (a philosopher) say that he knows it, he shall not be able to discover it." The *Vulgate* renders it, *verus plus sapias quam necesse est*. JEROME, in his Latin Version, *ne quæras amplius, LXX μὴ σοφίζου*. The whole precept, then, may be taken as a condemnation of that spirit which would be more just and wise than God. No man professes this, or would even admit that he thus feels, yet it is realized when any one, in any way, finds fault with, or even doubts, or has difficulty with, the ways of God in the world. Such a temper is also condemned Eccles. v. 8: "If thou seeest oppression of the poor, etc., be not astonished concerning such a matter, for He who is high above all is watching them." Compare also Job iv. 7, where the Spirit-

voice says to Eliphaz **יָצַק הָאָנוּשׁ כְּאִלוֹהִים**, "shall a man (בֹּרֵחַ mortalitas) be more just than God?" This is being צָרָק הַרְבֵּה. So also Ps. xxxvii. 1: "Pret not thyself against the evil doers." The Hithpael form, הִתְחַכֵּם, would authorize us to understand it of a seeming or affected wisdom, but it more properly means here a prying into the divine mysteries, whether of revelation, or of the supernatural, or an arrogant denial of both, grounded on the comparative infinitesimalty of our knowledge.

לִפְנֵי תְשׁוּמִים (for the fuller Hithpael הִתְשׁוּמִים) *ne obstupesceas* (JEROME); rather "why shouldst thou be desolate," or "make thyself desolate," which would correspond to the first interpretation of הִתְחַכֵּם, "alone in thy wisdom;" or "why shouldst thou be confounded." He who presumes to settle matters too high for him, will surely, in some way, be taught his ignorance and his folly.—T. L.

*The Syriac has something here which is not in the Hebrew, nor in any other version, **לֹא תִכְתְּנָה** "that thou mayest not be hated."—T. L.]

the law, and bold immorality. אָצַץ with the accusative, signifies here as in Jer. x. 20, (אָצַץ בְּנִי, "my children desert me"), Gen. xlv. 4 (אָצַץ אֶת-הָעִיר) "they went out of the city"). Amos iv. 3. etc.: "to go from something, to escape a thing," (comp. also 1 Sam. xiv. 41). HITZIG'S view gives a somewhat different sense: "He who feareth God goes with both," i. e., does not strive to exceed the mid medium; this is similar to the Vulgate (*nihil negligit*) and to the Syriac (*utrique inhæret*). But the *usus loquendi* is rather more in favor of the former meaning. Ver. 19. **Wisdom strengtheneth the wise.** Lit., "proves itself strong to him (הֵינִי לְחַכְּךָ) more than," etc., i. e., it protects him better, defends him more effectually. **More than ten mighty men which are in the city;** than ten heroes which are at the head of the troops, than ten commanders surrounded by their forces, to whom the defence of the besieged city is entrusted. For the sentence comp.

Prov. x. 15, (where קָרַת עֵץ reminds of עֵץ) xxi. 22; xxiv. 5. The wisdom whose mightily protecting and strengthening influence is here lauded, is of course, that genuine wisdom which is in harmony with the fear of God; it is that disposition and demeanor which hold the true evangelical mean between the extremes of false righteousness and lawlessness, which forms the necessary contrast and the corrective to "the being over wise" censured in ver. 16.—Ver. 20. **For there is not a just man upon earth who doeth good and sinneth not.** Therefore (this is the unexpressed conclusion), every one needs this true wisdom for his protection against the justice of God; no one can dispense with this only reliable guide in the way of truth. This sentence confirms the 19th verse in the first place, and then the whole preceding warning against the extremes of hypocrisy and impenitence. Comp. the similar confessions of the universal sinfulness of our race in Ps. cxxx. 3; cxliii. 2; Job ix. 2; xiv. 3; Prov. xx. 9; 1 Kings viii. 46.—Vers. 21 and 22 are not simply connected with ver. 20, as KNOBEL supposes, (who brings out the sequence of thought by means of the idea that as sinners we fall short of our duty, and cause adverse judgments against ourselves) but is also connected with all the preceding verses from the 15th on, so that the connection of ideas is as follows: * You will certainly receive the manifold censure of men for living according to the doctrines of this wisdom (you will be considered hypocritical, excessively austere, eccentric, etc.); but do not

* [This seems exceedingly forced and far-fetched. KNOBEL'S view is more so. The simple order of thought may be stated thus: Wise men are scarce, being to the strong men,

the שְׂרֵיטִים, captains, or principal men in a city, about as one to ten; but one, a truly righteous, or perfectly righteous man, is not found on earth, etc. The wise man of ver. 19, is not the pious man necessarily, or the one who fears God, though that may be included, but wise, simply, in distinction from men of power or political eminence, or wise like the one described chap. ix. 15, "who saved the city." Such may be found, but the perfectly righteous is a character that does not exist upon earth. The particle כִּי here is emphatic, calling attention to the fact regarded as strange and yet well known. See Metrical Version.—T. L.]

be led astray by this, and do not listen to it; and this out of humility, because you must ever be conscious of your faults, and therefore know sufficiently well what is true in the evil reports of men, and what is not.—**Also take no heed unto all the words that are spoken.** That is, do not cast all to the wind that thou hearest, but only, do not be over anxious about their evil reports concerning thee; do not be curious to hear how they judge thee. We are therefore warned against idle curiosity and latent desire of praise, and reminded of the very significant circumstance that one's own servant may accord to the vain listener disgrace and imprecation, instead of the desired honor.—Ver. 22. **For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others.** The expression, "thine own heart," is clearly equivalent to the guilty conscience that accuses man of his former sins, especially of his unkindness to his neighbor, and his violations of the eighth commandment, and thereby demands of him a more humble self-appreciation, and a wiser restraint in intercourse with others. פְּעֻמֹת לִבִּי may be considered either as the accusative of time—"many times"—or the objective accusative—"many cases"—hut belongs in either case closely to עָרַץ, not to קִלְלָה. The first לֵב is, in strictness, superfluous. אֲשֶׁר at the beginning of the second clause, is not "so that" (ELSTER), but "there where" ("where it happened that," etc.); comp. Gen. xxxv. 13-15; 2 Sam. xix. 25.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

(With Homiletical Hints.)

This section has three divisions describing the nature of genuine wisdom in three principal phases:—as an earnestness of life, despising the world, as patience, resigned to God, and as an humble penitent fear of God. Of these, the third affords a rich harvest in the dogmatic field, and mainly by emphasizing one of the most important anthropological truths of the entire Old Testament revelation, namely, the universal sinfulness of the human race (see especially ver. 20, and also the parallel passages there quoted from Psalms, Job and the Proverbs). This truth appears here in a connection which is the more significant because it forms the background, and the deepest motive, to all the preceding admonitions. It explains not only the preceding warning against the two extremes of hypocritical and false righteousness and bold lawlessness, (the cardinal vice of Jew and Gentile before Christ, or the fundamental error of Pharisees and Sadducees among the later Jews); but it also finally serves as a basis and impulse (in the first two strophes) to the admonitions to holy earnestness, and to a calm and resigned state of soul. In the admonition to a stern contempt of the world and its pleasures, this is especially clear: for this admonition closes in verse 7 with the highly impressive reference to the fact, that even wise men are exposed to the seduction of vices and follies of divers kinds, whence directly springs the duty of turning from the busy

tumult of the world, and of anxious zeal for one's own salvation in fear and trembling. But the second division (vers. 8-14) also presupposes the fact that men, without exception, lie under the burden of sin; as it declares wisdom [which is unconditional resignation to the divine will] to be the only dispenser of true life (ver. 12) and describes, as the salutary fruit of such wisdom, the patient endurance of the evil as well as the good days which God sends. It needs no further illustration to prove that this significant attention to the principal anthropological truth of the Old Testament gives to this chapter a peculiarly evangelical character,—especially with the quite numerous parallels in New Testament history. (Comp. Matt. v. 4; Luke vi. 25; James v. 9, etc., with vers. 3, 4, 6; and 2 Cor. vii. 10 with ver. 3; James v. 7, 8 with ver. 8; James i. 19 with ver. 9; Matt. xxiii. 5 ff. with ver. 16 ff.; Matt. xxiii. 23 with ver. 18; Rom. iii. 23 with ver. 20).

We may regard the following as the leading proposition of the entire section: *The universality of human sin and the only true remedy for it.* Or, God withstands the arrogant and grants His favor to the humble; or, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted; Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth; Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matt. v. 4-6, three beatitudes of the sermon on the mount, corresponding to the three divisions of this chapter).—Comp. also STARKE. Two rules for Christian conduct: 1. Be ever mindful of death (1-7); 2. Be patient and contented (8-29).

HOMILETICAL HINTS ON SEPARATE PASSAGES.

Ver. 1. CRAMER:—Faith, a good conscience, and a good name, are three precious jewels; we can get nothing better than these from this world.—STARKE:—The death of the saints is the completion of their struggle against sin, the devil and the world; it is to them a door of life, an entrance into eternal rest and perfect security.—HENGSTENBERG:—The difference between the proposition in the latter clause of the first verse, and similar expressions in the Gentile world, is that the Gentiles did not possess the key to explanation of human sorrows on earth, and did not understand how to bring them into harmony with divine justice and love.

Ver. 2. MELANCHTHON:—In prosperity, men become reckless; they think less of God's wrath, and less expect His aid. Thus they become more and more presumptuous; they trust to their own industry, their own power, and are thus easily driven on by the devil.—TÜBINGEN BIBLE: Joy in the world is the mark of a man drowned in vanity. It is much better to mourn over sin, and, in reflecting on this vanity, to seek a higher joy that is in God.—STARKE:—Although not all cheerfulness is forbidden to the Christian (Phil. iv. 4), it is always safer to think with sorrow of one's sin, guilt, and liability to punishment, than to assume a false gladness.—HENGSTENBERG:—Periods of sorrow are always periods of blessings for the Church.—DEICHERT: [Sermon on vers. 3-9, in the collection of Old Tes-

tament sermons: "The Star out of Jacob, Stuttgart, 1867, p. 208.]" The house of lamentation is a school of humility. 1. In the house of mourning proud thoughts are abased; 2. There, especially, is the vain pleasure of the world recognized in its emptiness; 3. There, also, we learn to prize the end of a thing more highly than its beginning.

Vers. 6 and 7. LUTHER:—The joy of fools seems as if it would last forever, and does indeed blaze up, but it is nothing. They have their consolation for a moment, then comes misfortune, that casts them down: then all their joy lies in the ashes. . . . Pleasure, and vain consolation of the flesh, do not last long, and all such pleasures turn into sorrow, and have an evil end.—STARKE:—(Ver. 7), Even a wise and God-fearing man is in danger of being turned from the good way (1 Cor. x. 12); therefore watchfulness and prayer are necessary that we may not be carried back again to our evil nature (1 Pet. v. 8).

Ver. 8. MELANCHTHON:—In this saying he demands perseverance in good counsels (Matt. x. 12); for the good cause appears better in the event. Though much that is adverse is to be borne, nevertheless the right and true triumph in the end.—LANGE:—The beginning and the continuance of Christianity are connected with sorrows; but these sorrows are followed by a glorious and blissful end (2 Cor. iv. 17.—BERLEB. BIBLE:—Blessed is he who under all circumstances behaves with quiet patience, arms himself with humble resignation and great cheerfulness, adapts himself to good and evil times, and ever finds strength and pleasure in the words: "Thy will be done!"—HENGSTENBERG:—It is folly to stop at what lies immediately before our eyes; it is wisdom, on the contrary, in the face of the fortune of the wicked, to say: "For they shall soon be cut down like the grass and wither as the green herb." Ps. xxxvii. 2; xcii. 7; cxxix. 6). If we only do not hasten in anger, God in His own time will remove the inducement to anger from our path.

CRAMER:—It proceeds from men alone that time is better at one period than at another; on their account also time must be subjected to vanity.—GEIER:—The best remedy against evil times is to pray zealously, penitently to acknowledge the deserved punishment of sin, patiently to bear it and heartily to trust in God.—WOHLFARTH:—Let us hear the voice of truth! In its light, impartially comparing the present and the past, we shall arrive at the conviction that every period has its peculiar advantages and defects, and that with all the unpleasant features that rest upon our time it nevertheless presents a greater measure of happiness than any former one. Instead, therefore, of embittering the advantages of our epoch by foolish complaints, making its burdens heavier, and weakening our own courage, we should seek rather to become wisely familiar with it, and to remove its defects or make them less perceptible.

Vers. 11-14. STARKE (Vers. 11 and 12):—If you are to have but one of two things, you should much rather dispense with all riches than with heavenly wisdom, that after this life you may have eternal blessedness (Wisdom vii. 8-10).—CARTWRIGHT (ver. 13):—When a bird is caught in a net, the more he struggles the more tightly is

he held. So if a man is taken in the net of Providence, the safest course for him, is to yield himself wholly to the divine will as that which, with the highest good, does nothing unwise or unjust (Job xxxiv. 12).—HENGSTENBERG:—We must be led to contentment in sorrow, by the reflection that it comes from the same God that sends us happiness (Job ii. 10). If the sender is the same, *there must be in the sending, in spite of all external inequality, an essential equality.* God, even when He imposes a cross, is still God, our heavenly Father, our Saviour, who has thoughts of peace regarding us.

Vers. 15-18. LUTHER:—The substance is this: *Summum jus summa injuria.* He who would most rigidly regulate and rectify everything, whether in the State or in the household, will have much labor, little or no fruit. On the other hand, there is one who would do nothing, and who contemns the enforcement of justice. Neither is right. As you would not be over-righteous, see to it that you be not over-wicked,—that is, that you do not contemn and neglect all government committed to you, thus letting everything fall into evil. It may be well to overlook some things, but not to neglect everything. If wisdom does not succeed, you are not, therefore, to get mad with rage and vengeance. Mind that you be just, and others with you, enforce piety, firmly persevere, however it may turn out. You must fear lest He come as suddenly and call you to judgment, as he took away the soul of the rich man in the night he thought not of.—CRAMER, (Ver. 16):—Those rulers are over-just who search everything too closely; and the theologians are over-wise who, in matters of faith, wish to direct everything according to their own reason.—ZEYSS, (ver. 17):—Wickedness itself is already a road to ruin; but where foolish arrogance joins it, so that one boldly sins, divine punishment and vengeance are thereby hastened (Sirach v. 4 ff.).—HENGSTENBERG:—Godly fear escapes the danger of Phariseism by awakening in the heart an antipathy against deceiving God by the tricks of a heartless and false righteousness; but it also escapes the danger of a life of sin, because the power arising from the confession of sin is inseparably connected with it (Isa. vi. 5); for with the fear of God is connected a tender aversion to offending God by sin (Gen. xxxix. 9) as also the lively desire to walk in the way of His commandments (Ps. cxix. 16.)

Vers. 19-22 ZEYSS, (vers. 19 and 20):—The universal ruin produced by sin must lead every one to heartfelt penitence and humility (Ezra ix. 6).—STARKE, (vers. 21 and 22):—The wisdom of the Creator has given us two ears and only one tongue, in order to teach us that we must hear twice before we speak once (James i. 19). If anything grieves thee, examine thyself to learn whether thou hast not deserved it by evil conduct; humble thyself concerning it before God, suffer patiently, and do it no more!—HENGSTENBERG:—In times of severe sorrow it is important that, in the suffering, we recognize the deserved punishment for our sins. That brings light into the otherwise obscure providence of God, a light that stills the rising of the soul, that animates the hope. If we recognize the footsteps of God in the deserved sorrow, the confidence in His mercy soon becomes strong.

C.—True Wisdom must be Energetically Maintained and Preserved in Presence of all the Attractions, Oppressions, and other Hostilities on the part of this World.

CHAP. VII. 23—VIII. 15.

1. Against the enticements of this world, and especially unchastity.

(CHAP. VII. 23-29).

23 All this have I proved by wisdom: I said, I will be wise; but it *was* far from
 24, 25 me. That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out? I applied
 mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason
of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness *and* madness:
 26 And I find more bitter than death the woman whose heart *is* snares and nets, *and*
 her hands *as* bands: whose pleases God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall
 27 be taken by her. Behold, this have I found, saith the Preacher, *counting* one by
 28 one, to find out the account: Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: one man
 among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found.
 29 Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have
 sought out many inventions.

2. Against the temptations to disloyalty and rebellion in national and civil relations.

(CHAP. VIII. 1-8).

1 Who *is* as the wise *man*? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? a
 man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the boldness of his face shall be
 2 changed. I *counsel thee* to keep the king's commandment, and *that* in regard
 3 of the oath of God. Be not hasty to go out of his sight: stand not in an evil
 4 thing; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him. Where the word of a king *is there*
 5 *is* power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou? Whoso keepeth the
 commandment shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man's heart discerneth both
 6 time and judgment. Because to every purpose there is time and judgment, there-
 7 fore the misery of man *is* great upon him. For he knoweth not that which shall
 8 be: for who can tell him when it shall be? *There is* no man that hath power over
 the spirit to retain the spirit: neither *hath he* power in the day of death: and *there*
is no discharge in *that* war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given
 to it.

3. Against the oppressions of tyrants and other injustices.

(VERS. 9-15.)

9 All this have I seen, and applied my heart unto every work that is done under
 the sun: *there is* a time wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt.
 10 And so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the
 holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done: this *is* also
 11 vanity. Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore
 12 the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Though a sinner do
 evil an hundred times, and his *days* be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall
 13 be well with them that fear God, which fear before him: But it shall not be well
 with the wicked, neither shall he prolong *his* days, *which are* as a shadow; because
 14 he feareth not before God. There is a vanity which is done upon the earth; that

there be just *men*, unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked : again, there be wicked *men*, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous : I said that this also is vanity. Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry : for that shall abide with him of his labour the days of his life, which God giveth him under the sun.

[VII. 29. לְבַד is not rightly rendered *only*—"this only have I found." More correctly, *this by itself*, or *besides*, as something beyond what is said before of both sexes.—T. L.]

[Chap. viii. I. שָׂנֵא; there is no need of saying of this that it is *more Chaldaes*; some such interchange of ש for ה is quite common in Hebrew—see the extensive list of cases given by the Jewish grammarian, JONA BEN GANNACH. The lxx. read שָׂנֵא to hate. So did the Syriac. בְּנֵי יוֹ denoted the sternness, or austerity, of the countenance. Wisdom clears it up, *changes* it to a bright and joyful aspect. See M. V.—T. L.]

[Ver. 2. אָנִי פִי-כִלְיָי; ZÖCKLER would supply אֶכְרְהָ here. There is hardly need of that—I a king's mouth; supply simply the substantive verb, "I am a king's mouth—take heed." It is an assertion by the writer of his royal right to give such adv.c. See M. V.—T. L.]

[Ver. 10. יִבְכֵּךְ. See Exeget.—T. L.]

[Ver. 11. בְּתָרֵם. See remarks on the appendix to Introduction, p.33.—T. L.]

[Ver. 15. וְשִׂבְחָתִי; the conjunction ו here, has more than the mere copulative force. It denotes *time*, as it frequently does, and also a *reason*. Its mere conjunctive force is seldom alone when it connects sentences: "Twice then I praised joy"—that is, when I took this view of things. וְשִׂבְחָתִי is not simply to *say*, but to *say* *as*, *how* that there is, etc.; and that this אֲלֵךְ will remain, adhere to him.—T. L.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

The subdivision of this section into three equal divisions or strophes, is indicated by the introductory remarks on the general contents, which are found in chap. vii. 23-29; chap. viii. 1; and chap. viii. 9. The divisions beginning with these passages are clearly different from each other in contents; chap. vii. 25-29 warns us against voluptuousness; chap. viii. 2-8 against rebellion towards civil authority; chap. viii. 9-15 against injustice. Since this latter theme does not close until the 14th and 15th verses, it seems quite improper to extend the third section simply to ver. 10, as do HENGSTENBERG, HITZIG, *et al.*, [the general introduction of the first part of ver. 14 is, in comparison with vers. 1, 9, and chap. vii. 23-25 too insignificant to be able to serve as the opening of a new division], just as we must declare the separation of ver. 15 from the preceding, as the beginning of an entirely new section, (HAHN) decidedly inexpedient and destructive of the sense.

2. *First Strophe. Introduction.* Chap. vii. 23-25. Concerning the difficulty of finding true wisdom, and Koheleth's zealous search after it.—**All this have I proved with wisdom.**—This, therefore, formed the means and the goal of his searching. For the expression נָבֵה נִבְחָה compare on the one hand הִלֵּךְ נִבְחָה ch. i. 13, and, on the other, נִבְחָה נִשְׁכָּה, ch. ii. 1. "All this" certainly does not refer to all the preceding from the beginning of the book, as HENGSTENBERG asserts, but mainly to the rules of life and practical counsels contained in chap. vii. 1-22.—**But it was far from me.**—"It," *i. e.*, wisdom in the absolute sense, perfected wisdom. A partial possession of wisdom is by no means excluded by this humble confession of not having found any; see vers. 5, 11-16, 19, *etc.* Ver. 24. **That which is far off**—*i. e.*, the real innermost essence of wisdom lies far from human compre-

hension; comp. Job xxviii. 12 ff.; Sirach xxiv. 38 ff.; Baruch iii. 14 ff. ROSENUELLER, HERZFELD, HAHN, ELSTER [and, at an earlier period, also EWALD] correctly consider שָׂרָה כִּי as the subject of the clause; but הִיא cannot then be taken in the preterit sense, as is done by the three first named commentators [HERZFELD: "that remains far off which was far off;" ROSENUELLER: *procul abest, quod ante aderat*; HAHN: "that is far off which has been"]. KNOBEL, HITZIG, VAHINGER, and, lately, EWALD, affirm that there is an emphatic prefixing of the predicate "far" before the relative pronoun כִּי: "That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out." But the examples quoted from chap. i. 9; Job xxiii. 9 scarcely justify so harsh a construction. The interpretation of HENGSTENBERG: "that is far off which has been," *i. e.*, the comprehension of what has been or is (τὸν ὄντων γένεσιν, Wisd. of Sol., vii. 17) is opposed by the circumstance that practical wisdom alone is here considered, and not theoretical,* for which reason also there can

*[The confusion arises here from disregarding the meditative, soliloquizing, exclamatory style of this book,—a word, its poetical character. These divisions into the *practical* and *theoretical* regard it too much as an abstract ethical or didactic treatise with its logical and rhetorical arrangement. This is at war with its subjective, emotional aspect, and hence much force and false interpretations. See the remark p. 172 in the Introduction to the rhythmical version. The most literal rendering is the best, since it preserves this broken, interjectional, ejaculatory style, in which the writer is giving vent to his emotions at the thought of the great past, and how small human knowledge is in respect to it. He expresses it as he feels it, in fragmentary signs, and repetitions, or as one who says it over and over to himself without thinking of others, or of any didactic use, and yet in this very way, making the most vivid and practical impression.

O that I might be wise, I said; but it was far from me; Far off! The past, what is it? Deep—a deep—O who can find?

There is strong emotion in the paragogic or optative form of אֶחְכֵּמָה. It expresses the most intense and longing desire, but with little hope of knowing the great secret of the

scarcely be a reference to the objective cognition of wisdom, or the knowledge of its objects. The interpretations of most of the ancients are decidedly ungrammatical, as of the Septuagint (*μακρὰν ὑπέρο ὅ ἦν*), Vulgate (*multo magis quam erat*), LUTHER ("It is far off, what will it be?"); thus also is that of KÖSTER ("It is far off, what is that"), and so many others.—**And exceeding deep.**—Lit., "deep, deep." The repetition of עָקַב expresses the superlative idea (Ewald, *Lehrbuch*, § 303 c). Deep signifies difficult to be fathomed, comp. Prov. xx. 5, and especially Job xi. 8, where the Divine doing and the Divine government are declared to be the absolute limit of all wisdom, or as "deeper than hell"; see also Ps. cxxxix. 8; Rom. xi. 33. Ver. 25 **I applied mine heart.**—Lit., "I turned, I and my heart,"—a figure similar to that in Acts xv. 28: *ἔδοξεν τῷ πνεύματι ἀγίῳ καὶ ἡμῖν*; comp. also the Song of Solomon v. 2. That the heart also participated in the turning, shows it to be no thoughtless action, but one resting on deep reflection. The simple כָּוַנְתִּי does not express a return from a path formerly followed, but now perceived to be an erroneous one (Hitzig's view). It is different with וּכְוַנְתִּי, "then I turned," chap. ii. 20, which clearly marks the entrance into a path entirely new, whilst in this passage nothing is affirmed but the transition from a superficial to a deeper and more solicitous searching after wisdom. Comp. HENGSTENBERG and VAHINGER on this passage, which latter correctly gives the connection thus: "Although

lous past, much less of the far stretching future. The interjections used in rendering really inhere in the style. What should we think of an attempt to lay off *Young's Night Thoughts* in "strophes of the practical and the theoretical?" And yet it is fully as capable of such divisions as this most emotional poem of Koheleth. In the Hebrew, רָחֹק is accentually joined with כִּה, but it is rhythmical rather than logical, and would not prevent כִּה from being an interrogative pronoun: **כִּה אשר היה**, "what—that which was?" or, "that which was, what is it?" As though he had been going to say merely, "far off the past," but the emotion throws it into the more broken or emphatic utterance, and then he adds: "and deep—deep—*is* can and it!" The כִּי as personal interrogative, corresponds to the general interrogative כִּה.

In the expression, "*O let me be wise*," we have at once suggested to us the passage 1 Kings iii. 5-12, Solomon's dream at Gibeon, the Lord's appearing unto him, and his earnest prayer for a **לֵךְ חָכְמָה**, "a wise and understanding heart."

With all his errors the *love of wisdom* (φίλοσοφία and θεοσοφία) had been a passion from his earliest youth,—wisdom speculative as well as practical,—wisdom not only "to govern so great a people," and to "discern," ethically, "between good and evil," but to understand, if it were possible, the ways of God, and the great problem of humanity. Rightly considered, this strong desire, thus expressed, is a special mark of the Solomonic authorship. "*O let me be wise, I said.*" He said it in his dream at Gibeon.

"*Deep—deep—O who shall find it!*" Like other passages of Scripture, this is capable of an ever expanding sense. We may think of the earthly past, so much of it historically unknown; but the style of thought in Koheleth carries the mind still farther back to the great past "before the earth

was" (Prov. viii. 23),—to the עוֹלָמִים עוֹלָמִי קֹדֶם τῷ αἰῶνι, 1 Cor. ii. 7, "before the ages of ages," or worlds of worlds. There are two views here that may be pronounced exceeding narrow. The one is that of the Scriptural interpreter who recognizes no higher chronology to the whole universe than a few thousand of our sun-measured years. To this he adds six solar days, and then slides off into a blank

wisdom in its fullness is unsearchable and unattainable, I did not refrain from searching after an insight into the relations of things, in order to learn the causes of the want of moral perfection; I wished, however, in learning wisdom, to learn also its counterpart, and thus to see that iniquity is every where folk."—**To know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, etc.**—The two accusatives, wisdom and reason, belong only to the last of the three infinitives (שֵׁכַח), before which ל is left out, in order to separate it externally from the two preceding ones. הַשְׁכִּיחַ is here, as in ver. 27, "reason, calculation," a result of the activity of the judgment in examining and judging of the relations of practical life, therefore equivalent to insight, practical sagacity and knowledge of life. VAHINGER's interpretation of הַשְׁכִּיחַ וְהִשְׁכַּח in the sense of "wisdom as calculation," is unnecessary, and indeed in direct contradiction to the construction in the following clause. The copula also in viii. 2 does not express the explanatory sense of the expression, "and indeed."—**And to know the wickedness of folly, and even of foolishness and madness.**—(ZÖCKLER: "wickedness as folly, foolishness as madness"). That this is to be thus translated is proved by the absence of the article * before the second accusative. Comp.

antepast eternity, a chronological nothingness, we may say, where Deity dwelt, had ever dwelt, ἀχρονος, without time, without creative manifestation—all worlds, whether of space or time, and all ranks of existence below the Divine, having had their origination in this single week (as measured by earthly revolutions) that he assigns to them. The other view, still more narrow—for it is an infinite narrowness—is the one held by some modern thinkers of high repute. It is that of an eternal physical development, or evolution, carried on through an infinite past of duration, ever evolving progressively, and yet with nothing more or higher evolved, ever evolved, than the very finite and imperfect state of things we now behold,—man the highest product of this eternal evolution that has ever been reached in any part of the universe,—man as yet the "être supreme,"—man, too, lately evolved, or within a few thousand years, from some of the animal classes just below him. All before is a descending inclined plane, with an uninterrupted evenness, and an infinitesimal angle, falling away lower and still lower forevermore, in the infinite retrocession from the present advanced state of things!

In contradistinction to the meagre poverty of both these views stands the Scriptural *mal'kuth kol olamim* (Ps. cxlv. 13) *βασιλεία τῶν αἰώνων* (1 Tim. i. 17)—*a kingdom of all eternities*, with its ages of ages, its worlds of worlds, its ascending orders of being, its mighty dispensations embracing all grades of evolution in the physical, and an unimaginable variety in the holy administrations of Him who styles Himself Jehovah tsebaoth, the Lord of hosts. This alone leaves the mind free in its speculative roamings, allowing it to compete with any philosophy in this respect, whilst binding it ever to an a priori recognition of the one absolute and infinite personality, "according to whose will all things are, and were, created."

The *largo* explains כִּה שֵׁהִי here of the great unknown past, regarding it as equally mysterious with the secrets of the unknown future: "It is too far off for the sons of men to know that which was from the *days of eternity*." RASHI and ABEN EZRA give substantially the same interpretation, with a like reference to the creation and the creative times: "What is above, what is below, what is before, what is after,—it is deep, deep, too deep for our power to think." The impassioned impressiveness of Koheleth's language amply justifies such a style of interpretation.—F. L.]

* [ZÖCKLER's rendering, "wickedness as folly, foolishness as madness," weakens the sense. It is more impassioned without the conjunctions, or any other particles to break its earnest and hurried style: "wickedness, presumption [stupidity, as כָּכֵל may mean], yea, stupidity, madness," all given in a running list:

To seek out wisdom, reason,—sin to know—
Presumption, folly, vain impiety.—F. L.]

for this construction EWALD, § 284 b, and for the sentence, i. 17; ii. 12 f.; x. 13.

3. *First Strophe. Continuation and Conclusion.* Vers. 26-29. A warning concerning an unchaste woman and her seductive arts. HENGSTENBERG, following older writers [and thus SEB. SCHMID, MICHAEL, LAMPE, J. LANGE, STARKE, etc.] maintains that this harlot is an ideal personage, the false wisdom of the heathen; but that she is a representative of the female sex in general in its worst aspect, appears to be incontrovertible from vers. 28 and 29, where women in general are represented as the more corrupt portion of humanity, corresponding with Sirach xxv. 24; 1 Tim. ii. 12-15. And as parallels to this passage we find above all those warnings of the Proverbs of Solomon against the "harlot" or "strange woman," *i. e.*, against unchaste intercourse with women in general; comp. Prov. ii. 16 ff.; v. 2 ff.; vii. 5 ff.; xxii. 14; xxiii. 27. And quite as arbitrary as the idealizing of this lascivious woman into the abstract idea of "false wisdom," is the view of HIRTZIG, namely, that therein allusion is made to a definite historical person, Agathoclea, mistress of Ptolemy Philopater.—**And I find more bitter than death.**—For this figure comp. 1 Sam. xv. 32; Sirach xxviii. 25; xli. 1; also Prov. v. 4, etc.—**The woman whose heart is snares and nets.**—אֲשֶׁר is to be connected with the suffix in לִבָּהּ and הִיא is to be regarded as copula between subject and predicate, which here emphatically precedes. In the comparison of the heart of the harlot to "snares and nets," and her hands to "bands," we naturally think, in the first instance, of her words and looks (as expressions of the thoughts of her heart), and, in the second, of voluptuous embraces.—**Whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her.**—Lit. "He who is good in the sight of God." Comp. ii. 26. The meaning is here as there, the God-fearing and just man, the contrary of חוטא or sinner, who by her (בָּהּ) *i. e.* by the nets and snares of her heart, and by her loose seductive arts, is caught. Ver. 27. **Behold, this have I found, saith the Preacher.**—Notwithstanding chap. i. 1; ii. 12;

xii. 9, where קָהֳלֶת is without the article, we must still read here אָכַר הַקָּהֳלֶת (comp. xii. 8) and not אָכַרָה קָהֳלֶת; for the word קָהֳלֶת is every where else used as masculine, and the author cannot wish to express a significant contrast between the preaching wisdom and the amorous woman, since the expression, "saith the Preacher," is here, as in those other passages, a mere introductory formula (though HENGSTENBERG thinks otherwise).—**Counting one by one**—namely, considering, reflecting. Lit., "one to the other," *i. e.*, adding, arranging. The words are adverbially used, as in the phrase בְּנִים אֶל בְּנִים Gen. xxxii. 31.—**To find out the account.**—[הִשְׁבִּנוּ] as in ver. 25], giving the result of this action of arranging one after the other. This did not consist in comparison between woman and death, but in a summing up of those unfavorable observations concerning

her which necessitates the final judgment, namely, that she is "more bitter than death." The whole verse clearly refers to the foregoing, and does not, therefore, serve as an introduction to the contents of vers. 28, 29, as HAHN and several older authors contend, who begin a new section with this verse. There is rather a certain break immediately before ver. 28, as the words אֲשֶׁר יִרְוֶה בְּקִרְוָהוּ at the beginning of this verse show. Ver. 28. **Which yet my soul seeketh.**—The soul is represented as seeking, to indicate how much this seeking was a matter of the heart to the preacher; comp. the address: "thou whom my soul loveth," Song of Sol. i. 17; iii. 1 ff. The "finding not" is then again attributed to the first person: "and that which I found not."—**One man among a thousand and have I found**—*i. e.*, among a thousand of the human race, I found, indeed, one righteous one, one worthy of the name of man, and corresponding to the idea of humanity. אָרוּם here stands for אִישׁ as, in the Greek, ἀνθρώπος for ἀνὴρ. For the expression "one among a thousand" [lit., out of a thousand] comp. Job ix. 3; xxxiii. 23; but for the sentence, ver. 20 above, and Job xiv. 5; Micah vii. 2, etc. The hereditary corruption of the entire human race is here as much presupposed as in the parallel passages; for Koheleth will hardly recognize the one righteous man that he found among a thousand as absolutely righteous, and therefore as אָרוּם in the primeval, pure and ideal sense of the first man before the fall.—**But a woman among all these have I not found.** That is, one worthy of the name אִישׁ, in the primeval ideal sense of Gen. ii. 22-25, I did not find among all that thousand, which presented me at least one proper man. That he never found such a one, consequently that he considered the whole female sex as vicious and highly corrupt, cannot possibly be his opinion, as appears from ver. 29, as also in chap. ix. 9. (See the praise of noble women in other documents of the Chokmah literature, as Prov. v. 19; xviii. 22; xxxi. 10 f.; Ps. cxxviii. ff.). But that moral excellence among women, taken as a whole, is much more rarely found than among men, that sin reigns more uncontrolled among the former than the latter, and in the form of moral weakness and proneness to temptation, as well as in the inclination to seduce, to deceive and ensnare—such is clearly the sense of this passage, a sense that harmonizes with Gen. iii. 16; Sirach xxv. 24; 2 Cor. xi. 3; 1 Tim. ii. 12 ff., as also with numerous other extra-biblical passages. Comp. also these sentences from the Talmud: "It is better to follow a lion than a woman;"—"Who follows the counsel of his wife arrives at hell;"—"The mind of women is frivolous;" also the Greek maxims: θάλασσα καὶ πῦρ καὶ γυνὴ κακὰ τρία;—ὅπου γυναῖκες εἰσι πάντ' ἐκεῖ κακά. Compare also the following Proverb from the Arabic of MURDANI; "Women are the snares of Satan," etc. (Comp. WOLFFARTH, KNOBEL and VAHLINGER on this passage).—Ver. 29. **Lo, this only have I found.** לְבַד, "alone, only" (an adverb as in Isa. xxvi. 13), here serving to introduce a re-

mark intended as a restriction of what precedes.* The fact of the universal sinful corruption of man, expressed indirectly in ver. 28, is here to be so far restricted that this corruption is not to be considered as innate in humanity through a divine agency, but as brought into the world by man's own guilt.—**That God hath made man upright.** יָשָׁר, upright, good, *integer*; comp. Gen. i. 26 f.; v. 1; ix. 6; Wisdom ii. 23.—**But they have sought out many inventions.**

הַשְּׂכֵנִיה are not “useless subtleties,” (Ewald), but, as the contrast to the idea of יָשָׁר teaches us: *malæ artes*, tricks, evil artifices, conceits.

4. *Second strophe, Introduction*, chap. vii. 1.—Of the rarity and preciousness of wisdom.—**Who is as the wise man?** This is no triumphant question, induced, or occasioned by that lucky finding in the last verse of the preceding chapter (Hitzig), but simply an introduction to what follows, by which true wisdom is to be declared a rare treasure of difficult attainment, just as in chap. vii. 23; viii. 16 f.—In פְּהִיחֵכֶם, the usually contracted form פְּהִיחֵךְ is again expanded, in accordance with a custom often occurring in later authors; † comp. Ezek. xl. 25; xlvii. 22; 2 Chron. x. 7; xxv. 10, etc.—**And who knoweth the interpretation of a thing;** זֹכֶרֶת, “of the word,” (רָכַרְךָ) ‡ namely, of the following assertion, which emphasizes the great work of wisdom according to its influence on the physical well-being and morally just demeanor of men. בְּשֵׁר, a Chaldaic word § (comp. Dan. ii. 4 ff., 24 ff.; iv. 6, 15), holding the same relation to the synonymous יָתֵר as יָתֵר to יֵרֹן.

—**A man's wisdom maketh his face to shine.** That is, it imparts to him a cheerful soul, and this on account of the fortunate and satisfactory relations into which it places him. The same figure is found in Numb. vi. 25; Ps. iv. 7; Job xxix. 24.—**And the boldness of his face shall be changed.** עָלָּו פְּנָיו is to be explained without doubt according to expressions יִגְדֹּל פְּנֵי, Prov. vii. 13; xxi. 39; or

* [See text note on לָרַךְ.—T. L.]

† [This is undoubtedly meant as proof of the late authorship of Koheleth, but it amounts to no more than this, namely, that the old manuscript of Ecclesiastes, whose copies have come down to us, was made by a scribe writing from the ear as another read aloud in consequence of which he has sometimes given in full a letter known to exist etymologically, though lost to sound, as in this case; whilst, on the other hand, and more frequently, he has given it as abbreviated in sound, like שֵׁ for אֶשֶׁר, or אָלוּ for לוֹ אֵם, though generally written in the full old etymological form; and again, in other cases, he has written a like sounding letter in place of the true one, as שְׁכָלוֹת for שְׁכָלוֹת, and other similar cases. The same remark is applicable to Ezekiel, and the very instances that ZÖCKLER quotes. They are evidences of late chirography in manuscripts, but are little to be relied on as proofs, or disproofs, of original authorship.—T. L.]

‡ [This would require the article, or the demonstrative pronoun, or both: הַרְכַּרְךָ הַזֶּה.—T. L.]

§ [No more Chaldaic than it is Hebrew. It is merely a variation of orthography for the like sounding word פָּתַר, Gen. xl. 8. Who knows how early the change to the sibilant took place? as there are no other examples of either form between Moses and Solomon, or between Solomon and Daniel.—T. L.]

עָלָּו פְּנֵי Deut. xxviii. 50; Dan. viii. 23, and signifies, therefore, that repulsive harshness and stiffness of the features which are a necessary result of a coarse, unamiable, and selfish heart (not exactly “boldness,” as DÖDERLEIN, DE-WETTE, and GESSENIUS translate, or “displeasure,” as KNOBEL, GRIMM, and VAHNINGER). It is therefore the civilizing, softening and morally refining influence of true wisdom on the soul of man, that the author has in view, and which, according to the question in the beginning of the verse, he describes as something mysterious and in need of explanation, and which he explains, partly at least, by the subsequent precepts regarding wise conduct in a civil sphere. EWALD'S comprehension of the passage is in sense not materially different from ours: “And the brightness of his countenance is doubled”—but this is in opposition to the usual signification of עָלָּו as well as that of שָׁנָה, which can hardly be rendered “to double.” The explanations of the *Septuagint*, resting on a different punctuation, עָלָּו instead of עָלָּו give a widely different sense ἀναδύς προσώπου αὐτοῦ μασιθησεται, which gave rise to that of LUTHER: “But he who is bold, is malignant;” and HITZIG, in conjunction with ZINKEL (and the *Vulgate*) reads עָלָּו and thus obtains the sense, “and boldness disfigureth the countenance.” But the word עָלָּו alone hardly means “boldness,” and the change adopted in the punctuation appears the more unnecessary since the sense resulting from it brings the assertion in the last clause into contrast with the one before it, which is in decided opposition to the connection.

5. *Second strophe. Continuation.* Vers. 2-4. A proper demeanor towards kings the first means of realizing true wisdom.—**I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment.** To אֶתְּרֵי supply אֶמְרֵי or אֶמְרֵי, a somewhat harsh elipse,* for which however we may quote parallels in Isa. v. 9; Jer. xx. 10, and elsewhere. Therefore it is unnecessary, with Hitzig, to punctuate שְׁמַר “I keep the king's commandment” (thus the *Vulgate*). That שְׁמַר stands in ver. 5 below in *scriptio plena* would form no valid objection against the allowableness of this change of the imperative into the participle; for שְׁמַר is also found in chap. xi. 4. But, as ELSTER correctly observes: “it would be surprising if Koheleth did not appear here in his usual manner as a teacher who admonishes others, but only as announcing what he has laid down as a principle to himself.” “To regard the mouth of the king” means of course, to render obedience to his commands; comp. Gen. xlv. 21; Ex. xvii. 1; Job xxxix. 27, etc.—**And that in regard of the oath of God, which thou hast vowed to him, the King.** The duty of obedience to worldly authority is here insisted on with reference to loyalty towards God, the heavenly witness to the vow made to the king; comp. Matt. xxii. 21; Rom. xiii. 1-7; 1 Pet.

*[See text note.—T. L.]

ii. 13-17. These New Testament parallels should have prevented HENGSTENBERG from endeavoring to cause the "king" to mean the heavenly King Jehovah, because nominally, "the obedience to the heathen lords of the O. T. in general was not enjoined as a religious duty,"—a remark that is in direct contradiction with passages like Prov. xvi. 10-15; Isa. xlv. 1 ff.; Jer. xxvii. 12, 13; xxix. 5-7; Ezek. xvii. 12 ff. The conjunction **ו** in **וְעַל** is not "and indeed," but "also," adding the remembrance of the assumed oath as an additional motive to the one already contained in the precept. The "oath of God" is an oath made with an appeal to God as witness (Ex. xxii. 10; 2 Sam. xxi. 7; 1 Kings ii. 43), and here especially such an oath of fidelity to the sovereign, sworn in the presence of God (comp. 2 Kings xi. 17; Ezek. xvii. 12 ff.).—Ver. 3. **Be not hasty to go out of his sight.** The first verb only serves to express an adverbial qualification of the second. The hasty going out from the king is not to indicate an apostasy from him, or a share in rebellious movements (KNOBEL, VAHINGER), but simply the timid or unsatisfactory withdrawal from his presence, in case he is unfavorably inclined; it is directly the opposite of the "standing" forbidden in the subsequent clause. HITZIG's opinion, that the king is considered as an unclean heathen, and that the aim of the entire admonition is to counsel against the too strict observance of the Levitical laws of cleanliness in presence of heathen princes, has too little connection with the context, and is in every respect too artificial.—**Stand not in an evil thing.** (*Ger.*, "evil word"); *i. e.*, when the king speaks an angry word (**וְכִּי יִרְבֵּץ**) do not excite his anger still more by foolishly standing still, as if thou couldst by obstinately remaining in thy place compel his favor. EWALD and ELSTER correctly give the general sense of the admonition as follows: In presence of a king, it is proper to appear modest and yet firm, to show ourselves neither over timid nor obstinate towards him. The *Vulgate*, LUTHER, STARKE, *etc.*, are less consistent: "Stand not in an evil thing," *i. e.*, remain not in evil designs against the king, if you have become involved in such;—HENGSTENBERG gives the same. VAHINGER: "Do not appear in an evil thing." And thus finally HITZIG: "Stand not at an evil command" [*i. e.*, even though the king should command an evil thing, thou must do it, as DOEG, 1 Sam. xxii. 18], a translation which rests on the erroneous supposition that the author presents as speaking, in vers. 2-4, an opponent of his teachings, a defender of a base worldly expediency and a false servility.—**For he doeth whatever pleaseth him.** This formula serves in other places to show the uncontrolled power of God as ruler of the world (Jon. i. 14; Job xxiii. 13) but must here be necessarily accepted in a relative sense, as an emphatic warning against the fearful wrath of a monarch who is all-powerful, at least in his own realm; comp. Prov. xvi. 14; xix. 12; xx. 2.—Ver. 4 completes the last clause of ver. 3.—**Where the word of a king is there is power.** **שְׁלֹטוֹן** here, and in ver. 8, need not

be considered as an adjective; it can quite as easily express the substantive sense of "ruler, commander," as in Dan. iii. 2, 3 (Chaldaic).—**And who may say to him, What doest thou?** That is, who can utter an objection to his ordinances and commands? An expression like that at the close of the preceding verse, which is elsewhere only used in glorification of *divine* power (Job ix. 12; Isa. xlv. 9; Dan. iv. 32; Wisdom xii. 12), but which therefore justifies neither HENGSTENBERG's nor HAHN's reference of the passage to God as the heavenly King, according to HITZIG's assertion: "We have here the servility of an opponent of the king, introduced by the author as speaking in a style which usually indicates the omnipotence of God."

6. *Second Strophe. Conclusion.* Vers. 5-8. Admonition to submit to the existing arrangements of this life, all of which have God as their final author.—**Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing.**—**כִּי יִשְׁמַר** "the commandment," is undoubtedly the same as **וְרַב־כֹּלֵךְ**, ver. 4, therefore not the Divine law (VAHINGER, HAHN, HENGSTENBERG, *etc.*), but the law of earthly authority as the Divine representative. The feeling no evil thing (**לֹא יֵרָע**) most probably signifies the remaining distant from evil counsels, taking no part in rebellious enterprises (KNOBEL, VAHINGER, *etc.*), so that, therefore, **וְרַב־כֹּלֵךְ** here expresses a sense different from that in verse 3 above. Yet another explanation of the language, and one consistent with the context, is as follows: "He experiences no misfortune, remains protected from the punishment of transgressing the laws" (ELSTER, HENGSTENBERG). But HEILIGSTEDT, on the contrary, is wrong (comp. EWALD): "he pays no attention to the evil that is done to him, and does not grieve about the injustice that he suffers, but bears it with equanimity;" and also HITZIG: "the keeper of the commandment (the servile slave of tyrants) does not first consider an evil command of his superior, in so far as it is morally evil, but executes it blindly, and thus commits a sin at the bidding of a higher power; the wise man, on the contrary, *etc.*"—a declaration which stands and falls with the previously quoted artificial understanding of ver. 2-4 as antagonistic in speech.*—**And a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment.**—That is, the wise man knows that for every evil attempt there comes a time of judgment; see ver. 6. This explanation alone, which is that of the Septuagint [*καὶ καιρὸν κρίσεως γινώσκει*

*[Among all these conflicting interpretations, it may be suggested that the best way is to take ver. 5 as a qualification of the positiveness and strictness of the previous precepts: The ordinary man who simply yields literal and passive obedience, will be safe in so doing; but the wise man will use his wisdom in judging as to the manner of doing the command, or of modifying, avoiding, or, it may be, resisting, as Daniel did. This mode of qualifying, or partially restricting, a precept that seems general and exclusive, is not uncommon with Koheleth. Comp. ix. 11 and *al.* Such as in general the idea of STRUAK, especially as to the last clause, though he interprets **וְרַב־כֹּלֵךְ** in the first, as meaning, "he (who obeys) will have no concern about the evil command;" that is, will not trouble himself about its rectitude.—T. L.]

καρδία σοφῶν] is in accordance with the text; one needs think as little of the judgment which awaits all men, especially wicked princes and tyrants, as of the appointed time of existence of all civil ordinances [ELSTER], or of the proper time and authority to do any thing, or not (HAHN). Ver. 6. For the first clause compare chap. iii. 17.—**Therefore the misery of man is great upon him.**—That is, on him who unwisely disregards the important truth that there is a time and judgment for every purpose, and therefore takes part in rebellious undertakings against the king; a heavy misfortune visits him as a well-deserved punishment, and he falls a victim of his foolish effort to struggle against the Divinely sanctioned ordinances of this world.* Ver. 7. **For he knoweth not that which shall be.**—He knows not the issue of the undertakings in which he has thoughtlessly allowed himself to be involved; and because the future is veiled to us men, he cannot see what consequences they may have, and how weighty may be the destinies that it entails upon him.—**For who can tell him when it shall be?**—(Ger., “how it shall be”).—Therefore he is not only ignorant of future destinies in themselves, but does not even know their “how,” the manner of their entrance. HERZFELD and HITZIG say: “When it shall be,” etc. But בְּאַיִן no where else in this book signifies “when,” not even in iv. 17; v. 4, where it is to be taken as conditional; and the idea of time is by no means in harmony with the passage. Ver. 8. **There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit.**—רוּחַ here is different from that in chap. xi. 4 and 5, † where it clearly signifies “wind” (comp. Prov. xxx. 4); it must here be taken in a sense very usual in the O. T., that of “breath of life,” “spirit;” comp. iii. 19-21. ‡ The meaning of the following clause is most nearly allied to this, and that we find בְּרוּחַ and not בְּרִיחוֹ proves nothing in favor of the contrary acceptance of HITZIG, HAHN, etc.; for the author denies the ability of men to control the breath of life, and purposely in the most general way, in order to show, in the

strongest manner, his unconditional dependence on God [just as in the following clause he has the very general הַפֶּתַח הַיּוֹם and not יוֹם כְּמוֹתוֹ].—**And there is no discharge in that war.**—That is, as little as the law of war, with its inexorable severity, grants a furlough to the soldier before the battle, just so little can a man escape the law of death which weighs on all, and just so unconditionally must he follow when God calls him hence by death.—**Neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.**—Lit., “its possessors;” comp. vii. 12; and for the sentence, Prov. x. 2; xi. 4, etc. This clause clearly contains the principal thought of the verse, as prepared by the three preceding clauses, and which here makes an impressive conclusion of the whole admonition begun in verse 2 concerning disobedience and disloyalty towards authority.

Ver. 7. *Third Strophe. First half.* Vers. 9-13. The many iniquities, oppressions and injustices that occur among men, often remain a long time unpunished, but find, at last, their proper reward, as a proof that God rules and judges justly.—**All this have I seen.**—A transition formula, serving as an introduction to what follows, as in chap. vii. 23. “To see” is here equivalent to observing through experience, and “all this” refers, in the first place, to ver. 5-8, and then to every thing from chap. vii. 23 onward.—**And applied my heart unto every work.**—For

לֹבְ אֶת־לֵב comp. i. 13.—The infinitive absolute with copula prefixed indicates an action contemporaneous with the main verb. For what follows comp. i. 14; ii. 17; iv. 3, etc.—**There is a time when one man rules over another to his own hurt.**—These words clearly form an explanation to what precedes: “every work that is done under the sun;” and they therefore more closely designate the object of the author’s observation to be a *whole epoch or series of oppressions of men by tyrants.*—The words are usually regarded as an independent sentence: “There is a time wherein,” etc.; or, “sometimes,” or, “at times,” “a man rules,” etc. (Vulgate, LUTHER, VAHINGER, HENGSTENBERG, etc.). But the word יָמַי alone is not equivalent to “there is a time,” or “sometimes;” and to

refer the pronoun in לִי to the first אָרוּם (to his own hurt,” i. e., to the hurt of the tyrant) is not in harmony with what follows. Also KNOBEL’s explanation: “truly I have also seen tyrants who practiced evil unpunished through whole eras,” seems quite unfitting, because it anticipates ver. 10, and introduces into the text the word “truly” that is in no wise indicated.—Ver. 10. **And so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone (to rest).**—יָבִיטָהּ lit.: and under such circumstances,* comp. Esth. iv. 16. The wicked, of whom it is here affirmed that they were buried and went to rest, i. e., they received a distinguished and honorable burial [comp. Isa. xiv. 19; Jer. xxii. 19; and also Ec-

* [We cannot help regarding this as a forcing the text into the support of the extreme monarchical doctrine of passive obedience, notwithstanding the qualification adverted to in the previous note. There is, too, an omission, unusual for ZÖCKLER, of all comment on the first part of ver. 6, which contains not only the connection with what precedes, but furnishes the key to what follows. “The heart of the wise man will acknowledge time and reason” (ver. 5): “for there is time and reason to every thing, although the misery of man (the oppression, the evil rule, under which he suffers)

beso great upon him” (יָבִיטָהּ) implying something laid upon him like a heavy burden). It is all made clear by rendering the second יָבִיטָהּ although, as adverbative to the first—a frequent sense of the participle in this book, as is generally shown by the context. It is a strong and passionate assertion: The world is not all confusion; there is time and reason; they will appear at last, though misery so abounds; therefore be patient; watch and wait. Obedience is indeed inculcated to lawful (not merely monarchical) authority, but it is also intimated that it is not to be wholly passive, unreasoning, and blind.—T. L.]

† [There is precisely the same argument for rendering it spirit in chap. xi. 5 (the way of the spirit), as exists for it here. See excursus on that passage, p. 147.—T. L.]

‡ [Perhaps there is nothing that shows the *unspirituality* of some commentators more than their obstinate determination to render רוּחַ wind, and often in utter defiance of the context, as in Gen. i. 2, and in such places as these.—T. L.]

* [יָבִיטָהּ is the particle of illustration: “and in such a case,” or, taken in the connection: “and so it was.” See the Metrical Version—

‘Twas when I saw the wicked dead interred.—T. L.]

cles. chap. vi. 3] are the same as those named in ver. 9, who rule over others to their hurt, and are therefore tyrannical oppressors and violent rulers. אָבָהּ lit.: "they entered in," namely, to rest, an abbreviation of the full form which is found in Isa. lvii. 2.—**Gone from the place of the holy.**—[ZÖCKLER: But went far from the place of the holy.]—The wicked are clearly here no longer the subject, but as in the following clause, "those who did righteously," whose undeservedly sad fate the author well depicts in contrast with that of the former. Therefore the "place of the holy" from which they wandered afar [יָבֵא, as in Isa. xxvi. 14; Zeph. iii. 18; Job xxviii. 4] is the grave, the honorable burial place which these just ones must fail to obtain; to refer this expression to Jerusalem (HITZIG), or to the sacred courts of the leaders of the people (KNOBEL), or to the community of the saints (HENGSTENBERG), is all arbitrary, and opposed to

the context. הִלְכּוּ, "they wandered, they went," does not, of course, mean a wandering of the souls of the unburiad after death, but simply [in contrast to that word אָבָהּ] the wandering or being carried to another resting place than that holy place," the burial in a grave neither sacred nor honorable. HITZIG'S emendation, הִלְכּוּ, "they pass away," is as unnecessary as the view of EWALD, ELSTER, VAHNINGER, etc., that the Piel הִלְכּוּ is here synonymous with the Hiphil הוֹלִיךְ as though the sense were "I saw them driven away, cast out from the holy place."*—**And they were forgotten in the city where they had so done** (ZÖCKLER: "who there justly acted).—For עָשָׂה בֵּן "to do right," to act uprightly, comp. 2 Kings vii. 9: for "being forgotten in the city," i. e., in their own place of residence [not in Jerusalem, as

*[ZÖCKLER'S version here, which is substantially that of HITZIG, and even of GIER, seems very forced. How is he to get the sense of "wandering far," or of "being driven away,"

from יִהְיֶה? Then, again, the rendering אֲשֶׁר בֵּן עָשָׂה "they who had done rightly," and making it the subject of הִלְכּוּ, are both unwarranted. STUART well says that the makkeph in עָשָׂה בֵּן shows that the Masorites regarded בֵּן as the usual adverb so, and therefore joined it closely to the verb as simply qualifying. The references of ZÖCKLER and HITZIG do not bear them out, and there cannot be found a clear case in the Bible where בֵּן is used absolutely for justice. There are two objections to the finding in this phrase the subject of הִלְכּוּ: one is the separation it makes between it and וְכֵן; the second is its coming so late after its verb, making a very unusual Hebrew construction in keeping the sense so long suspended. It seems quite clear that הִלְכּוּ and וְכֵן have the same subject—not that a sudden change is unexampled in Hebrew, but because these two verbs so uniformly go together in similar expressions; as in ch. i. 4 דֹּר הִלְךְ, דֹּר בָּא "generation goes, and generation comes;" also vi. 4, בָּחֻשֶׁן יֵלֵךְ, בְּהִכְלָא בָּא "comes in vanity, goes away in darkness." So here there must be for both the same subject; but it is the wicked, mentioned above, or men generally, not personally or pronominally expressed, because it so readily suggests itself from the mention of burial, ~they, the mourner, real or pr. and d., ~they

HITZIG declares], Comp. vi. 4; Prov. x. 7; Ps. lxxiii. 19, 20. Instead of וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּהוּ the Septuagint, Vulgate, and twenty-three manuscripts had וַיִּשְׁבְּחוּ "and they were praised;" but this reading appears clearly to be an emendation, and would render necessary this grammatically inadmissible translation: "and they were praised in the city, as if they had acted justly."—**This is also vanity.**—That is, also this unequal distribution of destiny in human life, is an example of the vanity pervading and controlling all earthly relations: comp. ii. 26; iv. 14, 16; vii. 6, etc.—Ver. 11. **Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily.**—Because speedy justice is not executed—a very common reason for the increase of crime and wickedness. כִּנְיָה * originally a

Persian word [ancient Persian, *patigama*, modern Per. *paigam*, Armenian *patkam*]; lit., "something that has happened or taken place," and, therefore, command, edict, sentence; comp. Esther i. 20. Since in this passage, as in the Chaldaic sections of Ezra and Daniel (e. g., Ez. iv. 17; Dan. iii. 16; iv. 14), the word is always treated as masculine, we should have expected הִנְיָה instead of כִּנְיָה. But comp. the examples of the masculine quoted by EWALD, § 74, gr., which, in later authors, are used as feminine.—**Therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in him to do evil.**—Therefore they venture on evil without any hesitation; comp. ix. 3; Esther vii. 5; Matt. xv. 19.—Vers. 12 and 13. In spite of the universal and ever-increasing prevalence of evil over justice and righteousness, hitherto depicted, the wicked at last find their deserved reward, and oppressed innocence does not perish.—**Though a sinner do evil a hundred times.**—אֲשֶׁר does not here signify "because" (HITZIG), but "although," "considering that," as כִּי does sometimes (Lat. *quod si*).

Comp. Lev. iv. 22; Deut. xi. 27; xviii. 22; EWALD, § 362, b. Before כִּנְיָה supply פְּנֵינֵינוּ. **And his days be prolonged**—namely, in sinning. לוֹ with כִּנְיָהוּ shows that this verb is

who form the procession (הִלְכּוּ; see remarks on this word in piel, p. 85), who go about the streets, xii. 5, where כִּכְבֵּי includes both going to and coming from. According to this, there is, indeed, a change of subject from that of the previous clause, but this is far from being unexampled in Hebrew, even without notice: as in Ps. xlix. 19: "For he blesses himself in life, and they will praise [יִירָדוּ] thee,"—that is, men will praise thee, when thou dost well to thyself. Here, however, the personal subject is so familiar that it is easily understood, and its omission is on that very account all the more impressive: I saw the wicked buried, and from (or to and from) the holy place [the place of burial],—they came and went [men came and went]; then straight were they forgotten, that is, the wicked rulers were forgotten. The coming back to these as the old subject, after the mention of the funeral procession, seems very natural. The crowd disperses, the hired mourners "go about the streets;" it is all over; and soon are they "forgotten in the city where they thus had done"—where they had ruled to their own dishonour, only to be hated, and at last, after an empty funeral pomp, to be consigned to oblivion. In the description of a scene so well understood, the formal insertion of the logical subject would have made it much less graphic. See Metrical Version.—T. L.]

*[On this word see remarks in the note appended to ZÖCKLER'S introduction, p. 33.—T. L.]

not to be supplemented by **וְיָדַעְתָּ**, as in the following verse.—**Yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God.**—**וְיָדַעְתָּ**, “yet,” makes here a strong contrast. Koheleth represents the idea of just retribution as something certain and lasting, although experience seems so strongly to teach the contrary, and consequently as a conviction that does not rest on empirical observation, but on direct religious faith. “There is not expressed in this verse, as some commentators suppose, the thought of a retribution in after life, but it must be confessed that the standpoint of observation on which Koheleth here places himself could easily lead to this conclusion, although it is not here drawn (ELSTER).—**Which fear before him**—Not, “because they fear before him:”

וְיָדַעְתָּ is here really a relative pronoun, pointing out the conformity of the conduct of the God-fearing to their designation as such. Comp. 1 Tim. v. 3: *χήρας τίμα τὰς ἀντως χήρας*.—**But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days**—This denial of long life to the wicked does not contradict what is said in ver. 12; for there the question was not of long life, but of prolonged sinning.—**Which are as a shadow; because he feareth not before God.**—[ZÖCKLER: He is as a shadow who feareth not before God.] We have had the same figure in chap. vi. 12. The Vulgate, as well as most modern commentators, are correct in not joining **וְיָדַעְתָּ**, with the Masoretic accentuation, to what precedes [thus also LUTHER, VAHINGER, HENGSTENBERG; “and as a shadow will not live long”], but to what follows [Vulg. “*transeunt*”].

8. *Third Strophe. Conclusion.* Vers. 14 and 15. Since the unequal distribution of human destiny points to the futile character of all earthly occurrences and conditions, we must so much the more enjoy present happiness, and profit by it with a contented mind.—**There is a vanity which is done upon the earth.**—See ver. 10 and chap. iii. 16. That the lots of the just and the wicked are frequently commingled and interchanged in this world, seems to the Preacher as vanity, *i. e.*, as belonging to the evil consequences of the human fall; but it does not, therefore, make on him an especially “bitter and gloomy” impression, as ELSTER supposes. Comp. HENGSTENBERG: “If there were righteous men such as there should be, wholly righteous, then the experience here given would certainly be in a high degree alarming. But since sin is also indwelling in the just, since they deserve punishment and need watchful care, since they can so easily slide into by-paths and fall into a mercenary worldliness, the shock must disappear for those who really dwell in righteousness. These latter are often severely disturbed by the fact here presented to view, but it is for them only a disturbance. The definitive complaint regarding this comes only from those who without claim or right count themselves among the just. And it is clear that the equality of result for the evil and just is only an *external* and *partial* one. To those whom God loves, every thing must be for the best, and the final issue separates

the evil from the good.”—Ver. 15. **Then I commended mirth, etc.***—Comp. the exegetical remarks on ii. 24; iii. 22; v. 19.—**For that shall abide with him of his labour the days of his life.**—Lit., “That clings to him,” *etc.*, *i. e.*, that and that only becomes truly his; comp.

וְיָדַעְתָּ chap. iii. 22; v. 19, which is synonymous in sense. The optative meaning of **וְיָדַעְתָּ** (HIRZIG: “that may cling to him;” HENZFIELD: “that may accompany him,” *etc.*), is unnecessary and runs counter to the analogy of those earlier parallels.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

(With Homiletical Hints.)

The warnings against seduction through the snares and amorous arts of women, concerning rebellion against authority, and wicked oppression and violence, are quite dissimilar in their nature, and hang but loosely together. For in the first of these warnings the attention of the author is principally directed to the depraved nature of woman as the originator and principal representative of the ruin of man through sin; in the second, it is less the Divine necessity that is made especially emphatic, than the human utility and profitableness in the obedience to be rendered to kings; and in the third, the principal object of attention is not the wicked conduct of sinners in itself, but the fixed, certain, and just retribution of God for this conduct, together with the useful lesson which the good man is to draw therefrom. The questions concerning the origin, goal, and remedy of human depravity, [the most important problems in anthropology], are in this way touched, but by no means exhaustively treated; and the indicated solutions reveal a certain one-sidedness on account of the brevity of the illustration. It *appears*, at least, in chap. vii. 28, as if the female sex were thoroughly and without exception evil, and the first woman was represented as the sole originator of the sin of humanity; and just so it *seems* as if

*[“It was then I commended mirth,” *etc.*; that is under such a view of mankind and their destiny. See the text note. The conjunction **וְ** in **וְיָדַעְתָּ** connects by showing the time

and reason. It is very important as showing that the Epicurean aspect Koheleth sometimes exhibits was in connection with, and conditional upon, such discouraging and gloomy views of human destiny as those just mentioned. And this explains the **וְיָדַעְתָּ**, in what follows, as the matter

or language of the false commendation (*quod, etc.*), “that there was no other good to man,”—or then “I praised mirth,” *etc.*, (saying), “that there was no good to man,” *etc.*, and so of what follows: “and that this only remains to him,” *etc.* It is all dependent on **וְיָדַעְתָּ**, as the subject matter of the Epicurean commendation. ZÖCKLER omits all remarks on **וְיָדַעְתָּ** here, and the connection of **וְיָדַעְתָּ**, although it is so important.

‘Twas then that pleasure I extolled:
How that there was no good to man beneath the sun,
Except to eat and drink, and [here] his joy to find,
And this alone attends him in his toil,
During all the days, *etc.*

Compare the Arabic **البقيّة** *res residua*, as used in the

Koran to denote the portion either of the plous in the life to come, or of the wicked pleasure-seekers in this world.—T L.]

the remedy against sin and its bad effects were mainly (chap. viii. 2 ff.) *unconditional* obedience to earthly authority; and then, again, it would appear (chap. viii. 15) that a *frivolous* and *thoughtless* joyousness were recommended. But that this is mere appearance, is proved by the connection of each of the respective passages. As in chap. vii. 29, not women alone, but sinning humanity as a whole, are presented as the destroyers of the originally upright, pure, and God-like nature [corresponding to the words of Paul, *ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον*, Rom. v. 12]; not less in chap. viii. 2 ff. is the duty of obedience to authority to be, from the beginning, Divinely influenced, and therefore subordinated to the higher duty of obedience towards God [corresponding with Acts iv. 19]. And finally, the joy recommended in ver. 15 appears clearly as the joy of one fearing God [comp. vers. 12 and 13], and consequently it no more forms an exclusive contrast to the rejoicing with trembling of Ps. ii. 11 than it contradicts the Apostolic admonition: "Rejoice in the Lord always" (Phil. iv. 4). In short, it is every where the conduct of the truly wise man, who, as such, is also the God-fearing man, to which the Preacher directs us, and in which he gets a view of the true ideal in the sphere of ethical anthropology (comp. vii. 23-25; viii. 1, 5).

Thence is drawn for a collective homiletical treatment of this section the following theme: the truly wise man fears God, and guards himself as well against unchastity as against the disloyalty and injustice of this world. Or, the truly wise man in conflict with the enticements of this world, as he meets them first in the cunning of women, secondly, in the desire of rebellion, and thirdly, in the wickedness and arrogant violence of tyrants.

HOMILETICAL HINTS ON SEPARATE PASSAGES.

Chap. vii. 23-25. GEIER:—Our knowledge is fragmentary: the more we learn, the more we perceive how far we are removed from true wisdom. Sirach li. 21 ff.; I Cor. xiii. 9.—HANSEN:—No one on earth has the ability and skill to acquire a perfect knowledge of the works of God. They remain unfathomably deep and hidden from our eyes.—We must exert all the powers of our soul to discover the difference between wisdom and folly.—STARKE:—Depend not on your own strength in Christianity. You imagine that you make progress, but in reality you retrograde, and lose, in your spiritual arrogance, that which you had already acquired (2 John 8).—The best teachers are those who teach to others what they themselves have learned by experience.

TÜBINGEN BIBLE:—Man was created in innocence, justice and holiness, and this is the image of God, that he lost after the fall, but after which he should again strive with all earnestness.—HENGSTENBERG:—After the fall, man forgot to remain in a receptive relation, which, in respect to the *ἀνομιαν σοφία*, is the only proper position; he chases after schemes of his presumptuous thoughts. The only means of becoming free from so dire a disease, and of being delivered from the bonds of his own thoughts and phantoms, is

again to return to Divine subjection, and renouncing all his own knowledge, to permit himself to be taught of God.

Chap. viii. 4. ZEYSS:—Impenetrable as is the human heart in itself, it is nevertheless often betrayed by the countenance.—STARKE:—The innocent man looks happy and secure. He who cherishes injustice in the heart looks at no one cheerfully nor rightly.—HENGSTENBERG:—When, by the transforming power of wisdom, the heart of flesh has taken the place of the heart of stone, and inward flexibility and obedience that of terror in presence of God and His commandments, it becomes also evident in the countenance.

Vers. 2, 6. LUTHER:—It is enough for you to do so in the state, that you should obey the king's commands, and listen to him who is ordained of God. Here you see how civil obedience is comprehended in obedience to God. So Paul would have servants obey their masters, not as submitting to men, but as to God.—MELANCHTHON:—Thus is obedience ordained. Obey the Divine voice first; then the king commanding things not repugnant to the Divine law.—This will be in conformity with the rule given Acts iv. 19.—STARKE (ver. 3):—The powerful ones of this world have among men no higher one over them, to whom they must give an account, but in heaven there is One higher than the highest. Wisdom of Solomon vi. 2-4.—(Ver. 5): He who keeps the commandments of God will, for the sake of God and his conscience, also obey the salutary commands of authority, Col. iii. 23.—HENGSTENBERG (Ver. 5):—The wise heart knows well that as certainly as God will judge justly in His own time, so certainly also can he not be really and lastingly unhappy who keeps the commandments, and therefore has God on his side.—(Ver. 6): With all his power, man is nevertheless not independent, but is subjected to the heavy loads of human destiny. Thus all men will be unable to place any impediment to the execution of the justice of God for the good of His children.

Ver. 7, 8. HIERONYMUS (Ver. 8): We are not to mourn, though often oppressed by the unjust and powerful; since all these things come to an end in death, and the proud potentate himself, after all his tyrannical cruelties, cannot retain the soul when taken away by death.—CRAMER (Ver. 7):—It is vain that we anxiously trouble ourselves about the progress and issue of things to come: therefore we should abandon our prying desire. Ps. xxxvii. 5.—GEIER:—The last conflict and struggle is the hardest and most dangerous; but a pious Christian should not be terrified at it; for the conquest of Jesus over death will become his own through faith: temporal death is for him only a dissolution, a passing away in peace.

MELANCHTHON:—This question tortures all minds; so that many who see the prosperity of the wicked, and the misfortunes of the just, begin to think there is no Providence. It is the excellent strength of faith, that it is not broken by such spectacles, but retains the true cognition of God, and waits patiently for the judgment.—OSTANDER:—It does not become us to dictate to God how He shall rule the world. Let it satisfy us that God rules, and will finally bring to light

the justice of His judgment.—Because God delays a while in the punishment of sin, men falsely convince themselves that their wickedness will go wholly unpunished, Sirach v. 4, 5.—J. LANGE:—The children of God consider the patience of the Lord their salvation [2 Pet. iii. 15]; whilst the wicked consider this patience as a privilege to sin the more boldly (Rom. vi. 1). But however happy they may esteem themselves, they nevertheless die unblessed, and their happiness is changed into eternal shame.

Vers. 14 and 15. BERLEB. BIBLE:—Joy is a godly cheerfulness and serenity of soul; since the just man, though he may suffer from the vanities of this world, which are common to all, keeps his soul free from vain cares, calm through faith in God, and hence cheerful and ready in the performance of its duties; so that he eats, drinks and rejoices, *i. e.*, enjoys what God gives him, in a calm, cheerful, and fitting manner.—HENGSTENBERG:—[See previous exegetical illustrations to ver. 14].

FOURTH DISCOURSE.

Of the relation of true wisdom in the internal and external life of man.

(CHAP. VIII. 16—XII. 7.)

- A. The unfathomable character of the universal rule of God should not frighten the wise man from an active part in life, but should cheer and encourage him thereto.

(CHAPTER VIII. 16—IX. 16.)

- I It cannot be denied that the providence of God in the distribution of human destiny is unfathomable and incomprehensible.

(CHAP. VIII. 16—IX. 6.)

- 16 When I applied mine heart to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done upon the earth: (for also *there is that* neither day nor night seeth sleep with his eyes:) Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun: because though a man labour to seek *it* out, yet he shall not find *it*; yea, further; though a wise *man* think to know *it*, yet shall he not be able to find *it*.

- IX. 1 For all this I considered in my heart even to declare all this, that the righteous and the wise, and their works, *are* in the hand of God: no man knoweth either love or hatred *by* all *that is* before them. All *things come* alike to all: *there is* one event to the righteous and to the wicked; to the good, and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not; as *is* the good, so *is* the sinner; and he that sweareth, as *he* that feareth an oath. This *is* an evil among all *things* that are done under the sun, that *there is* one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness *is* in their heart while they live, and after that *they go* to the dead. For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any *thing* that is done under the sun.

2. Therefore it behooves us to enjoy this life cheerfully, and to use it in profitable avocations.

(VERS. 7-10).

- 7 Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for 8 God now accepteth thy works. Let thy garments be always white; and let thy 9 head lack no ointment. Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days

of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that *is* thy portion in *this* life, and in thy labour which thou *takest* 10 under the sun. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do *it* with thy might, for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

3. The uncertain result of human effort in this world should not deter us from zealously striving after wisdom.

VERS. 11-16.

11 I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race *is* not to the swift nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, 12 nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all. For man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so *are* the sons of men snared in an evil 13 time, when it falleth suddenly upon them. This wisdom have I seen also under the 14 sun, and it *seemed* great unto me: *There was* a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks 15 against it: Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom de- 16 livered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man; Then said I, Wis- dom *is* better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom *is* despised, and his words are not heard.

[Ch. viii. 17.—בְּשֵׁל equivalent to בְּאִשֶּׁר ל' "in that which to"—"in proportion to;" Vulgate well renders it *quanto plus*. LXX. *ὅσα ἐὰν*; "in proportion to that which one shall labor"—or "the more he labors." It is found elsewhere only in Jonah i. 7, or, in composition, בְּשֵׁלִי and בְּשֵׁלִי. It is certainly not a Chaldaism, but it is said "to belong to the later Hebrew," and the argument runs in this way: Koheleth must belong to the later Hebrew, because this word is elsewhere found only in Jonah; and Jonah must belong to the later Hebrew, because this word is elsewhere found only in Koheleth. It is also called a Rabbinism in Koheleth; but it is rather a Kohelethism much employed, with other Kohelethisms, by the earliest Rabbins, because that book was a great favorite with them, and regarded by them as a specimen of the more elegant and courtly, as well as the more philosophical Hebrew.—Ch. ix. 1. וְלִכְנֹךְ; it has the same meaning here with כָּרַךְ, Ecclesiastes iii. 13, to *explore—prove* by exploring—primary sense, *separate, purify*. It is an example of the affinity, or of the interchange of meanings, in verbs *ain wau* and double *ain*.—F. L.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

1. VAHINGER deviates from the above analysis of this section into three divisions, but only so far as to extend the first division simply to chap. ix. 3, which does not well coincide with the contents of ver. 4-6, that clearly refer to what immediately precedes. Several commentators begin a new section with chap. ix. 11 [HAHN, indeed a new discourse], and deny in this way that the principal theme of the whole piece—the contrast between the inscrutability of human destinies, and the wisdom which still retains its worth, and is to be sought after as the highest good—is also treated in this last division, and that it is more closely allied with the foregoing than with that which follows ver. 17.—HENGSTENBERG also very improperly separates vers. 11, 12 from the four subsequent ones, with which they are most closely connected; see below at ver. 13.

First Strophe, first division. Chap. viii. 16, 17. The universal rule of God is unfathomable.—**When I applied mine heart.**—Lit., "gave;" comp. chap. viii. 9. וְאָשַׁר introduces the longer primary clause, to which then, in ver. 17, a still longer secondary clause corresponds, introduced by וְ or וְאִתִּי. There is no closer connection with the preceding, such as is affirmed by Ro-

SENMUELLER, HITZIG, HENGSTENBERG and HAHN, according to the example of most old authors. The commendation of pleasure in ver. 15, like the earlier praise of cheerfulness [chap. ii. 24; iii. 22; v. 18, 20], fittingly closes the preceding, whilst this clause, as is shown by וְ chap. ix. 1, serves as a basis and preparation for the subsequent reflections.—**To know wisdom, and see the business.**—Comp. i. 13, 17. The word וְיִדְעַתְּ is here as there the travail caused by a zealous searching after the grounds and aims of human action, fate, and life.—**For also there is that neither day nor night.** וְ here gives the nature and operation of the travail; or is inferential, "so that," as Gen. xi. 15; Ex. iii. 11, etc. [comp. VAHINGER]. The parenthetical interpretation of this third clause [Ewald, Elster, Hahn, etc.] is also unnecessary.—"To see sleep" is equivalent to enjoying sleep; comp. Gen. xxxi. 40; Prov. vi. 4; Ps. cxxxii. 4 (Lat. *sonnum videre*).—Ver. 17. **Then I beheld all the work of God.** אֶת-כָּל-מַעֲשֵׂה אֱלֹהִים is the accusative of relation: "I saw in relation to all the work of God." The work that is done under the sun, that we find in the subsequent clause, is the same as the "work of God," the universal rule of the Most High; and the inability to find this work, its incomprehensibility and inscrutability [comp. Ps. cxlvii. 5; Rom. xi.

33] form from the beginning the principal theme of the assertion. To "find" is used in the sense of "to comprehend, to fathom;" comp. iii. 11; vii. 24.—**Because though a man labour to seek it out.**—That is, however much he may try, in spite of all his toil, *etc.* **אֲשֶׁר בְּשֵׁל אֲשֶׁר** is equivalent to **בְּאֲשֶׁר-לְאֲשֶׁר** [comp. the similar crowding of relations in Jonah i. 7, 8, 12, and also the Aramaic **כְּרִיל דְ**], and signifies, when taken together with the following verb **עִמָּל**, "with that which is in it," *etc.*; that is, "with that which there is in his labor," or "with that zeal and talent perceptible in it." Compare HIRZIG on this passage, who correctly rejects as unnecessary EWALD's emendation **בְּשֵׁל אֲשֶׁר** in place of **אֲשֶׁר**, although the LXX., Vulgate, and Syriac seem to have so read it.—**Yea further, though a wise man think to know it.**—**אִם אֲמַר** "should he presume," "should he attempt;" comp. Exod. ii. 14; 2 Sam. xxi. 16.

3. *First strophe, second division.* Chap. ix. 1-3. All men, the just, as well as the unjust, are subject to the same fate, especially to the law of mortality.—**For all this I considered in my heart.** Namely, when I applied my heart to know wisdom, chap. viii. 16. "All this" refers to what immediately follows.—**Even to declare all this.** The infinitive construct with **לְבַיֵּר** continues the finite verb, as elsewhere the infinitive absolute; comp. Isa. xxxviii. 20; x. 32, **בְּרַר** equivalent to **כָּרַר** (chap. iii. 18) is found only in this passage in the O. T.—**That the righteous and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God.** That is, wholly dependent on Him, not capable, in any manner, independently to shape their life; so that their best actions may be followed by the saddest fate. Comp. HENGSTENBERG on this passage, who correctly shows that there is affirmed an unconditional dependence, not of human action in itself, but of its results on God.—**No man knoweth either love or hatred.** That is, no man knoweth in advance whether God will grant him love or hatred (*i. e.*, happiness or unhappiness); (MICHAELIS, KNOBEL, VAHINGER, and HENGSTENBERG are correct). Others read: "No man knoweth whether he will love or hate;" [HIRZIG, ELSTER]. But this interpretation is not in harmony with the text, and would give a sense which is foreign alike to the passage and the book, and for which chap. ii. 5 cannot be quoted as proof, as is done by HIRZIG.—**By all that is before them.** That is, not as affirmed by HIERONYMUS, GIEBER, and ROSENUELLER,—all their destinies are clear, and as it were visible before their eyes, but the reverse: all their destinies lie in the dark uncertain future before them; they have yet everything to experience, happiness as well as unhappiness, good as well as evil. Comp. vii. 14, where **אֲחֵרָיו** "behind him" signifies just the same as here

לְפָנֵיהֶם "before them." KNOBEL unnecessarily insists that **כָּל** here means: Everything is before them, everything can occur to them—even great misfortune—a sense that would need to be more clearly indicated by the context than is here the case.—Ver. 2.—**All things come alike to all.** That is, every thing happens to the wise and just as to all others; the just have no special fortune, they share the common fate of all (in this world of course). KNOBEL, EWALD, HEILIGSTEDT, UMBREIT, and HENGSTENBERG correctly take this position, whilst HIRZIG and ELSTER include the following words **מִקְרָה אֶחָד** and so bring out this somewhat obscure and distorted thought: "All are as all, they meet one fate;" but VAHINGER takes **הַכָּל** at the beginning of the verse as an elliptical repetition from ver. 1: "Ye all! Just as all have the same destiny," *etc.*—**There is one event to the righteous and to the wicked.** Not that they are the offspring and the victims of one and the same blind power of chance [HIRZIG], but they are subjected to one and the same divine providence as regards the issue of their life. HENGSTENBERG justly says: "Chance (**מִקְרָה**) just as in iii. 19 (comp. ii. 14, 15), does not form the counterpart to divine providence, but to the spontaneous activity on the part of the just."—**To the good and to the clean and to the unclean.** In order that one may not take clean and unclean in the levitical or externally legal sense, but in the moral sense, the kindred thought of **טוֹב** (good) precedes that of **טָהוֹר** (pure) as explanatory.—**He that sweareth as he that feareth an oath.** That is, the frivolous swearer, and he that considers an oath sacred. That this is the sense is plainly seen in chap. viii. 2, from which passage it appears that it does not enter the author's mind to condemn the oath in general as something immoral. VAHINGER is of opinion that by him that feareth an oath, as by him that does not sacrifice, is meant an Essene, or at least a representative of growing Essenianism. But the designation is by no means clear enough for this; and the one not sacrificing seems clearly to be a wicked contemner of the levitical laws concerning the temple and sacrifices, and not an unreasonably conscientious ascetic in the sense of Essenianism.—Ver. 3.—**This is an evil among all things that are done under**

the sun. **רַע בְּכָל יוֹ** cannot mean the worst of all, *etc.* (ROSENUELLER, VAHINGER) but in the absence of the article before **רַע** (comp. the Song of Solomon i. 8; Jos. xiv. 15, *etc.*), simply bad, evil among all things, or in all things; therefore an evil accompanying and dwelling in every earthly occurrence.—**That there is one event unto all.** Namely, that befalls all. **מִקְרָה** must be taken as in verse 2, and points out, therefore, not what one meets with in life, but its issue, its end. The equal liability of all to death, even the good and the just, is designated by Koheleth as that evil, that evil thing that is mixed with every earthly occurrence: (comp. Rom. v. 14, 21; 1 Cor. xv. 55 f.; Heb. ii. 15). **Yea, also the heart of the sons of**

*[See the text note on this word, and the simple translation of the Vulgate and LXX., which came from the text as it is.—T. L.]

men is full of evil; namely, in consequence of this their liability to the power of death, which, therefore, also in addition exerts a demoralizing effect on them; comp. chap. viii. 11.—**And after that they go to the dead.** The suffix to **אחרי** is to be considered as neuter, (“and after this condition,” comp. Jer. li. 46), not masculine as if the sense were “and after it” (*i. e.*, after this life) as in vi. 12; x. 14. The preposition of motion (**אל** in **אלה הַפְּתִיחַ**) “indicates that the sense of ‘it goes,’ is to complete the sentence,” HIRZIG.

4 *First strophe, conclusion.* Vers. 4-6. In spite of the presentation just given, the condition of the living is ever to be preferred to that of the dead—**For to him that is joined** (ZÖCKLER, taking the reading **בְּחַר** translates it, “who is it that is preferred?”—T. L.). Thus according to the k’tib **בְּחַר**, dual of **בָּחַר** “to choose, prefer,” does VAHINGER more correctly give the sense: “There is no one who would be here preferred and accepted, or who would have a choice, who would be exempted from death; since dying is a common fate; each one must go to the dead; but in death there is nothing more to hope.” In the same way, substantially, does ELSTER translate, except that he punctuates **בְּחַר**, and therefore gives it actively; “For who has any choice?” Many later commentators adhere to the k’ri **בְּחַר**, which the Ixx. read (*τις ὃς κοινωνεῖ πρὸς πάντας τοὺς ζῶντας*) together with SYMMACHUS and the Targum. They translate, therefore, with EWALD, “who is joined to the living has hope,” or, with HIRZIG, interrogatively, “who is it who would be joined to all the living?” But the sense thus arising makes a very forced * connection; and the translation of HAHN, who takes the word **חָבַר** in the sense of “charming,” is open to very weighty linguistic objections.—**To all the living there is hope.** Literally, “for all living,” for all as long as they live. The grammatical expression does not accord with HENGSTENBERG’S interpretation: “One may trust to all living;” for **אל** is used with the verb **בָּטַח** (Ps. iv. 6; xxxi. 7), but not with the substantive **בְּטָחוֹן** for the introduction of the one in whom the confidence is placed. Comp. Job xi. 18.—**For a living dog is better than a dead lion.** For the most contemptible and hateful thing that lives (comp. for the proverbial use of the dog in this relation, 1 Sam. xvii. 43; 2 Sam. ix. 8; Isa. lxvi. 3; Matt. xv. 26; Rev. xxii. 15, *etc.*) is more valuable than the most majestic of all beasts if it is dead; (for the majesty and glory of the lion as the king of beasts, consult Isa. xxxviii. 13; Hosea xiii. 7; Lamentations iii. 10; Job x. 16). This proverb is also known to the Arabs. See GORIUS, *Adag. Cent.* 2, n. 3.

Ver. 5.—**For the living know that they shall die.** The consciousness of the necessity of death, is here presented not as the only, but yet as the characteristic superiority of the living over the dead, just as if only the necessity

of death were the object of human knowledge—an individualizing statement of an ironical and yet most serious nature.—**Neither have they any more reward.** Not that they have had their share (HIRZIG) but that God no longer exercises retributive justice towards them, because they are wanting in conscious, personal life. The fact of a retribution in a world beyond, is only apparently denied here, for the author now sees only the conditions of this world; on the subsequent fate of a spirit returned to God he is for the present entirely silent (chap. xii. 7; comp. xi. 9)—**For the memory of them is forgotten.** So entirely do the dead remain without reward; not even the smallest thing that could profit them here below, not even the preservation of their memory with their posterity, is granted to them. Comp. Ps. xxxi. 12; Job xiv. 21. It is doubtful whether **יָכַר** “memory” is intended to rhyme with the preceding **שָׂכַר** “reward” (as HIRZIG supposes). It is more probable that such a rhyming is made in the following verse between **שָׂכַר** and **שָׂכַר**.—Ver. 6. A continued description of the sad fate of the dead; “from the very beginning with touching depth of tone, a strain of lamentation overpowering the author” (HIRZIG). **Also their love and their hatred and their envy is now perished.** That is, not that they are deprived of the objects of their love, hatred, or envy (KNOBEL), but these sentiments and activities themselves have ceased for them; as **רַפְּאִים** they are destitute of all affections, interests, and exertions, and lead rather a merely seeming life. (ROSENUELLER, HIRZIG). The sad existence of departed souls in School, as described in Job xiv. 11 ff., seems here to hover before the author, just as in ver. 10 below, he expressly speaks of it. It is significant that he denies them love as well as hatred, and would seem thereby to mark their condition as one extremely low.

5. *Second strophe, vers. 7-10.* On account of this superiority of life, compared with the condition of the dead, and the uncertainty of human fate in general, it behooves us to enjoy life cheerfully (vers. 7-9), and to use it zealously in the activity of our vocations (ver. 10).—**Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart.** (Comp. ii. 24; v. 19). This collective triad, “eat, drink, and be merry,” is here, as it were, increased to a quartette; joy being doubly designated, first as it finds its expression in cheerful adornments of the body and appropriate ornament, and then in loving union with a wife.—Wine* is used as a symbol and producer of joy, and also in chap. x. 19; Gen. xxvii. 25; Ps. civ. 15, *etc.* For **בְּלֵב־טוֹב**, “of joyful heart, gay,” comp. 1 Sam. xxv. 38; also chap. vii. 3 of the foregoing.—**For God now accepteth thy works.** That is, not that God finds pleasure in just this eating, drinking, *etc.* (HIRZIG),

*[It may well be said, on the other hand, that the exceedingly forced rendering of ZÖCKLER and VAHINGER show that the common translation “joined, associated,” and the reading **בְּחַר** on which it is grounded, are correct—T. L.]

*[“And merrily drink thy wine.” No where do we find more of the Bacchanalian expression, and yet ZÖCKLER would regard it here as the “innocent and normal use of wine.” (See his comment on x. 19): whilst elsewhere, with no difference of language, it denotes, he says, the “corrupting and licentious use.” The irony of the passage is shown once by comparing it with vii. 2 and ii. 2.—T. L.]

but, thy moral conduct and efforts have long pleased Him,* wherefore thou mayst hope in the future surely to receive thy reward from Him. (HENGSTENBERG correctly takes this position).—Ver. 8. **Let thy garments be always white.** White garments are the expression of festive joy and pure, calm feelings in the soul, comp. Rev. iii. 4 f.; vii. 9 ff. Koheleth could hardly have meant a literal observance of this precept, so that the conduct of Sisinnius, Novatian bishop of Constantinople, who, with reference to this passage, always went in white garments, was very properly censured by Chrysostom as Pharisaical and proud. HENGSTENBERG'S view is arbitrary, and in other respects scarcely corresponds to the sense of the author: "White garments are here to be put on as an expression of the confident hope of the future glory of the people of God, as SPENER had himself buried in a white coffin as a sign of his hope in a better future of the Church."—**And let thy head lack no ointment.** As in 2 Sam. xii. 20; xiv. 2; Isa. lxi. 3; Amos vi. 6; Prov. xxvii. 9; Ps. xlv. 8, so here appears the anointing oil, which keeps the hair smooth and makes the face to shine, as a symbol of festive joy, and a contrast to a sorrowing disposition. There is no reason here for supposing fragrant spikenard (Mark xiv. 2), because the question is mainly about producing a good appearance by means of the ointment, comp. Ps. exxxiii. 2.—Ver. 9. **—Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest.** That is, enjoy life with her, comp. iii. 1; Ps. xxxiv. 12; and also chap. vii. 28, above, to which expression, apparently directed against all intercourse with women, the present one serves as a corrective.—**All the days of the life of thy vanity.** This short repetition of the preceding ("all the days of thy vain life, which he has given thee under the sun") is left out of the *Septuagint* and *Chaldaic*, but is produced in the *Vulgate*, and should be by no means wanting, because it points with emphasis† to the vanity of life as a

*[As there is nothing said about moral conduct in the text, or any other conduct except unrestrained eating and drinking, this remark of ZIEGLER is perfectly gratuitous. If it is to be taken as serious advice of Koheleth, then HIRTZIG'S view is far more logical: "It is just this eating, drinking, &c., that God approves beforehand, so that you can indulge, without any scruple to disturb your sensual joy." How contrary this is to other declarations of Koheleth we have elsewhere shown. How utterly opposed it is to other numerous passages of Scripture need not be pointed out. It is equivalent to saying God will never bring the into judgment" for it, or that He is utterly indifferent. See the Appendix to this Division, p. 134.—T. L.]

†[Ver. 9. "The days of thy vain life," or, more literally, "all the days of the life of thy vanity." The lxx. left out this second mention because they regarded it as a mere repetition. MARTIN GEIER would connect it, not with the former, which he says would be *odiosa repetitio*, but specially with what is said about the wife as indicating that the conjugal relation continues through life, as also the idea, Luke xxvi. 36, that there is no marriage in the other world. Other commentators have, in like manner, been disturbed by it, but it only shows that no amount of piety, or of learning, will fit a man to be a true interpreter of this book without something of the poetic spirit by which it is pervaded. It is not *emphasis* merely, much less an enforced motive to joy, that this repetition gives us, as HIRTZIG and ZIEGLER maintain, but a most exquisite pathos in view of the transitoriness and poverty of life. The style of diction reveals the style of thought, showing how far it is from the Epicurean sentiment of any kind, whether gross or moderate. It is the language of one musing, soliloquizing, full of some touching thought that causes him to linger over his words, and keep their sad music in his ear.

principal motive to joy.—**For that is thy portion in this life and in thy labor, etc.** That is, for this cheerful and moderate enjoyment of life shall, according to the will of God, compensate thee for the toil and labor which this life brings with it; comp. ii. 10; iii. 22; v. 18.—Ver. 10.—**Whosoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might,**

The word קַח is by the *Vulgate* and most modern authors joined to פַּעַל , whilst according to the accents and the collocation, it belongs to what precedes. But it is a vigorous doing, nevertheless, that is here recommended; for the sense is clear: whatsoever presents itself, is to be performed with thy strength, whatsoever offers itself to thee as an object for thy exertion, that do! For the expression, "whosoever thy hand findeth to do," comp. 1 Sam. x. 7; xxiii. 8; Judges ix. 33; also Isa. x. 13, 14.—**For there is no work nor device, etc., in the grave whither thou goest.** comp. ver. 6. As Koheleth gives a motive here in his admonition to an active life, by pointing to the lifeless and inactive condition of departed souls in the realm of death, so speaks Christ in John ix. 4: *ἐμὲ δεῖ ἐργάζεσθαι ἕως ἡμέρας ἵσταν ἐρχεται νῆξ ὅτε οὐδεὶς δύναται ἐργάζεσθαι.* Since the *νῆξ* (night) mentioned in John ix. 4 and elsewhere, is clearly something else than the לַיְלָה of this passage, there is no definite reference to the latter, as HENGSTENBERG affirms, but between the two assertions there is a certain analogy.

There are examples of it in the Greek poets, especially in HOMER, which have led the ancient writers on rhetoric to give it a technical name. Thus PLUTARCH calls it *ἐπαφορά*, and so also the later writer MACROBIUS, *Saturnal.* Lib. iv. 6, more particularly describes it: *Nascitur pathos et de repetitione quam Græci ἐπαναφορὰν vocant, cum sententiæ ab eisdem nominibus iterantur.* "Pathos also comes from repetition, which the Greeks call *επαφορά*, when sentences begin from the same words." It receives some of its best illustrations from passages in the *Iliad*, such as xx. 371, xxiii. 641, and especially xxii. 126, which, though very different from this, in other respects, has the same kind of pathetic repetition. It is Hector soliloquizing in the time of his awful danger from the near approach of Achilles—

ὁ μὲν πῶς νῦν ἔστιν ἀπο δρυὸς οὐδ' ἀπὸ πέτρης,
τὸ δ' ἀρριζέμεναι, ἀπὲ παρθένος ἦθεος τε,
παρθένος—ἦθεος τ' ἀρριζέτορ ἀλλήλοισιν.

No time for such a friendly parley now,
As when from oak and rock, the youth and maid,
The youth and maid, hold parlarce sweet together.

Very different is the sentence of Solomon in its subject matter, but like it in pathos, in the peculiar repetitive diction to which it gives rise, and the musing state of soul from which it flows:

Go then, with gladness eat thy bread, and merrily drink thy wine,

Thy garments ever white, thy head with fragrant oil adorned;

Enjoy with her whom thou dost love, the days of thy vain life.—

The days of thy vain life, the all, that God has given to thee
Beneath the sun.

It is indeed irony, but not that of scorning sarcasm, nor of heartless satire. It is the irony of Scripture, full of a mournful tenderness, taking this as its most impressive form of serious admonition. Interpreted in its spirit, and even by what is rhetorically revealed upon its face, there is no contradiction between it and vii. 2; 3; ii. 2; and other passages in this book that represent sobriety, and even sadness, as morally and spiritually better for man than mirth. We have dwelt more fully on these topics, and at the hazard of some repetition, in the extended excursus on the alleged Epicureanism of Koheleth, p. 131. It has been done, because no ideas suggested by the book seemed more important in their bearing upon its thorough interpretation.—T. L.]

6. *Third strophe, Introduction.* Vers 11 and 12. Human actions in this world depend entirely on divine fate, and their success, therefore, is too often in no comparison with the real ability and strength of the actor.—**I returned.**—Comp. chap. iv. 1. For the infinitive absolute **הָרָץ** comp. chap. viii. 9.—**That the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.** These remarks serve only to illustrate what follows: “Neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill.” **יָצַד** favor, as in Ex. iii. 22; xi. 3; xii. 36, etc.—**But time and chance happeneth to them all**—That is, the success of human actions depends wholly on that higher power which controls the change of seasons, and permits men to be met sometimes by this, sometimes by that (**וַיִּבֶן**) which “happens, meets;” (comp. 1 Kings v. 18). A New Testament parallel is found in Rom. ix. 16, where, instead of time and chance, divine mercy is called the highest power in all human affairs.—Ver. 12. **For man also knoweth not his time.** A conclusion, *a majori ad minus*. “Even over his time itself, over his person and his life, to say nothing of his actions (ver. 11), there is a controlling power outside of him” (HITZIG). The “time” of a man is here clearly equivalent to the time of his destruction; as elsewhere the “day,” of Job xviii. 20; or the “hour,” Job xii. 27; Mark xiv. 41. Comp. also chap. vii. 17 preceding.—**As the fishes that are taken.** For net, and noose, and trap, as symbols of the judgments overtaking men, comp. Ilosea vii. 12; Ezek. xii. 13; xxxii. 3; Prov. vii. 23; Luke xxi. 35.—**So are the sons of men snared.** **וַיִּקָּשׂוּ** Part. Pual see Ew. § 169. d. The word strikingly represents the helpless condition of men in the presence of divine destiny, that can put an end to their life at any moment, as the fowler who suddenly robs of its life the bird caught in the snare. An allusion to the catastrophe threatened to the Persian kingdom by a new universal monarchy, the Macedonian, is not found in the passage, as HENGSTENBERG supposes.

7. *Third strophe. Conclusion.* Vers. 13-16. In spite of that dependence of human destiny and success on a higher power, which often violently interferes with them, wisdom remains, nevertheless, a valuable possession, still able to effect great results with inconsiderable means of an external character, as is seen in the example of a poor and despised man, who, by his wisdom, became the deliverer of his native city from threatening danger of destruction. Whether this example is a purely feigned didactic story (thus think HENGSTENBERG, LUTHER, MERCERUS, STARKE, *et al.*), or whether it refers to an historical fact within the experience of the author, must remain uncertain, on account of the general character of the description; and this so much the more so, because the only passage that could seem to refer to a definite fact from Persian history (ver. 15) is of doubtful exposition.—**This wisdom have I seen also under the sun.** (ZÜCKLEN, this have I

seen as wisdom). The words **וְהָיָה רָצוֹנִי** **וְהָיָה** must clearly be thus translated (comp. the similar construction in chap. vii. 25), not, “thus also saw I wisdom,” *etc.* (thus usually), or, “this also have I seen: wisdom,”* *etc.* (as HITZIG renders it,) changing **וְהָיָה** into **וָהָיָה**—**And it seemed great unto me,** *i. e.* it appeared large, comp. Jonah iii. 3.—Ver. 14.—**There was a little city, and few men within it.** That is, not few inhabitants in general, but few fighting men available for defence—a circumstance which shows the danger of the city to be so much greater, and the merits of its deliverer to be so much more brilliant.—**And there came a great king against it.** We cannot deduce from the expression that the great king was the Persian; because the predicate **נָוֶל** attributed to the hostile king serves mainly to show the contrast to the smallness of the city, and the great size of the army led against it.—**And built great bulwarks against it.** **מִצֹּרִים** (from **מִצֹּר** “an instrument for seizure,” hence sometimes a “net;” *e. g.* vii. 26) is here used only in the signification of bulwarks, and must therefore not here be confounded with the more customary **מִצֹּרִים** (Deut. xx. 20; Micah iv. 14), as two manuscripts here read.—Ver. 15. **Now there was found in it a poor wise man.** Literal, “one found in it,” impersonal—not, “he, the king found.”—**Yet no man remembered that same poor man.** [ZÜCKLER renders in the pluperfect “had remembered,” *etc.*, and then makes it the ground of the remarks that follow.—T. L.] We can neither urge against this plu-

perfect rendering of **וְאָרְסוּ לֹא זָכְרוּ** the circumstance that the one in question is here designated as **אִישׁ כְּסֵלָן** and not as **חָכָם** (for the predicate poor is clearly to point out why they did not remember him—), nor also the contents of the following verse. For in it the emphasis lies upon the commendation of wisdom contained in the first clause, not on the subsequent restrictive remark concerning the contempt and disregard that it often meets with. VALHINGER is correct in his deviation from HITZIG, EWALD, ELSTER, and most modern authors, who, like the *Fulgate* and LUTHER, translate: “no man remembered.” As certain as this sense, according to which the discussion would be concerning a deliverer of his country, rewarded with the ingratitude of his fellow-citizens, is approached neither through language nor connection, just so certainly may we not (with EWALD and some ancient authors) here find an allusion to Themistocles as deliverer

*[A much clearer sense, and better adapted to the whole spirit of the passage, is obtained by taking **וְהָיָה רָצוֹנִי** in the concrete, like the Greek **τὸ σοφόν**, for a wise thing, a problem, a mystery, something that requires wisdom to explain it. Such use of it, though not common elsewhere in the Hebrew, is justified by the perfectly parallel Greek idiom, and by what is demanded to represent the peculiar thinking of this book. The mystery, puzzle, **τὸ σοφόν**, **φιλοσόφημα**, **ζήτημα**, *inquiry*, is the curious case which he is going to state. The use of **וְהָיָה רָצוֹנִי**, chap. vii. 25, is quite dissimilar. This view is confirmed by what follows, “and it seemed great to me.”—T. L.]

of Athens from the hand of Xerxes; and this latter so much the less because Athens could scarcely have been designated by the author as *עָרֵי הַיָּם*. HIRTZ is of opinion that the besieged city is the little sea port Dora, vainly besieged by Antiochus the Great in the year 218 (Polyb. v. 66); but nothing is known of the deliverance of this city by a "poor wise man," and for many reasons the epoch of this book cannot be brought down to so late an era as that of Antiochus Magnus. Comp. the Introduction, § 4, Obs. 3.—Ver. 16. The moral of the story, is given in the words of Koheleth uttered immediately after he had heard it.—**Then said I, wisdom is better than strength.** Comp. similar sentences in chap. vii. 19; Prov. xiv. 29; xvi. 32; xxi. 22; xxiv. 5.—**Nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised.** These words, which again limit the praise of wisdom expressed above, depend also on the expression, "Then said I." They refer, according to ver. 15, to the fact that in the beginning no one had thought of the wisdom of that deliverer of the city—and not even of the ingratitude afterwards shown to him, or of not having followed his wise counsels (which latter view however would be in antagonism with ver. 15, according to which the sorely pressed city was really delivered).

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

(With Homiletical Hints.)

As the previous section contained a series of ethical precepts with an anthropological foundation (similar to the one preceding it) so is this one a combination of *theological* and ethical truths, which the author lays to the heart of his readers. And it is especially the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of the decrees and judgments of God, and of the hidden character of His universal rule that the author treats, and from which he derives the duties of a cheerful enjoyment and use of the blessings of life (ix. 7-9) of an untiring activity (ix. 10) and of continued striving after practical wisdom as a possession that is valuable under all circumstances. The contents are therefore similar to those of chap. iii., only that there the principal thought is of the conditioning and restrictive character of the divine counsels and acts of universal rule; here, on the contrary, the prominent idea is their hidden and unsearchable nature (Rom. ix. 33; 1 Cor. xiii. 12). This section is also in close relation with chap. vi., especially in regard to its ethical and practical precepts (comp. ix. 9, with vi. 12; ix. 14, with vi. 8; ix. 1-6, with vi. 2-6, etc.), only that from the former, the conclusions drawn are mainly serious and gloomy, while from the latter they are predominantly cheerful.

Homily on the whole section. The thought of the brevity of human life, and the obscurity of that which awaits us in it, should not discourage but impel us to a ready and cheerful use of the blessings granted us here below, as well as of the powers for a truly wise exertion; or more briefly: Of the blessing and value of reflections concerning death, as an impulse to the zealous fulfilment of the vocations of life.

HOMILETICAL HINTS TO SEPARATE PASSAGES.

Chap. viii. 16, 17. **HIERONYMUS**:—He shows that there are causes for all things, why each thing should thus be, and that there is righteousness in all, though they may be latent and beyond the comprehension.—**ZEYSS**: a Christian should neither show himself negligent in investigating the works of God, nor too curious.—**HANSEN**: God's works that He performs among the children of men have eternity in view, and nothing short of eternity will open up to us their inner perfection, Rev. xv. 3.—**BERLENB. BIBLE**:—O ye poor blind men, who think to fathom by your wisdom the cause of divine providences; ye are indeed greatly deceived! You condemn everything that surpasses our understanding, when you should rather confess that these things are so much the more divine, the more they surpass your comprehension. The more trouble you take to fathom the secrets of wisdom by your own study, so much the less do you attain your goal. The true test that a man possesses genuine wisdom, is when he is assured that he cannot comprehend the mysteries of God as He deals with souls.—**HENGSTENBERG**:—Blessed is the man who accepts without examination all that God sends him, in the firm trust that it is right, however wrong it may appear, and that to those who love God all things must be for the best.

Chap. ix. 1-3. **BRENZ** (ver. 1):—There are those whom God loves and whom He hates. For He does not cast off the whole human race, though He might justly do so; neither does He embrace all men in His favor; but to some He deigns to grant His mercy, whilst others He leaves to their own destruction. There is, however, no one who can know by any external sign, whom God receives or rejects.—(Ver. 2, 3). Whoever in faith looks into the word of God may easily know that, though the wicked may now seem to have the same fortune with the pious, there shall come, at last, a clear discrimination between the good and the bad, adjudging the one class to eternal punishment, the others to the happiness of everlasting life.—**GEIER** (ver. 2, 3). We cannot judge of the condition of the dead after this life, by our reason, but only by its accordance with the revealed word of God.—**HANSEN**:—We are to ascribe it to the peculiarities of this present life, if the just suffer with the wicked; Sirach xl. 1 ff.

ZEYSS:—A child of God should love this life not on account of temporal prosperity, but for the honor of God, and the welfare of his neighbor. **CRAMER**:—So long as the wicked lives, it is better for him than if he is dead, since he has yet time to repent. But when he is dead then all hope for him is lost. **STARKE**:—Atheists live in the foolish delusion that after death all is over and that the soul ceases with the death of the body; but they will receive the most emphatic contradiction on the great day of judgment.

Vers. 7-10. **LUTHER** (ver. 7):—You live in a world where there is nothing but sorrow, misery, grief, and death, with much vanity: therefore use life with love, and do not make your own life sour and heavy with vain and anxious cares.—Solomon does not say this to the secure and wick-

ed children of the world, but to those truly fearing and believing God. These latter he consoles, and desires that they may cheerfully take comfort in God. To the former He says rejoice, but does not bid those to drink wine, eat, *etc.*, who are but too much inclined to do so, and pass their lives in idleness and voluptuousness as wicked and depraved men.

ZEVS (ver. 7):—The believers have more claim to the gifts of God than the unbelievers (1 Cor. iii. 21, 22), although they may enjoy them the least.—(ver. 9). Marriage is a sacred and wise ordinance of God; therefore the Christian may use it with a good conscience; but it must be enjoyed in the fear of God, Eph. v. 31. **STARKE** (ver. 8):—Arrogance, pride, and display in dress are very common vices in these latter times: the children of God find it very difficult to suppress these in themselves.—(ver. 10). The obligations that you owe to the body, you owe doubly to the soul. O man neglect not the labor due to thy soul; the night of death is coming when no one can work.—**CRAMER** (ver. 10):—We should perform the work of our calling with a resolute and confident spirit, and never hesitate in our charge.—**HENGSTENBERG** (ver. 10):—That we should do all that lies in our power is required by the facts that what we leave undone here below is never done, that the tasks placed upon us by God for this life, and which here remain unperformed, never find their performance, and that the gifts and powers conferred on us for this life must be used in this life.

Vers. 11 and 12. **TÜBINGEN BIBLE**:—Even in temporal things it does not depend upon any one's will or movements, but only on God's mercy. Everything is derived from God's blessing.—**STARKE** (ver. 12):—By his skill man can calculate the rising and setting of the sun; but human wisdom does not extend so far that one can tell when the sun of his life will rise or set.—**HENGSTENBERG**:—If it seems sad with the people of God when the world triumphs, let us reflect that such result does not depend on the might, or the weakness of men; and that a sudden catastrophe may overwhelm the highest, and cast him to the ground. Have we God for our friend? it all comes to that as the only thing that can decide.

Ver. 13-16. **MELANCHTHON**:—Such a poor man, in a city, was Jeremiah, as he himself writes, a man who saved the church in the midst of disorder and confusion. At the same time the precept admonishes us that good counsels are listened to by the few, whilst the worst please the many. And thus he says; The poor man's wisdom is despised.—**CARTWRIGHT**:—Wisdom, however splendid, if in lowly state, is so obscured by the cloud of poverty that in a brief time it has all eyes averted, and utterly falls from the memory.

CRAMER:—Thou shouldst laud no one on account of his high estate, and despise no one on account of his low estate. For the bee is a very little creature, and yet gives the sweetest fruit.—**STARKE**:—The heart of man is by nature so corrupt that to its own injury it is inclined to run after folly, and be disobedient to wisdom.—But true wisdom always finds those who know and love her. Though a wise man may for a

time dwell in obscurity, he will nevertheless be drawn forth from it before he is aware. Wisdom of Solomon x. 13, 14.

APPENDIX.

[I. KOHELETH'S IDEA OF THE DEAD.—Chap. ix. 5:—

The living know that they must die, the dead they nothing know;
For them there is no more reward—forgotten is their name;
Their love, their hate, their zeal, all perished now;
Whilst the world lasts, no portion more have they
In all the works performed beneath the sun.

STUART thinks that the Preacher "claims small merit for the living, merely the knowledge that they must die." "Is this," he asks, "better than not knowing any thing?" He argues, besides, that there is an inconsistency in such a view, made greater by the fact that this praise of life is one of the cheering passages, whereas such declarations as vii. 1; iv. 2-3 are from the desponding mood. Is not this, however, a mistake? The language here is gloomy, if not wholly desponding. Koheleth is perplexed and bewildered as he contemplates the apparent state of the dead, especially as it presents itself to the *sense*, inactive, motionless, silent, unheeding. He turns to the living, and surveys their condition, so full of vanity, with only the superiority of a little knowledge, one important element of which is a knowledge that this vanity must come to an end. It is just the survey that would give rise to that touching irony already spoken of, that mournful smile at human folly, in which a just contempt is blended with deepest sympathy.—an irony, not sneering, but tenderly compassionate, such as we find in some other Scriptures. As, for example, in Gen. iii. 22, where God is represented as ironically repeating the words of Satan, but in a spirit how different from that of the fiend! Ah, poor wretch! he knows it now, the difference between good and evil! See Gen., p. 240. So here, as though he had said, "Alas, their boasted knowledge! They know that they must die,—this is the substance of it, the remotest bound to which their science reaches." There is something of the same feeling in what is here affirmed of the state of the dead. It gloomily contemplates only the physical aspect, or the physical side of death, such as presents itself, sometimes, to the Christian, without any feeling of inconsistency, and without impairing that hope of future life which he possesses in a higher degree than Koheleth. We may even say that it is good for us, occasionally, to fix our minds on this mere physical aspect of our frail humanity.

O when shall spring visit the mouldering urn?
O when shall day dawn on the night of the grave?

It was not an infidel, but a devout believer, that wrote this. And so, too, there may be, at times, a sort of melancholy pleasure in thinking of death mainly in its aspect of repose from the toils and anxieties of the present stormy life; as in that mournful dirge so often sung at funerals—

Unveil thy bosom, faithful tomb;
Take this new treasure to thy trust;
And give these sacred relics room
To slumber in the silent dust.

Nor pain, nor grief, nor anxious fear,
 Inva'de thy bounds; no mortal woes
 Can reach the peaceful sleeper here.

We feel no inconsistency between such strains, even when they assume a more sombre aspect, and that brighter view which the Christian takes in contemplating the spiritual side of our strange human destiny, or even as it sometimes presented itself to the Old Testament believer (Ps. xvi. 11; xvii. 15; lxxiii. 24). They no more jar upon our speculative theology than the language of our Saviour, John ix. 4: "The night cometh, when no man can work" [comp. Ecclesiastes ix. 10; xi. 8], or that touching language of the New Testament which represents death under the soothing conception of a sleep—*κοιμησας*—a lying down to rest. This term is not confined to the body, as the best exegesis would show, but would seem to denote also a most blessed state of quiescence for the spirit,—a state rudimental, imperfect, unfinished, anomalous, preparatory, yet most *secure*,—tranquil, yet not torpid—inactive, yet not inert—a holy conscious rest, a lying "under the shadow of the Almighty,"—separate from the present world, away from all its busy doings, if not from all its memories, and thus cradled again, nursed and educated, we may say, for that higher finished life, when death shall be fully conquered. He is the last and greatest enemy [1 Cor. xv. 26] who, until that time, retains some dominion over all humanity,—even over those "who sleep in Jesus," or "through Jesus," as it should be rendered,—the saved, or rather, the being saved [present participle, *ὁ σωζόμενος*] the being healed, or made alive, as the Syriac has it, those in whom the redemptive life of Christ is overcoming death, and growing to the matured and perfect life of eternity. For it is clear, even from the New Testament, that this "state of death," or reign of death, still continues, in a certain sense, and in a certain degree, until the resurrection. Its power is over all men, an I over the whole man, soul and body, although for the Christian, whose "life is hid with Christ in God" [Col. iii. 3], its sting is taken quite away. There is no mistaking the language, 1 Cor. xv. 54: *ὅταν δὲ τὸ φθαρτὸν τοῦτο ἐνδύσῃται ἀφθαρσίαν κ. τ. λ.* It is only when this corruption puts on incorruption, and this mortal puts on immortality, that there is brought to pass the saying, "*Death is swallowed up in victory.*" Till then, Death and Hades go together. One is but the continuation of the other. Being in Hades is being in the kingdom of the dead. Till then, the Old Testament idea still holds of death, not as extinction, non-existence, or *not being* [see Genesis, Notes, pp. 273, 586], but as a *state*, a state of positive being, though strange and inexplicable,—a state of continued personality, real though undefined, utterly unknown as to its condition, or only conceived of negatively as something that differs, in almost every respect, from the present active, planning, toiling, pleasure-grasping, knowledge-seeking life "beneath the sun." That there is something strange about it, something difficult to be thought, is intimated in our Saviour's language respecting the Old Testament saints, Luke xx. 38. *πάντες γὰρ αὐτῷ ἔδσαν*, "for they all live unto Him" [unto God],—as though what was called their life was something out of

them, and could only be made dimly conceivable to us by this remarkable language. Compare the Jewish expression as we find it, 1 Sam. xxv. 29, and as it is interpreted and often quoted by Rabbinical writers, *צְרִיכָה בְּצִוּרוֹ הַחַיִּים* "bound up in the bundle of life with Jehovah thy God," or as the Vulgate renders it—*anima custodita quasi in fasciculo viventium apud Dominum Deum tuum*.

There is yet a reserve to the doctrine of the immediate after life, still a veil cast over it, we may reverently say, even in the New Testament. The most modern notions of a sudden transition to the highest Heavens, and to the perfect life, are, perhaps, as far to the one extreme, as the descriptions of mortality which Koheleth gives us, in his gloomy mood, may be in the other. This idea of the dead passing straightway into a busy active state of existence, in these respects resembling the present life, with its proud talk of progress, was unknown to the early Church, as its liturgies and funeral hymns most evidently show. See especially the earliest Syriac hymns, much of whose language the modern notions would render almost unintelligible. Christ has indeed "brought immortality to light," but it is chiefly by the doctrine of the resurrection, that great article so clear in the New Testament, though having its shadow in the Old. But there is another doctrine there, however little it is studied. We are taught that there was a *work of Christ in Hades*. He descended into Hades; he makes proclamation [*ἐκήρυξεν*] in Hades (1 Pet. iii. 19) to those who are there "in ward." He is our Christian Hermes, belonging to both worlds. He is the *ψυχάγωγος*, the conductor and guide of redeemed spirits in Hades, the "*Shepherd and Bishop of souls*" (1 Pet. ii. 15), the "*Good Shepherd*" (Ps. xxiii.), who leads his spiritual flock beside the *still waters*, in the *Getzalmareth*, the "valley of the death shade," or *terro umbrarum*, and, at the same time, the great High Priest above, to whom is "given all power in Heaven and in earth." He is the *מלאך המוות* the Redeeming Angel of the Old Testament, to whom the righteous committed their spirits [Ps. xxxi. 6] and the Mediator more clearly revealed in the New.

The doctrine of the *immediate after life*, as we have said, has still a shadow cast upon it. We should not, therefore, wonder to find Koheleth still more under the veil. His very language implies *continuance of being*, in some way, although presenting a state of inactivity, and, in a word, a want of all participation in the doings and even memories of the present "life beneath the sun." It did not fall in the way of his musing to speak of differences, in this state, between the "righteous and the wicked;" but, in other passages of the Old Testament, it appears more clear, though still barely hinted, as in Prov. xiv. 32; Ps. lxxiii. 20; xlix. 15. It is a state in which the one is "driven away," whilst the other "has hope." Elsewhere, however [iii. 17; xii. 13, 14], Koheleth affirms his strong belief that at some time, and in some way, the two classes will be judged, and the difference between them most clearly manifested.

In the rhythmical version of ix. 10, *חֲכָכָה*

is rendered *philosophy*, because the writer seems, in this place, to take it in its more pretentious sense, or for human wisdom in distinction from the Divine,—speculative inquiry.—very much as Paul uses *σοφία*, sometimes, in the New Testament. And so, perhaps, we would come nearer to the intended force of the other word *תְּבוּנָה* by rendering *science*, although not exactly corresponding to it in the most modern acceptation of the term. It is Paul's *γνώσις*, “curious knowledge,”—not mere knowing, as consciousness, whether Koheleth held to any such consciousness or not. Comp. it with *תְּבוּנָה* (*plan, reckoning*) in immediate connection. So, too, even when speaking of the perfect psychological state (1 Cor. xiii. 8) Paul says of *knowledge* (*γνώσις*), *καταργηθήσεται*—not, “it shall cease,” as rendered, but “it shall be deposed”—put one side—no longer made the highest thing, as in this fallen life, where the intellectual is placed above the moral nature. In the blessed and perfect life to come, moral or spiritual contemplation, pervaded by *ἀγάπη*, shall be the highest exercise of the soul. Even the intermediate state is to be regarded as superior to the present existence in ontological rank, and the terms *embryotic* or *rudimental*, if applied to it, must be taken simply as denoting a formative state of repose, preparatory to the more glorious life that follows.—T. L.]

[II. THE ALLEGED EPICUREANISM OF KOHELETH. NOTE on chap. ix. 7-10, in connection with chap. xi. 9, 10. These passages have given rise to much comment. Stuart, with many others, regards the first of them as expressing the real advice which Koheleth would give in regard to the conduct of life, and then says: “In all this there is nothing Epicurean.” What then is Epicureanism? Or how shall we distinguish? It would seem to be almost too sober a word. The language here used may almost be characterized as Anacreontic: “Eat with joy thy bread, and drink with mirth thy wine,—thy garments always white, and oil ne'er lacking to thy head:”

Πίνωμεν, ὃ πίνωμεν—
Τὸ ῥόδον τὸ καλλιφύλλον
Κροτάφοισιν ἀρμόσαντες.

How, then, shall we avoid what seems to be on the very face of the passage? It will not do to resort to any special interpretation on account of a mere exigentia loci; although it might, with perfect truth, be said, that such Anacreontic advice is not only contrary to all the more serious portions of the Scriptures, Old and New, but also to the deeply solemn views in regard to human vanities, and the great awaiting judgment, that Koheleth himself has, in other places, so clearly expressed. All this outward argument, however, would not justify us in calling it irony, unless there were some internal evidence, something in the very style of the passage which called for such a conclusion. A careful examination, made in the spirit of the whole book, shows that there are such internal grounds of criticism. It was a feeling of this that led Jerome, the most judicious of the Patristic commentators, to call it a *προσωποποιία*, a *personification*, or dramatizing, *more rictorum et poetarum*, or what the Jewish

critics (see p. 71) called “the case speaking.” the language of human life and human actions, in view of the pure earthliness of its condition. It is the language of the author so far as he puts himself forth as the representative of such a despairing state: *quasi dixerit, O homo qui ergo, post mortem nihil es, dum vivis in hac brevi vita fruere voluptate, etc.*: “O man since, after death, thou art nothing, then, whilst thou livest thy short life, enjoy pleasure, indulge in feasts, drown thy cares in wine, go forth adorned in raiment ever white (a sign of perpetual joy), let fragrant odors be ever breathing from thy head; take thy joy in female loveliness (*quæcumque tibi placerent feminarum, ejus gaude complexu, et vanam hanc et brevem vitam vana et brevi voluptate percurrere*) and in brief pleasure pass this thy brief life of vanity.” *etc.* He then represents Koheleth as retracting all this in the passage immediately following, where he says, “I turned again, and saw that the race was not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor wealth to the prudent, *etc.*” in other words, that thus to live in joy was not in man's power, but that all things happened as they were disposed by God: *Hæc, aliquis inquit, loquatur Epicurus et Aristippus, et ceteri pecudes philosophorum, ego autem (inquit Koheleth) necum diligenter retractans, invenio non est velocium cursus, nec fortium prælium, etc., etc.*

There are two things in the passage itself that lead the serious reader to such a feeling, and such a view of its ironical, or, rather, its dramatic character. The first is the exuberance of the language, its extravagance, its Bacchanalian style, we might almost call it, inconsistent with, or certainly not demanded by, such a moderate, rational, sober view, or such a sober advice to live a contented life, as Stuart contends for, or, in other words, a judicious, virtuous Epicureanism. The joy so oft repeated, the mirth, the wine, the white raiment, the aromatic oils—what has such superlativeness of style to do with such a moderate, sober purpose? It was no more needed than the language which Euripides (*Alcestis* 800) puts into the mouth of Hercules when playing the Bacchanalian, and which this Solomonic irony so closely resembles:—

Εὐφρανε σαντόν, πίνε τὸν καθ' ἡμέραν
Βίον λογιζοῦ σὸν τὰ δ' ἄλλα τῆς τύχης.
Τίμα δὲ καὶ τὴν πλείστον ἡδίστην θεῶν.
Οὐκ οὖν, μεθ' ἡμῶν, τὴν λύπην ἀφείψ, πηρ,
Στεφανοῖς πυκασθεῖς κ. τ. λ.

Make glad thy heart, drink wine, the life to-day
Regard thine own: all else belongs to chance.
In high esteem hold Love's delightful power.
In social joy indulge—with chaplets crowned;
And drive dull care away.

Hear Koheleth:

Go then and eat with joy thy bread, and drink with mirth thy wine,
In every season be thy garments white,
And fragrant oil be never lacking to thy head;
Live joynt with the wife whom thou hast loved.

The one kind of language seems but the echo of the other. If we disregard the spirit and the design of Koheleth, there is an Epicurean zest in his description, not surpassed, to say the least, by that of Euripides. We may say, too, on the other hand, that it is not easy to distinguish his language, and the spirit of it, from that of Paul in his quotation, 1 Cor. xv. 32: “Let us eat and

drink, for to-morrow we die." If it be said that the context there makes it impossible for us to mistake the Apostle's ironical meaning, the same may be said in respect to the writer who tells us, only a short distance back,

Better to visit sorrow's house, than seek the banquet hall;
Better is grief than mirth;
For in the sadness of the face the heart becometh fair.

It is the very nature of rhetorical irony, especially if it be the irony of sorrowful warning, to paint the thing in higher colors, we may say, than would suit its description in a more direct and didactic admonition. Had it been a piece of Isocratean moralizing in commendation of a moderate, contented, frugal, and thankful enjoyment of life, it would naturally have been in a lower and calmer strain. The wine, the odors, the splendid raiment, would have been all wanting. They are just the points in the picture, however, to make an impression on the serious mind when it is felt to be a description of the vanity of life. We may even say that they are just the things that lead to such a feeling.

The second internal evidence showing the true character of this passage, is the feeling of sorrow, which, amidst all its apparent joyousness, the writer cannot suppress. We have called it irony, but the irony of the Bible is not only serious, but sometimes most tender. Whilst, then, the language here criticised is not the mere worldly advice that Stuart and others would represent, neither is it, on the other hand, the hard irony of sarcasm, or of un pitying satire. Koheleth's thoughts of death, and its awful unknown, have depressed his faith, and there seems to have come over him a feeling akin to despair. His idea of God's justice, and of some great destiny, or world, over and encompassing the present, is not lost—for it reappears strongly afterwards—but, for the moment, the thought of man, as he is seen in the earthly state, becomes predominant, and he breaks out in this strain, in which pity is a very manifest element. "Go then and enjoy thy poor life." There is strong feeling in it, a most tender compassion, and this shows itself in that touching mention of the transient human state, and, especially, in the pathetic repetition of the words

The days of thy vain life,—that life
Which God hath given to thee beneath the sun;
Yea, all thy days of vanity.

This plaintive tone is utterly inconsistent with the Epicurean interpretation, however moral and decent we may strive to make it.

Again, there are two arguments against such a view that may be said to be outside of the passage itself, though one of them is derived from another place in the book. First—in chap. xi. 9, 10, we have a strain so precisely similar, in style and diction, that we cannot help regarding it as possessing the same rhetorical character. It may be thus given metrically, yet most literally, and with the full force of every Hebrew word:

Rejoice O youth in childhood; let thy heart
Still cheer thee in the day when thou art strong;
Go on in every way thy will shall choose,
And after every form thine eyes behold.

It is not easy to mistake the character of this,

even if it were not followed by that most impressive warning:

But know that for all this, thy God will thee to judgment bring;
O then turn sorrow from thy soul, keep evil from thy flesh;
For childhood and the morn of life, they, too, are vanity.

Here the caution is clearly expressed, although we feel that such expression is just what the previous words, rightly comprehended in their spirit, would have led us to expect. Rhetorically regarded, such an addition would have been exactly adapted to this place (ix. 7-10). It would have been in harmony with the tone of what had gone before. It is, however, so suggested by the whole spirit of the passage, and especially by that irrepressible tone of commiseration that appears in the words before cited (the pathetic allusion to our poor vain life), that it may well be a question whether any such distinct warning, or any mere moralizing utterance, could have had more power than the "expressive silence" which leaves it wholly to the feeling and conscience of the reader.

The passage xi. 9, 10, is so important in itself, and has such a bearing on the one before us, as to justify its fuller interpretation in this place. Many modern commentators regard these verses also as a *serious* advice to the young man, if the term *serious* could, with any propriety, be applied to such an admonition. The older commentators, however, are mostly the other way. They regarded the passage as indeed most *serious*, but as having this character from its sharp yet mournful irony. So GEIER says: "*magnam interpretum partem hæc verba imperativa ironice accipere.*" Among these were Kimchi, Munsterus, Mercurus, Drusius, Junnius, Piscator, Cartwright, Cajetan, Vatablus, Ar. Montanus, Osorius, Mariana, Menoch, Pineda, Jac. Mathiæ, and others, among whom may be reckoned Tremellius, if we may judge from the tone and style of his Latin translation. Luther was the other way, and it may be said that he has given the tone to many that have come after him, evangelical as well as rationalist. "This is said seriously by Solomon," he tells us, "*de licita juventutis hilaritate*, concerning the permitted joyfulness of youth, which ought not to be unbridled, or lascivious, but restrained within certain limits." But what right has he to say this? What limits are assigned? The language seems wholly without limitations, or reserve: "Walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes," terms which every where else in the Hebrew Scriptures are used, in *malam partem*, to denote sensual and ungodly conduct; as in Numb. xv. 39: "Ye shall not go (roam) אַחֲרַי לְבַנְנֶם וְאַחֲרַי אַחֲרַי אַחֲרַי" after your own heart, and after your eyes." Compare also the frequent phrase לְבַרְרֹת לֵב, commonly rendered "the imagination of the heart," but really meaning the *turnings* (choices) of the heart,—doing as one pleases. See Deut. xxix. 18; Ps. lxxxii. 13 where it is synonymous with לֵכוּ בְּכֹל עֲצוֹת יְהוָה, "walking in their own counsels," also Jerem. ix. 13, and other places. Compare especially Job xxxi. 7, where, for "the heart to follow the eye" is placed among the grievous sins, being regarded, in fact, as the very fountain-head of

sin: אִם אַחַר עֵינַי הִלֵּךְ לִבִּי. "if my heart hath gone after mine eyes," the *will* (the conscience) after the *choice*, the *velle* after the *optare*, the *voluntas* after the *voluptas*. "Walk in the way of thine heart;" what an admonition this to a young man, even if such a one ever needed an exhortation to hilarity, or to the following of his own pleasure! How strange, too, as coming from one who, in other parts of this book, talks so differently: "Better the house of mourning than the house of feasting;" "I said of laughter it is mad, of mirth, O what availeth it!" Compare it with the repeated charge of Solomon, in the Proverbs, to restrain the young man—not to let him go after the imaginations of his heart, to put a bridle on him (חַנֵּךְ Prov. xxii. 6), and "bow down his neck in his youth." The language here is peculiar, and each word must be sharply looked to: "Go on" (it is הִלֵּךְ, the piel intensive) "keep going, in the ways (all the ways, in the plural, every way) of thine heart," וּבְכִרְאֵי עֵינֶיךָ (the k'tib is undoubtedly right) and in (or after) the forms of thine eyes." The word בְּרִאָה is so frequently used of female beauty (see the phrase פֶּתַח בְּרִאָה Gen. xii. 11, and other places) that the idea is at once suggested here; and what a contrast then to our Saviour's teaching, that even to look is sin. What a contrast, we may say, is the whole of it thus considered, to what Christ says about the broad way, and to St. John's most emphatic language (1 Epist. ii. 16) respecting "the lust of the eye," the desire of the eye, τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν τῶν ἀσθαλιμῶν! If we give the phrase the more general rendering, "the sight of the eyes (sight objectively) it would come to the same thing. It would be a license to follow every form of beauty. There might be urged, too, the contrast between it (thus regarded as serious advice even in the most decent sense that could be given to it) and Paul's counsel for young men, Titus ii. 6, τοῖς νεωτέροις παρακάλει σωφροσύνην, "exhort them to be sober," temperate, sound-minded, having reason and conscience ruling over appetite and desire. How unlike, too, the Psalmist's direction exix. 9, "Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way,—by taking heed thereto (לְשֹׁמֵר), by watching it, according to Thy word." How utterly opposed to this is the unlimited advice to the young man "to walk in the way of his heart," that is, to do as he pleases. Luther feels the force of this contrast, for he says in the same comment, when he comes to speak of the words וְחָךְ בְּרַכְּכִי לִבֵּךְ "walk in the ways of thine heart," *fecit hic locus ut talem hunc textum ironiam esse putarem, quia ferme in meliorem partem sonat, siquis incedat in via cordis sui*: "This place would make me think that the whole text was irony, because the phrase 'to walk in the way of one's heart,' is so generally taken in a bad sense." But, after all, he goes on to say that we must abide by the general idea of the passage (as he had taken it) and suppose the necessary limitations. Very few commentators have had a clearer perception than Luther of the general sense of the Scripture, but in regard to such passages as these he is not to be implicitly trusted.

He was of a very jovial disposition; but what chiefly led him to such interpretations, here and elsewhere in this book, was his aversion to some of the more austere dogmas, as well as practices of Romanism, and especially his dislike of asceticism, as exhibited by the Monks. Hence he allowed himself too much to be driven towards the opposite extreme. Thus in his commenting on the words בְּכִרְאֵי עֵינֶיךָ, "in the sight of thine eyes," he boldly says, *quod offertur oculis tuis hoc frueri, ne fias similis Monachorum, etc.*: "what-ever is offered to your eyes, that freely enjoy, lest you become like the monks who would not have one even look at the sun." And so in the beginning of the passage, ver. 9: *non prohibet juvenilitates sive voluptates, quemadmodum stulti monachi fecerunt, etc.*: "It does not prohibit delights nor pleasures, as the foolish monks have done, which is nothing else than making stocks of young men (even as ANSELM says, *ille manichisimus monachus*, that most monkish monk), or than attempting to plant a tree in a narrow pot." Others of the Reformers and early Protestant commentators were influenced in the same way in following LUTHER, and there can be no doubt that this has much affected their interpretations of Koheleth, making him talk like an Epicurean, and then denying that it was Epicureanism, or trying to throw over it a decent ethical mantle by their unwarranted hypotheses and limitations. After they have done their best, however, in this way, they make this writer of Holy Scripture to be a moralist inferior to SOCRATES and SENECA, who certainly never thought that a young man needed any such advice as that. The pious GEIER seems to be aware of the suggestions that might arise from other parts of Scripture, and would zealously guard this virtuous Solomonic young man, who needs such a caution against excessive sobriety, from any comparison with the Prodigal son, Luke xv. But what did he do, that *filius perditus*, that spendthrift, *ille helius*, as GEIER calls him, except "to walk in the ways of his heart, and in the sight of his eyes?" What is all pleasure-seeking selfishness [*φιλαυτία, φιληδονία*, 2 Tim. iii. 2-4] but saying "give unto me my portion of goods that falleth to me," in this world?

It might have been thought, however, that the latter part of ver. 10, following the warning of judgment, would have been treated in a different manner; but the general consistency of which LUTHER speaks has led some to an Epicurean interpretation even of this. We regret to find our author ZÖCKLER following such a course in his interpretation of the words חֶסֶד כִּנְעַם כְּלָבֶךָ "turn away sorrow from thy heart." "Here," he says, "the positive exhortation to hilarity (*Fröhlichkeit*) is followed by a dissuasion from its opposite,"—that is, the young man is told to avoid seriousness as painful and troublesome (*Kummer, Unmuth*,) which he gives as the interpretation of כִּנְעַם. It is a recommendation of hilarity, of mirth, in opposition to asceticism or undue sobriety, as though the young man's danger in Solomon's time, or in the days of Malachi, or at any other period in the human history, had been in that direction of gloom and monkery.

There are few interpreters more honest, or more learned, than STUART, and yet his comment here is certainly a very strange one. "In verse 9th," he tells us, "the command is to do something positive in the way of enjoyment; here it is to shun evil and suffering. Taking both together, the amount is, enjoy all that a rational man can enjoy in view of retribution, and avoid all the evil and suffering that can be avoided." Retribution here is a mere make weight. Why retribution for simply acting according to the advice? If *pleasure* be the *good*, then, as that acute moralist SOCRATES says, "he who gets the most of it is the *ἀγαθὸς ἀνὴρ*, the *good* man, the *best* man." "But why," asks STUART, "is this so strongly urged upon the young?" The question is certainly one that is very naturally suggested in view of such an interpretation, but the answer he gives is remarkable: "Plainly because that even they, although in the best estate of man, hold life by a very frail tenure. Therefore, as even youth is so frail and evanescent, make the best of it. It is almost as if he had said—Then or never." In other words, a short life and a merry one. ANACREON could not have said it better. No exhortation to obedience to parents, to temperance, to sober-mindedness, in the style of Paul, no advice to "watch over the heart," such as Solomon gives in the Proverbs, but a direction "to walk in the sight of the eyes," and a caution against seriousness as inconsistent with youthful hilarity. Strange advice this under any circumstances: and still more strange from the fact that it is the only place in the book in which young men are addressed,—the first verse of chap. xii. being but a continuation of the admonition here given. Look at the argument as it thus presents itself: God will bring thee unto judgment, young man; therefore put away all serious concern from thy heart. And why? Because youth is brief and evanescent. How does it compare Scripturally with the other view as presenting the other reasoning: Know that God will bring thee into judgment for "following the ways of thine heart, and walking in the sight of thine eyes;" therefore "turn sorrow from thy heart" [thy soul], that is the feeling of remorse, the sense of the Divine displeasure, or of thine own self-accusing indignation [עֲצִיב] for such an unrestrained living to thyself, and "keep off [הִיָּבֵר, avert] evil from thy flesh"—that is, the bodily ills that must come from a life of sensuality, or following "the desire of thy heart," and "the voluptuous sight of thine eyes." And why? Because "childhood and youth [שְׁחֵרִית, literally, the morn of life] are vanity;" that is, all their joys, take them at the highest, are vain and worthless in comparison with the serious evils, whether for this life or another, that such a course of free indulgence may bring upon thee.

The ironical nature of this passage is accepted by that great critic, GLASSIUS, in the *Philologia Sacra*, p. 1518. It is an "apostrophe," he says, "a *concessio ironica cujus correctio, a consuetudine animi et sensuum prava revocans, statim subjungitur.*" Go on.—but know. He compares it with Isaiah ii. 10, "enter into the rock, and hide thyself in the dust," but know that God will find

thee. So Isaiah viii. 9, "Join yourselves together, enter into council, but know that it will be all in vain." It is equivalent to saying, "though ye do this,"—the imperative being really the statement of an hypothesis. Another passage he cites is Isaiah xxi. 5: "Spread the table, set the watch, eat, drink," etc.: though that may be taken in a different way.

A second outside proof of the true character of the language, Eccles. ix. 7-10, is derived from a passage in the Apocryphal book entitled Wisdom of Solomon. It is evidently an imitation of these very verses, and, whether written by a Jew or a Christian, is evidence of the earliest mode of interpreting all such modes of speaking in Koheleth. It is the language of the worldly pleasure-seeker, chap. ii. vers. 6-8: "Come then, and let us enjoy the good that is before us; let us be filled with costly wine and aromatic odors; let no flower of the spring pass by us; let us crown ourselves with roses before they be withered," etc. The imitation is evident throughout the passage. It appears not only from the language used, but also from the fact that the writer, both by his general style and by the title he has given to his book, intended it as a more full and florid setting forth of what he deemed the pervading thought and feeling of Koheleth. Now, by placing this same style of language in the mouth of the sensualist, he makes clear that he was of like opinion with JEROME (whose views may have been derived from his Hebrew teacher representing the same view afterwards advanced by Kimchi), that as uttered by Koheleth, it was a *προσωποποιία*, a dramatic representing of what is expressed in human action,—the sensualist's own conduct speaking forth the view of life that would be in accordance with the idea that this is all of man, and that there is no such judgment as that on which Koheleth elsewhere so strongly insists. This is rendered still more clear from the sudden change that immediately follows in ver. 11, and which JEROME justly characterizes as Koheleth *retractans*. He cannot let the language go without showing how full of vanity it is, viewed only in regard to the present world, and according to the known condition of human life:

I turned again to look beneath the sun.

Not to the swift the race, I saw, nor victory to the strong.

Nor to the wise secure their bread, nor to the prudent wealth.

The very uncertainty of all human efforts renders such advice utterly vain. Why say to men, be happy, eat, drink, and be merry, "let thy garments be ever white, and let aromatic oils be never lacking to thy head," when no strength, no wisdom, can give any security for the avoidance of sorrow, much less for the attainment of such Epicurean joys. In such a connection the thought of there being, necessarily for man, a judgment and a destiny, making all such pleasures, even if innocent, mere vanity and worthlessness in the comparison, is more powerfully suggested than it would have been by the most express utterance.

There are some other things of less exegetical importance, but deserving of attention in their bearing on the real character of these important passages. Thus the words רָצָה רָצָה רָצָה

קִבְּלֵנוּ אֶת־נִסְיוֹנֵינוּ [ix. 7] are rendered in E. V.: "God now accepteth thy works," indicating that He has, in some way, become gracious. The true rendering is, "God hath already," or rather, "long ago, accepted thy works." It is a thing of the past, settled as the Divine way in regard to man; He has never been offended at all. It is the doctrine of Plato's second class of atheists (as he calls them, though they claim to be theists), who believe in a Divine power, but regard Him as taking no account of men, or rather, as accepting all human works, as He accepts the operations of nature. Or it is a Hebraistic form of the Lucretian doctrine of the Divine nature:

Senola ab nostris rebus, sejunctaque longe.

That this general acceptance by Deity of human works is not the serious language of Koheleth, is evident from his so frequent insisting on judgment, either in this world or in another, as though it were his favorite doctrine, his "one idea," we might say, in all this discourse. So WORDSWORTH regards the whole passage as the language of the sensualist (which is the same as JEROME'S ironical *προσωποποιία*, or Koheleth speaking in their person), and thus comments on the words in question: "Evil men misconstrue their prosperity into a sign that God accepts their works." There is, however, too much inferential moralizing in such a statement. In their language, God's "accepting their works" is rather another mode of saying that He is utterly indifferent about them, or, as they would represent in their Lucretian hyperpiety, too great, too exalted, to mind the affairs of men.

The 10th verse of ch. ix. is rendered in E. V.: "Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." The Vulgate favors this, but the accents forbid it. They connect כִּחַץ with לַעֲשׂוֹת, requiring us, if we follow them, to render: "whatever thy hand findeth to do in thy strength, do it." This puts a different aspect upon the sentence, and the accents, with their usual nice discrimination, bring it out. The other rendering would indeed suggest a similar meaning, but the accents make it clear. It becomes the maxim, τὸ κρᾶτιστον τὸ δίκαιον, might makes right, or let might be thy law of right, or as it is rendered in the Metrical Version,—

D, then, what'er thy hand shall find in thy own might to do.

WORDSWORTH takes the same view: "Do all that thy hand findeth to do by thy power" [see HENNINGSTENBERG, EWALD]; that is, "let might be right with thee: care nothing for God or man, but use thy strength according to thy will." Surely this is not the serious language of the serious Koheleth, the earnest teacher of judgment, who speaks so solemnly of "the fear of God, and who says, only two verses from this: "Then I turned again to look beneath the sun, and saw that the race was not to the swift nor the victory to the strong."

The language following: "For there is no knowledge," etc., even STUART regards as that of the objector, though replying to the serious advice given above, as though he had said in addition: enjoy thyself, etc., for there is no after

state to give thee uneasiness. "But we have seen," says STUART, "that the settled opinion of Koheleth himself [viii. 12, 13] was something quite different from this." It is not easy to understand the remark. It would have furnished STUART a much more consistent ground of reasoning, had he regarded the whole passage as irony or personification. He says, at the close of his comment on the verses: "The positive passages which show Koheleth's view of judgment, and of retribution, are too strong to justify us in yielding to suggestions of this nature"—that is, the supposition of his denial of all future accountability. This rule of criticism, had they consistently followed it, would have made Koheleth all clear in many places where the opposite method produces inextricable confusion and contradiction.

Such remarks as ZÖCKLER and STUART sometimes make in depreciation of Epicureanism [HITZIG, in general, gives himself no concern about it] show the pressure upon evangelical commentators (and even upon all who may in a true sense be styled rational), when they adopt what may be termed the half-way Lutheran mode. The doctrine of Epicurus, even in its most decent form, is so inconsistent with any devout *fear of God*, and this again is so utterly alien to any philosophic or scientific theism that maintains a Deity indifferent to human conduct, one who cannot be prayed to, ἀνεκταίος, and without any judgment either in this world or another; for in respect to the true nature of Koheleth's exhortation, either idea presents a conclusive argument. His doctrine must be somehow connected with all that system of truth, with all that "wisdom, of which the fear of the Lord is the beginning." To a mind deeply meditative like that of Koheleth, the thought of there being no judgment, no hereafter (should such a belief be ever forced upon it), would not be ground of joy, much less of an exhortation to joy, as addressed to others. He would not, even in that ease, adopt the Epicurean maxim: Let us eat and drink,—rather let us fast, let us mourn, in view of an existence so brief, so full of vanity, so soon to go out in darkness all the more dense, a despair all the more painful, in consequence of the transient light of reason with which we are so strangely and irrationally endowed—*e tenebris in tenebras*—like the bubble on the wave in a stormy night, reflecting for a moment all the starry hosts above, and then going out forever. There is no religion, no superstition, no creed so awfully serious, as that of human extinction, and of a godless world. Place the two exhortations side by side: Live in the fear of God, for thou must come to judgment: Live joyful, for soon thou wilt be no more; in either alternative, the present value of the present being, considered for its own sake, dwindles in a rational estimate. As connected with a greater life to come, though made important by such connection, yet how comparatively poor! regarded as the whole of our existence, how absolutely vain! In the first aspect, it is *vanitas*; in the second, it is *vanitas vanitatum*, utterly vain, a "vanity of vanities." The Epicurean idea and the Epicurean call to mirth are as inconsistent with the one as with the other.—T. L.]

B.—In Presence of the Insolence, Bold Assumption and Violence of Fortunate and Influential Fools, the Wise Man can only Preserve his Peace of Soul by Patience, Silence and Tranquility.

CHAP. IX. 17—X. 20.

1. Of the advantage of a wise tranquility over the presumptuous insolence of fools.

(IX. 17—X. 4.)

17 The words of wise *men are* heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth
18 among fools. Wisdom *is* better than weapons of war: but one sinner destroyeth
1 much good. Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stink-
ing savour: *so doth* a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom *and* honour.
2, 3 A wise man's heart *is* at his right hand; but a fool's heart *is* at his left. Yea
also, when he that is a fool walketh by the way, his wisdom faileth *him*, and he
4 saith to every one *that he is* a fool. If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee,
leave not thy place; for yielding pacifieth great offences.

2. Of the advantage of quiet, modest wisdom over the externally brilliant but inconstant fortune of fools.

(VERS. 5-10.)

5 There is an evil *which* I have seen under the sun, as an error *which* proceedeth
6, 7 from the ruler: Folly is set in great dignity, and the rich sit in low place. I
have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth.
8 He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent
9 shall bite him. Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith; *and* he that
10 cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby. If the iron be blunt, and he do not
whet the edge, then must he put to more strength: but wisdom *is* profitable to
direct.

3. Of the advantage of the silence and persevering industry of the wise man over the loquacity and indolence of fools.

(VERS. 11-20.)

11 Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment; and a babbler is no better.
12 The words of a wise man's mouth *are* gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow
13 up himself. The beginning of the words of his mouth *is* foolishness: and the end
14 of his talk *is* mischievous madness. A fool also is full of words: a man cannot
15 tell what shall be; and what shall be after him, who can tell him? The labour
of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to
16 the city. Wo to thee, O land, when thy king *is* a child, and thy princes eat in the
17 morning! Blessed *art* thou, O land, when thy king *is* the son of nobles, and thy
18 princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness! By much sloth-
fulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house drop-
19 peth through. A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money
20 answereth all *things*. Curse not the king, no, not in thy thought; and curse not
the rich in thy bed-chamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that
which hath wings shall tell the matter.

*[V. 8. יִדְבַּח]. A ditch, or pit, *Vulg., fovea, LXX. βάθρον*. The Syriac Version has the same word. It is, however, no more Aramaic than Hebrew, being rare in both languages, though the verb, signifying to dig, is found in the latter. Its form is unusual in having dagesh after shurek, as is noted in the margin.—T. L.]

[Ver. 9. שָׁכַן; for שָׁכַן, a denominative from שָׁכַן, "a knife," and, therefore, having no relation to the verb שָׁכַן as found, with quite a different meaning Job xxii. 2; xxxiii. 3; xv. 3: Isaiah xxii. 15, etc. Lit., "shall he cut," or, "may he cut thereby." It is another example of variant orthography, showing that in first manuscripts of this work were written from the ear. See remarks on שָׁכַן and similar words, page 116.—T. L.]

[Ver. 10. קָלַף; the sense of *swinging*, which ZÖCKLER, HITZIG, and ELSTER give to this word, is not confirmed by Ezek. xxi. 26, to which they refer. GESenius gives the sense to *sharpen, polish*, but derives it from the primary idea of *light moving*, as in the rapid motions of a whet-stone, which is very probable. The accents connect it with פָּנִים *faces, edges*, though the *Vulgate* and *LXX* have disregarded it.—T. L.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Of the three sections of this division, as we lay them down in essential conformity with VAHINGER, the first compares the entire nature of the wise man with that of the fool, whilst the second draws a parallel between the two regarding the conditions of their happiness; but the third points out the more profound* causes of their opposite destinies in two special qualities of both (the loquacity and indolence of fools, and the opposite of these faults in the wise man). This train of thought is less clear on account of the peculiar form of the sentences,—nearly all being proverbs of two lines, concise in extent, and significant and aphoristic in character:—but it must not therefore be disregarded, nor displaced by the acceptance of an incongruity of plan or connection, as if it were a conglomerate of many groups of maxims or of separate proverbs with no internal connection. By an atomistic and disintegrating process, this section has been divided by HENGSTENBERG into five divisions, by HAHN into eight, and by ELSTER even into nine; (1) ix. 17—x. 1; (2) x. 2, 3; (3) ver. 4; (4) vers. 5-7; (5) vers. 8-10; (6) vers. 11-14; (7) ver. 15; (8) vers. 16-19; (9) ver. 20; we shall present the special refutation of this system in our illustrations of the words and sense of the individual verses.

*[These ethical and logical divisions are not easy to trace. The different methods adopted by different commentators, warrant a strong suspicion of their reality. There is, doubtless, a connection in the thought, but it is poetical rather than logical, suggestive rather than formally didactic. In the Metrical Version there is an attempt to group into separate cantos the thoughts that seemed to have the nearest relation to each other; but these might, perhaps, be differently arranged, and with equal effect. The mind of the author may be regarded under different aspects. And so, too, of the reader, it may be said, that the division for him may depend very much on his own spiritual state; for it is the very nature of all such musings, emotional writing, to suggest more to one mind than to another. It may even give a wider and a higher train of thought to the reader than the writer himself possessed: and that too legitimately, or without any violence to the text; for there is a *spirit in words* witnessing with our *spirits*, and, under favorable spiritual circumstances, there may be seen a light in our author's language which he did not see, or but dimly saw, himself. And this we may suppose to have been the very design of the higher or divine author, in giving such a dramatic or representative work a place in His holy written revelation. The whole book is a *meditation*, or a series of meditations. The thoughts do not, indeed, follow each other arbitrarily; but, like our best thinking, are connected more by emotional than by logical bands. Place ourselves in the same subjective state—read it as poetry, not as a formal didactic ethical treatise—and we shall readily see what there is in each part, in each verse, in a single word sometimes, that makes the writer think of what follows, though all logical, or even rhetorical criticism might fail to find it. (See remarks p. 176). Take, for example, these verses of the ix. and x. chapters, as apparently the most disconnected of any in the whole poem. The ever-recurring, or underlying thought is wisdom in its two apparently contradictory aspects of *preciousness* and *vanity*—wisdom, of such inestimable value in itself as compared with folly, and yet, through folly, rendered so unavailing. The episodical

2. *First strophe.* Chap. ix. 17—x. 4. Of the patient and tranquil nature of the wise man in contrast with the arrogant insolence and irascibility of the fool.—**The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools.** Observe the connection with the section immediately preceding, vers. 13-16, which shows the superiority of wisdom by a single example. But this verse opens a new section in so far as it begins to treat specifically of tranquility as a characteristic and cardinal virtue of the wise man. He who hears in quiet, proves himself thereby a lover of quiet and tranquility, and therefore a wise man. A quiet attention to wise words is a condition necessary to their practical obedience, and consequently to becoming wise and acting wisely. The counterpart of this is shown by the boisterous and passionate cry of the "*ruler among fools*," *i. e.*, not absolutely of the "foolish ruler" (VAHINGER, etc., referring to Ps. liv. 6; Job xxiv. 13, ff.), but of a ruler who, as he rules over fools, is foolish himself; comp. chap. x. 16. ELSTER correctly observes: "Two pictures are here compared, the wise man among his scholars, who receive his teachings with collected attention, and thoughtful quiet, and a ruler wanting in wisdom to control, and who, in undignified and boisterous ostentation, issues injudicious commands to those who execute them quite as

mention of "the poor wise man" leads on the general train of thought, but it immediately suggests (ver. 7) how one sinner (one fool) may destroy its effect upon a community. This prompts the parallel thought, how, in the individual, too, a little folly taints all his better acquisitions,—the mode of expressing this being, doubtless, a favorite proverbial form commending itself less for its nicety than for its exquisite appropriateness. This again makes him think how readily the fool exposes his folly; as the most striking example of which there occurs to the mind the rashness with which such bring upon themselves the displeasure of the ruler. Then comes readily up the folly of rulers themselves,—the examples of it in subverting the proper relations of life. A pause, perhaps, occurs; some links pass silently through the mind, but the chain of thought still shows itself. It is transferred from the higher to the more ordinary vocations of life. It is still the unavailingness of human wisdom. With all our care, and all our skill, there is danger everywhere, liability to mistakes and mishaps in every business, and in every act. Another pause; it is the same thought but it takes a different form—the unavailingness of eloquence, or the gift of speech [that splendid evil, ὁ κοσμος τῆς ἀδικίας, Jas. iii. 6, or "ornament of unrighteousness"]. Here, too, there is to be traced the influence of the proverbial association: "the serpent hites without enchantment;" so is the gift of speech to its possessor when misemployed in vain babbling or in slander. In such a tracking of ideas and emotions, the transitions may seem slight and even fanciful; but they are more natural, more sober, more impressive, we may say, in their moral and didactic effect, than those formal, logical divisions which commentators so confidently propose, and in which they so greatly differ. Other readers may be differently affected, so that they discover in it other associations of thought [for there are various ways, lying below the soul's direct consciousness, in which our spiritual movements link themselves together] but such diversity of view, it may be said, arises from the very nature of this kind of subjective writing, and is evidence of excellency in it rather than of a defect. It comes from its very suggestiveness, and shows the rich fertility inherent in its germs of thought.—T. L.]

injudiciously. Comp. the mild and tranquil nature of the servant of God, with the criers in the streets: Isa. xlii. 2; Matt. xii. 19.—Ver. 18. **Wisdom is better than weapons of war; i. e.,** it is stronger, more effective, and indomitable than the greatest physical strength and warlike preparation, כְּקַרְבַּי poetical, and equivalent to כְּלִחְצָקָה comp. Ps. lv. 19; Dan. vii. 21; and therefore, כְּלִי-קַרְבַּי as elsewhere we have כְּלִי-הַחַיָּה, not merely weapons of war (*Vulgate: arma bellica; ELSTER, et al.*), but implements of war, warlike instruments, and apparatus, war material in general (LXX *σκεπή πολέμου*).—**But one sinner destroyeth much good.** “One sinner,” *i. e.*, a single one of those coarse miscreants or fools, who can command physical strength, but are destitute of wisdom. There certainly can be no intention to make a special allusion to the “heathen world-monarch,” *i. e.*, the Persian king (HENGSTENBERG), nor in the expression, “much good” is there any reference to the prosperity of the Persian realm. This expression טוֹבָה הַרְבֵּה can rather be only intended to show what is homogeneous with wisdom and belonging to it, consequently the salutary creations and measures of wisdom, its blessings in the various spheres of the civil, and, especially, of the moral life of men.—Nine manuscripts read וְהוֹטֵא instead of וְהוֹטֵא “and one sin destroyeth much good;” but the connection imperatively demands the retention of the Masoretic reading.—Chap. x. 1. **Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour.** Literal, “flies of death,” *etc.* The singular בְּאִישׁ, with the plural וְכִבְיָהּ, is to be taken distributively: each individual dead fly can make the ointment stink, as soon as it falls into it. For this construction comp. Hosea iv. 8; Prov. xvi. 2; Song of Solomon ii. 9; GESENIUS, *Lehrgebäude*, pp. 665, 713. בִּיַּעַן means literally “turns into liquid, causes to bubble up,” *i. e.*, sets into fermentation, and in that way produces the decomposition and rottenness of the ointment. רוֹבֵקֵן, dealer in spices. This addition gives us to understand that the valuable ointment of commerce is meant, and by no means a worthless article.—**So doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honor.** [ZÖCKLER’s comment is based upon his translation: “Weightier than wisdom, than honor, is a little folly,”* which is essen-

tially different from our English Version.—T. L.] קַרְבַּי is here used in its original signification “heavy, weighty,” namely, in the eyes of the dazzled multitude, that is, accustomed to esteem folly, and indeed a very small amount of folly, of more value than all real wisdom and honor. “Wisdom and honor” correspond in this second clause to the costly ointment of the first, and the “little folly” (קֵטֶעַ) corresponds to the fly, the little dead animal, that nevertheless corrupts the whole pot of ointment; comp. 1 Cor. v. 6.—Ver. 2. After ver. 1 has explained and developed the second clause of ix. 18, the author turns back to the illustration of the great advantages of wisdom over folly, that is, to the first clause of ix. 18. **A wise man’s heart is at his right hand.** That is, it is in the right place, whilst the fool’s is really at the left, *i. e.*, has sinister and perverse purposes. “Heart” is here equivalent to judgment, as in the subsequent verse, and in Prov. ii. 2; xiv. 33; xv. 28.—Ver. 3. **Yea also, when he that is a fool walketh by the way, his wisdom faileth him.** That is, when he goes out he lets people perceive his want of judgment in various ways—for which reason he would do much better to remain at home with his stupidity.—**And he saith to every one that he is a fool.** Namely, because he considers himself alone wise, and as a fool he can do no otherwise: for as soon as he should consider himself a fool, he would have made the beginning of his return to the path of wisdom. KNODEL, EWALD, and VAHINGER render; “it is foolish.” But כִּפְּל stands elsewhere only for persons; for the adjective sense it would be necessary to assume the reading כִּפְּל.—Ver. 4 (ELSTER) but an admonition holding the closest connection with what precedes, and which forms the practical conclusion of the whole discussion (beginning with ix. 17) concerning the relation between wise gentleness and foolish passionateness. For the ruler among fools (ix. 17) here

of בְּאִישׁ in the second member; but for such ellipsis, especially in proverbial expressions, and when the context evidently favors it, there is good and clear authority. Comp. Prov. xii. 2: “From the fruit of his mouth a man shall eat good, but the soul of the wicked—folly;” that is, shall eat folly [with ellipsis of תֹּאכֵל]. Comp. Prov. xxvi. 9; Jerem. xvii. 11. A still stronger case is found, Job xxiv. 13, where there is, in fact, a double ellipsis, and yet the comparison and the meaning are both quite clear: “Heat carries off the snow waters, Sheol—have sinned;” that is, so “sheol (carries off those that) have sinned.”

*[The objections to the rendering of ZÖCKLER, HITZIG, STUART, and others, are 1st: the unusual meaning “heavier,” which it gives to קַרְבַּי, a sense existing primarily in the root, and appearing in the Syriac and the Arabic, but having no other example in the Hebrew; 2d, the filling up, or supposed ellipsis (“in the eyes of the ignorant and foolish”), which is required if we give it the more common Hebrew significance of a “precious, honorable;” 3d, and chiefly, the singular incongruity that, by either of these authors, is introduced into the comparison: “as the dead fly taints the precious ointment, so a little folly outweighs wisdom,” *etc.*, or, is more precious in the vulgar opinion. It is evidently a comparison in either rendering, though the particle of comparison is omitted, as in many other cases, especially of the concise sententious kind (see the long list in the *Grauert* of JONA BEN GANNACH). The objection to the common English rendering (which is also that of GEIER, TREMELLIUS, and the great critic GLASSIUS) is that it requires a repetition

of שְׂוֹא טֹמֵא. There is an ellipsis both of the governing verb, and of the relative pronoun. “The dead fly taints the fragrant ointment, so a little folly [taints] one honorable for wisdom,” *etc.* Nothing could be more apt, or true. This read-ing preserves also the analogy between a *good name* and *precious odors*, a metaphor common in all languages, and so strikingly introduced vii. 1, and Cant. i. 3: Dead flies spoil the fragrant ointment, a little folly the good name. This is in accordance, too, with a common usage in Hebrew, by which the sense of שְׂוֹא הַבְּאִישׁ is transferred from the literal *ill savor* to odiousness of character. The preposition כִּי with the sense of *propter*, *an account of*, is also well established: יָקָר כִּמְהֵרָה כִּפְּבוֹד, “precious,” that is, held in esteem “for wisdom and honor.” The two verbs בִּיַּעַן and בְּאִישׁ are to be taken together, or the one as qualifying the other: “make corrupt, make ferment,” or froth, that is, corrupt by fermentation—“with frothy taint.” See *Metrical Version*.—T. L.]

clearly appears again as "ruler;" the "great offences" point back to the "sinner" of ix. 18; and thus also is there made a close connection with vers. 2 and 3 of this chapter. Hence LUTHER is correct in his rendering: "Therefore, when the insolence of a mighty one," etc. **If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee.**

For the expression רִיחַ תְּהִי לְךָ עֵל in which רִיחַ does not mean spirit (*Sept.*, *Vulg.*, HENGSTENBERG), but anger, comp. 2 Sam. xi. 12; Ps. lxxviii. 21; Ezek. xxxviii. 18.—**Leave not thy place;** *i. e.*, do not be disconcerted, do not become dissatisfied, as this would develop itself in a changed position of thy body in a manner that would entail danger on thee. In this obvious illustration it is not necessary, with HITZIG, to explain כִּקְוֹנֶךָ by "thy condition of soul, thy usual state of mind,"—an interpretation for which the appeal to the soul—"maintain thy place"—in the Arabian story of the "Golden Necklace," scarcely affords a sufficient reason.—**For yielding pacifieth great offences,** *i. e.*, prevents them, smothers them in the birth, and does not let them come to light. We find similar sentences in Prov. x. 12; xv. 1; xxv. 15.

3. *Second strophe.* Vers. 5-10. Of the apparent but inconstant fortune of fools, and of the superiority of the modest, but effective and sterling influence of wisdom.—For ver. 5, first clause, comp. chap. vi. 1.—**As an error which proceedeth from the ruler.** By the comparative עֲוֹן בְּשִׁנְנָה, the evil in the first clause is marked as one that is not simply an error of a ruler, but which only appears as such, manifests itself as such, so as to draw after it much worse evils, (EWALD is correct in translating, "apparently in error"). We can also understand this עֲוֹן as *veritatis*, and either leave it untranslated (as ELSTER, according to LUTHER and many other authors) or give it through our turn: "there is an evil in respect to an error" (HITZIG); it is then indicated that the particular action in question corresponds to the general idea of an evil (הַעֲוֹן); compare 2 Sam. ix. 8.—The explanations of KNOBEL, VAHINGER, and HAHN are censurable in making עֲוֹן equivalent to the expressions "according to, or in consequence of which;" as are also those of HENGSTENBERG, who, following the example of HIERONYMUS and a Jewish adept in Scripture learning whom he questioned, understands the term

"ruler" (הַשֹּׁלֵט) to be God, and thence thinks of an act of divine power that seems like a fault, but is none,—an interpretation which is untenable on account of the manifest identity of שֹׁלֵט with כּוֹשֵׁל in ver. 4.—Vers. 6 and 7 give two examples of errors of rulers.—**Folly is set in great dignity;** namely, by the caprice of a ruler who elevates an unworthy person to the highest honors of his realm. נָתַן lit., "is given, is set," comp. Esther vi. 8; Deut. xvii. 15. The abstract הַכְּבֹל stands for the concrete הַכָּל which the *Septuagint*, *Vulgata*, etc., seem to have read directly, but which is not therefore to be

put in the place of the Masoretic text, because the latter gives a much stronger thought; it is not simply a fool, it is personified folly.—**And the rich sit in low place,** *i. e.*, by virtue of those very despotic acts of a despotic ruler, the rich (*i. e.*, the noble and distinguished, whose wealth is patrimonial and just,) *homines ingenuos nobiles* (comp. ver. 20, as also the synonym קְהִלֵי הַיְיָ ver. 17) are robbed of their possessions and driven from their high places. HITZIG says: "Sudden and immense changes of fortune proceeding from the person of the ruler are peculiar to the East, the world of despotism, where barbers become ministers, and confiscations of large fortunes and oppression of possessors are the order of the day."—Ver. 7. **I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth.** A contrast to sitting on horseback, which, among the Hebrews was considered a distinction for the upper classes. Comp. 2 Chron. xxv. 28; Esther vi. 8, 9; Jer. xvii. 25; and to this add Justinian xli. 3: "*Hoc denique discrimen inter servos liberosque est, quod servi pedibus, liberi non nisi equis incedunt.*" Here also, as in the preceding verse, the persons compared are to be considered as contrasted not merely in their external condition but also in their character; the princes are really princely, and princely-minded persons, but the servants are men with base servile feeling, which qualifies and makes it right for them to serve.—Vers. 8-10 show that in spite of this sudden elevation, so easily gained by unworthy and foolish persons, their lot is by no means to be envied; because their fortune is rife with dangers, because the intrigues by means of which they excluded their predecessors from their possessions, can easily overthrow them, and because the difficult tasks that devolve on them in their high offices can easily bring upon them injury and disgrace. Wherefore genuine wisdom, of internal worth and business-like capacity, is far preferable to such externally brilliant but unreliable and inconstant fortune of fools. The close connection between these verses and vers. 5-7 is correctly perceived by HITZIG, HENGSTENBERG and HAHN, whilst ELSTER and VAHINGER isolate their contents too much in wishing to find nothing farther in them than a warning against rebellion, or resistance to divine command.—**He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it.** This is different from Ps. vii. 15; Prov. xxvi. 27; Sirach xxvii. 26; it is not a pit for others, but simply a pit, the result of severe exertion of a dangerous character, with the implements for digging. Falling into the pit is not presented as a necessary, but only as a very possible case.—**And whoso breaketh a hedge, a serpent shall bite him;** namely, in accordance with the well-known and frequently confirmed fact, that serpents and other reptiles nest in old walls; comp. Isa. xxxiv. 15; Amos v. 19. The breaking of this hedge appears clearly as an action by which one seeks to injure his neighbor.—Ver. 9. **Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith; and he that cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby.** HITZIG, taking the futures יִצַּק and יִקַּץ too much in the mere potential sense, says;

"can injure himself." See ver. 8, second clause. For הִסִיֵּעַ, "to break loose, to tear out," that is stones from the earth (not "to roll away," as KNOBEL says), comp. 1 Kings v. 31.—פִּקְנֵן is not equivalent to "endangereth himself" (*Sept.*, EWALD, KNOBEL and VAHINGER), but is to be derived from שֶׁפֶן a knife (from כָּחַ "to cut;*" comp. Prov. xxiii. 2) and is to be translated in accordance with the *vulnerabitur* of the *Vulgate* by, "he will injure or wound himself," (HITZIG, ELSTER, HENGSTENBERG; see LUTHER also.—Ver. 10. **If the iron be blunt.** (ZÖCKLER translates: "If one has blunted the iron"). Since קָהָה as piel of קָהַח "to be blunt," can scarcely mean anything else than to make blunt, we must either consider the indefinite "one," as the subject, or the wood-chopper of the previous verse. EWALD ("Authors of the O. T."), HENGSTENBERG and most ancient authors (also the *Vulgate* and Luther) say, that קָהַח is to be taken intransitively, and as equivalent to *hebescit. retusum fuit*, but this is opposed by the following הֵאָה before לֹא-פָנִים, which clearly shows a change of subject, forbidding the thought that iron can be the subject of this clause. The view formerly entertained by EWALD, "one leaves the iron blunt" (*Poetical Books*, 1 Ed), he afterwards discarded as incorrect.—**And he do not whet the edge.** ZÖCKLER translates: "And it is without edge." HITZIG is correct in saying that לֹא-פָנִים is formed as לֹא פָנִים "childless," 1 Chron. ii. 30, 32, and is equivalent to saying, "without an edge, or edgeless." The subsequent קָקַל is not to be connected with these words, but with the following ones, especially as, according to the only passage in which it occurs (*Ezek.* xxi. 26,) it does not signify to "polish, to sharpen," but "to shake, to swing." (HITZIG and ELSTER are correct, though in opposition to most modern writers, who translate: "And he has not whet the edge"). **Then must he put to more strength; i. e.,** in splitting the wood he must swing † the ax with all his strength.—**But wisdom is profitable to direct.** ZÖCKLER translates: "But it is a profit wisely to handle wisdom." Read (with HITZIG and ELSTER) הַכְּשִׁיר instead of הַכְּשִׁיר thus making the infinitive construct, which, with its object הַחֲכִיחָה (as predicate to הִתְרוֹן) forms the subject (*i. e.,* it is a profit, an advantage, or, it is the best; comp. the opposite הִתְרוֹן וְאֵין הִתְרוֹן in ver. 11th. For the phrase הַכְּשִׁיר הַחֲכִיחָה occurring only here (lit., to make

* [The meaning given to פִּקְנֵן is probably the correct one (see text note), as derived from the noun שֶׁפֶן "a knife"

(Arabic سكين); but כָּחַ = שָׁחַ, means to see, and

is only rendered to cut from its supposed affinity to the Latin *esco*, and to accommodate it to this word. The sense of כָּחַ "to become poor," as in Isa. xlii. 20 (puer), and in the Arabic, might perhaps answer here, but it would mar the parallelism.—E. L.]

† [See Text Note and Metrical Version.—T. L.]

wisdom straight, *i. e.,* to direct it successfully, to handle it skillfully) comp. a similar turn הַשִּׁיב הַחֵר in Ruth iii. 10. It is usual to retain the infinitive absolute הַכְּשִׁיר as a genitive dependent on הִתְרוֹן: "And wisdom is the profit of prosperity" (KNOBEL); or, "wisdom has the advantage of amendment" (HENGSTENBERG); or, "and wisdom is the profit of exertion" (?) EWALD); or, "wisdom gives the advantage of success" (VAHINGER). But all these renderings give a thought less clear and conformable to the text than ours. LUTHER is not exact: "Therefore wisdom follows diligence," (in harmony with the *Vulgate, et post industriam sequetur sapientia*). The rendering of HAHN is nearest to ours: "And the favor of wisdom is an advantage," wherein the sense of "favor" for הַכְּשִׁיר does not seem quite appropriate. The entire sense of the verse is essentially correct in the following rendering of HITZIG: Whosoever would proceed securely, and not expose himself to the dangers that are inseparable, even from the application of proper means to ends, toils in vain if he undertakes the task in the wrong way (like those fools in vers. 6-9); the direct, sensible way to the end is the best"—namely, that very humble, modest, but effective way of wisdom, which the author had recommended already in ix. 17, 18; x. 2, 3, and now in ver. 12 ff., farther recommends.

4. *Third Strophe.* Vers. 11-20.—Of the advantage of the silent, sober, and industrious demeanor of the wise man, over the indolent and loquacious nature of the fool.—**Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment.**

This sentence in close connection with verse 10 advises to a zealous and dexterous application of the remedies at the command of the wise man; but, at the same time, shows the necessity of such application by an example chosen perhaps with reference to verse 8; thus forming the transition to the warning against empty loquacity and its evil consequences contained in vers. 12-14. KOBETH does not here allude to the charming of spiritual serpents, *i. e.,* of vicious men, by importunate requests (HENGSTENBERG) but undoubtedly means the actual art of charming serpents; the possibility of which, or rather the actual existence of which he clearly presupposes in possession of wise and skillful persons, just as the author of the 58th Psalm (vers. 4 and 5), indeed, as Christ himself affirms in Mark xvi. 18; Luke x. 19. (Comp. also Ex. vii. 11, and the learned observations of KNOBEL on the art of charming serpents among the ancients). בְּלֹא

לְחֹשׁ literally, "without enchantment," *i. e.,* without that softly murmured magic formula, which, it was pretended, formed the principal agent in expelling poisonous reptiles, if spoken at the proper period, and thus guarded against

the danger of being bitten. בַּעַל הַלְשׁוֹן literally, the "master of the tongue," *i. e.,* who has the poisonous tongue of the reptile in his power, and knows how to extract the poison, or to prevent its biting; or it may also mean the "one" with a gifted tongue," who by means of his tongue can produce extraordinary results (HITZIG, HAHN).

The latter interpretation is preferable as much on account of the analogy of **בַּעַל כָּנָף** Prov. i. 17, and similar expressions, as on account of the context, which clearly shows that the author has in his eye one of ready tongue not making timely use of his gift, a hero with his tongue, but without energy and promptness in action.—Ver. 12. **The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious.** Such a one therefore should not be silent, as the slack serpent-charmer in ver. 11, but should speak often and much, because he does nothing but good, and acquires favor everywhere with his "gracious" words (LUTHER). **פֶּה** here means *id quod gratiam seu favorem parit*, or graciousness; comp. Prov. xxxi. 30; and for the sentence in general Prov. xv. 2, 26.—**But the lips of a fool will swallow up himself.** Comp. Prov. xv. 2; x. 8, 21; xiii. 16, etc. Any other reference of the suffix in the verb **הִכְלִיעַנִי** than to the logical subject **כִּסְלִי** is inadmissible. For the plural form **עֲפָתוֹת** comp. Isa. lix. 3; Ps. lix. 7.—Ver. 13. **The beginning of the words of his mouth are foolishness; and the end of his talk is mischievous madness.** That is, there is nothing discreet either in the beginning or the end of his foolish twaddle (HITZIG); he remains a fool in everything that he says; comp. Prov. xxvii. 22. "The end of his talk" is the end which his mouth makes of speaking, the last and most extravagant of his foolish speeches. Of this it is here affirmed that it is mischievous madness, namely, even for himself injurious and mischievous madness; comp. Prov. xviii. 7; Ps. lxiv. 8, etc.—Ver. 14. **A fool is also full of words.** To the error of his silly speech, he adds that of endless loquacity.* And he is most apt to prat-

יִרְבֶּה דְבָרָיו. It is not mere "loquacity" that is here intended. The best explanation is that of Aben Ezra, who refers it to vain predictions, [see note on **דְּבָרָיו**, v. 5. Eng. v. 7, p. 91], or rather, boasting assertions in respect to the future: "I will eat and drink, says the fool, but he knows not what shall be in his life or in his death; as is said in another place [v. 7, vi. 12], there are many words that increase vanity, yet who knoweth what is good for man etc." So also RASHI: "In his simplicity, the fool is full of words, speaking confidently and saying, 'to-morrow I will do so and so, when he knoweth not what shall be on the morrow,—or when he would undertake a journey for gain, and knoweth not that he may fall by the sword.'" Comp. Luke xii. 20. James iv. 13. This is also the interpretation of MARTIN GRIES, at least in relation to the 14th verse. It is strongly confirmed by the immediately following context.

In such a rendering **וּכְכֹל** has an adverbative force: "Though the fool multiply words, yet man knows not, etc." "For who shall tell him what shall be after him?" This does not mean in the remote future, nor even the future generally, as would be expressed by **אַחֲרָיו**, but the near, the immediate, which is the sense given by the preposition in the compound **כִּמְאַחֲרָיו**, "from after"—that which comes from, out of, or directly after the present,—or, "on the morrow," according to the language of these Jewish interpreters, and that of St. James. Comp. FURST's derivation of **כִּתְרָה** (to-morrow), which he regards, not as an independent root, but as a contraction of **כִּמְאַחַר**, as he makes it, or **כִּמְאַחַר כִּמְאַחַר** (see Marg. Note to ver. 7. p. 91).

This shows, too, the direct connection with the verse that follows, and furnishes a key to that obscure expression on which there is so much comment to so little purpose. Our English Version: "The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city," is hardly intelligible in any sense that can be put upon it.

He gladly and much about things of which, from their nature, he can know the least, namely, about future events. And to this fact there is again reference in what is said in the second and third clauses.—**A man cannot tell what shall be.** **כִּה־שִׂיְהִיה** must not be changed into **כִּה־שִׂיְהִיה**, according to the Septuagint, Symmachus, Vulgate, and Syriac, Vaihinger, etc.; for the subsequent clause does not form a tautology with the present one, even when retaining the Masoretic reading, because there is here denied in the first place only the knowledge concerning the future in itself, and then the actual existence of a foreteller of future events (as a reason for the ignorance of the future).—**And what shall be after him who can tell him?** As in **אַחֲרָיו** of chap. vi. 12, (but different from that in **אַחֲרָיו** of chap. ix. 3), the suffix in **כִּמְאַחֲרָיו** refers to the subject **הָאָדָם**, not to **כִּה־שִׂיְהִיה** as though there were a distinction here drawn between the near and the remote consequences of the talk of the fool (HITZIG). A restriction of the here mentioned *res future* to the evil consequences of the thoughtless twaddle of the fool, is quite as

The same may be said of HITZIG's and ZÜCKLER's attempts to explain it. The expression, **עֵבֶל הַכִּסְלִיִּים** is a collective one, "the toil of fools," equivalent to "a foolish toil," to be taken as a nominative independent, or what DE SACY styles, in his Arabic Grammar, *Urchoati*, or detached subject. Its separation from the verb following is shown by the change of gender,—the feminine prefix **תִּנְעֲנַע** being used to show that the immediate grammatical subject is the neuter, or indefinite, fact: "Vain toil of fools! it only wearieth him;" the singular objective pronoun in **תִּנְעֲנַע** referring, not to **כִּסְלִיִּים** taken distributively, but to the *vain predictor* in ver. 14, and who is kept in view throughout. "It wearieth him,"—is too much for him—surpasses his knowledge. **תֵּן אֲשֶׁר** gives the reason: "One who knoweth not **לָלֶכֶת אֶל עִיר**, the going to the city"—so plain a fact as that—or "that he shall go to the city;" even this comes not within his knowledge of the future. "How to go," says our E. V., and that is the idea conveyed by most others; but there is a great difficulty in making any sense out of it, and the grammatical construction does not require it. In the small number of cases in Hebrew where we find

יָדַעַ followed by the infinitive (whether with or without **ל**) it is to be determined by the context whether it means a knowing *how* to do a thing, or a knowledge of the doing, as a *fact* or *event*. Thus in Ecclesiastes iv. 13, it cannot mean, "knows not how to be admonished," which makes a very poor sense, but, "no longer knows (that is, heeds or recognizes) admonition," or the being admonished. In Exod. xxxvi. 1, 2 Chron. ii. 13; 1 Kings iii. 7; Isai. vii. 16; Amos iii. 10; the context favors the sense of "knowing *how*." In

Isai. xlvii. it is decidedly the other way: **יָדַעַ רֵעֵךְ שֹׂבוּל** does not mean "know how to be bereaved," but, "know bereavement." Still more clear, and *precisely parallel to this case*, is Ecclesiastes iv. 17 (Eng. Bib. v. 1) where **אִנֹּס יָדַעַיִם** אִנֹּס

רַעֵי can only mean the *fact*: "They know not that they are doing evil" in their sacrifices. So Ewald renders it. HITZIG and Stuart find there too the sense of *knowing how*: "They know not how to do evil," or, according to the *tura* they give it, "*how to be sad*;" a meaning which we do not hesitate to pronounce absurd in itself, and also altogether unsupported by 2 Sam. xii. 18, to which they refer. According to the view we have taken, the whole passage (vers. 14, 15) may be thus rendered:—

Predicting words he multiplies, yet man can never know
The thing that shall be; yea, what cometh after who shall tell?

Vain toil of fools! it wearieth him,—this man who knoweth not

What may befall his going to the city.

It is no paraphrase, but only so expressed as to give the spirit of the Hebrew as shown by the general connection, and by the evident reference of the **יָדַעַ** in ver. 15, to the

inadmissible as defining it to consist of his lofty plans and bold projects (HENGSTENBERG). There is simply a general mention of coming events, precisely as in the similar passage in chap. vi. 12.—Ver. 15. **The labor of the foolish wearieth every one.** Literal, “the labor of fools:” the plural is used distributively just as in verse 1; comp. Hosea iv. 8. The author here passes from the empty and annoying loquacity of the fool to his indolence, his downright inertness, and feeble slothfulness, as to qualities forming a close connection with, and mainly the foundation of, this loquacity.—**Because he knoweth not how to go to the city.** HIRTZIG less correctly says: “him who knoweth not,” and EWALD “the one who,” etc. But this second clause is rather intended to give the reason of the premature fatigue of the fool, as also of the feebleness and unprofitableness of his exertions. “Not to know how to go to the city,” is doubtless a proverbial expression allied to that in chap. vi. 8: “to walk before the living,” denoting ignorance in respect to behaviour and general incompetency. The way to the city is here mentioned as that which is the best known, most traveled, and easiest to find (VAHINGER, HENGSTENBERG), not because it leads to those great lords described in ver. 16-19, whom it avails to bribe [EWALD], but simply in so far as the city is the seat of the rulers, of the officers, whence oppression proceeds, and whence also may come relief for the inhabitants of the land (HIRTZIG, EL-

STER). HAHN is peculiar, but hardly in accordance with the true sense of the word שָׂא: “The travail which foolish rulers (?) prepare for their subjects makes these latter tired and faint, brings them to despair, so that they do not know regarding their going to the city, whether, or when, or how it must take place, in order not to violate a law.”—Vers. 16-19 have so loose a connection with ver. 15, that HIRTZIG seems to be right when he perceives in them the words of the prattling fool previously described (vers. 12-15), instead of the actual speech of the author. The lament about the idle lavishing of time, and luxurious debauchery of a king and his counsellors in these verses, would be then given as an example of the extreme injudiciousness of a foolish man in his talk, and the following warning against such want of foresight (ver. 20) would then be very fittingly annexed. The whole tendency of the section would then seem directed only against thoughtless and idle loquacity, together with its evil consequences; whilst the indolence and luxury of extravagant nobles (vers. 16, 18, 19) form no object of the attack of the author, although he may consider the complaints of the foolish talker as well grounded, and may himself have lived under an authority attended with these vices.* For him who will not accept this view, for which the relation between vers. 5 and 6 of the fourth chapter may be quoted as analogous, there is no other course than, with the great majority of commentators, to see in these verses a farther exten-

ם האדם לא ידע ללכת. The difference between ידע, ללכת, and ידע, ללכת, is very slight, but the ל makes it correspond more nearly to our English genitive phrase, “to know of a thing.”—that is, as an event or fact. The relative אשר here, has an inf-mental sense, just as ος, sometimes, in Greek, and the latin qui when equivalent to quis “who knoweth not”=“seeing he knoweth not,” or (quod) “because he knoweth not.” Such a mention of “going to the city,” as one of the most common and familiar illustrations of human ignorance of the future, suggests immediately James iv. 13: “Go to ye who say to-day, or tomorrow, we will go to a certain city, etc., who know not (οτι ουκ οισμεν) used exactly as שָׂא here, what shall be on the morrow, etc.” It may have been this very passage, thus understood, that suggested the illustration to the Apostle; since his language is almost identical with the very words of Rashi’s interpretation. The great difficulties under which HIRTZIG and ZÖCKLER labor, and their far-fetched reasons, warrant the offering of the above explanation, as one that deserves attention, to say the least, in clearing up this obscure passage.

We may arrive at the same general idea, even if we understand ידע ללכת לא ידע ללכת “knows not how to go, etc.,” and such is substantially the conclusion of ABEN EZRA in another comment on the 15th verse: “The fool is like one who would pry into things too high or too wonderful for him, when he knows not the things that are visible and familiar, or like a man who purposes to go to a city when he knoweth not the way, and so he gets weary, and falls in his design.” It is the same general lesson, the folly of confident assertions or confident plans respecting the future. Taken in either of these ways, it avoids the exceedingly forced explanations which ZÖCKLER here, and HIRTZIG in his commentary, give of the passage.

The expression ידע להלך, vi. 8, may, perhaps, be cited as a parallel case to ידע ללכת. An answer might be found in the different form of the infinitive ללכת, which is used more like a substantive denoting the event, or fact, as the object of knowledge. This reference, however, is at once disposed of by a consideration of the accents, which, in vi. 8, separate the two words, and require the rendering: “What to the poor man who knows,”—or “what to the intelligent poor man, to walk,”—or “that he should walk before the living.” In other words: What profit is his intelligence in his walking before the living? Thus it becomes, according to the usual law of parallelism, an amplification

of the thought just above it: “What profit to the wise?” It is another example of the spiritual and critical acuteness that dictated the Masoretic accentuation (see 2d Marginal Note, p. 94). ZÖCKLER thinks the accents here of no authority; but that great critic EWALD holds himself governed by them. The assertion, moreover, that ידע never

has the adjective sense *intelligens*, is refuted by simply looking into a concordance, and noting the places where it is joined with the participle כָּבִין having a like adjective force. With this view agrees also ABEN EZRA, the prince of Jewish critics. It is fortified, too, by the difficulty which all commentators have felt in making any clear sense out of the language: “Who knows how to walk before the living?” The references given by HIRTZIG, Gen. xvii. 1, and 2 Kings iv. 13, are not parallel; since the preposition, on which the meaning of the phrase so much depends, is entirely different.—T. L.]

* [This most absurd and far-fetched view of HIRTZIG only shows how a false critical theory of division may turn one of the most impressive passages of the book into a fool’s gabble. It all comes from looking for logical connections where they do not exist, and from overlooking the poetical subjective character of the work as a series of meditations, each one prompting the other, but by associations discerned by the feeling rather than the ethical reason. It is this free discursive view of human folly, and of the inefficiency of man’s best wisdom, that brings out the exclamation: O ill-governed land with its weak king and drunken nobles, where folly so abounds; and then this calls up the picture of the higher and purer ideal. He may have thought of the weak son to whom his kingdom was soon to be committed; it may have been a humbling thought of himself and of his own misgovernment, although there is in the way of this that Solomon’s youth was the best part of his life; or it may have been prompted by his general historical experience. View it any way, it is far more expressive in this exclamatory and discursive aspect, than though it were bound together by the closest syllogistic ties. And this appears in what follows. In perfect poetical harmony does this free, contemplative style of thought turn again from the political to the common life—from the revelry and misgovernment of kings and nobles to the slothfulness, luxury, and mercenary spirit that are found in the lower plane. Yet “revile not the ruler.”—that is the next thought that arises. Obedience and reverence are still due to authority, since evils abound in all ranks. Things are described as they are, and to find here an authority for wine drinking is about as rational as to seek an excuse for sloth and shiftlessness.—T. L.]

sion of the theme of indolence, business incapacity and slothfulness of fools, the treatment of which was begun in ver. 15. Ver. 16 would then pass from indolent fools in general to indolent, supine and inefficient rulers and nobles in particular. But there would then exist a very imperfect, if, indeed, any, connection with the final warning in ver. 20; indeed the open manner in which complaints are made, in what immediately precedes, regarding the bad conduct of rulers, would seem to be in direct contradiction to this warning about uttering these complaints loudly.—**Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child!**—That is, an inexperienced, thoughtless fool, incapable of governing; comp 1 Kings iii. 7: Isa. iii. 4, 12,—which passages also describe it as a great misfortune to be governed by a child [νήπιος]. Therefore נָעַר is not to be rendered by “servant, slave,” which latter would rather be expressed by נָבֵר [contrary to DÖDERLEIN, HERZFELD, *et al.*].—**And thy princes eat in the morning.**—A sign of especially excessive intemperance and gluttony; see Isa. v. 11 ff.; Acts ii. 15, and compare also the classical parallels in CICERO, Phil. ii. 40; CATULLUS, Carm. xlvii. 5, 6; JUVENAL, Sat. II. 49, 50.—Ver. 17. **Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles.**—(בֶּן-חַיִּים compare בֶּן-גֵּרִי Song of Solomon vii. 2; Isa. xxxii. 8); a noble not merely by birth, but also in disposition, *vere nobilis, generosus*.—**And thy princes eat in due season, for strength and not for drunkenness.**—Therefore make that proper use of wine treated of in Ps. civ. 15; 1 Tim. v. 23; not that perverted use against which we are warned* in Prov. xxxi. 4. בְּגִבּוֹרָה is not “in strength” (HAHN), or “in virtue” (EWALD), but “for strength,” for obtaining strength. The prep. בְּ relates to the object on whose account the action occurs, just as in בָּרֵאשִׁית ii. 24 (comp. פֶּסֶח iii. 12).—Ver. 18. **By much slothfulness the building decayeth.**—That is, the edifice of state, that is here compared to a house that is tottering and threatening to fall (comp. Isa. iii. 6; Amos ix. 11). The intent here is to point out the bad effects of the rioting idleness of the great ones who are called to govern a state. עֲצֵלָה literally: “the two idle” [hands]; comp. EWALD, § 180 a, 187 c. The expression is stronger than the simple form עֲצֵלָה or עֲצֵלוֹת (Prov. xix. 15; xxxi. 27); “double idleness,” *i. e.*, “great idleness.”—**And through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.**—That is, the rain penetrating through the leaky roof. The words

* [As drunkenness is condemned here, or, rather, *excess of any kind*, revelling or high banquetting, which is the predominant meaning of שָׂתַת [comp. מְשֻׁתָּה convivium], whilst not a word is said about any moderate drinking, this remark must be regarded as rather gratuitous. What makes it more than gratuitous is the fact that in Prov. xxxi. 4, instead of a mere warning against perverted use, there is enjoined upon “kings and princes” *total abstinence* from “all wine and strong drink,” as something only fit to be given to persons in *extremis*, in great pain or debility [the perishing, the נִפְשׁ כָּרִי or “bitter in soul”], and therefore unfit for those in health, and especially for all who have responsible duties to perform.—T. L.]

בְּיַדְיָם are used as elsewhere בְּיַדְיָם “idleness of the hands,” Isa. xlvii. 3; comp. Prov. x. 4—Ver. 19. **A feast is made for laughter.**—A return to the description of riotous and ruinous conduct as given in verse 16. לְשִׁחֻק “for laughter,” as elsewhere בְּשִׁחֻק with laughter; comp. for this use of לְ 2 Chron. xx.

21: Ps. cii. 5.—עָשִׂים לֶחֶם literally, “they make bread;” *i. e.*, they give banquets, have riotous feasts. עָשָׂה לֶחֶם is therefore used here in a sense different from that in Ezek. iv. 15, where it signifies “to prepare bread, to bake bread;” comp. עָשָׂה in chap. iii. 12; vi. 12.—**And wine maketh merry.**—The suffix is wanting just as in עָשִׂים the הָם was left out. Comp. moreover, Ps. civ. 15, where an innocent and reasonable enjoyment of wine is meant* whilst here the allusion is to a perverted and debauching use of it, as in chap. vii. 2 ff.—**But money answereth all things.**—That is, to these luxurious rioters, who, counting on their wealth, declare in drunken arrogance that “money rules the world,” “for money one can have every thing that the heart desires, wine, delicacies,” *etc., etc.* For this Epicurean rule of life see HORACE, *Epis.* I., 6, 36-38. עָנָה literally, “to answer, to listen to” (v. 10), but is here equivalent to “to afford, to grant;” comp. Hosea ii. 23. HITZIG unnecessarily considers עָנָה as Hiphil (“makes to hear”).—Ver. 20. Concerning the probable connection with the preceding, consult vers. 16-19 above.—**Curse not the king, no, not in thy thought.**—יָדַע elsewhere “knowledge,” here “thought,” Sept. *συνειδησις*. The signification, “study chamber,” given by HENGSTENBERG, lacks philological authority. For the sentence comp. 2 Kings vi. 12. HENGSTENBERG is correct in saying: “We have here a pure rule of prudence (not a formal precept of duty), a tenet that may be simply summed up in the expression of the Lord: *γινεσθε φρόνιμοι ὡς οἱ ὄφεις.*” —**And curse not the rich in thy bed chamber.**—The rich here represents the noble, the prince, or the counsellor of the king (comp. v. 16).—**For a bird of the air shall carry the voice.**—That is, in an inconceivable manner, which no one would consider possible, will that he betrayed which thou hast said. See the proverb: “The walls have ears;” also IIab. ii. 11; Luke xix. 14.—**And that which hath wings shall tell the matter.**—בְּעֵל הַכְּנָפִים equivalent to בְּעֵל-בְּגָרָה Prov. i. 17. The K’ri would unnecessarily here strike out the article before כְּנָפִים.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

(With Homiletical Hints)

Although the conclusion of the chapter—the warning against injudicious speeches assailing

* [In Ps. civ. 15 a certain effect of wine is mentioned; nothing is said about either its innocent or its immoral use. All such remarks are gratuitous.—T. L.]

the respect due to kings in ver. 20—may have been written with conscious reference to the relation of Israel to its Persian rulers, the section, taken as a whole, is simply an unambiguous illustration of the relation between wise men and fools. The allegorical conception of HENGSTENBERG, by virtue of which he sees in chap. x. 1-3 the idea that the people of God, groaning under the tyranny of the world, will be sustained by reference to the fact that the hostile world, *i. e.*, the Persian world, is given over to folly, and that thus its destruction cannot be far off,—this conception, we say, finds no sufficient support in the text; it is, rather, very decidedly opposed by the exceeding general character of the morally descriptive as well as of the admonitory parts. The contents and the tendency of the section form an eloquent, figurative, vivid and popular illustration of the superiority of wisdom over folly. The theme here treated is that favorite one of the Proverbs—the parallels between wisdom and folly [Prov. i. 20 ff.; ix. 1 ff.; x. 1 ff.; xiv. 1 ff.; xxiv. 1 ff.]; and simply with the difference that here are more emphatically and accurately described the insolence and haughtiness of fools, as well as their loquacity and indolent levity, in contrast to the corresponding virtues of the wise. See exegetical illustrations above, No. 1. *A Homily on the entire Chapter*: Of a few dominant qualities and principal characteristics of wisdom and folly.—Or, of genuine wisdom as the only remedy against the vices of pride, levity and arrogance, together with their evil consequences.—Comp. STARKE: Three moral precepts: 1. Esteem genuine wisdom (vers. 1-15). 2. Avoid indolence and debauchery (vers. 16-19). 3. Curse not the king (ver. 20).

HOMILETICAL HINTS ON SEPARATE PASSAGES.

Ch. ix. 17; x. 4. MELANCHTHON (ix. 17): The words of the wise are heard by the silent—that is, by those who are not carried away by raging lusts, but who seek for things true and salutary (Ver. 10). Good counsels, sound teaching, well ordered methods, are constantly marred and rendered unavailing by trifling meddlers, who are more readily heard, both in courts and by the people, than the more modest and poor, who give right instruction and salutary advice. LANGE (ix. 18). He who has learned any thing thoroughly can effect much good thereby, but also much evil, if he wickedly uses what he has learned against the great purposes of God. CARTWRIGHT:—Such patient submission calms the most violent tempests of the soul; it makes tranquil the most swollen waves of passion; it turns the lion into a lamb. Let us strive then to be imbued with this virtue by which we may please God as well as men, even those who are the farthest removed from piety and humanity. STARKE (ver. 3):—It is difficult to expel folly and instil wisdom; but it becomes still more difficult when man in his folly considers himself wise (Rom. i. 22).—(Ver. 4). To suffer and patiently commend one's innocence to God is the best remedy against misused power and the wrong that we have endured, Jer. xi. 20.

GEIER (ver. 5):—Lofty positions and great power have not the privilege of infallibility. Therefore, the higher one stands, the more care-

ful let him be, entreating God that he may not fall into error and vice.—HANSEN (vers. 6 and 7):—The want of foresight in rulers ever exerts evil influences in the world. The unworthy are thereby preferred to the worthy, and every thing takes a wrong course.—(Ver. 10):—It depends more on wisdom and foresight than on physical strength, to carry on the occupations of men with success.—HENGSTENBERG (ver. 9): He who proceeds with violence in the moral sphere, and thus performs actions that, in respect to this quality, are similar to the breaking of stone or the splitting of wood, will suffer inevitable injury.—(Ver. 10). He who in wisdom possesses the corrective whereby he can sharpen the blunt iron of his understanding, must rise, however deep he may be sunken. He who does not possess it must go to ruin, however high he may have risen.

Vers. 11-15. BRENZ:—There is nothing in man which contributes more to bring him into sin than his tongue. Truth is satisfied with the fewest and simplest words, and the wiser the man, or the more attached to truth, the more sparing is he in his speech. (Ver. 15). This teaches that no labor, no diligence, will produce fruit, if one knows not the legitimate use of labor. As the unskilled steward has much toil, with little or no result, if he knows not how to put to use the goods acquired in the proper manner, or does not carry them to market in the city.—CRAMER:—The unprofitable babblers prattle about things of no import; but the wise weigh their words with a golden balance, Sirach xxi. 27.—STARKE:—Ver. 15. That men must painfully toil is a thing of universal necessity since the fall; but to toil in profitless and sinful things is double folly and sin, Isaiah lvii. 10.—ZEYSS [ver. 15]:—Remember the city of the living God (Heb. xii. 22) and learn the right way thither, which is indeed narrow and not easy to find (Luke xiii. 24).—GEIER (ver. 16):—In judging a wise man we are not to regard his years, but the power of his mind, and what they manifest, 1 Sam. xvi. 17; 1 Tim. iv. 12.—[Ver. 17]. A pious and virtuous magistracy we should gratefully recognize as an inestimable gift of God, and heartily pray to him for their preservation.—ZEYSS (vers. 18, 19):—Beware, above all things, that the house of thy soul be not ruined by neglect, whilst thou art yielding to the flesh and its sinful desires.—THE BIB.:—Observe this rule of wisdom: speak no evil of thy ruler, nor of any one else, James iv. 11.—[MATTHEW HENRY] (ver. 14):—*A fool also is fond of words*, a passionate fool especially, that runs on endlessly, and never knows when to take up; it is all the same, over and over; he will have the last word, though it be but the same with that which was the first. What is wanting in the strength of his words he endeavors in vain to make up in their number. The words that follow may be taken either (1) as checking him for his vain-glorious boasting in the multitude of his words (in respect to the future), namely, what he *will do*, and what he *will have*, not considering what every body knows, that a man cannot tell *what shall be* in his own time while he lives (Prov. xxvii. 1), much less can one tell *what shall be after him*, when he is dead and gone. Or (2) as mocking him for his tauto-

logies; he is *full of words*, for if he do but speak the most trite and common thing, such as *a man cannot tell what shall be*, then, because he loves to hear himself talk, he will say it over again, *what shall be after him, who can tell him?* like BATTUS in *Ovid*:

Sub illis

Montibus (inquit) erant, et erant sub montibus illis.

Whence vain repetitions are called Battologies

(Matth. vi. 7).—[Ver. 15. The foolish tire themselves in endless pursuits, *because they know not how to go to the city*, because they have not capacity to apprehend the plainest thing, such as the entrance to a great city. But it is the excellency of the way to the heavenly city, that it is “*a highway*” in which “*the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err*” (Isaiah xxxv. 8); yet sinful folly makes men miss that way.—T. L.]

C. The only true way to happiness in this world and the world beyond consists in benevolence, fidelity to calling, a calm and contented enjoyment of life, and unfeigned fear of God from early youth to advanced age.

CHAP. XI 1—XII. 7.

1. Of Benevolence and Fidelity to Calling.

(CHAP. XI. 1-6.)

1 Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days.
 2 Give a portion to seven, and also to eight, for thou knowest not what evil shall be
 3 upon the earth. If the clouds be full of rain, they empty *themselves* upon the earth,
 and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the
 4 tree falleth, there it shall be. He that observeth the wind shall not sow, and he
 5 that regardeth the clouds shall not reap. As thou knowest not what *is* the way of
 the spirit, *nor* how the bones *do grow* in the womb of her that is with child: even
 6 so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all. In the morning sow thy
 seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand; for thou knowest not whether
 shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both *shall be* alike good.

2. Of a Calm and Contented Enjoyment of Life.

(VERS. 7-10.)

7 Truly the light *is* sweet, and a pleasant *thing it is* for the eyes to behold the sun:
 8 But if a man live many years, *and* rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days
 9 of darkness, for they shall be many. All that cometh *is* vanity. Rejoice, O young
 man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk
 in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for
 10 all these *things* God will bring thee into judgment. Therefore remove sorrow from
 thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth *are*
 vanity.

3. Of the Duty of the Fear of God for Young and Old.

(CHAP. XII. 1-7)

1 Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days
 come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in
 2 them; While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor
 3 the clouds return after the rain: In the day when the keepers of the house shall
 tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because
 4 they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened. And the doors
 shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise
 up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low;
 5 Also *when* they shall be afraid of *that which is* high, and fears *shall be* in the

way, and the almond-tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about
 6 the streets: Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the
 7 pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

[Ch. xi. Ver. 3.—הִנָּה. If it is allowable at all to vary from the text that has come down to us, this may be regarded as equivalent to הִנָּה שָׁׁ (comp. i. 5) "there is he," there it is. It might easily arise in writing from the ear, the shewa sound being hardly perceptible. If we regard it as the future of the substantive verb הָיָה, or הוּוֹה, with א for ה, it is not a Syriacism, since the future of the Syriac verb would be הוּוֹא or rather הוּוֹא.—T. L.]

[Ver. 5.—בְּעֵצְמִים with ellipsis of כָּרַךְ, equivalent to כָּרַךְ עֵצְמִים.—T. L.]

[Xii. 3.—יָזַע. This is called Aramaic, but it is as much Hebrew as it is Aramaic or Arabic. The intensive form, יָזַע, occurs Hab. ii. 7. It is one of those rarer forms that are to be expected only in impassioned writing, like this of Solomon, or in any vivid description. Its frequency or rarity would be like that of the word *quake*, in English, as compared with *tremble*. The rarer word [as is the case in our language] may be the older one, only becoming more frequent in later dialects according as it becomes common by losing its rarer or more impassioned significance.—T. L.]

[On the difference between יָרַתָּ xii. 9, פָּחַדְתָּ xi. 9, the words שָׁחַדְתָּ xi. 10, בָּטַלְתָּ xii. 3, יָנַן xii. 5, יָרַחַק xii. 6, and יָרַיִן and יָרַיִן xii. 5, see the exegetical and marginal notes.—T. L.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

The close connection of verses 1-7 of the 12th chapter with chap. 11 is correctly recognized by most modern commentators; a few, as HITZIG and ELSTER, unnecessarily add to it also chap. xii. 8. A section thus extended beyond the limits of the 11th chapter concentrates within itself, as the closing division of the fourth and last discourse, all the fundamental thoughts of the book, and in such a manner that it almost entirely excludes the negative and skeptical elements of earlier discussions and observations [only that the words בָּל-הִבֵּל return again in chap. xi. 8: comp. xi. 10], and therefore lets its recapitulation very clearly appear as a victory of the positive side of its religious view over the gloomy spectre of doubt, and the struggles of unbelief (comp. Int. §1, Obs. 2). The entire section may be clearly divided into three subdivisions or strophes, the first of which teaches the correct use of life as regards actions and labor, the second concerns enjoyment, and the third the reverence and fear of God, with an admonition to these respective virtues.

2. *First Strophe, first half.* Chap. xi. 1-3. An admonition to benevolence, with reference to its influence on the happiness of him who practices it. HITZIG, instead of finding here an admonition to beneficence, sees a warning against it, an intimation that we hope too much for the good, and arm ourselves too little against future evil; but every thing is opposed to this, especially the words and sense of ver. 3, which see.—**Cast thy bread upon the waters.**—That is, not absolutely cast it away (HITZIG), nor send it away in ships (as merchandise) over the water (HENGSTENBERG), but "give it away in uncertainty, without hope of profit or immediate return." The admonition is in the same spirit as that in Luke xvi. 9; Prov. xi. 24 f. The Greek aphoristic poets have the expression "to sow on the water;" as THEOOL, *Sent.* 105. *Phocylides*,* 142 c.

The entire sentence (most probably as derived from this source) is found in BEN SIRA (BUXTORF, *Florileg. Heb.*, page 171), and among the Arabians as a proverb: *Benefac, projice panem tuum in aquam; aliquando tibi retribuetur* (DIEZ, *Souvenirs of Asia*, II., 106).—**For thou shalt find it after many days.**—יָמֵי מָצְאוֹ is here clearly used in the sense of finding again.—**וְלִבְךָ הֵמִים** literally, "in the fullness of days, within many days." Comp. Ps. v. 6; lxxii. 7, etc. The sense is without doubt this: Among the many days of thy life there will certainly come a time when the seeds of thy good deeds scattered broadcast will ripen into a blessed harvest. Comp. Gal. vi. 9; 2 Cor. ix. 6-9; 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19; also Prov. xix. 17: "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord."—Ver. 2. **Give a portion to seven and also to eight.**—That is, divide thy bread with *many*; for "seven and eight" are often used in this sense of undetermined plurality, as in Micah v. 4; comp. also "three and four," Prov. xxx. 15 ff.; Amos i. 3; ii. 1 ff.—HITZIG runs entirely counter to the text, and does violence to the usual signification of

חֶרֶק in saying: "make seven pieces of one piece, divide it so that seven or eight pieces may spring from it," which admonition would simply be a rule of prudence (like the maxim followed by Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 8) not to load all his treasures on one ship, that he might not be *robbed* of every thing at one blow. This thought comports neither with the context nor with ver. 6, where the sense is entirely different.—**For thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.**—That is, what periods of misfortune may occur when thou wilt pressingly need strength by community with others; comp. Luke xvi. 9.—Ver. 3. **If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth.**—Not that evil or misfortune "occurs from stern necessity, or in immutable course" [HITZIG, and also HENGSTENBERG, who here sees announced the

*[The heathen sentiment of PHOCYLIDES is as nearly the direct opposite of Solomon's as language could express, al-

though it contains the same phrase here: μή κακὸν εὖ ἐρέται σπείρειν ἐστίαι ὡς εἰνὶ πόντῳ. "Do no favor to a bad man; you might as well sow in the sea."—T. L.]

near and irrevocable doom of the Persian monarchy], but exactly the reverse: let the good that thou doest proceed from the strongest impulse of sympathy, so that it occurs, as from a natural necessity, that rich streams of blessings flow forth from thee; comp. John vii. 38; also Prov. xxv. 14; Sirach xxxv. 24; also the Arabian proverbs in the grammar of ERPENIUS, *ed. Schultens*, p. 424. *Pluvia nubis co-operiens, dum dona funderet, etc.*—**And if the tree fall toward the south or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth there it shall be.**—This is apparently a parallel in sense to the second clause of ver. 2, and therefore refers to the irrevocable character of the doom, or the Divine decree that overtakes man [HITZIG, HENGSTENBERG, *etc.*; also HAHN, who, however, translates the last clause thus: “One may be at the place where the tree falls,” and consequently be killed by it]. But it seems more in accordance with the text, and with the introduction [not with ׀ but with the simple copula] to find the same sense expressed in this second clause as in the first, and consequently thus: “the utility of the tree remains the same, whether it falls on the ground of a possessor bordering it to the north or the south; if it does not profit the one, it does the other. And it is just so with the gifts of love; their fruit is not lost, although they do not always come to light in the manner intended” (ELSTER; comp. also VAHINGER and WOHLFARTH, *etc.*). GEIER and ROSENUELLER are quite peculiar in the thought that the falling tree is the rich man, who is here warned of his death, after which he can do no more good deeds (similar to this are the views of SEB. SCHMIDT, STARKE, MICHAELIS, *etc.*). אֲרִיאָה a secondary Aramaic* form of אֲרִיאָה and therefore literally equivalent to: “it will be, it will lie there;” for which consult EWALD, § 192 c, as well as HITZIG on this passage. There is no grammatical foundation for the assertion that it is a substantive to be derived from an obsolete verb אָרַח and explained by the word “break” [אֲרִיאָה אֲרִיאָה “there occurs the break or fracture of the tree,” as says STARKE].

3. *First strophe, second half.* Vers. 4-6. An admonition to zealous, careful, and untiring performance in one’s calling [μὴ ἐκκαέιν, “not to faint,” as before he was warned ποιεῖν τὸ καλόν, to be earnest in well doing, Gal. vi. 9]. **He that observeth the wind shall not sow.**—A warning against timid hesitancy and its laming influence on effective and fruitful exertion. He whom the weather does not suit, and who is ever waiting for a more favorable season, misses finally the proper period for action. The second clause expresses the same admonitory thought regarding excessive considerateness.—Ver. 5. **As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her who is with child.**—[ZÜCKLER renders “way of the wind.” See the excursus appended, p. 150.—T. L.]—That is, as thou canst not comprehend nor see through the mysteries of nature. That the origin and pathway of the winds is in this re-

gard proverbial, is shown by John iii. 8 [comp. above, chap. i. 6]. For the formation of the bones in the womb of the mother as a process peculiarly mysterious and unexplainable, comp. Ps. cxxxix. 13-18.—**Even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.**—The “works” or action of God are, of course, His future dealing,* which is a mystery absolutely unknown and unfathomable by men; wherefore all success of human effort can neither be known nor calculated in advance. “Who maketh all;” for this comp. Amos iii. 6; Matth. x. 28, 29, Eph. iii. 20, *etc.*

[THE UNKNOWN WAY OF THE SPIRIT AND OF LIFE.—ECCLESIASTES xi. 5.—“As thou knowest not the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow.” *etc.* The words אֲרִיאָה אֲרִיאָה are rendered here by ZÜCKLER, STUART, and HITZIG, “the way of the wind.” There would be good reason for this from the verse preceding; but what follows points to the sense of spirit, although the word was undoubtedly suggested by what was said in ver. 4 of the wind. The best way, however, is to regard the double idea of wind and spirit as being intended here, as in our Saviour’s language, John iii. 8. About the words following there can be no mistake. The process described is set forth as the peculiar work of God, a Divine secret which human knowledge is challenged ever to discover. “Thou knowest not the way of the spirit” [אֲרִיאָה Gen. vi. 3, “my spirit,” that I have given to man], “nor how the bones do grow.” that is, how that spirit, or life, reorganizes itself each time, clothes itself anew in the human system, making the bones to grow according to their law, and building up for itself a new earthly house in every generic transmission. This is the grand secret, the knowledge and process of which God challenges to Himself. Science can do much, but it can never discover this. We may say it boldly, even as Koheleth makes his affirmation, science never will discover this; for it lies above the plane of the natural; and in every case, though connected with nature, demands a plus power, or some intervention, however regulated by its own laws, of the supernatural. The Bible thus presents it as God’s challenged work [comp. Gen. ii. 7; vi. 3; Job xxxiii. 14; Ps. cxxxix. 13; Jerem. i. 5], the same now as in the beginning when the Word of life first went forth, and nature received a new life power, or, rather, a rising in the old. The passage of life from an old organism to a new is as much a mystery as ever. We mean the transition from the last enclosing matter of the former, through the moment of disembodiment, or material unclathing (see note, Gen. p. 170), when it takes that last matter of the previous organization, or of the seed vessel, or seed fluid, and immediately makes it the commencing food, the first material it uses in building up the new house in which it is to dwell. In respect, too, to the mystery of supernatural origin, it is as much a new creation as though that unclathed and immaterial power of life [whether in the ve-

*[This is an unwarranted limitation. It refers evidently to God’s dealing in nature, present and past, as well as future, and especially to the mystery of generation.—T. L.]

* See the text note.

getable or in the animal sphere] had for the first time begun its manifestation in the universe. It is the same Word, sounding on in nature, or, as the Psalmist says, "running very swiftly,"—*πνεῦμα νοερόν, ἐκκίνητο, ἐνεργητικόν, παντοδύναμον, πάσης κινήσεως κινητικώτερον, καὶ διὰ πάντων δίκρον, διὰ τὴν καθαρότητα*; Wisd. of Sol. vii. 23, 24. It is the transmission, not merely of an immaterial power (though even as a *power* science can only talk about it or find names for its phenomena), but also of a *law* and an *idea* (*νοερόν* as well as *ἐνεργητικόν*, an intelligent working we may say) representing, in this dimensionless monad force the new life exactly as it represented the old in all its variety, whether of form or of dynamical existence,—in other words, *transmitting the species*, or the specific life, as that which lives on, and lives through, and lives beyond, all the material changes that chemistry has discovered or can ever hope to discover. Science may show how this life is affected in its *manifestations* by the outward influences with which it comes in contact, the changes that may seem to enter even the generic sphere, and it may thus rightly require us to modify our outward views in respect to the number and variety of strictly fundamental forms; but the transmission itself of the species (however it may have arisen or been modified) into the same form again of specific life, or the carrying a power, a law, and an idea, in a way that neither chemical nor mechanical science can ever trace,—this is the Divine secret towards which the Darwinian philosophy has not made even an approach. Its advocates know no more about it than did the old philosophers who held a theory precisely the same in substance, though different in its technology. They talked of atoms as men now talk of fluids, forces, and nebular matter; but give them time enough, or rather give them the three infinities of time, space, and numerical quantity of conceivable forms, and they would show us how from infinite incongruities falling at last into congruity and seeming order, worlds and systems would arise, though their form, their order, and the seeming permanence arising from such seeming order, would be only names of the states that were: any other states that might have arisen being, in such case, equally entitled to the same appellations. Like the modern systems, it was all idealess, without any intervention of intelligence either in the beginning or at any stages in the process. It is astonishing how much, in the talk about the Darwinian hypothesis, these two things have been confounded,—the possible outward changes in generic forms, and the inscrutable transmission of the generic life in the present species, or in the present individual. The theory referred to is adapted only to an infinity of individual things, ever changing *outwardly*, and which, at last, fall into variety of species through an infinite number of trials and selections, or of fortunate hits after infinite failures. It makes no provision, however, for one single case of the transmission of the same specific life, either in the vegetable or the animal world. There it has to confess its ignorance, though it treats it sometimes as a very slight ignorance, soon to be removed. How pigeons, taken as an immense number of individual things, undergo an eternal series of outward changes,—

how existing pigeons spread into varieties, by some being more lucky in their selections than others—all this it assumes to tell us. But in the presence of the great every day mystery, the wonderful process that is going on in the individual pigeon's egg, invisibly, yet most exactly, typing the pigeon life that now is, it stands utterly speechless. One of its advocates seems to regard this as a very small matter, at present, indeed, not fully understood as it will be, but of little consequence in its bearing on the great scheme. It has its laws undoubtedly, but the *principle of life*, he maintains, is chemical,—that is, it is a certain *arrangement* of matter. Now this we cannot *conceive*, much less *know*. We are equally baffled whether we take into view the grosser (as they appear to the sense) or the more ethereal kinds of matter, whether as arranged in greater magnitudes, or in the most microscopic disposition of atoms, molecules, or elementary gases constituted by them. We may attempt still farther to etherealize by talking of forces, motions [motions of what?] heat, magnetism, electricity, *etc.* They are still but *quantities*, matters of more or less. And so the modern chief of the positive school has boldly said: all is quantity, all is number; life is quantity, thought is quantity (so much motion); what we call virtue is quantity; it can be measured. And so all knowledge is ultimately mathematics, or the science of quantity. There is nothing that cannot be reduced, in its last stages, to a numerical estimate. There is, moreover, just so much matter, force, and motion in the universe,—ever has been, ever will be. And there is nothing else. But how life, a thing in itself dimensionless, to say nothing of feeling, thought, and consciousness, can come out of such estimates is no more conceivable of one kind of matter, however moving, than it is of another. Still more do we fail to imagine how it can, in any way, be the result of figure, arrangement, position, quantity, or of *σχῆμα, τάξις, θέσις*, as LEUCIPPUS and DEMOCRITUS called their three prime originating causalities [see ARISTOT., Met. II. 4]. But so it is, they still continue to insist, though chemistry has searched long and could never find it, or even "the way to its house," as is said, Job xxxvii. 20, of the light. Prof. HÆCKEL, of Jena, in his *Natürliche Schöpfungsgeschichte*, maintains "that all organized beings are potentially present in the first matter of the nebular system." He looks upon "all the phenomena of life as a natural sequence of their chemical combination, as much as if they were conditions of existence, *though the ultimate causes are hidden from us.*" There may be some truth in what is said about *conditions* [for conditions are not causes], but it is the other remark that demands attention: "*though the ultimate causes may be hidden from us.*" He seems to regard this as a very slight circumstance, which ought to have little effect on the great argument of what calls itself the exact and "positive philosophy." There is yet indeed an unimportant break in the chain: a link or two is to be supplied; that is all, they would say. But what data have we for determining what is lacking before the full circuit of knowledge is completed? A most important inquiry this: how great is the separation made by the unknown?

Is it a few inches, or a space greater than the stellar distances? Is it a thin partition through which the light is already gleaming, or is it a vast chasm, compared with which any difference between the most ancient and the most modern knowledge is as nothing? Is it something that may be passed over in time, or is it the measureless abyss of infinity which the Eternal and Infinite Mind alone can span? "They are yet hidden from us," he says. Is there the least ray of light in the most advanced science that shows us that we are even approaching this mysterious region of causality? Is there any reason to think that we know a particle more about it than ARISTOTLE did, or those ancient positivists who talked of *σχῆμα*, *τάξις*, and *θέσις*, or any of those profound thinkers of old whose better reasoned atheism CUNWORTH has so fully refuted in his great work? And yet this professor of "exact science" talks of his *monera*, the prototypes of the *protista*, and how from these came *neutral monera*, and from these, again, vegetable and animal *monera*, just as freely as though he knew all about it from his inch of space and moment of time, or had not just admitted an ignorance which puts him at an inconceivable distance from that which he so confidently claims to explain. For it should be borne in mind that science has not merely failed to discover the principle of life, as "positive knowledge;" she cannot even *conceive* it: she cannot form a theory of it which does not run immediately into the old mechanical and chemical language of number and quantity, out of which she cannot think, nor talk, without bringing in the supernatural, and that, too, as something above her province. After what is told us about the *monera*, etc., the writer proceeds to say: "this once established, from each of the archetypes, we have a genealogy developed which gives us the history of the protozoan and animal kingdoms," etc., as though any thing had been established, and he had not admitted his ignorance of a prime truth without which he cannot take a step in the direction in which he so blindly hastes. There is nothing new in this, in substance, though there may be much that is novel in form and technology. It is the old philosophy of darkness. It is as true of this modern school as it was of the old cosmologists of whom ARISTOTLE first said it, *ἐκ νυκτὸς πάντα γεννᾶν*, "that they generate all things out of Night." This bringing every thing out of the nebular chaos through mechanical action and chemical affinities, and these grounded on nothing else than *σχῆμα*, *τάξις*, and *θέσις*, is nothing more than the Itesiodean generations, or the Love and Discord, the attractions and repulsions, of EMBEDOCLES. It is the pantogony of these old world builders, but without their splendid poetry.

"All organized beings in the first nebular matter," and that from eternity! Then, of course, there has been no addition in time, no plus quantity, or plus power, or any plus idea combined with power; for that would be something which previously was not. NEWTON was in the toad-stool; for what is not *in* cannot come out, or be developed; and so every toad-stool now contains a NEWTON; every fungus contains an academy of science, or a school of "positive philosophy." The carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen, or still

earlier and more formless matter out of which this thinking arises, is there, only in a different *τάξις* and *θέσις*, perhaps. There has been no more addition to nature in the physical development of the rationalist commentator than in that of the *□ῶϩ* (Exod. viii. 17: Ps. cv. 31) or Egyptian lice, whose *immediate* production he regards as beneath the dignity of any supposed Divine or supernatural action. And so there can be no *real* or *essential* difference in rank. The *kinnim* were as much in the first matter as the phosphorus that thinks in the brain of the theologian; they had as high and as old a place. The *idea*, too, of the *kinnim* was there, and all the machinery of their development; so that there was no saving of means or labor; their *immediate* genesis would cost no more, or be any more of a belittling work, than their mediate, or developed production. These insignificant creatures were *provided* for from all eternity. But *providing* means *foreseeing*, *foreknowing*; and language revolts. We cannot consistently talk atheism or materialism in any human dialect; God be thanked for such a *provision* in the origin and growth of speech. We can, indeed, say in words, as one of the boldest of this godless school has said, *ohne Phosphor kein Gedanke*, "without phosphorus no thought;" but then we must give up the word *idea* as, in any sense a cause originating; for there could be no idea antecedent to the phosphoric matter, or that *order* and *position* of it, out of which *idea*, or the development of thought, was to arise; that is, any idea of phosphorus before phosphorus. There is, then, nothing eternal, immutable, undeveloped, or having its being in itself, and to which, as an ideal standard, the terms *higher* and *lower* can be referred to give them any meaning. For all *risings* of matter, or form, to higher forms regarded as any thing else than simply unfoldings of previous matter, or previous arrangements of forces, or *creations* as much as any thing that is supposed first to commence its being as a whole; since *more from less* involves the maxim *de nihilo*, as well as *something from nothing* in its totality. If they were in that previous matter without a new commandment, a new word, and a plus activity accompanying it, then they are not truly a rising. They are no more, in *quantity*, than what they were; and *quantity* is all. Quality, according to COMTE, is but a seeming; it is not a positive entity, but only *σχῆμα*, *τάξις*, and *θέσις*, an arrangement of matter. The *potentiality*, then, has all that there is, or can be, in any actuality. Even that inconceivable power which causes any potentiality to be thus potential, is, itself, only a potentiality included in the infinite sum of potentiality, which, as a whole, is also, in *some way*, caused to be what it is, and as it is. We say, *in some way*; for to say for *some reason*, would, at once, be bringing in a new word, and a new idea, utterly foreign to this whole inconceivable scheme. According to the other philosophy, Reason is "in the beginning," *ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος* (John i.; Prov. viii. 22). But here reason is junior to matter, something developed, and which could, therefore, neither as *intelligens* nor as *intellectum*, be made a ground of that from which itself proceeds. We can never get out of this labyrinth; for the moment we bring in a plus

quantity, or a plus activity, or a plus idea, or any thing seeming to be such, we only have a new causative potentiality, and that demanding another, which is potential of it, and so on *ad infinitum*: the infinity, too, not proceeding from the highest downward, but from the lowest state [or that which is next to nothing], as being the *first* possible manifestation of being in the universe of conceivable things. Again, it may be asked, why has not this infinite potentiality, in this infinite time, developed all things potential, so that pigeons should long since have become arch-angels, and our poor, earthly, dying race long since risen "to be as gods." Or how, if we shrink from that, are we to avoid the converse conclusion, that the whole state of things now actual, now developed, is still infinitely *low*, and that the *highest* and *best* in the sphere of soul, and thought, and reason, is not only as yet undeveloped, but infinitely far in condition, and eternally far in time, from its true actuality,—if, in such a scheme, *highest* and *best* have any real meaning. It makes the lowest and most imperfect first, the best and perfect last, or at such an infinite distance that it may be said they never come. Religion and the Scriptures just reverse this. They put soul first, mind first, the Personal first, the all Holy, the all Wise, the all Righteous, the all Perfect, first, whilst every seeming imperfection contributes to the manifestation of the infinite excellency and infinite glory of the one separate personal God who is first of all and over all.

How poor the science of Koheleth, it may be said, and yet he has propounded here a problem having regard to one of the most common events of life, but which the ages are challenged to solve: "As thou knowest not the way of the spirit, or even how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child, even so thou knowest

not the work of God who worketh all,"—**אֵת-הַכֹּל** *the all*, the great paradigm which He is bringing out in space and time [ch. iii. 14], and for those moral and spiritual ends to which the natural, with all its changes, and all its developments, is at every moment subservient. In one sense, indeed, it has no plus quantities. All is provided for in Him "who is the A and the Ω, the First and the Last, the *ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος*, the Beginning and the End." "All that God doeth is for the olam, the Great Eternity" [iii. 14]. "Nothing can be added to it or taken from it;" but this, instead of excluding the supernatural, or shutting all things up in nature, necessitates the idea that there is a world above nature, a power, or rather an Eternal "Word [*ἐν ᾧ τὰ πάντα συνέστηκε* (Col. i. 17)] in whom all things *consist*," or stand together. This Word still speaks in nature. There,

still abides its constant voice, **קוֹל דַּמְמָה רַקָּה** [1 Kings xix. 12], *susurrus auræ tenuis*, its "thin still voice," that is heard "after the fire and the wind," its **שִׁמְעֵן דָּבָר**, its "whisper word," as Job calls it, xxvi. 14; and then again there is the "going forth" of its "mighty thunder voice," **וְעַם לִבְרֹתָיו** which "none but God can understand," speaking in its great periodic or creative utterances, as it did of old, and as it shall speak again, when it calls for the "new heavens and

the new earth," giving to nature its new movement and its still holier Sabbath. It is this greater utterance that brings into the natural development its plus powers and plus ideas, not from any undeveloped physical necessity, but from a Divine fullness, not arbitrarily, but from its own everlasting higher law.

Throughout all the seeming nature there remains this mysterious, generative, life-giving process in the vegetable, the animal, and especially in the human birth, as a constant symbol of the supernatural presence, or of the old unspent creative force, still having its witness in continually recurring acts, ever testifying to the great Divine secret that baffles science, and to the explanation of which she cannot even make the approach.

There is an allusion to this mystery of generation, Ps. cxxxix. 13: "Thou didst *possess* my reins [claim them as thine own curious work], thou didst overshadow me in my mother's womb." So also in ver 15: "My substance was not *hid from thee*,"—**עַצְמוֹתַי** *my bone*, the same symbolic word that is here employed by Koheleth. In fact, it was ever so regarded by the earliest mind, as it must be by the latest and most scientific. Koheleth simply expressed the proverbial mystery of his day. It existed in the thinking and language of the most ancient Arabians; as is evident from the use Mohammed makes of it in the Koran. His mode of speaking of it shows that it was a very old query that had long occupied the thoughts of men. Hence his adversaries are represented as proposing it to him as a test of his being a true prophet (see *Koran Sur. XVII* 78): "They will ask thee about the *spirit*

(**عَنِ الرُّوحِ**); say: the *spirit* is according

to the command of my Lord, and ye have been gifted with knowledge but a very *little way*." When he says "the spirit is by the *command* of my Lord," he has reference to a distinction that was made (and very anciently it would seem) between the creation of spirit, and that of matter, or nature strictly. The latter was through media, steps, or growth, whilst spirit was *immediate*, by the *command* of God, according to the language of Ps. xxxiii. 9, or the frequent expression in the Koran which so closely resembles it,

كُنْ فَكَانَ. "be, and it was." AL ZAKHSHARI, in his Commentary, p. 783, 2, tells us that the Jews bid the Koreish ask Mohammed three questions—one about the mystery of "the cave and the sleepers," one about Dhu'l Karnein, and the third, this question about the spirit. If he pretended to answer them all, or if he answered neither of them, then he was no true prophet. He answered the first two, but confessed his ignorance of the human soul, as being something "the knowledge of which God had reserved to Himself." Then he told them that there was the same reserve in their law (the Old Testament) which revealed to them nothing about the way of the spirit, **רַךְ הוּיָהּ**. If Mohammed knew any thing about the Bible (and there is but little reason in the contrary supposition), then it may be

reasonably thought that in what is thus said of him by the Koranic commentator, he had reference to such passages as this of Ecclesiastes (compare also Eccles. iii. 21, רוח, כִּי יָדַע רוּחַ, "who knoweth the spirit," etc.), or to the general reserve of the Old Testament respecting the soul, or in a more special manner to Gen. ii. 7; vi. 3, where there are ascribed to God the more direct creation of, and a continued property in, the human spirit. This would seem, too, from Ps. civ. 29, to be asserted, in some sense, even of the animal creation.—T. L.]

Ver. 6. **In the morning sow thy seed.**—The sowing of seed is here a figurative designation of every regular vocation or occupation, not specially of benevolence; comp. Job iv. 8; Ps. cxvii. 5; 1 Cor. ix. 10, 11.—**And in the evening withhold not thine hand.**—Literal, "towards evening" (לְעֶרְבַי), i. e., be diligent in thy business from the early morning till the late evening, be incessantly active.—**For thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that.**—הֲיֵשׁ, not "what," but "whether;" the expression refers, as it seems, to the double labor, that of the morning and that of the evening. "We are to arrange labor with labor, because the chances are equal, and we may therefore hope that if one fails, the other may succeed. God may possibly destroy one work—and who knows which? (comp. chap. v. 6); it is well if thou then hast a support, a second arrow to send" (Hitzig).—**Or whether they shall both be alike good**—i. e., whether both kinds of labor produce what is really good, substantial and enduring, or whether the fruit of the one does not soon decay, so that only the result of the other remains. יחד, "together," as in Ezra vi. 20; 2 Chron. v. 13; Isa. lxxv. 25.

4. *Second strophe.* Vers. 7-10. Admonition to calmness and content, ever mindful of divine judgment, and consequently to the cheerful enjoyment of the blessings of this life.—**Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun.** Hitzig correctly gives the connection with the preceding: The tendency of the advice in vers. 1-6 (mainly in ver. 6) to secure guaranties in life, is justified in ver. 7. "Life is beautiful and worthy of receiving care." ELSTER is less clear and concise: "Such an energy of mental activity (as that demanded in vers. 1-6) will only be found where there is no anxious calculation about the result; but where man finds alone in the increased activity of his mental powers, (?) and in the intense striving after an eternal goal, his satisfaction and reward," etc. The "light" here stands for life, of which it is the symbol. (Comp. Ps. xxxvi. 9; xlix. 19; lvi. 13; Job iii. 20). And so the expression: "to behold the sun," for which see not only Ps. lviii. 9; John xi. 9, but also passages in classic authors, e. g., EURIPIDES, IPHIG. in Aul. 1218: ἦδον γὰρ τὸ φῶς βλέπειν; also HIPPOCR. 4: φῶς ὁρῶντες ἡλίου; PHOENISS: εἰ λείψαι φῶς.—Ver. 8. **But if a man live many years.** כִּי here greatly increases the intensity of thought (comp. Job vi. 21; Hosea x. 5); it is consequently to have no closer connection with the following כִּי:

comp. Prov. ii. 3; Isa. x. 22, etc.—**And rejoice in them all;** [ZÖCKLER renders: Let him rejoice in them all];* therefore daily and constantly rejoice, in harmony with the apostolic injunction, χαίrete πάντοτε. See the "Doctrinal and Ethical" to know how this sentence is to be reconciled in Kobolet's sense, with the truth that all is vanity, and at the same time to be defended against the charge of Epicurean levity.—**Yet let him remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many.** וְ in

here the relative, not the causal ὅτι; comp. the *Septuagint*: καὶ μνησθήσεται τὰς ἡμέρας τῶν σκότους, ὅτι πολλὰί ἐσονται. "The days of darkness are those to be passed after this life in Scheel, the dark prison beneath the earth (chap. ix. 10), the days when we shall no longer see the pleasant light of the sun, or the period of death;" comp. Job x. 21, f.; xiv. 22; Ps. lxxxviii. 12, etc.—**All that cometh is vanity;** that is, that cometh in this world; everything that exists in this life, consequently all men especially; comp. chap. vi. 4; John i. 9. Nevertheless the translation should not be in the masculine; the *Septuagint* is correct: πᾶν τὸ ἐρχόμενον, ματαιότης. The sense given by VAISINGER and ELSTER is too broad: "All future things are vanity." But even this is more correct than the *Vulgate* and LUTHER, who refer נַפְשׁוֹ to the past.

Moreover the clause is a confirmation of what precedes, though used without a connective, and therefore making a still greater impression.—Ver. 9. **Rejoice, O young man in thy youth.**—Here we again have a vividly emphatic omission of the connective. That which the previous verse recommended in general, is now specially addressed to youth as that period of life especially favorable to cheerful enjoyment, and therefore, in accordance with God's will, especially appointed thereto. But the necessary check is indeed immediately placed upon this rejoicing, by the reminder of the duty to forget not that God will bring to judgment. וְ in וְיָרֵת does not give the cause or object of rejoicing, but, as also in וְיָרֵת in the following clause (comp. Isa. ix. 2), the period and circumstances in which it is to occur.—**And let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth †** For this expression comp. i. 17:

*[XI. 8. כִּי יִשְׂכַח, "Let him rejoice," etc., would not seem very congruous to what follows: "let him remember the days of darkness," which is certainly not a joyful thought. Our English translators have inserted the conjunction: "and in them all rejoice," which gives the spirit of the passage, although there is no ל in the Hebrew. The better way is to regard the particles וְ and כִּי as affecting both the futures, the second as well as the first, whilst the third, introduced by the conjunction, is the one exhortation of the sentence, to which the others are preparatory: "For if a man shall live many years, if he shall rejoice in them all," or as it is elliptically, yet most literally, expressed in the Metrical Version—

Yet if a man live many years, in all of them rejoice,
The days of darkness let him not forget.

Or it may be the imperative style with the conditional aspect: let him live, let him rejoice, (that is, though he live, though he rejoice) yet let him remember, etc. In such a rendering there is no discord in the thought.—T. L.]

†[Ver. 9. פְּחוּיֹתֶיךָ, a rising upon the word יָרֵת childhood as is seen by the parallelism. It is the period of

iii. 18; vii. 25, etc. The heart delights the whole man in proportion as it itself is טוב, that is, of good cheer.—**And walk in the ways of thine heart, i. e., in the ways in which it will go; follow it.** Comp. Isa. lvii. 17 and for the thought above chap. ii. 10.—**And in the sight of thine eyes, i. e., so that thy observation of things shall form the rule for thy conduct, (comp. iii. 2-8).** This is in accordance with the k'ri כְּרִיָּה, which is attested by all versions and manuscripts; the ketib כְּרִיאָ which is preferred by HENGSTENBERG and others, would designate the multitude of the objects of sight as the rule for walking, which, as HIRTZIG correctly observes, would be an intolerable zeugma. We moreover decidedly condemn the addition of לֹא before כְּרִיָּה: “and not according to the sight of thine eyes,” as is found in the Codex Vaticanus of the *Septuagint*, and in the Jewish Haggada; for the passage in Numb. xv. 39, that probably furnished the inducement to this interpolation, is not, when rightly comprehended, in antagonism with the present admonition; for quite as certain* as the allusion is there to amorous looks of lust, is it here, on the contrary, to an entirely innocent use of sight, and one well-pleasing to God.—**But know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee to judgment.** Comp. Job xi. 6. The judgment (כִּשְׁפָט) is very certainly not merely to be considered as one of this world, consisting of the pains of advanced age (HIRTZIG), described in chap. xii. 1, ff., or of human destinies as periods of the revelation of divine retributive justice in general (CLERICUS, WINZER, KNOBEL, ELSTER, etc.). The author rather has in view the “judgment” in the absolute sense, the great reckoning after death, the last judgment, as the parallels Ps. cxliii. 2; Job xiv. 8; xix. 29, etc.,† incontestably show (comp. also Heb.

commencing manhood. Its etymological sense would be the choice period of life, from בָּחַר primary sense, that of exploring, proving (the keen eye), hence choosing, selecting that which is most precious. From this the idea of excellence, superiority. In the noun בְּחִירָה, it is taken collectively for the youth, the choice young men, as in Isaiah xl. 29, where, in the parallelism it is a rising on בְּחִירָה, “the youths shall be weary, even the young men shall utterly fall.” Here it is an abstract noun in the fem. plural, to denote intensity. We have the masculine plural in the same way, Numb. xi. 28. It is of the same form, in the masculine, with בְּחִירָה; an intensive form to denote extreme feebleness

of age. This is the direct opposite.—T. L.

* [How is it “certain,” unless it be that the hard necessities of this exegesis demand such an assertion? The two expressions are precisely alike, both in their letter and their spirit. There is nothing said, Numb. xv. 39, about amorous

looks,” since the word בְּחִירָה applies to any evil desire, any going away after the eye (see Ps. lxxiii. 27), and is often used of idolatry. The term כְּרִיָּה, which is so much used of female beauty, suggests the idea here, more than any thing in the other passage. Everywhere else this kind of language, “following the heart,” the “desires of the heart,” “going after the eye,” the sense (compare Job xxxi. 7), is used in *malam partem*, and to give it just the contrary sense here, as something “well pleasing to God,” is to abandon every safe guide in interpretation. See the remarks on the solemn and sorrowful irony of this passage, in connection with ix. 7-9: Note on the Alleged Epicureanism of Koheleth; p. 132.—T. L.]

† [Still more striking allusions to such a judgment may

ix. 27; x. 27); the preludes of the final judgment belonging to this life come into view only as subordinate. Neither ver. 8 of this chapter, nor chap. ix. 10 are opposed to this; for Koheleth in these teaches not an eternal, but only a long sojourn in School. Our interpretation receives also the fullest confirmation in chap. iii. 17 as in chap. xii. 7, 14.—Ver. 10. **Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart.** The positive command to rejoice, is here followed by the warning against the opposite of rejoicing כְּעָרָה “sorrow, dissatisfaction;” the *Septuagint*, *Julgate*, *Geier*, etc. most unfittingly render it “anger,” just as the following, רָעָה which means “evil, misfortune,” they render, “wickedness,” (*πονηρία, malitia*). The recommendation to cheerfulness instead of sadness and melancholy (comp. Mal. iii. 14; Isa. lviii. 3) is here clearly continued; comp. chap. ix. 7, ff. For שָׂרָה in the second clause, comp. chap. v. 6.—**For childhood and youth are vanity.** The figure שָׂרָה a later expression for שָׂחָר: comp. the *Talmudic* שָׂחָרִית), and the thing compared הַיְלָרִית also a later word) are here, as in chap. v. 2; vii. 1, connected by a simple copula. Koheleth would have written more clearly, but less poetically and effectively if he had said “for as the dawn of the morning so is the period of youth all vanity” (i. e., transitory, fleeting. comp. vii. 6; ix. 9).

[**KOHELETH'S DESCRIPTION OF OLD AGE**, chap. xii.—The imagery and diction of this remarkable passage show it to be poetry of the highest order; but it presents a very gloomy picture. Even as a description of the ordinary state of advanced life, it is too dark. It has no relief, none of those cheering features, few though they may be, which Cicero presents in his charming treatise *De Senectute*. As a representation of the old age of the godly man, it is altogether unfitting. Compare it with the שְׂנֵיָה טִיבָה the “good old

age” of Abraham and David, Gen. xv. 15, 1 Chron. xxix. 28, the serene old age of Isaac, the honored old age of Jacob, the hale old age of Moses and Joshua. See how Isaiah (xl. 30, 31) describes the aged who wait upon the Lord: “The youths may faint and be weary, even the young men may utterly fail, but they who wait on Jehovah shall renew their strength, they shall mount up on wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.” A more direct contrast is furnished by the striking picture of aged saints, Ps. xcii. 15: They are like the grandæval cedars of Lebanon; “planted in the house of the Lord, they shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing” (more correctly, “still rich and green”), *be evergreens*; or, as WATTS has most beautifully paraphrased it,

The plants of grace shall ever live;
Nature decays, but grace must thrive;

he found Ps. i. 5; Job xxi. 30, the יוֹם אֵיךְ, the יוֹם עֲבָרוֹת, the *dies iræ* (*irarum*) “to which the wicked are reserved;” as also to Psalm xlix. 15, “the morning (בֹּקֶר) in which the just shall triumph.”—T. L.]

Time that doth all things else impair,
Still makes them flourish, strong and fair.
Laden with fruits of age they show,
The Lord is holy, just and true;
None that attend His gates shall find,
A God unfaithful or unkind.

Another very striking contrast to this is that picture which Solomon twice gives us in the Proverbs xvi. 31, and xx. 29, "the hoary head a crown of glory when found in the way of righteousness." But one supposition remains; the picture here given is the old age of the sensualist. This appears, too, from the connection. It is the "evil time," the "day of darkness" that has come upon the youth who was warned in the language above, made so much more impressive by its tone of forecasting irony. It is the dreary old age of the young man who would "go on in every way of his heart, and after every sight of his eyes,"—who did not "keep remorse from his soul, nor evils from his flesh"—and now all these things are come upon him, with no such alleviations as often accompany the decline of life. Such also might be the inference from the words with which the verse begins: "Remember thy Creator while the evil days come not" (עַד אֲשֶׁר לֹא). It expresses this and more. There is a negative prohibitory force in the אֲשֶׁר עַד: So remember Him that the evil days come not,—"*before they come,*" implying a warning that such coming will be a consequence of the neglect. Piety in youth will prevent such a realizing of this sad picture; it will not keep off old age, but it will make it cheerful and tolerable, instead of the utter ruin that is here depicted.

Another argument is drawn from the character of the imagery. The general representation is that of the decay of a house, or rather of a household establishment, as a picture of man going to his eternal house, his בית עולם. *οἰκὸν οἰκισσιν*. This earthly house (*ἐπιγῆστος οἰκία*, 2 Cor. v. 1) is going to ruin, but the style of the habitation is so pictured as to give us some idea of the character of the inhabitant. It is not the cottage of the poor, nor the plain mansion of the virtuous contented. It is the house of the rich man (Luke xvi. 19) who has "fared sumptuously (*λαμπρῶς*, splendidly) every day." The outward figure is that of a lordly mansion,—a palace or castle with its "keepers," its soldiers, or "men of might," its purveyors of meal and provisions, its watchers on the turrets. It is a luxurious mansion with its gates once standing wide open to admit the revellers, now closing to the street. The images that denote these different parts of the body, the different senses or gates of entrance to the soul, are all so chosen as to indicate the kind of man represented. It is the eye that looked out for every form of beauty, the mouth (the teeth) that demanded supplies of the most abundant and delicious food. It is the ear that sought for "singing women," כָּל בָּנוֹת הַשִּׁיר, the loudest and most famed of the "daughters of song." And so, too, the appurtenances at the close of the description, the hanging lamps, the golden bowl, the costly fountain machinery all falling into ruin, present the same indications of character, and of the person represented.

Another very special mark of this may be traced in the expression יִתְפַּר הָאֵיזִינָה ver. 5, rendered, "desire shall fail," rather, "shall be frustrated," still raging but impotent. How characteristic of the old sensualist, and yet how different from the reality in the virtuous old age that has followed a temperate and virtuous youth! See how Cicero speaks of such failure of desire as a release, a relief, instead of a torment: *libenter vero istinc, tanquam a domino furioso, profugi: De Senectute*, 47. This view is rendered still stronger, if we follow those commentators who would regard אֵזִינָה as denoting an herb used for the excitement of failing desire: It shall fail to have its effect. The meaning seems plain, however, as commonly taken, and there is, perhaps, no good reason for departing from the etymological sense. Everything goes to show that Watts has rightly paraphrased the passage—

Behold the aged sinner goes,
Laden with guilt and heavy woes,
Down to the regions of the dead.

The soul returns murmuring to God, as though with its complaint of the cruel and degrading treatment it had received from "the fleshly nature" "in the earthly house," or as a wailing ghost "driven away" (see Prov. xiv. 32), naked and shivering into the uncongenial spiritual sphere.

It is in view of such a life, and such a death, that we see the force of the closing exclamation—"O vanity of vanities—all vanity!" As a finale to the life and death of the righteous, even if the writer, like Solon, had had reference only to this world, it would have seemed inharmonious and out of place. If we regard it, however, as Solomon's picture of himself repenting in *extremis*, then may we indulge a more cheerful hope in regard to its close, though still with the wail of vanity as its mournful accompaniment. One thing seems almost certain. Such a description as this, so sad, so full of feeling, must have been written by one who had had some experience of the situation described. There is a pathos about it that indicates personality, and a personal repentance. If so, no one is so readily suggested as the king of Israel, whose fall into sensuality and idolatry is so vividly described, 1 Kings xi., where the divine judgments upon him are also fully set forth. His repentance is not there mentioned, but it may be because this book of Koheleth, which he left behind him as his brief spiritual autobiography, contained such ample evidence of the fact.—T. L.].

5 *Third strophe*. Chap. xii. 1-7. An admonition to fear God during youth, and not to leave this till old age, the period when approaching death announces itself through many terrors—here depicted in a series of poetical figures drawn from the various realms of nature and human life.—Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth. For the plural בְּיָמֶיךָ see chap. v. 8 preceding. The word "remember" (זָכַר) is, of course, a remembering with becoming reverence, as well as with a feeling of gratitude for the many blessings received. It is therefore substantially the same with the fear expressly recommended in chap. xii. 13, and in substance, at least, in chap. xi. 9, second

clause.—**While the evil days come not.** Literally, “until not,” *i. e.*, “before;” just as in ver. 2 and in the later recapitulation ver. 6. The “evil days,” and the “years” following are naturally the years of old age, of the period immediately preceding death, in contradistinction to the joyous period of youth.—**Ver. 2. While the sun, or the light,* or the moon or the stars be not darkened.** The darkening of the sun and the light must here be synonymous with the diminishing and the saddening of the joys of life, as is experienced in advanced age. A more special interpretation of the sun and the light, as well as of the moon and the stars (only added to finish the description), is inadmissible, and leads to platitudes, as is the case with GLASSIUS, OETING, and F. W. MEYER, who think of the darkening powers of the mind or with WEDEL, who would interpret the sun by the heart, the moon by the brain, the stars by the bowels (!), and the clouds and rain, even, by the catarrhal rheum of old age (!). Moreover the darkening of sun, moon and stars is a favorite figure for seasons of misfortune, punishment and judgment; comp. Joshua iii. 4; ii. 10; Amos viii. 9; Isa. xiii. 10; Ezek. xxxii. 7; Acts ii. 20; Rev. vi. 12. The same is also found in classic authors, *e. g.*, Catullus viii. 3; *Fulsere quondam candidi tibi soles*; Martial Epigr. v. 20. 11; *Bonosque soles effugere atque abire sentit.*—**Nor the clouds return after the rain.** That is, one calamity follows another, one season of misfortune begins where the other ceases. The rainy season, or winter, is therewith described, in contrast to the mere showers or passing thunder storms of summer. Old age is symbolized as the winter† (or autumn of life, as it has previously been termed the approaching night; comp. Job xxix. 3; where the mature age of man is designated as “the days of autumn” (יְמֵי חֹרֵף)). So we too sometimes speak of the evening, the autumn, and the winter of life.—**Vers. 3-5.** A more intimate figurative description of old age’s infirmity and proximity to death. This is here represented under the figure of a house whose inhabitants, formerly cheerful and animated, now become weak, inactive and sad. UMBREIT and ELSTER condemn this view as harsh and devoid of taste, and consider the passage rather as a poetic description of the day of death, which is represented under the figure of a fearful tempest, see especially GURLITT, *Studien und Kritiken*, 1865, II., p. 331, ff. (comp. p. 27, preceding). Comp. also the

*[Ver. 2. “*Whilst the sun or the light.*” This is not a tautology; nor does it mean the light as an element. That would be too abstract for such a writing as this. ABEN EZRA gives a good interpretation in referring it to the *morning light* that precedes the sun rising. This is essentially the same with the light of the sun, but is phenotemally and practically different.—T. L.]

† Ver. 2. “*And the clouds return after the rain.*” There is no need of regarding this as denoting the winter season. It represents the subjective state of the old man. In youth the sunshine is predominant. The cloudy days are little remembered. The sun is ever coming out, or as it is expressed in the beautiful language of 2 Sam. xxiii. 4, it is ever

נֹגַהּ מִפְּנֵי הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ, “*clear shining after rain.*” In old age, especially the old age of the sensualist, who has no spiritual sun to cheer him, it is just the reverse. The clouds seem ever coming back. It is all dark, or the intervals of sunshine seem brief and evanescent.—T. L.]

subsequent remarks under the head of Doctrinal and Ethical.—**In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble.** The human body is often compared to a house* or a tent, *e. g.*, Isa. xxxviii. 12; Wisdom ix. 15; Job iv. 19; 2 Cor. v. 1, ff.; 2 Peter i. 13, f. So also in profane writings, *e. g.*, in the Arabian poet HARRIRI, (RUCKERT’S Ed., p. 293); in Virgil, *Æneid VI.*, 734. The “keepers of the house” are the arms with the hands, that are intended to protect the body, but which become tremulous in aged persons. These are considered as outside of the house, but as closely belonging to it. For the use of the hands as protection and armor for the body, comp. GALEN, *de usu partium I.*, (4 Opp. ed. KUEHN T. III., p. 8).—**And the strong men shall bow themselves.** That is, evidently the legs, which in old age lose their muscular power; whilst in the young, strong man they may be compared to marble columns, (comp. Song of Solomon v. 10), they now shrink and become feeble, and crooked. Comp. the “crooked knees” of Job iv. 4; the “weak knees” of Ps. cix. 24; “the feeble knees,” Isa. xxxv. 3; Heb. xii. 12; also 3 Mac. iv. 5. “Men of strength,” is, on the contrary, a designation for valiant warriors; Judges xx. 44; 2 Sam. xi. 16; 2 Kings xxiv. 16; and to these especially strong legs are very necessary: see Ps. cxlvii. 10; 2 Sam. i. 23, etc.—**And the grinders cease† because**

they are few. הַטְּחֵנֹת “the grinding maids” are to be construed as referring to the teeth, as is also shown by מִיָּמֵינוּ, “for they have become few,” and by the subsequent mention of the “sound of the mill,” *i. e.*, of the human speech proceeding from the wall of the teeth (ver. 4). The closeness of the comparison between human teeth and a mill is proved by the designation “grinders,” for the molar teeth in many languages, *e. g.*, in the Syriac (טַחְנֹת), in the Greek (μύλακροι μολοδοντες), in the Latin (*molare*). The feminine form is in allusion to the custom

*[Ver. 3. הַכֹּהֲנֵי הַבַּיִת “The keepers of the house.” HIRZIO recognizes the comparison, throughout, of the human body to a house, but he trifles when he says, that this is suggested by the mention of the rain in ver. 2, and that the figure is used because a house is made of loam and white bricks that are dissolved and worn away by the showers. Every thing goes to show that there is had in view, rather, the decay of some lordly mansion, the richly furnished house of some Dives, who had fared sumptuously every day, or of a castle with its apparatus of war and luxury, as we have said p. 153.—T. L.]

*[Ver. 3. הַטְּחֵנֹת “The grinders fail.” It is rendered cease in our E. V. ZÖCKLER, *feriari*, to rest, keep holiday. GESSENIUS, the same *feriari sunt*. It is one of the words of this book reckoned to the later Hebrew. It is common, however, to all Semitic tongues, and there is no reason why it should be regarded as either unhebraic, or as late in the Hebrew. Those who argue from its rare, or single, occurrence, should show that there is any other place in the scanty Hebrew writings we have, where it would have been more suited to the idea than the word or words used. The rendering of ZÖCKLER and GESSENIUS would make it synonymous with טְחַן, but this is not its sense in the Arabic and Syriac, and an examination of passages would show how unsuitable it would have been as a substitute for טְחַן, to cease, rest, keep holiday, in any of the many places where the latter occurs. Its true sense is to fail, or rather, to be worn out, to become useless. It may, therefore, be regarded as an old Hebrew word, but as used in this place only, because it is the only one in which its peculiar sense was required.—F. L.]

of all antiquity, according to which female slaves performed the grinding with hand-mills (Ex. xi. 5; Job xxxi. 10; Isa. xlvi. 2; Matt. xxiv. 41), and is also in harmony with the use of שן (tooth) as feminine, occurring in Prov. xxv. 19. —And those that look out of the windows be darkened. These are the eyes,* that are here the more fittingly designated as הַרְאוֹת (the eyes), because עַיִן the “eye” is feminine, and since the eyelids, in other passages compared to the threads of a net (Prov. vi. 25), are here clearly compared to the bars of a grate or to the grating (אַרְבֵּית), and since also it was very natural to present the eyes, the most noble of all our organs, as the mistresses of the house, who look quietly out into the exterior world, but the teeth on the contrary as the servants or slaves. Comp. CICERO Tusc. I., 20: *Oculi quasi fenestree sunt animi; foramina illa, quae patent ad animum a corpore, callidissimo artificio natura fabricata est*; also LACTANTIUS, *De opif. Dei*, c. 8; CLEMENS, *Stromata*, VII., p. 685, § . See also the Cabalistic theory of the seven openings or doors of the head, of which the two sockets of the eyes are the most elevated and distinguished (JEZIRA, c. 4; comp. Talmud tract. Schabb. p. 152, col. 1; BUXTORE, *Florileg.* p. 320). Those looking out of the windows are said to be darkened with reference to the feebleness of sight in old persons, e. g., Isaac (Gen. xxvii. 1), Jacob (Gen.

xlvi. 10), Eli (1 Sam. iii. 2), Abia (1 Kings xiv. 4), etc.; comp. also Ps. lxx. 23; Lam. v. 17; Deut. xxxiv. 7.—Ver. 4. **And the doors shall be shut in the streets.** Namely, the mouth[†] whose upper and lower lips are compared to the two sides or folds of a door (דֶּלֶת); comp. Ps. xli. 3; Micah vii. 5; Job xli. 6. שָׁשֶׁן literally, “on the street,” points to the function of the mouth as a means of communication with the outer world, whether by the reception of food or the sending out of words or other sounds. As the latter reference is not so close, and would anticipate the subsequent clause, we are doubtless to think of the mouth as the organ of eating, and the shutting of the doors as an allusion to the feeble appetite of old men, [in this EWALD is correct, in opposition to KNOBEL, VAHINGER, etc.]. HERZFELD and HITZIG are entirely too artificial: “the lips of the toothless mouth cling together;” but HENGSTENBERG also says: “the shutting of the doors refers to the difficulty of hearing in old men, a common infirmity with them that would not be wanting here” (!).—When the sound of the grinding is low. ZÖCKLER translates: “the voice of the mill.” The mill is the teeth,† according to ver. 3; its voice

*[Ver. 3. “And they who look out of the windows be darkened” (הַרְאוֹת בְּאֲרָבוֹת). All agree that this means the eyes in respect to the body; but what does it stand for in the figure, or parallel representation of the mansion? To this ZÖCKLER does not advert except in what he says about the “mistresses,” which is very inadequate and unpicturesque. His remarks, too, about the eyelids, and “the threads of a net,” with his reference to Prov. vi. 25, are factious prettinesses, which seem out of place in so serious yet so animated a description. The question is, what places and persons are meant? There is something here instructive of the character of the house that is pictured. As it had “its strong men,” its אַנְשֵׁי הַחֵיל, so these are the castle-watchers who look out from the turrets, or rather, at or by the turrets (בֵּית instead of כֶּסֶף) If we are to be governed by the gender of רְאוֹת, we should think of women employed for that purpose, which would suit well enough,—the strong men being otherwise employed—but the gender may have been controlled by the thought of the thing represented, the eyes, which in Hebrew, are feminine. The word, אַרְבֵּית, does not mean the ordinary windows of a house (חַלּוֹנוֹת), but some opening high up, in the roof or in a turret. This is shown from all its uses, as in Gen. vii. 11, viii. 12, 2 Kings vii. 19, Isa. xxiv. 15, Malachi iii. 10, in all of which places it is rendered the windows of heaven (supposed openings in the sky) Hosea xiii. 3, where it means chimneys, and Isa. lx. 8, where it is used diminutively for the openings in the dove houses. Here, therefore, it must mean turret windows or openings, where the watchers are stationed, and this is in harmony with the usual sense of the verb אָרַב, to lie in wait, to watch. There is a striking pictorial propriety in this which has led to similar representations by other ancient writers. “Thus” the sight (says PLATO in the *Timæus*, 90 A), “as the noblest of the senses, is placed in the highest part” ἐν ἀκροτάτῳ σφύρατι. So CICERO *De Nat. Deorum*, II., 149, *Sensus autem, interpretes ac nuntii rerum, in capite, tanquam in arce, collocati sunt*: “The senses, as interpreters and messengers of things without, are placed in the head as in a watch tower.” “And this,” he says, “is especially true of the eyes as watchers;” *nam oculi, tanquam speculatores, altissimum locum obtinent, ex quo plurima conspicientes fungerentur suo munere*. Compare also *Xenophon Memorabilia* Lib. I. ch. iv. 11, where we have the same idea as in the well-known passage from *Ovid Met. I.*, 85:

*Os homini sublimis deicit, celumque tuert,
Jussit, et rectos ad sidera tollere vultus.*—T. L.]

*[Ver. 4. “And the doors shall be shut in the streets;” or rather, “the doors to the street” (the street doors) are shut (becoming shut, closing; see Metrical Version). The reference of this to the mouth, which began with JENOXE, has been the occasion of much false interpretation, both here and in what follows. The dual number is just as applicable to the eyes and ears as to the lips. It agrees, therefore, far better with the whole context, to take it as HENGSTENBERG does, of the ears closing to sounds, or rather, of all the senses, as the avenues to the outer world. To say that this is too remote or abstract a sense for Koboeth, is to overlook the whole scope of this most thoughtful representation, and to fail in appreciating the spirit of its grand poetry. The old sensualist, he who had lived so much abroad, and so little at home, is shut in at last. Again, the language is inconsistent with the other and more limited view. With no propriety could the mouth be called the street door, through which the master of the house goes abroad; especially when regarded, as this interpretation mainly regards the mouth, in its eating or masticating function. It is rather the door to the interior, the cellar door, that leads down to the stored or consumed provision, the stomach, or belly. The word שָׁשֶׁן whether we render it in the street, or to the street, would be altogether out of place in such a narrow view, and more especially since שָׁשֶׁן has such a wide meaning (platea, wide place, foras, abroad), comp. v. 5, Prov. vii. 5, Cantic. iii. 2.—T. L.]

†[Ver. 4. “When the sound of the grinding is low.” In ver. 3 the שְׁחִינֹת, or female servants who grind the meal in the rich mansion, undoubtedly represent the teeth; that is, the term is directly metaphorical. Here, on the other hand, הַשְּׁחִינָה, the grinding, or the mill, is not so much metaphorical as illustrative. It is to be taken, therefore, in its primary sense as a fact showing the old man’s dullness of hearing. The most familiar and homely sounds, such as that of the grinding mill, are faintly distinguished. The making it represent the mouth masticating, as a mill grinding, has given rise to a great many disagreeable and very unpoetical images, marriage, as STUART admits, the otherwise admirable propriety, or keeping, of the picture. The mill, it is said, is the old man’s collapsed mouth; the low sound of the grinding is the mumbling noise made by his feeble chewing, the “sinking daughters of song” are his feeble piping. Commentators seem to have vied with each other here in the exercise of their ingenuity. Some of these most unpoetical critics have referred the low grinding sound to the rumbling noises in the belly and stomach arising from poor digestion (see their names in GELER, also the commentators cited in POLE’S *Synopsis*). STUART says: “none of these interpretations (whether referring to the chewing or the piping or the digestion) are very inviting,” and yet he is not prepared to give any other. He says well that “eating seems to be dispatched in the 3d verse, and there is an incongruity

is not, however, the noise caused by the chewing of food—which would be very harsh and unnatural (contrary to EWALD, *et al.*), but human speech breathed out, as it were, from the wall of the teeth [ἔρκος ὀδόντων], that voice which in old age usually becomes weaker and lower.—**And he shall rise up at the voice of the bird.** ZÖCKLER translates: “and it seems like the voice of the sparrow.” EWALD and HIRTZIG are correct [in regard to the impersonal rendering of קִיָּץ] with reference to Isa. xxix. 24, where also a weak voice is compared to the low chirping, if not of the sparrow, at least of some other small birds. It is usually rendered (*Sept., Vulg., LUTHER, KNOBEL, VAHINGER, etc.*): “and he rises up at the voice of the birds,” *i. e.*, in the early morning—which might also afford an allusion to the sleeplessness of old men. But it is more than doubtful whether קִיָּץ לְקוֹל הַצִּפּוֹר should express this sense of early rising. Instead of קִיָּץ we should in that case have expected יָעוֹר. And early rising is by no means a general custom of old men, and—what seems more weighty than all the rest—the *context* requires a reference to the low, whispering speech of old men; see the following clause. For לְקוֹל הַצִּפּוֹר in the sense here given to it, comp. Zeph. iii. 8; 1 Sam. xxii. 13.—**And all the daughters of music shall be brought low**, that is, all the songs in which the old man endeavors to join, but which he utters only with a trembling, and scarcely audible voice. The “daughters” of a thing means in Hebrew style its special or

specific announcement or utterance; comp. the Rabbinic קוֹל בַּת as well as the expression “Son of fruitfulness,” Isa. v. 1, *etc.* HIRTZIG is correct, and HENGSTENBERG substantially so, who understands by the “daughters of song” the qualities required in singing. But KNOBEL is arbitrary, who, with HERZFELD, sees in the singers only singing birds (according to which the failing here described would be the deafness of the old man); VAHINGER sees an allusion to the organs of singing; and, finally, UMBREIT and ELSTER understand the passage to be about the low flight of birds, and their uneasy fluttering at an approaching thunder storm.—Ver. 5. The discourse continues to depend on שָׁלוֹם at the beginning of the third verse, if not grammatically, at least logically.—**Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high**; *i. e.*, of ascending an eminence which would be difficult on account of their sunken chests, and short breath; a remark in sympathy with what precedes concerning the feeble voice of old men. Nearly all modern commentators are correct on this point, as is now EWALD, who formerly translated: “when they shall be afraid of the lofty One,” that is of God, the one supremely lofty.—**And fears shall be in the way**; namely, “threaten” them, “meet” them, who are too lame and weak easily too avoid such frights. For the abstract form of the plural תַּחֲתָהּ, see EWALD, § 179, a.—**And the almond tree shall flourish.** Thus we must, without doubt, translate the words הַשֶּׁקֶר יִגְאֹץ, for יִגְאֹץ (Hiphil of נָצַץ). For this compare EWALD, § 15, a.;

in supposing it to be again introduced here.” The incongruity is all the greater from bringing this lowest part of the human economy (even if it had not already had place enough) between the two noblest senses; for what follows (בְּנוֹת הַשִּׁיר), undoubtedly refers to the hearing; or else (which would indeed be most strange) there is no notice taken at all of this most important function. We would not hesitate, therefore, to refer this clause also to that sense. There is, too, a wonderful pictorial propriety in it, when we consider the important part which this grinding, and its constant sound, must have borne in an ancient wealthy mansion. From the want of outside mills, this domestic occupation is in continual demand for the daily provisioning; and, in a large house, or castle, it must have employed a great many servants. It was generally done by women, and to this our Saviour refers, Matt. xxiv. 41, Luke xvii. 35: “Two women shall be grinding together” They must have been constantly at work to supply the demand for bread at every meal. Day and night “the sound of the grinding” was heard, like that which proceeded from the tired and drowsy female slaves in the house of Ulysses; as described in the *Odyssey* XX., 109:

Αἰ μὲν ἄρ' ἀλλὰ εὐδον, ἐπεὶ κατὰ πυρρὸν ἄλυσσαν,
 ἢ δὲ μὴ ὄπισθε παύει, ἀφαυροτάτη δ' ἔστευκτο,
 ἢ ῥα μύλην στήσασα, ἔπος φάτο, σίμη ἀνακτι.

The rest had laid them down to sleep, their weary task was done;
 One still kept on the ceaseless toil, the weakest of them all;
 When suddenly she stopped the mill, and spake aloud the sign.

The account is very touching. It is very late at night, and near the dawn. These poor wearied creatures, who had been grinding all day for the rapacious suitors, finish their long tasks, one after another, and lie down, overcome by fatigue and drowsiness, until one alone is left in her late hour of toil. In answer to the prayer of Ulysses, Zeus had given the signal thunder in the early cloudless sky. Startled at the sound she stops the mill, and hails it as a signal of deliverance, whilst Ulysses recognizes her words as an auspicious omen.

There was hardly any part of the day or night when this work was not going on with its ceaseless noise. It was, indeed, a sign, then, that the senses were failing in their

office (בְּטוֹלָה), when this familiar, yet very peculiar, sound of the grinding had ceased to arrest the attention, or had become low and obscure.

When the hum of the mill is faintly heard,
 And the daughters of song are still.

It is from this, too, that the words לְקוֹל הַצִּפּוֹר, which have been so much misunderstood, get their clearest exposition. קוֹל has for its subject, not the old man, but “the sound of the grinding,” the last grammatical antecedent, and it presents a contrast, as HIRTZIG says, with שָׁבַל preceding, as well as with שִׁירָה following. “Though it rise to the sparrow’s note”—“attain unto,” as קוֹל, with לְ following, is used Zeph. iii. 8, 1 Sam. xxii. 13, Mic. ii. 8,—referring not so much to loudness, or volume of sound, as to that sharp, shrill noise which was ever ringing in the ears of others. Its real sound, shrill as the sparrow’s voice, is put in contrast with the dull droning sound that reaches the old man’s ears. What follows would seem to put this interpretation beyond doubt. The term daughter (בַּת) is used in Hebrew, not as ZÖCKLER takes it, but to intensify, to give the very best of a thing. בְּנוֹת הַשִּׁיר, “daughters of song,” then, does not necessarily mean singers, though it may have that sense, but may be understood of “the loudest songs,” or the loudest voices in the song. They are faintly heard; יָשָׁחוּ; they sink down. The sound they make to the old man is exactly represented by the same word, Isaiah xxix. 4, where we have also שָׁבַל used as it is here: “And thou shalt speak low out of the ground (שָׁבַל תִּדְבַּר), and thy speech shall sound low (תִּשְׁחַח) shall sink down) out of the dust, and thy voice shall be as of one that hath a familiar spi it, out of the ground, and shall whisper out of the dust.” See Metrical Version.—T. L.]

‡ 141, b. The almond tree bears its blossoms in the midst of winter,* and on a naked, leafless stem, and these blossoms (reddish or flesh-colored in the beginning) seem at the time of their fall exactly like white snow-flakes; (BODENSTEDT, 1001 *Days in the Orient*, II., p. 237). In this way the almond blossom is a very fitting symbol of old age with its silvery hair, and its wintry, dry, barren and unfruitful condition. EWALD, HEILIGSTEDT, VAHINGER, and GURLITT, are correct; the first-named makes an appropriate reference to Philo, *de vita Moysis* iii. 22.—HENGSTENBERG's view is too far-fetched in finding in the words (according to Jerem. i. 11) the wakefulness, or sleepless nights of hoary old age; whilst SCHRÖDER, GESENIUS, DIETRICH, *et al.*, consider פִּנְיוֹן as intrans. Fut. Hithpa. from פָּנָה, and render: "And the almond is despised" (by the toothless old man who cannot bite it); others undertake emendations, *e. g.*, GAAB, who reads פִּנְיוֹן, "is despised," HITZIG, who points it פִּנְיוֹן, and thus obtains the scarcely intelligible sense: "And the Almond tree refuses," *i. e.*, does not permit the weak old man to obtain its fruit (which is to be understood according to the analogy of the Song of Solomon vii. 9). Still others, finally, force an unusual sense on the word פִּנְיוֹן as HAHN, who understands and translates it "the waking," referring it to the human mind; "the waking one acquires pinions," which is about equivalent to saying: "The previously half-wakened spirit is, in the moment of death, released unto clear life and full liberty" (against which explanation is the absence elsewhere of any Hiphil denominative הִנְיָן from נִנְיָה "pinion"—And the Grasshopper shall be a burden (ZÖCKLER renders "burdensome"), on account of its singing and chirping, or also on account of its hopping flight and creeping. חֲנֹכַּח literally, "locust," but here more fittingly translated by grasshopper, because, in rendering locust, it is most probably the comparative smallness, as in Isa. xl. 22; Numb. xiii. 34, which is mainly considered (as though we should say: "And the gnat becomes a burden, or the fly"). For כִּרְתַּל (fut. Hithpa of כָּכַל) "to become a burden," comp. GESENIUS in the *Thesaurus*. KIMCHI is correct regarding this, and he is followed by GURLITT, especially among modern au-

* [Ver. 5. פִּנְיוֹן הַשֶּׁקֶר, ZÖCKLER well defends here the old interpretation. The other mode of exegesis gives a poor and mean image, marring the poetry, and exceedingly far-fetched as a supposed trait of old age; whereas the comparison of the hoary head to a flowering tree is very striking, as well as natural. The old man's mouth, and eating powers had been treated of before (*ad nauseam*, we might say, if, with some critics, we allow a second reference to it in ver. 4, as well as in ver 3), whilst it would indeed be a wonder if so marked a characteristic as the gray head had been wholly omitted. By changing the punctuation to פִּנְיוֹן, these critics would render it "the almond disgusts," it is too hard a nut for the old man's teeth to crack; or "the almond disgusts," because it is "sour grapes" to the old man; it grows so high he cannot get at it. For other incongruous imagery, see HITZIG and STUART. In regard to the orthography, whilst כִּרְתַּל for כָּכַל (see Numb. xxii. 22, Ps. xxix. 6, Ps. xxii. 22) presents a parallel to פִּנְיוֹן or פִּנְיוֹן for פִּנְיוֹן, the other view of פִּנְיוֹן for פִּנְיוֹן is wholly unexampled. The objection from the color of the almond blossoms is well answered by ZÖCKLER. These difficulties settled, what can be

thors, and approximately also by GESENIUS and HENGSTENBERG, of whom, however, the former thinks of the burdensomeness of the locust as an article of food, whilst the latter prefers to have locust understood figuratively in the sense of influences hostile to life. The numerous remaining hypotheses are to be decidedly rejected; they are divided into two groups, according as they interpret the locust as a symbol of the old man himself, that is as to the form of his body, or seek to alter the sense of חֲנֹכַּח by peculiar explanations. To the former group belong the Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac, *etc.*, which agree in the signification that "the locust becomes fat" (swells up), and understand the whole, though in opposition to the true signification of הכתבל as a biblical representation of the corpulency of old men; and 2. those of LUTHER, GEIER, VAHINGER, *etc.*, who explain locust to mean the crooked or bent skeleton and spinal column of man in old age, and therefore translate: "The locust is burdened;" and 3. that of HITZIG: "And the jumper permits himself to be carried," *i. e.*, the one formerly hopping merrily about can no longer walk: 4. that of OETINGER: "the locust becomes a burden to itself," *i. e.*, "drags its body about with difficulty"; 5. those of EWALD, HEILIGSTEDT, and HAHN, who agree in making locust point to the inner body, or to the mind of man (EWALD); and "the locust rises," namely to fly; HEILIGSTEDT: "et tollit se ad volandum locusta;" HAHN: "And the locust unburdens itself," which is equivalent to our expression: "And the butterfly bursts its cocoon." Among the second class we may count such illustrations as the Chaldaic, and that of Aben Ezra: "when the ankle-bones become thick;" that of BOCHART, "when the bones of the legs become heavy;" and of KNOBEL: "and the breathing is a burden" (the last two on the basis of a peculiar signification of חֲנֹכַּח derived from the Arabic).⁴—And desire shall fail, that is, when neither the appetite nor sexual desire can be excited by so strong a stimulant as the caper-berry. As

more striking than the metaphor! A good parallel to it is found in SOPHOCLES' *Electra* 42, where it is said of the Tutor,

Οὐ γὰρ σε μὴ γῆρα τε καὶ μακρὰ χρόνια
Γνωσὶ, οὐδ' ὑποπτεύουσιν, ὅδ' ἠ' ἠνοήσμενον:

They'll know thee not,
Through age and time thus blossomed;
Nor even have suspicion who thou art.

Some would explain this of the flowers and garlands he is supposed to wear as a messenger; but the critical reader must see that this would be altogether out of keeping with the circumstances, as there detailed, and especially with the sad message he was supposed to bear. The other objection, made by BOTHE, that it would be a tautology with γῆρα (*age*), is very trifling. It is the very nature of poetry thus to intensify, and often by what would be tautology in prose. WUNDER gives an explanation from Fr. JACOBIUS, which refutes completely his own criticism, and that of BOTHE. He cites examples that put the meaning of SOPHOCLES beyond a doubt; as from *Cyril c. Julian VI.*, p. 157, ὅτε λευκῆ πολὴ κατηρθισμένος; and another, where the same figure is applied to the beard, *De Chrysse sene Christodor. Ecclhr.* 90:

βαθὺς δὲ οὐ γῆθεε πάγων

Modern poetry has the same metaphor.—T. L.]
* [Most of these hypotheses seem absurd, and all of them inconsistent with the simplicity and directness of the whole picture. After all, none of them seem so obvious as that which is given by some Jewish commentators, and suggests itself directly from our common English Version; namely, that it is a hyperbolic expression of feebleness. "He cannot bear the least weight."—T. L.]

אֲבִינֵי has the meaning of "Caper" (κάπρις) by the testimony of the oldest translators as well as of the Rabbins (comp. ΒΥΧΤΟΥΡ, *Lex Rabb. et Talm.*, p. 12, 2098), and as the use of the berries or buds of the caper-bush undoubtedly stimulate the appetite, and, according to the ancient oriental representation a voluptuous desire (comp. also PLUTARCH, *Sympos.*, 6; Winer, *Real Lexicon, Art. Caper*), the correctness of this interpretation is not to be doubted, and LUTHER's translation: "and all desire fails," appears at least consonant with the sense. Varying interpretations: 1) Septuagint, Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic; ROSENUELLER, HEILIGSTEDT, EWALD, VAHNINGER: "and the caper bursts," *i. e.*, the spirit presses forth as a kernel from the husk; 2. Vers. Veneta (παύση ἢ ὀρεξίς) ABULWALID, LUTHER, HENGSTENBERG, *etc.*: "Since desire fails;" 3. SCHMIDT, DÖDERLEIN, *etc.*: "since the turtle-dove, the messenger of spring is despised;" 4. HAHN: "Since the poor one (fem. of אֲבִינֵי) bursts forth," *i. e.*, since the imprisoned soul bursts its prison, its mortal coil, *etc.* KNORR, HITZIG, and GURLITT are correct among the modern writers.—Because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets. Clearly a parenthesis by which the previous description of the infirmities of age, especially that contained in the last three clauses, is strengthened by pointing to the imminent approach of death for the old man. Man passeth away, (הֲלֵךְ) *i. e.*, he is on the point of going; comp. Gen. xix. 13, 14, *etc.* "His long home" is the grave, from which there is no more return to earthly life (comp. Job vii. 10; Ps. xlix. 12; Isa. xiv. 18, *etc.*). The same appellation is also found in Tob. iii. 6; Targ. Jonath. in Jes. xlii. 11; among the Egyptians (Diodorus Sic., i. 51), among the Arabians (Koran, Sur. xli. 28) and the Romans (*domus aeterna; marmorea domus, Tibull. Carm.*, III., 2, 22).

[THE ETERNAL HOUSE.—Ver. 5. בֵּית עֲלָמוֹ.

ZÖCKLER's interpretation of this striking expression is scanty and misleading. It cannot, any more than Sheol, mean the grave simply. Without insisting upon the fact that the Hebrews had for that a distinct term (קִבְרֵי), when nothing more was intended (see Bibelwerk Gen. 536), it may be said that the context almost immediately following is at war with such an idea. The expression here, had it stood alone, might have been regarded, perhaps, as a figurative one for extinction of all being. The "long home" might have been thought to denote the dark house of bodily dissolution and spiritual nothingness; though still it would be a question whether language, thus implying residence, permanence, and something like continuance of selfhood, could ever, even in figure, have arisen from such a nihilistic conception. What is said, however, in ver. 7, forbids it altogether. The being of man, though one and inseparable in personality, is there regarded as locally divided: "The dust goes down to the earth, the spirit returns unto God who gave it." Now to predicate this residence of the dissolving dust alone does not

satisfy the conception. The passage, Job vii. 10, to which ZÖCKLER refers, has no application, whatever; Isaiah xiv. 18 is only a highly figurative representation of the remains of monarchs, lying in state, or in their splendid mausoleums, and the בֵּית מוֹעֵד of Job xxx. 23, "the house of meeting," or of "the assembly," which he might more properly have cited, has the same meaning as in this place; and every argument against regarding it as the mere place of deposit for the decomposing remains, which are not man in any sense, is as applicable to the one place as to the other. There is equal difficulty in regarding it as any separate mansion of the spirit by itself. Neither can be said to be *man*, the personality, the self-hood, when separately viewed; and yet it is man himself that has gone to the house of his olam, or rather to his olamic house; since the pronoun in עֲלָמוֹ belongs to the whole compound taken as one epithet. God is spoken of as the מוֹעֵד, "the dwelling-place" of His people (see Ps. xc. 1), but that cannot be the sense intended here; neither, on the other hand, can the "spirit's return to God" be regarded as a pantheistic absorption, as ZÖCKLER well shows. No theism was ever more clear of such an idea, or more opposed to Buddhism, whether in its ancient eastern, or its modern transcendental form, than that of the old Hebrews. Although in the Old Testament God is represented as

אֱלֹהֵי רִיחֹת (Numb. xvi. 22) "God of spirits," yet it would seem to go even to the extremes in setting forth His distinct and incommunicable personality, His unapproachable *holiness*, that is, His separation from all things, and all beings, even the highest whom He has created, or to whom He has given being. As it cannot, therefore, apply separately, either to the soul or the body, the term beth-olam must denote something consistent with such a modified being of both. It is clear, then, that it cannot express *locality*, nor even duration as such, but a *state of being*, unknown except as obscurely defined in what follows (ver. 7), though positive as a fact. This state of being is so called in distinction from the present being upon earth. Although the idea of place is thus excluded, yet the word בֵּית is used as suggested by the previous figure of the decaying mansion. The "earthly house," ἡ ἐπίγειος ἡμῶν οἰκία, is dissolved, and now man goes to the οἰκία αἰώνιος, the olamic house, not under the law of space and time, "the house not made with hands,"—whatever it may mean, whether the same as, or less than, Paul intends by the use of similar language. The term beth-olam, however it may have been suggested here, is in striking accordance with the corresponding classical Greek usage of οἶκος Ἄιδου (Homeric, δῶμ' Ἄϊδαο, Ἄϊδος δῶμος) representing the other world, or the other condition of being, as a house, a home, or abode, though unseen and unknown. This was its pure primary sense and usage, denoting *state* alone, though afterwards the poetry and mythology gave it scenery and locality. עוֹלָם here corresponds to Hades in etymological significance, as well as in its manner of usage. It is the *hidden*, the unmeasured, as that is the *unseen*

The idea of time, though in general inseparable, from עולם, is not here predominant. It certainly does not denote an absolute, endless eternity. And so another phrase, *αἰδώς αἰσπας*, as used in Greek (DIODORUS, XENOPHON, and PLATO: see Gen. p. 587) is etymologically the *unseen*, though coming to be used for eternal, or æonian, through the near relation, and frequent blending of the Hædean and the æonian, or olamic conceptions.

The view, then, of this phrase בֵּית עוֹלָם which is least liable to objection, or on which we can most safely rely, is that which is content with regarding it as simply the antithesis of this present worldly state of being. There is suggested the same rendering (*world*) which we have given chap. i. 11, iii. 11, and ix. 7. It is the other world in distinction from this, whether regarded as lying parallel or as succeeding. It is the house in which the dead (who yet have some unknown being) are to abide, while the world lasts (even this world) as we have rendered לעולם ix. 7, in the Metrical Version.

*Whilst the world lasts, no portion more have they,
In all the works performed beneath the sun.*

In the same manner also, in our modern language, do we speak of *this world*, and the *other world*. We use the latter term in two ways; 1) as the great world, or olam, which, as a whole, is historically to succeed this as a whole that shall have passed away; or 2) as the world into which each individual goes at death,—as though the finishing with *this* were virtually the entrance into *that*, although its historical manifestation for all men collectively may yet be far remote. Our mode of speech has not come from the Bible,—certainly not from the English Bible,—for its general mode of translating עולם vaguely by *forever* and *everlasting*, and its avoiding the rendering *world*, are unfavorable to it. It is a thought horn in the modern as in the ancient mind, and existing from the earliest ages. It was accompanied by no knowledge, yet none the less tenaciously held. It was the goal of the Patriarch's pilgrimage idea. They were "going to Sheol," to the other world, yet all unknowing as Abraham was, when, at the command of God, he went out from Mesopotamia: *ἐξῆλθε μὴ ἐπιστάμενος πῶν ἔρχεται*, Heb. xi. 8. So "went they out" (from this world), confiding in God, hoping "for a better country," yet "not knowing whither they went," or having the least conception, perhaps, of the mode of being that was to follow.

We are simply told of the fact: man goes to the olam, the beth-olam, to the other world, and there the Old Testament leaves him; and leaves the interpreter to give it as high or as low a sense as his spiritual-mindedness or lack of spiritual-mindedness may lead him to prefer. It speaks of it as a *state*, but throws no light upon it as a *mode* of being. It is not wholly a blank, but in almost everything we deem of highest worldly importance, it is set forth as the opposite of the present life. These images, however, of stillness, unknowingness, (not to say unconsciousness), inactivity, want of interest, in a word, lack of vitality, as we would call it, and which would

seem to reduce it almost to an embryo existence (see ix. 5, and note p. 129), may be because the impossibility of our conceiving it aright, and the consequent veil of reserve which the old Scripture throws over the whole subject, leaves little else to the picturing imagination than a description of negatives. Any premature development in the other direction might have falsely stimulated the fancy, and led the divinely guarded people of God into many of those wild conceptions which so deform the Heathen mythologies of Hades, or the world of the dead.

In respect to other great ideas, however, as connected with such a state, the Old Testament is by no means silent. In some places it would seem to speak of death as though it were the end of man, as indeed it is of life, like the present. But again, it sets forth duties to God and man that cannot be measured by time, a law for the spirit, so searching, so high and holy as to seem incompatible with a mere finite earthly animal being; it speaks of *relations* to Deity, of awful accountabilities, that have no meaning, or that greatly collapse in their significance, if there be not for man another olam, another and greater state of being, either in itself, or to which it is preparatory. It never turns aside to explain any such seeming inconsistencies. Sublime in its reserve, in its types and shadows, in its mere hints of a post-mundane human destiny, as in its clearest announcements, this most suggestive Old Scripture goes on its majestic way, fearing no charge of contradiction, taking no pains to make any explicit provision against Sadducean cavils, and leaving the matter wholly to that spiritual discernment which the Saviour manifested (Matt. xxii. 23-33) against those who sought to entangle him with verbal and casuistical difficulties. One great truth of this kind stands prominently out. It is the idea of a judgment, somewhere, and at some time in the great æon of æons, the kingdom of God. This is especially the case in Koheleth, and all that is dark in the book is relieved by this one thought so firmly adhered to, so positively stated, so distinct in itself, or as a fact, yet so undefined in time, locality, and circumstance, as to make it extremely difficult for one who should demand attention to these in defending its consistency.—T. L.]

The mourners going about the streets, is a vivid description of the preparations for a great funeral, which are often made by his heirs for a mortally sick old man even before his decease. With this explanation, (agreeing substantially with HIRTZIG) it is not necessary, with HENCKSENBERG, to consider כִּסְפָה as relative future, and therefore to translate: "The mourners will soon go about." For the mourning customs of the ancient Hebrews consult Amos v. 16; Isa. xv. 3; Jer. ix. 16ff.; Matt. ix. 23; xi. 17, etc.—Verses 6 and 7, following the description of hoary age, give that of his final end in death, and in such a way that the dissolution of the spiritual-bodily organism is first described in ver. 6 in a variety of figures, and then literally or in accordance with its inner nature. In syntactical relation the two verses run parallel with ver. 2, the construction there begun with עָרַב אֶשֶׁר לֹא "before," "being taken up again."—Or over the

silver cord be loosed—i. e., before the thread of life is ruptured. The thread of life is here designated as a silver cord, and not as a tent-cord (which keeps the tent from falling together, see Job iv. 21; Isa. xxxviii. 12), because the author imagines the living one, or rather his living organism, as a golden lamp hanging by a silver cord, as the sequel shows. Both figures, however, point, through the noble metals of which they speak, to human life as a valuable and noble possession; comp. the association of gold and silver in Prov. xxv. 11.—Read רִחֵק **discessit longe recessit* (“gives way”), not רָחֵק (“is unbound”), as the K’ri has it; nor רִחֵק as it stands in the text, nor יִתַּק [“is torn asunder”(PFANNKUCHE), nor יִתַּק as HITZIG has it. These emendations are rendered unnecessary by the simplicity and perspicuity of the text.—

Or the golden bowl be broken.—נִלְהָ is literally equivalent to נַל “fountain” (comp. Song of Solomon iv. 12 with Joshua xv. 19 and Judges i. 15); in Zach. iv. 3 it signifies a vessel for oil, or an oil lamp, and is so to be considered here. The human body is therefore considered as a vessel in which is contained, as in a lamp, the oil, the blood, which is the supporter of the soul or of life [comp. Lev. xvii. 14]. Like the precious oil of Zechariah, iv. 3, which is called “golden oil,” so “is the blood the noble, precious fluid in the human organism;” and with reference to it as the condition of life and health, the organism itself is called נִלְהָ הַזָּהָב “the golden bowl.” HENGSTENBERG and HITZIG both maintain that this expression of the author here seems to be materially affected and modified by this passage in Zechariah iv. 2 ff.—**And the pitcher broken at the fountain.**—The pitcher [כַּר] is not identical with the golden bowl, and therefore a figurative designation of the whole body, but only of a special organ of it; of that one, namely, with which we draw air or breath, that is, nourish the body from the fountain of all life that surrounds it. The previous figure is now abandoned, or rather insensibly changed into one nearly allied to it; the burning flame of the golden lamp becomes the invisible inner flame of the process of respiration, whose physical organ is the lungs. Its destruction in death is figuratively described as the breaking (הִשְׁבַּר) of the pitcher at the fountain, from which it had hitherto daily drawn water,—wherein there clearly appears an amplification of the expression as compared with the preceding form; comp. שָׁכַר in Isa. xlii. 3.—**Or the wheel broken at the cistern.**—Not a new figure, but only a more special illustration of the one just presented. The “wheel at the fountain” is the cistern wheel by which the bucket is raised or lowered, and cannot have a specific reference to any definite organ of the body, but symbolizes organic life it-

self in its continuous circle, just as “the wheel of birth” of James iii. 6 (τροχὸς τῆς γενέσεως) based probably on this passage. The cistern (כִּבְרוֹ) is not materially different from the fountain (כַּפְיַי) and likewise means the air surrounding man and affording the most indispensable of all conditions of life, namely, breath; it does not mean the whole world, as HENGSTENBERG maintains, or the grave, as some others think.—עַל הַכִּבְרוֹ is moreover the same as עַל הַכִּבּוֹר “at the fountain,” comp. 1 Sam. xx. 25; 2 Sam. ii. 9 ff. Observe also the passive נִרְן instead of the earlier active, הִרְן; it means that the golden bowl “breaks,” as it were, of its own accord, as soon as the silver cord that holds it is loosed; but the wheel “is broken,” is destroyed at the same time with the whole machinery of life, by an act of violence operating from without.*—In older

* [ZÖCKLER’S general comment here is judicious and safe. Attempts to be more particular are apt to mislead into fanciful error. And yet there remains the impression from the whole, and especially from the evident particularity in the first four verses, that certain parts or functions of the body are directly intended by the golden bowl, the bucket at the spring, and the wheel at the cistern. The ancients had more knowledge of the human anatomy than we give them credit for. The Egyptians must have learned much from their continual processes of embalming. It would appear also from HOMER’S minute and varied descriptions of wounds, and especially in passages from ARISTOTLE and PLATO that show even a scientific knowledge of the human system. There is, for example, a passage of some length in the Timæus, extending from 70 B to 76 E, containing quite a full description of the more vital internal parts and their uses, with some things much resembling what we find here. In the assigning, too, of different spiritual powers and affections to different parts of the body, as though it were a kind of civil corporation, the author of the Timæus reminds us of JOHN BUNYAN and his town of Man-oh. Solomon’s golden bowl, too, is suggested, when we read in the Timæus how the θεῖον σπέρμα, the “divine seed” of life was moulded into a round shape, and made the ἐγκεφάλου, or brain; and there are other things about the fluids and their περιβολή, or circulations, that call up what is here said about the wheel and the fountain. Neither is there to be ridiculed and wholly rejected the idea which some have entertained that Solomon referred to the circulation of the blood. We need not suppose that he had anticipated HARVEY’S great discovery; but the general idea that the human system had its period [or, to use ARISTOTLE’S language before quoted, p. 46, that every organism was in the nature of a cycle, something going round and returning into itself] was a very early one. It came not so much from scientific or inductive observation, as from a sort of a priori thinking: so, it must be; to constitute a living, or even an organic thing, there must be some such going round and round, to keep it from running out or perishing. It was this mode of thinking that showed itself in

language, as in the Rabbinic תולדות הגלגל “the τροχὸς γενέσεως, the “wheel of generation” of James iii. 6, to which ZÖCKLER refers.

As a lesson, however, to those who are inclined to be extravagant here, nothing can be more judicious than the remarks of MAIMONIDES in the Preface to his More Nevuchim, where he tells those who would demand a minute explanation of every part of a *masbal* or parable—such, for example, as Prov. vii. 6-23—that “they will either miss the general thought, or get wearied in seeking particular illustrations of things that cannot be explained, and thus utterly fail in their vain attempt to get from the writer what perhaps never came into his mind.”

On the whole, therefore, we cannot expect to get a much better interpretation of this passage than that early one given by JEROME: *Funiculus autem argenti candivum hanc vitam, et spiramen quod nobis de celo tribuitur, ostendit; Phiala quoque aurea animam significat, que illic recurrit unde resurget, etc.* “The silver cord denotes the pure life and respiration [inspiration] which was given to us from heaven; the golden bowl also means the soul which returns whence it had ascended; the breaking of the bucket at the fountain and the shattering of the wheel at the cistern, are emblematical metaphors of death, for as when the bucket which is worn out ceases to draw, and the wheel by which the waters are raised is struck, the flow of the water is in-

* [The K’tib, or text as it stands in Niphah, רִחֵק, is better, since it has something of a passive or rather dependent sense: “is parted”—“parts,” intransitively, or “parts itself”—*rimphabitur*. It is the idea of giving way from stretching, or attenuation. The other various readings and renderings, as ZÖCKLER says, are useless.—T. L.]

commentators there are many arbitrary physiological and anatomical interpretations of the respective points of the description: MELANCHTHON sees in the silver cord the nerves and sinews, in the golden fountain the heart, and in the pitcher at the fountain, the great vein over the liver: PRAUN [*Physico-Anatomica Analysis*, Cap. XII., *Ecclesiastes*] thinks the silver cord the lacteal vessel of the breast, and WIRSIUS the golden bowl the brain, whilst WEDEL makes it the heart, and HOTTINGER refers it to the gall. Since HARVEY's discovery of the circulation of the blood, many have seen this pictured in the golden bowl as in the fountain (JABLONSKI, HANSEN, MICHAELIS, STARKE, SCHEUCHZER, etc.), and have mingled many strange things with it, e. g.: the pitcher is the liver (WIRSIUS), or the lymph (WEDEL), or the stomach (HOTTINGER), or the chyle (PRAUN, SCHEUCHZER); the wheel signifies the kidneys, urinary passages, and bladder (WEDEL), or the peristaltic motions of the bowels (SCHEUCHZER), or the motion of the lungs (SIBEL, JABLONSKI). Look especially at STARKE on this passage, and also at the Exegetical monographs quoted on page 27.—Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was.—Namely, as dust; comp Gen. iii. 19; Ps. civ. 29; Job xxxiv. 15, to which passages, especially the first named, Koberleth conforms in expression. For the form דָּבָר comp. EWALD, § 343 b.—And the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.*—Namely, as the life-giving principle in the human organism, comp. Gen. ii. 7; Ps. civ. 30; Isa. xlii. 5; Jer. xxxviii. 16. This passage does not expressly affirm a personal immortality of the human soul, but it also does not deny it; for that the author is thinking of a pantheistic floating of the soul in the universal spirit, and that, "separated into individual existence, this particle of the Divine breath poured forth into the world by God will again be drawn to Him, and thus again unite with His breath, the soul of the world" (HITZIG)—all this, only rationalistic extravagance, can find in this passage. Koberleth's earlier testimonies rather show him to have thought of the return of the spirit to God as an entrance into the presence and eternal communion of God, and not as an absorption by God. And the arrival of the departed ones into the dark Scheol separating them

recepted,—so also when the silver cord (of life) has parted, the stream of vitality returns back to its fountain, and the man dies."

There must, however, be kept in mind the general parallel with the rich mansion of the voluptuary; and in this aspect the golden bowl is undoubtedly the lamp depending from the ceiling by the silver cord, as is described in the Psalm l. 75.

*Dependent lychni laquearibus aureis
Inceps, et noctem flammis fuvalia vincunt;*

in which finally wears out and gives way. So the fountain and the cistern are the costly and curious water-machinery which such a mansion required for domestic drinking, and for irrigation. All is pictured as now in ruin, or going to ruin, like the curious circulating machinery of the human body with which it is compared. In regard to the reading of the text, we cannot do better than to retain the קָוָה וְהָיָה , and, pointed as it is, in the Niphal. From the sense of *distans* comes easily that of *elongation* (*elongationis*), and thence of *going way*, or *parting*. The words קָוָה and וְהָיָה

although they differ etymologically, are probably chosen only for the sake of variety.—T. L.]

* [Compare iii. 21, and the marginal note, page 71, on the expression, "who knows the spirit of man that goeth up," etc.—T. L.]

from Divine light and life, so depicted in chap. ix., evidently appears to him only a provisional and intermediate condition which will finally be followed by an eternal existence with God after that "judgment" (chap. xi. 9). Compare VAININGER: "According to this the coming to God seems, in the conception of the Preacher, to be gradual, and the view in Ps. xlix. 16 to have been in his mind, viz.: that the good will be liberated from Scheol, and, after being acquitted in the judgment, will live blessed in God, Ps. xvii. 15, whilst the wicked will be cast back into Scheol after the judgment, and there eternally remain, Ps. xlix. 15; * Luke xvi. 22 ff." HENGSTENBERG says: "It is impossible that at the period of death the hitherto so marked difference between the just and the wicked will be suddenly effaced. The sharp earnestness with which the judgment of this world is every where announced, and especially in this book, decides against this. After all this, after the impressive emphasizing of the retributive justice of God, in which the entire book ends in ver. 14, the return of the soul to God can only be that spoken of by the Apostle in 2 Cor. v. 10; Rom. xiv. 10; Heb. ix. 27." It is noteworthy also that the *Apستا*, of all the religious documents of the ancient heathen the one which is most nearly allied to the Old Testament revelation, and most in harmony with it, contains an assertion quite similar to the one before us: "When the body dies here below, it mingles with the earth, but the soul returns to heaven." (*Bundesch.*, p. 384.) Something allied to this is found in some of the Greeks, e. g., *Phokylides*, *Ποίημα νοητικόν*, and in *Euripides' Fragments* [but more distinctly in the *Drama of the Suppliants*, 535: *πνεῦμα μὲν πρὸς Αἴθερα (πρὸς Δία) τὸ σῶμα δ' εἰς γῆν.*—T. L.]

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

(With Homiletical Hints.)

This section properly contains the net result of the religious speculation of the Preacher; and in it the positive ground thoughts of the entire book arrive at their fullest development, and most striking and definite expression. This is externally seen in the style, hitherto at times, languid, of prosaic latitude, and unharmonious, but now rising to the loftiest strains, and clothed with the richest figurative adornments. Chap. x. had distinguished itself from the preceding by its greater wealth of figures and ingenious expressions; but now, from the very beginning of chap. xi., figure crowds on figure in a still more remarkable degree, until, in the introductory verses of the 12th chapter, or the third strophe of this section, the figurative ornament of speech rises to a fullness of the most profound, vivid, and surprising comparisons, which here and there almost give the impression of excessive and timid accumulation. And yet the single figurative expressions need only correct illustration and fitting insertion into the combination of the whole, in order to stand justified against every suspicion of absence of taste or presence of ex-

* [See the remarks on this passage Ps. xlix. 15—and the וְהָיָה , "the morning," or *des retributionis*, in the Intro. to Gen. i., *Bibberwerk*, Genesis, page 142, and marginal note.—T. L.]

cess, and to bring out into clearer light the object of the picture, *viz.*, the many tribulations of age, the premonitions of approaching death, and finally the very process of life's dissolution itself; all this, too, more vividly than is elsewhere in Holy Writ effected, at least in so restricted a space. It shows an imperfect comprehension of this most interesting and original of all the descriptions in the book, that several commentators, especially UMBRETT and ELSTER, mistake the gradual progress of the described symptoms of dissolution from the commencement of senile feebleness till death, and, by means of an allegorical perversion, force on the details concerning old age as the forerunner of death (vers. 3-5), a direct reference to death itself. The usual conception of these verses, according to which they describe the body of man, together with its organs, as they grow old under the figure of a household sinking into decay and dissolution, is precisely that which justifies the praise ever given to the author as the representative of a wisdom endowed with unusual penetration in the sphere of theological and anthropological research. That characterizing of Koheleth originating with OARSEN, and adopted by HIERONYMUS, giving to it the signification of a compendium of the physics of Solomon, (just as Proverbs contains the quintessence of his ethics, and the Song, the logic or dialectics of the wise king—comp. the General Introduction to the Solomonic writings) appears very especially justified by this passage; but this can only be the case when it is understood on the basis of the above developed, and only just comprehension of it as a description of the sad autumn and winter of the corporeal life of this world, and therewith as a foundation for the conception of human nature as a manifoldly significant image of the universe in general.

Benevolent, prosperous, industrious, and cheerful labors in life, afford the strongest security for lasting happiness, and to this fundamental thought of the section, the description in question holds the double relation that, on the one hand, it is to present and confirm the preceding admonition to a cheerful enjoyment of the pleasures of life's spring and summer, by reference to the contrast between these and the terrors of the autumn and winter of life, whilst, on the other hand, it is to present the basis for the farther admonition to that continual fear of God, which was necessarily to form the crowning termination and final goal of all the practical precepts of the author.—Comp. EWALD, p. 324: "The numerous tribulations of old age, and the mournful signs of approaching death, are described in the most striking figures, in order the more pressingly to admonish to a cheerful enjoyment of life at the proper period; but, at the same time, there appears most significantly the other truth by which the former receives its full light and correct limits, namely, that this very joy in life must not be blind and thoughtless, but thoughtful and conscious in remembrance of the eternal judgment over all things;—a truth which is indeed to be understood in every stern view of life, and which, therefore, has been only cursorily touched at an earlier period, (iii. 12, 17; viii. 12 ff.), but which is purposely alluded to here, in order to avoid any possible misunder-

standing before the final close."—In view of the fearful earnestness of this concluding reference to death and eternity, every suspicion of Epicureanism, or of a frivolous, skeptical, and materialistic disposition, as a background for the preceding counsels to enjoy life, must disappear; and this the more so, since that which precedes this admonition to enjoyment of life testifies clearly enough of the deep seriousness and purity of the author's ethical views. For the admonition at the commencement of the 11th chap. (vers. 1-3) which reminds us of that in Ps. cxii. 9, counseling a profuse benevolence, mindful of no loss and of no gain, appears clearly as a true fruit of faith in a holy, just, and paternally loving God, but which could never spring from an Epicurean, skeptical, or fatalistic view of the world. The subsequent admonition to an unwearied fulfilment of our calling, unmindful of the future yet cautious and conscientious (vers. 4-6), proceeds not from a dull, melancholy resignation, or a loathing despair of life, but simply and alone from a childlike yielding to the will of God, and obedient subjection to His counsels as the only wise. Indeed, even in the reference to the sweetness of light, and the loveliness of life under the sun, with which (in ver. 7) he paves the way to that injunction to cheerful enjoyment, there is nothing in any way Epicurean, or that shows a one-sided, earthly, irreligious disposition. There is rather nothing expressed therein but the deep religious feeling of a pure joy in the beauty of the works of God, and an inwardly thankful appreciation of the proofs therein offered of His boundless goodness; a feeling that forms a contrast quite as opposite to all fatalism and gloomy atheistical materialism, as to every kind of moral levity, or thoughtless desire for enjoyment. See ELSTER, p. 125: "The deep feeling for the beauty and loveliness of life, which Koheleth expresses in this verse, shows us that it was not a bitter discontent based on a dull insensibility of the inward spirit; but his grief lies therein that with this deep feeling for beauty which human existence bears within itself, he painfully encounters, on the one hand, the fact that men are mutually cheating each other out of the real profit of life, whilst, on the other, he perceives that this existence is fleeting and transitory, and that he has foreclosed the hope of a future clearing up of human destiny because the view of a life after death seems to him utterly dark and uncertain (??).—The period which man is permitted to seize in the present, must now appear to him only so much the more important; and the only sure thing remaining to man must seem to him to be the holding fast of eternity by the highest activity in this particular period. Therefore to verse 8 there is again joined the admonition to pleasure, whose nature and character are clearly enough depicted in what precedes, as *free from everything low and common, and rather as depending on the Most High and Eternal One.*"

Add to all this the fact, that the author marks the youthful vivacity and cheerfulness of life, which he recommends, expressly as a disposition to be tempered and purified by the thought of the retributive justice of God (ii. 9) and that there is ever present as the final aim of every earthly-human development (according to chap.

xii. 7), an eternal sojourn of the immortal soul with a holy and just God—a thought which **ELSTRUP** in the passage just quoted is clearly wrong in denying (see the exegetical illustrations to this passage),—adding this, and there results from it most conclusively that character of his ethical wisdom which is in conformity with revelation, and indeed directly belonging to revelation. We see especially the divinely inspired and incomparable nature of the religious truths of this section, in which the devout meditation of the author has reached its highest point, and after vanquishing doubt and hostility, combines its positive results into a chain of the purest ethical maxims, and the most profound physico-theological observations.

Homily on the Entire Section: The fear of God is the foundation of all true virtue, and all lasting joys.—Or: The fear of the Lord is the beginning and end of all wisdom.—Or: Live so in thy youth that old age brings to thee no terrors, but only the desire of relief from the yoke of this earthly life, and the joyful hope of an eternal existence with God.—Or: Use the morning of thy life profitably, that its evening may be calm and blissful; sow good seed in the spring-time of thy life, that thou mayest have a good harvest in the autumn.

HOMILETICAL HINTS ON SEPARATE PASSAGES.

Chap. xi. 1-3. **LUTHER** (ver. 1):—Be liberal whilst you can; use wealth in doing all the good in your power; for if you live long you shall receive a hundredfold.—**CARTWRIGHT**:—The universal instability of all things should excite you to munificence, whatever may happen in respect to you or the riches you may possess. Credit it for gain, whatever you may save from the flames and conflagration, as it were, by bestowing it upon the poor.—**SPARKE** (ver. 2):—In giving alms we are not to look too closely at the worthiness of the individuals. God permits His sin to rise on the just and the unjust!—**VON GERLACH**:—Collect not thy treasures by gathering in, but rather by giving out, by a denial of self! Ps. cxii. 9; 2 Cor. ix. 9

Vers. 4-6. **HIERONYMUS**:—In season, out of season, the word of God is to be preached; and so without thought of clouds, or fear of winds, even in the midst of tempests, may we sow (the word). We are not to say this time is convenient, another unsuitable, since we know not what is the way of the Spirit that controls all.

HANSEN:—In the distribution of his good deeds a man should not be too timorous; the left hand should not know what the right hand doeth.—**LANGE** (ver. 5):—One cannot know how much good God may effect for the perfection of the faith, even among the dissolute poor!—**SPARKE** (ver. 6):—Do not delay thy amendment until an advanced age; begin early to fear God; thou wilt never repent of it. It is, however, better to repent even in age than to continue in one's sins. But he who fears God from youth up, will find his reward so much the more glorious, Rev. ii. 10.—**HENGSTENBERG** (ver. 6):—Be incessantly active. In seasons of destitution be so much the more active, because just then many things may miscarry. The more doubtful the result, so much the less should we lay our hands in our lap.

Vers. 7 and 8. **MELANCHTHON**:—Whilst God permits, reverently use His gifts; when He takes away, patiently submit; as Paul says, "Let the peace of God dwell in your hearts."—**CRAMER**:—Because man has a desire for natural light, and shuns darkness, he should, therefore, practice: the works of light, and shun those of darkness. It is a piece of ingratitude that we think more of our past evil days than of the good ones. We must thank God for both: Job ii. 10.—**HENGSTENBERG**:—However great are the sorrows of this life, however manifold its vanities, and sad its circumstances, it is nevertheless true that life is a good, and it is the office of the word of God to impress this truth when gloomy despondency has gained the ascendancy. Disgust of life is also sinful under the New Testament law. A pious spirit will find out the sunny side in this earthly existence, and rejoice in it with heartfelt gratitude.

Vers. 9 and 10. **LUTHER**:—When the heart is in a right state no joy will harm, provided only it be true joy, and not merely a corrupting mirth. Enjoy it, then, if there is any thing pleasant for the sight or hearing; provided you sin not against God.—**ZEYSS**:—If thou wilt be preserved against the sadness of the world, thou must carefully guard thyself against its causes, *i. e.*, the ruling sins and vices, and accustom thy heart to the genuine fear of God, Sirach i. 17.—**WOLLE**:—He who would rejoice in the best bloom of his youth, must become acquainted with the Lord Jesus betimes, the fairest among the children of men, and make his heart a temple of the Holy Spirit, Sirach li. 18 ff.—**WOHLFARTH**:—That your youth may gladly enjoy youth, that the tempter may not destroy its roses and cast it into endless woe, have God before your eyes, ye young men and maidens, and remember the serious words: Every one who forgets Him, He will summon to judgment.

Chap. xii. 1-5. **LUTHER**:—Holy Writ calls consolation and happiness *light*, and tribulation *darkness*, or *night*. For boys, for youth, for manhood, there is joy. After rain comes the beautiful sunshine, *i. e.*, although at times there may be tribulation, yet joy and consolation follow. But age has no joy; the clouds return after the rain; one misfortune follows another.—**CRAMER** (ver. 1):—Who would be devout must begin betimes; for it is unseemly to offer the dregs of life to God, after having given his blooming youth to the devil.—[**MATTHEW HENRY** (ver. 5):—Man goes to "his long home." At death he goes from this world and all the employments and enjoyments of it. He has gone *home*; for here he was a stranger and a pilgrim. He has gone to his rest, to the place where he is to fix. He has gone to *the house of his world*, so some would render it; for this world is not his. He is gone to his *house of eternity* (Beth olamo). This should make us willing to die, that at death we *go home*; and why should we not long to go to our Father's house? Ver. 6. Death will dissolve the frame of nature, and take down the earthly house of this tabernacle. Then shall the *silver cord* by which the soul and body were wonderfully fastened together be *loosed*, that sacred knot untied, and those old friends be forced to part. Then shall the golden bowl which held for us the waters of

life be broken; then shall the *pitcher* with which we used to fetch up water, for the constant support of life, and the repair of its decays, be broken, even *a' the fountain*; so that it can fetch up no more; and *the wheel*, all those organs that serve for the collecting and distributing of nourishment, shall be shattered, and disabled to do their office any more. The body has become like a watch when the spring has broken; the motion of all the wheels is stopped; they all stand still; the machine is taken to pieces; the heart beats no more, nor does the blood circulate.

Ver. 7:—So death resolves us into our first principles. Man is a ray of heaven united to a clod of earth; at death these are separated, and each goes to the place whence it came.—[T. L.]

Vers. 6 and 7. LUTHER:—It is not defined where the spirit goes, but only that it returns to God from whom it came. For as we are ignorant of the source whence God made the spirit, so also we know not whither (or to what) it returns. Comp. HENGSTENBERG: The view that the individual soul returns to God, is supported by the fact that it had its origin immediately from God. According to this passage, creationism must be true, although it is a truth which, for certain significant reasons that favor traducianism, can only be regarded as a partial, or one-sided one. It is important that the two apparently opposing views should be reconciled by something common to both.

ZÜCKLER:—Not a few older theologians have endeavored to interpret this passage (xii. 7) in the interest of a one-sided creationism; *e. g.*, HIERONYMUS, who says: "They are to be condemned who hold that souls are sown with bodies, and are born, not from God, but from the bodies of the parents. But since the flesh returns to earth, and the spirit to God who gave it, it is clear that *God, not man*, is the parent of

souls. To this the traducianist replies: Koheleth treats, in this verse, solely of the creation of the first man (or the first humanity) * and of his relation to God (and so, at least by intimation, LUTHER on this passage, and CARTWRIGHT in *Hengstenberg*, p. 258); but they are not able thereby to remove the partial creationistic sense of the passage. Compare HENGSTENBERG and VAHNINGER.

WOLLE:—Unblessed is the old age and death of those who grow old in the service of sin. On the contrary, a conscience kept pure from youth up, lightens and sweetens both the toils of age and the bitterness of death, Job xxvii. 6.—BEN-LEB. BIBLE:—Souls come from eternity into the world as to a stage. There they manifest their persons (their masks) their affections, and their passions, whatever is in them of good or bad. When they have, as it were, sufficiently performed their parts, they again disappear, and lay off the persons that they have represented, and stand, naked as they are, before the divine tribunal. Universal as is the decree that all men are to return to God, there is, nevertheless, a great difference in them. The most return to him as to their offended Lord; but some as to the All-merciful, their friend and father. Because then this coming to God is certain and unavoidable, it should be our most necessary care that we are every moment concerned as to how we may come to Him rightly.—VAHNINGER:—The divine judgment of the life and conduct of men, as mentioned in chap. xi. 9, is only rendered possible by the personal return of the spirit to God. Therefore in youth must we think of our Creator, and live in His fear (iii. 14; v. 7); for the spirit does not become dust with the body; it returns not to the universal force of nature, but because it is from God it returns to God, to be judged by Him, *i. e.*, either to be blessed or condemned.

*[There is a sense in which creationism may be held in respect to the animal, and even the vegetable life. It is not irrational, it is not unscriptural, to suppose that in every true genesis there is a going on of the old unspent creative power, or word acting in a plane above the ordinary mechanical and chemical laws which God has given to nature. In a still higher sense may this be held of the human generation,—of the individual as well as of the first generic man (see Ps. cxxxix. 13-16; Jer. i. 4). And yet such a view is consistent with a doctrine of traducianism that connects every man with the first man, not by an arbitrary forensic decree, or appointment from without, but by a vital union, a psychological continuance of the same being, however great the mystery it may involve. There is a school of theologians who say that "in some way," by God's appointment, we are so connected with Adam that we sin "in consequence" of his sin, and suffer "in consequence" of his sin, though each succeeding human soul is born separate and pure. There is another school that brands this with heresy,

or treats it as evasive, and claims for itself a higher orthodoxy on account of the use of the words "federal headship," "imputation," *etc.*, whilst they equally affirm that Adam's posterity are not *morally guilty* in respect to the first sin. It is a representative, a forensic guilt, though involving the most tremendous consequences. Any essential difference between these is not easily discerned. Both make it a matter of outward and arbitrary institution, as long as there is denied any such psychological and ontological connection between us and the first man as grounds this "federal headship" and "imputation," as well as this "certain consequence as a fact," on a remoter and deeper union. The first class of terms are very precious ones, and sustained by the figures and analogies of Scripture, but their meaning collapses, or becomes arbitrary, when we put nothing beyond them as a fact, however inexplicable that fact may be. Holding to such deeper union, we become, indeed, involved in a *metaphysical* mystery, but we get free from the moral mystery, which is a much more important thing.—T. L.]

EPILOGUE.

Review of the whole, and Commendatory Recapitulation of the truths therein contained.

CHAP. XII. 8-14.

1. With reference to the personal worth of the author.

(VERS. 8-11).

8 9 Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher; all *is* vanity. And moreover, because
 10 the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge: yea, he gave good heed,
 11 and sought out, *and* set in order many proverbs. The Preacher sought to find
 12 out acceptable words: and *that which* was written, *was* upright, *even* words of truth.
 13 The words of the wise *are* as goads, and as nails fastened *by* the masters of assem-
 14 blies, *which* are given from one shepherd.

2. With reference to the serious and weighty character of his teachings.

(VERS. 12-14).

12 And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books *there is*
 13 no end; and much study *is* a weariness of the flesh. Let us hear the conclusion
 14 of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole
 15 *duty* of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret
 16 thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil.

Ver. 9.—**אָזְנוֹ**. The primary sense of this root must be the *ear*, or *hearing*; since it is easier to understand how the sense of *weighing* (as it is in the Arabic **أَنْزَلَ**) came from that, than *vice versa*. The latter sense is either by a very natural figure, or from the resemblance of a balance with its two ears, as they may be called. Its intensive *piel* sense here may denote listening attentively, as a prelude to judging, or the act of the mind itself.

[Ver. 11.—**אֲסֻפֹּתַי** **בְּעֵלַי** would be, according to the common usage, "masters of collections," or of gatherings. **בְּעֵלַי**, however, sometimes only very slightly modifies the meaning of the following word, and there is nothing in the way of its having the objective sense, like other similar auxiliary words: "objects of collections," rather than "makers of collections,"—the things gathered rather than the gatherers. So HITZIG views it, who has rendered it simply *gesammleten*, that is, *collectanea* or collections. In this way alone does it make a true parallel with the "words of the wise" in the previous number: "their gathered sentences," as we have rendered it in the Metrical Version.—F. L.]

[Ver. 12.—**סִפְרַי**. See remarks, p. 39.—F. L.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

This concluding discourse opens purposely with that sentence which opened the book (1, 2), namely, with a lamentation over the vanity of all earthly things. This exclamation cannot be considered as a conclusion to what precedes, because the very words that immediately precede (ver. 7) had opened the view to something that

is not **הַבְּלָה**, but the vanquishing of all **הַבְּלִיּוֹת**, and because, especially in the last section of the fourth discourse, the reference to the vanity of the world, or the negative side of the truths taught by the author, had fallen much behind the positive ideas of zeal in vocation, cheerful joy of life, and fear of God (as not vanities, but as virtue conquering vanity). Unlike the division followed by DE WETTE, KOSTER, ROSEN-MUELLER, KNOBEL, EWALD, HITZIG, ELSTER, *etc.*,

verse 8 is to be connected with what follows, in accordance with most of the older commentators (also with DATHE, UMBREIT, VAHINGER, HENGSTENBERG, MAHN, *etc.*) and is to be considered as an introductory formula* of the Epilogue, purposely conforming to the beginning of the whole. This view is also strengthened by the circumstance that the **!** at the commencement of the

*[The correctness of this would depend entirely upon the view we take of the preceding description. If it is the old age of the sensualist, the "aged sinner," as WATTS calls him, and as we have maintained in the note preceding the exegetical remarks on the section,—then this exclamation: Oh, vanity! all vanity! would be a very appropriate close. At the beginning of this scholium it would seem out of place under any circumstances, except, perhaps, as an imitation of the beginning of the book, for which there can be assigned no reason in any connection it has with what follows, whether regarded as all appended by a scholiast, or, which is the most probable view, that vers. 9, 10 are an inserted *prose* note by some other hand, intended to call special attention to the weighty concluding words that follow from the original author. These are clearly poetry, and as rhythmical as any

ninth verse presents this, not as an introductory verse, but as the continuation of something already begun, whilst on the contrary the expression **וְהַבְּלָה הַכֹּלֵל**, ver. 8, according to the analogy of chap. i. 2, is clearly used as an introductory formula. The object of this formula at the opening of the epilogue is again to present to the reader the negative summation of the observations and experience of the author, the fact of the vanity and perishability of all earthly things in order subsequently to establish the correctness of this result by a double testimony:—1. By vindication of the moral weight of the personality of the author as a genuinely wise man and teacher of wisdom (vers. 9-11); 2. by referring to the very serious and important character of the precepts laid down by him (vers. 12-14). These two divisions are characterized by equal length and analogous construction* (*i. e.*, that they both begin with **וְיִתֵּן** "and moreover") as skilfully planned strophes or executions of the theme contained in ver. 8, and not as two mere postscripts of the author added as by chance (Hirzig); whilst in the latter the positive result of the religious and moral observations of the Preacher appears again in the most significant and precise form possible (ver. 13), strengthened, too, by an addition (ver. 14) which presents most clearly the correct intermediation of the positive with the negative result in ver. 8, and thus affords the only true solution of the great enigma from which chap. i. 2 had proceeded. This solution consists simply in pointing him who is discontented and anxious about the vanity and unhappiness of this life, to the great day of universal reckoning, and in the inculcation of the duty of deferential obedience to a holy and just God,—a duty from which no one can escape with impunity. As this epilogue is in reality the first to offer the key to the correct understanding of the whole, (for the sum of the previously developed precepts of wisdom, is given neither so clearly nor impressively in chap. xi. 1-12, 7, as is the case here) we clearly perceive the untenability of that hypercritical view (v. D. PALM, DÖBERLEIN, BERTHOLD, KNOBEL, UMBREIT, and, to a certain extent, also, of HERZFELD) which denies the authenticity of these closing verses (from ver. 9). For a special refutation of their arguments comp. the Int. § 3, Obs.

2. *First strophe.* Vers. 8-11. The negative result of the book, attested in its truth and importance by reference to the personal worth of the

thing in the book. Such inserted scholia should cause no more difficulty than their evident appearance in Genesis, and elsewhere in the Pentateuch. The remark that follows, about the force of the conjunction **ו** has no weight whatever. It is so often used as a mere transition particle; and the idea of any logical, or even rhetorical, connection between the exclamation and the plain prosaic annotation that follows is absurd.—T. L.]

*[It should be said, rather, that the two divisions are made by the 9 and 10, on the one hand, and all that follows on the other. The fact that ver. 12 begins with **וְיִתֵּן** is of no importance in this respect. But that which has a decided bearing on the division is overlooked, namely, that the first (9 and 10) is the plainest prose, whilst the second (beginning with the 11th) most clearly returns to the poetical both in thought and diction,—a fact which shows that the first belongs to a scholiast, the second to the main and original author of the book. See the Metrical Version.—T. L.]

author as a genuine teacher of wisdom. For verse 8 see partly the previous paragraph (No. 1), and partly the exegetical illustrations to chaps. 1 and 2. For the name **קְהֵלֶת** (here without the article) see the Intr., § 1. Ver. 9. **And moreover because the Preacher was wise.**

וְיִתֵּן (used substantively): "and the remainder" (comp. 1 Sam. xv. 15, is here, and in verse 12, clearly equivalent to: "and there remains," namely, "to say." The indirect construction follows here, introduced by **וְ** (comp. the Lat. *restat, ut, etc.*), whilst in ver. 12 we find the direct construction (comp. the Lat. *Quod restat, or Ceterum*). GESENIUS, WINER, KNOBEL, VAHNINGER, *etc.*, translate **וְיִתֵּן שְׁהֵיָה** "and moreover, because," and therefore accept this clause as preliminary, letting the subsequent one commence with **וְעַל** (LUTHER does the same: "This same Preacher was not only wise," *etc.*; and so, in sense, the Vulgate: "*Cumque esset sapientissimus Ecclesiastes*"). But this is opposed partly by the analogy of the commencement, v. 12, and partly by the circumstance that the **וְעַל** alone could scarcely introduce the secondary clause. HENGST. correctly remarks concerning **וְהָיָה**: "A wise man, not in the sense of the world, but of the kingdom of God, not from one's self, but from God (comp. ver. 11), so that this passage is not in contradiction with Prov. xxvii. 2: 'Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.' And nevertheless, Solomon could hardly have spoken thus of himself without incurring the censure of self-praise. And even another, who had written this with reference to him, would, in reality, have expressed something insipid and inappropriate, in case he really had the historic Solomon in his eye. For which reason the fictitious character of Koboeth, or his merely ideal identity with Solomon is quite apparent.—He still taught the people knowledge.—For **וְעַל** at the beginning of a sentence, comp. Gen. xix. 12; Micah vi. 10; Job xxiv. 20.—**Yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs**—**וְאֵינִי** "to consider, to weigh," the root of **וְאֵינִי** "balances." This verb in conjunction with the following **וְיִתֵּן** shows the means whereby he "set in order" (**וְיִתֵּן** comp. chap. i. 15; vii. 13), many proverbs. This product was the result of careful investigation and reflection—a relation of the three verbs to one another, which is clearly indicated by the absence of the copula before the third: **וְיִתֵּן**; comp. Gen. xlviii. 14; 1 Kings xiii. 18: Ewald, § 333 c.—By the "many proverbs" (**וְהַרְבֵּה** as in v. 7; xi. 8), the author evidently does not mean those mentioned in 1 Kings v. 12, but rather those sayings of Solomon that are contained in the Book of Proverbs; for he imitates mainly these latter in his own contained in this book.—Ver. 10. **The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words.**—**וְרַחֲמֵי הַפֶּה**, pleasant, agreeable words (**λόγον χαρίτος**, Luke iv. 23), comp. **וְרַחֲמֵי הַפֶּה** Isa. liv. 12. Here are naturally meant

words acceptable not to the great mass, but to serious minds, heavenly inclined, and seeking wisdom; words of honeyed sweetness in the sense of Ps. xix. 11, *verba quæ, jure meritoque desiderari et placere debent, tumquam divinæ virtutis et certitudinis* (S. SCHMIDT). The expression חֲפִיז can scarcely relate to mere acceptability and adornment of the form of speech (as asserted by HIRTZIG and ELSTER).—And that which was written was upright, even words of truth. The passive participle וְכִתְּוִב expresses that which was written by the author in consequence of seeking after acceptable words; hence HERZFELD, and after him, HENGSTENBERG and ELSTER, are correct: “and thus then was written what was correct;” EWALD and VAHINGER, on the contrary, render erroneously: “but honest words were written,” which adversative rendering of the conjunction is decidedly injurious to the sense and opposed to the text. HIRTZIG reads וְכִתְּוִב the infinitive absolute: “to find (לְכַתְּוִב) and write;” but this change is quite as unnecessary as the adverbial rendering of וְכִתְּוִב in the sense of “correct, honest,” which latter rendering is also found in LUTHER, KNOBEL, VAHINGER, ELSTER, etc. It is כִּי־שָׁרִים that expresses this adverbial sense every where else (Song of Solomon i. 4; vii. 10; Prov. xxiii. 31; Ps. lviii. 1). שָׁרִי is, on the contrary, here, as every where, a substantive, meaning straightforwardness, uprightness; and that in which this uprightness consists is expressed by the words in apposition, וְדִבְרֵי אֱמֶת—“words of truth,” *i. e.*, in true teaching, acceptable to God, and therefore bringing blessings; teachings of the genuine “heavenly wisdom.” Comp. Prov. viii. 6-10; James iii. 17.—Ver. 11. **The words of the wise are as goads**—The author, by bringing “the words of truth” under the general category of “words of the wise” (*i. e.*, of those ethical precepts as they issue from the circles of the Chakamim, to which he himself belongs according to ver. 9), lends to them so much the more weighty significance and authority; for all that can be said in praise of the words of the Chakamim in general must now especially avail also of his proverbs and discourses. Hence the phrase וְדִבְרֵי חֲכָמִים would be more fittingly rendered by: “Such words of wise men” (comp. HIRTZIG). HENGSTENBERG takes too narrow, or, if we will, too broad a view of the idea of “wise men,” when he, in connection with older authors, as LUTHER, RAMBACH, STARKE, etc. sees therein only the inspired writers of the O. T., or the authors of the Canonical Books; according to which this verse would contain a literal and direct self-canonicalization. But this is opposed by the fact that חֲכָמִים elsewhere always means the authors of the characteristic Proverbial wisdom, or Chokmah, the teachings of the Solomonian and post-Solomonian era, which is to be clearly distinguished from the prophetic and lyric-poetical [Psalmonic] literature (see 1 Kings iv. 30 f; Prov i. 6; xxii. 17; Jer. xviii. 18; and comp. § 3 of the *General Intr.* to the Solomonian literature, Vol. XII., p. 3 f.), so that Moses, Joshua,

Samuel, David, etc., could not possibly have been reckoned in this category. This is quite apart from the fact that such a self-canonicalization expressed in the manner aforesaid, would have been neither especially appropriate nor sufficiently clear. כִּי־בָרְבָנֹת, “like goads,” *i. e.*, endowed with stinging, correctly aiming, and deeply penetrating effect, “*verba, quæ aculeorum instar alie descendunt in pectora hominum, usque manent infixæ*” (GESENIUS; comp. EWALD, HIRTZIG, HENGSTENBERG and ELSTER). It is usually regarded as “ox-goads” (Septuagint, ὄξ τὰ βοῦκέντρα; Targ., Talm., Rabb. and most of the moderns). But דִּרְבָּנִין or דִּרְבָּן (1 Sam. xiii. 21), neither means specially, according to its etymology, a goad to drive cattle, nor does the parallel “as nails” lead exactly to this special meaning, to which the plural form of the expression would not be favorable. Neither is it the case that all the words of the wise, nor especially all the proverbs of this book, are of a goading, that is, an exhortatory, nature, as HIRTZIG very correctly observes. Therefore we must stop at the simple meaning of “goads,” and interpret this to signify the penetrating brevity, the inciting and searching influence of these precepts of wisdom of Koheneth and other wise men.—**And as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies.**—As the “fastened nails” doubtless form a synonym to the “goads,” so the masters of assemblies, literally “the colleagues of the assembly” [אֲסֵפּוֹת בְּעָלֵי comp. chap. x. 11, 20; Prov. i. 17; Isa xli. 15] can only be another expression for those “words of the wise.” We are therein to understand collected maxims of wisdom, united into one assembly or collection, and not merely well connected proverbs, as EWALD and ELSTER would have it; for the verb אָסַף does not refer to the excellence and perfection of the collection; neither does the figure of the nails, which, at most, leads to the idea of juncture, and not to that of a specially beautiful and harmonious order. Highly unfitting also is the interpretation of אֲסֵפּוֹת בְּעָלֵי as “masters of assemblies” (LUTHER), *i. e.*, partakers in learned assemblies [GESENIUS] or principals of learned schools, teachers of wisdom [VAHINGER, etc.], or even authors of the individual books of the sacred national library, or authors of the separate books of the Old Testament Canon [HENGSTENBERG]. This personal signification of the expression is forbidden once for all by the parallelism with the “words of wisdom” in the first clause.—**Which are given from one shepherd.**—That is, in so far as the “words of the wise” in the preceding book are united, they proceed from one author, who was not only a wise man, but a “shepherd” in the bargain, *i. e.*, a wise teacher, the leader of a congregation, an elder of the synagogue. For this sense of “shepherd” as chief of a school, or a priestly teacher, comp. Jer. ii. 8; iii. 15: x. 21; xxiii. 4. The oneness of the authorship is here thus pointedly expressed by way of contrast to the many “wise men” in the first clause. To refer the expression to God [HIERON., GEIER, MICHAELIS, STARKE, HENGSTENBERG, HERZFELD, KNOBEL,

etc.], is quite as arbitrary as a reference to Moses [Targ.], to the historic Solomon [JABLONSKI, etc.], to Zerubbabel [GROTIUS], or as the emendation כְּרִיעָה for כְּרִיעָה by virtue of which HITZIG translates: "which are given united as a pasture" [reading נָתַנִּי instead of נָתַנִּי].

3. *Second strophe.* Ver. 12-14. The positive result of the book as a self-speaking testimony for the truth, worth, and weight of its contents.—**And further, by these, my son, be admonished.**—The word כְּהִיבָה is closely but improperly connected by the Masoretic accentuation with יוֹתֵר (it can as well be absolute as in ver. 9 above); it refers to the "words of the wise given by one shepherd," contained in ver. 11, and thus, in short, to the maxims of this book [not of the entire Old Testament Canon, as HENGSTENBERG thinks]. "From them" [comp. Gen. ix. 11; Isa. xxviii. 7], the reader, the "son" of the wise teacher, is to be admonished. For בְּנִי "my son," which is equivalent to my scholar: compare Prov. i. 8; x. 15; ii. 1, etc., and for הוֹיָה "be admonished," "accept wisdom," chap. iv. 13, preceding.—**Of making many books there is no end.**—That is, beware of the unfruitful, even dangerous, wisdom which others [partly in Israel, partly among the heathen, e. g., Egyptians, Persians, Greeks, etc.—Comp. Intr., § 3, Obs.] endeavor to spread and inculcate in numberless writings.* It is not worldly literature, in general, in contrast to the spiritual literature of Divinely inspired writings, against which the author utters a warning (HENGSTENBERG), but the useless and deceitful literature of others which he contrasts with that genuine wisdom taught by him. The countless elaborations of false philosophers [Col. ii. 8], as they already then in the bloom of Hellenistic sophistry were beginning to fill the world, are presented to his readers by way of warning, as a foul and turbid flood of perverted and ruinous opinions, by which they ought not to permit themselves to be carried away. HERZFELD takes the infinitive עֲשֵׂה as a genitive dependent on קִין אֵין, and renders אֵין in a conditional sense, "to making many books there would be no end" HITZIG opposes this rendering, but improperly takes קִין אֵין as a mere adverbial modifier to הִרְבָּה instead of the כְּאֵר elsewhere customary in such connection, and hence translates "the making of very many books," requiring much exertion of the mind (לִהְיוֹ) "is weariness of the body." Thereby Koheleth would give his readers to understand that he might have written for them whole books filled with maxims of wisdom (comp. John xxi. 25), but would rather not do this, as being useless and fatiguing. But the term "infinitely many" would then involve a very strong

hyperbole; and the equality and rhythmical harmony of the construction would be too much destroyed by such an affirmation of two subjects for the predicate נִיעַת בְּשֵׁר.—**And much study.** Namely, the study of many books, much reading (ABEN EZRA, EWALD, VAHINGER, ELSTER, etc.) not the writing of books (HITZIG), nor the thirst after knowledge (HENGSTENBERG), nor preaching (LUTHER, HAHN, etc.),—these are all renderings at variance with the simple and clear sense of לִהְיוֹ הִרְבָּה.—**Is a weariness of the flesh.**—VAHINGER correctly says, "the passion for reading, which weakens mind and body, whilst fruitful reflection strengthens both. Such a morbid desire corresponds entirely with the later Jewish *cras*.* See above, chap. i. 18.—Ver. 13. **Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:** In contrast, that is, to this useless making of many books and much reading. סוּף, "the end" (comp. iii. 11, vii. 2) does not literally signify the sum of all that has been previously said, but the limit which the author wishes just now to set to his discourse, the practical conclusion by which we are to abide. Therein we see that it is not the total and all-comprehending result of his observations and teachings, but only the positive or practical side of this result (in contrast to the negative one expressed in ver. 8) that he will now express in the following maxim: see above No. 1—הִרְבָּה points, even without an article, to the precise discourse of this book, and therefore to the entirety of קְהֵלֶת דְּבָרֵי קְהֵלֶת (comp. i. 1, and for דְּבָרֵי in this collective sense, see 1 Sam. iii. 17; Joshua xxi. 43, etc.) הַכֹּל is really in apposition with דְּבָרֵי, consequently, when strictly taken is to be translated, "the end of the discourse,—of the whole," and not, "the end of the whole discourse." And therewith it is indeed intimated that in the end of the discourse the whole is included, or that the final thought is the ground thought (or at least *one* principal thought); comp. HENGSTENBERG and VAHINGER. Observe also that by the mutual נִשְׁמָעֵנּוּ "let us hear," the author subjects himself to the absolute commandment of fearing God and obeying Him.—**Fear God, and keep His commandments.** Literally, "God fear"—the object of fear emphatically placed before, as in Chap. v. 7.—**For this is the whole duty of man.** There is an ellipsis of the verb in the original, for which comp. chap. ii. 12; Jer. xxiii. 5: xxvi. 9. The correctness of our rendering, which is the same as Luther's ("for that belongs to all men") is confirmed by verse 14, where we are informed of a divine judgment of all men regard-

* [See the remarks in Appendix to Introduction, p. 20, on כִּפְר as referring here to this very book of Koheleth (it is the plural either denoting chapters, or parts of one treatise, as the term is used by Greek and Latin writers, or being equivalent to πολλά γράμματα, or *multae litterae*, "much writing." It may be rendered, therefore, collectively, or in the singular: "in making a great book there is no end." It is an end—as a useless, labor. What is already written is enough: "therefore let us hear," etc.—T. L.]

* [There is no maintaining this unless the date of Koheleth is brought down to a period nearly, if not quite, contemporaneous with the Christian era. Even then, there was no such establishment of Jewish schools, or spread of Jewish books, as would render credible the existence among them of such a *Lesewuth*, or *Lesesucht* ("passion for reading," "morbid desire for reading") as is here spoken of by ZÖCKLER and HITZIG. Such an idea is not hinted at in the New Testament. All this shows the difficulty of finding any place for this book of Koheleth between the time of Solomon and that of Christ. The application of such a remark to the times of Malachi would be utterly absurd.—T. L.]

ing their works. The *Vulgate*, EWALD, HERZFELD, and ELSTER say, "for that is the whole man," which is as much as saying, "thereon rests his entire fate." But this sense would be very

obscurely expressed; and כֹּל-הָאָדָם, moreover, never means "the whole man," but "every man," "all men.* Ver. 14.—For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing. (ZÖCKLER renders: "Judgment upon every hidden thing"). This

direct connection of עַל כֹּל-נִעְלָם with the preceding כִּכְשֵׁפֹת is sustained by the construction of the verb שִׁפְּטָה in Niph'al with עַל, Jer.

ii. 35, as well as by the frequent use of עַל in the sense of "on account," "concerning" The view of HIRTZIG that עַל here stands for ל, the particle of relation, is too artificial, as is that of VAHNINGER and HAHN, that עַל=עִם "together with every secret thing." The natural meaning is, the judgment in the next world, as also in ch. xi. 9, not simply that which is executed in the ordinary development of this world. This view is supported also by the addition, "every secret thing," compared with Rom. ii. 16; 1 Cor. iv. 5, as well as by the subsequent, "whether it be good, or whether it be evil," compared with 2 Cor. v. 10; John v. 29, etc. Still the present judgment, executed in the history of the world, may come into consideration, here as well as in chap. xi. 9, and Psa'm xe. 8. (Comp. John iii. 17 ff.; Eph. v. 13, etc.).

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

(With Homiletical Hints).

The ground thought of this closing section, as already developed in No. 1 of the exegetical illustrations, is about as follows: The speech of the truly wise man infallibly proves itself to be such by its inner strength and truth; its effect, penetrating, like goads and nails, deeply into the heart, sharpening the dull conscience, mightily summoning the whole man to the fear of God and obedience to His sacred commandments, testifies in the most direct manner to its harmony with the word of God,—yes, even to its divine origin and character. It is the voice of eternity in time, of the imperishable, ever-living truth, rescuing us from sin and death in the midst of the vanity of this world. Thus is it to be understood when the preacher of the genuine truth proclaims to his hearers these two great truths of revelation: "All is vanity," and, "Fear God and keep His commandments," and thus it guides them to a correct knowledge of sin as well as of the way of salvation,—of the law as of the gospel.

In accordance with this, the theme for a succinct homiletical treatment of the section, would be about the following: Of the inward power and truth of the divine word, as is shown in the

*[ל, in the construct. state, rather means, "the whole of man." The other expression, "every man," might have the construct. form, but ל, the absolute, with or without the article, would be the best adapted to it.—L. L.]

preaching of the law and gospel (of repentance and faith) as the immutably connected, and fundamental elements of divine revelation.—Or, the knowledge of the vanity of all earthly things as the foundation for the knowledge and inheritance of heavenly glory.—Or: Of the wholesomeness of the wounds inflicted by the goads of the divine word.

HOMILETICAL HINTS TO SEPARATE PASSAGES.

Vers. 9 and 10. CRAMER:—It is not enough that a teacher be simply learned unto himself: it is his duty to serve others with the talent that God has given him, and not to bury it.—STARKE:—He alone is skilful in leading others into the way of truth who himself has been a pupil of truth, who has been instructed in the school of Jesus. GEIER (ver. 10):—Every one who speaks or writes should endeavor with all zeal to present nothing but what is just, true, lovely, and edifying, Phil. iv. 8; 1 Peter iv. 11.

Vers. 11 and 12. BRENZ:—Unless you lay the foundation of faith in the word of God, you will be the sport of every wind; much reading, frequent hearing of discourses, will bring more of error, disquietude, and perturbation, than of genuine fruit.—LUTHER:—He exhorts us not to be led away by various and strange teachings. It is as if he had said: You have an excellent teacher; beware of new teachers; for the words of this teacher are goads and spears. Such also were David's and the prophets'. But the bungler's words are like foam on the water.—GEIER:—In sermons and other edifying discourses, we must not speak words of human wisdom, or fables and idle prattle, but the words of the holy men of God, which are, themselves, the words of the living God; golly preaching is proof of the spirit and the power, 1 Cor. ii. 4.—HENGSTENBERG:—We have here a rule for the demeanor of hearers towards the sermon; they are not to be annoyed if its goad penetrates them.

Vers. 13 and 14. MELANCTHON:—He sets forth a final rule which ought to be the guide of all counsels and actions: Look to God and His teaching; depart not from it, and be assured that he who thus departs rushes, without doubt, into darkness, into the snares of the devil, and into the direst punishments. Refer all counsels and all actions to this end, namely, obedience to God. STARKE:—A sure sign of genuine fear of God, is to be zealous in keeping the commandments of God by the grace of the Holy Ghost.—SIBEL:—Since God has given to us the spirit, let us keep pure and sound this noble deposit, that we may thus return it to the Giver and the Creator. So good and faithful men are wont to guard a deposit committed to their care (1 Tim. vi. 20). On the health of the soul depends the health of the body, and of the whole man. The soul saved we lose nothing; when that is lost all perishes. ZEYSS:—The thought of the day of judgment, is a salutary medicine against false security (Sirach vii. 40), and a sweet promise of the rewards of mercy in eternal life. WOLLE:—Because God is infinitely just, He will neither let hidden evil be unpunished, nor hidden good be unrewarded. To Him therefore be all the glory forevermore.

AMEN.

METRICAL VERSION OF KOHELETH.

BY THE AMERICAN EDITOR.

INTRODUCTION.

POETICAL CHARACTER OF THE BOOK.

[STUART asserts that Koheleth is not poetry. HITZIG treats it very much in the same way, as essentially a formal prose ethical treatise. It is not too much to say that this overlooking the true poetical character and spirit of the composition, is, with both these commentators, the cause of much frigid exegesis, and false rhetorical division. There is, however, high authority for the other view [see LOWTH's *Heb. Poetry*, p. 205. 411, *Eichhorn Einleitung*, Vol. V., 250, 228, and JAHN's *Introduction to the Old Testament*]. EWALD is decided for its poetical character, and ably maintains it. "A genuine poetic inspiration," he says, "breathes through it all" [see ZÖCKLER's *Introduction*, § 2, Remark 3, p. 10]. He, however, regards some parts as prose (such as the little episode ix. 13-16), or as mere historical narrative, which seem to present the poetic aspect, both in the thought and in the measured diction. Thus the allusion to the "poor wise man who saved the city" is as rhythmical in its parallelism (when closely examined) as any other parts, whilst it is not only illustrative of what is in immediate proximity, but is also itself of the poetic cast in the manner of its conception. Although ZÖCKLER thus refers to EWALD, his own interpretation seems affected too much by the prosaic idea of a formal didactic treatise, with its regular logical divisions. We have deemed this question entitled to a fuller argument here, because it seems so intimately connected with a right view of the book, both as a whole and in the explanation of its parts. The whole matter, however, lies open to every intelligent reader. The question is to be decided by the outward form as it appears in the original, and by the peculiar internal arrangement of the thought in its parallelistic relations. This latter is the special outward mark of Hebrew poetry. Though there may not be anything like iambs or dactyls discoverable, even in the Hebrew, yet every reader of the common English Version feels, at once, that he is coming into a new style of diction, as well as of thought and emotion, when, in Gen. iv. 23 he finds the plain flow of narrative suddenly changed by a new, and evidently measured, arrangement, calling attention to a peculiar subjective state in the writer or utterer, and putting the reader immediately *en rapport* with it:

Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;
Ye wives of Lamech, listen to my speech.

So is it also when he finds the inartificial, yet highly eloquent prose narrative of Exodus xiv., and chapters preceding, all at once interrupted by a strain commencing thus—

I will sing unto Jahveh, for glory! glorions!
Horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea;

or when, after the plainest historical style in Numbers xxiv., and previously, he is startled by such music of thought and language as this—

I shall see Him, but not now;
I shall behold Him, but not nigh;
There shall come a star out of Jacob;
A sceptre shall arise out of Israel.

This is not so striking in *Koheleth*: in some places it is barely discoverable; but such parallelism of thought and diction is really there, to a greater or less extent, and, in many parts, as clearly discernible as in *Job* or the *Psalms*; more clearly than in much of *Isaiah*. Thus, for example, chap. x. 20—

Not even in thy thought revile the king;
Nor in thy chamber dare to curse the rich;
The birds of heaven shall carry forth the sound:
The swift of wing, the secret word reveal.

We may even say that it exists throughout, with a few exceptions, perhaps, that may be regarded as introductory or transition sentences, such as brief descriptions of the writer's outward state (i. 12, 13, as also i. 16) and the frequent formulas: "I said in my heart,"—"then I turned again to behold," *etc.* But after each of these, the strain goes on as before. It is musing, meditative, measured thought, in a peculiarly arranged diction, sometimes presenting much regularity in its rhythmical movement, as in chaps. i., xi. and xii., and sometimes seeming so far to lose it that it is known to be poetry only by the inward marks,—that is, the musing cast of thought, and that soul-filling, yet sober emotion which calls up the remoter and more hidden associations, to the neglect of logical or even rhetorical transitions. It is this latter feature that gives to *Koheleth* an appearance which its name, according to its true etymology, seems to imply—namely, of a *collection* of thoughts as they have been noted down, from time to time, in the memory or common-place book of a thoughtful man, not aiming to be logical, because he himself knows the delicate links that bind together his ideas and emotions without express grammatical formulas, and which the reader, too, will feel and understand, when he is brought into a similar spiritual state. Such a spiritual transition is aided by the rhythmical form, however slight, producing the feeling that it is truly poetry he is reading, and not outwardly logical statements of dogmatic truth,—in short, that these gnomic utterances are primarily the emotional relief of a meditative soul, rather than abstract ethical precepts, having mainly a scientific or intellectual aspect.

In this thought there seems to be found that essential distinction between poetry and prose, which goes below all outward form, whether of style or diction, or which, instead of being arbitrarily dependent on form, makes its form, that is, demands a peculiar dress as its most appropriate, we may even say, its most natural expression. In other words, poetry is ever subjective. It is the soul soliloquizing,—talking to itself, putting in form, for itself, its own thoughts and emotions. Or we might rather say that *primarily* this is so; because, in a secondary sense, it may still be said to be objective and didactic in its ultimate aim, whilst taking on the other, or subjective, form, as least indicative of a disturbing outward consciousness, and, therefore, its most truly effective mode of expression even for outward uses. That this, however, may be the more strongly felt on the part of the reader, his mind, as has been already said, must be *en rapport* with that of the writer, that is, it must get into the same spiritual state, by whatever means, outward or inward, suggestive or even artificial, this may be effected. Poetry is the language of emotion; and it is true of all poetry, even of the soberest and most didactic kind. This emotion may be aroused by the contemplation of great deeds, as in the Heroic poetry, whether of the epic or dramatic kind, or of striking natural objects, as in the descriptive, or of *great thoughts* contemplated as they arise in the mind, with more of the wonderful or emotional than of the logical or scientific interest. This is philosophical poetry,—the thinker devoutly musing, instead of putting forth theses, or aiming primarily to instruct. The utterance is from the fullness of the spirit, and, in this way, has more of didactic or preceptive power than though such had been the direct objective purpose. We have a picture of such a mind, in such a state, in this philosophical poem of *Koheleth*, with just enough of rhythmical parallelism to awaken

the emotional interest. It is this representation of a bewildered, questioning, struggling soul, perplexed with doubt, still holding fast to certain great fundamental truths regarded rather as intuitions than as theorems capable of demonstration, which makes its great ethical value. This value, however, is found in it chiefly as a whole. It consists in the total impression; and we shall be disappointed, often, if we seek it in the separate thoughts, some of which are exceedingly skeptical, whilst others we may not hesitate to pronounce erroneous. It is this subjective picture which the higher, or the divine, author has caused to be made, preserved, and transmitted to us, for our instruction (*πρὸς διδασκαλίαν—πρὸς π.·δείαν*, see 2 Tim. iii. 16), so that along with some things fundamental, immutable, which the thoughtful soul can never part with, we may also learn how great the darkness that hangs over the problem of the human and the mundane destiny when illuminated by nothing higher than science and philosophy, either ancient or modern. We need not hesitate to say, that so far as these are concerned, the teaching of the book is as important for the 19th century as it was in the days of Koheleth, whoever he may have been, or at whatever early time he may have lived. STUART thinks differently. Remarking on the affirmations respecting the vanity of what is called "wisdom and knowledge," he says: "Put such a man as Koheleth, at the present time, in the position of a Laplace, Liebig, Cuvier, Owen, Linnæus, Day, Hamilton, Humboldt, and multitudes of other men in Europe and in America, and he would find enough in the pursuit of *wisdom and knowledge*, to fill his soul with the deepest interest, and to afford high gratification." "But it does not follow [he adds] that Koheleth felt wrongly, or wrote erroneously, *at his time*, in respect to these matters. Literary and scientific pursuits, such as are now common among us, were in his day, beyond the reach, and beyond the knowledge of all then living; and how could he reason *then* in reference to what these pursuits *now* are?" (STUART, *Com. on Ecclesiastes*, p. 141). Now Koheleth admits that knowledge, whatever its extent, even mere human knowledge, is better than folly; it is better than sensual Epicureanism; even the sorrows of the one are better than the joys of the other, more to be desired by a soul in a right state; and yet, not in view of any *small amount*, but of the widest possible extent, does he say that "he who increases knowledge" (knowledge of mere earthly things, knowledge of *links* instead of *ends*, knowledge of man's doings, merely, instead of God's ways) only "increases sorrow." The wonder is, that there is not more commonly felt, what is sometimes admitted by the most thoughtful men of science, that the more there is discovered in this field the more mystery there is seen to be, the more light the more darkness following immediately in its train and increasing in a still faster ratio,—in short, the more knowledge we get of nature, and of man as a purely physical being, the greater the doubt, perplexity, and despair, in respect to his destiny, unless a higher light than the natural and the historical is given for our relief. In this respect the modern physical knowledge, or claim to knowledge, has no advantage over the ancient, which it so much despises, but which, in its day, and with its small stock of physical experience, was equally pretentious. Read how LUCRETIVS exults in describing the atomic causality, and the wonderful discoveries that were to banish darkness from the earth, and put an end to that dreaded *Religio*—

*Quæ caput a cæli regionibus obtendebat,
Horribili super adpectu mortalibus instans.*

How greatly does it resemble some of the boasting of our 19th century, and yet how does our modern science, with its most splendid achievements (which there is no disposition to underrate) stand speechless and confounded in the presence of the real questions raised by the perplexed and wondering Koheleth! What single ray of light has it shed on any of those great problems of destiny which are ever present to the anxious, thoughtful soul! "Our science and our literature!" How is their babble hushed in the presence of the grave! How wretchedly do they stammer when asked to explain that which it concerns us most to know, and without which all other knowledge presents only "a lurid plain of desolation," a "darkness visible," or to use the language of one much older than MILTON, "where the very light is as darkness!" How dumb are these boasting oracles, when, with a yearning anxiety that no knowledge of "the seen and temporal" can appease, we consult them in respect to "the unseen and eternal!" They claim to tell us, or boldly assert that the time is rapidly coming when they will be able to tell us, all

that is needed for the perfectibility of human life. But ask them now, what is life, and why we live, and why we die? No answer comes from these vaunting shrines. They have no reply to the most momentous questions: Whence came we? Whither go we? Who are we? What is our place in the scale of being? What is our moral state, our spiritual character? Is there any such thing as an immutable morality? Is there a true ethical rising at all above the physical, or anything more than the knowledge and prudent avoidance of physical consequences? Is there any hope or meaning in prayer? Is there a holy law above us to which our highest ideas of righteousness and purity have never risen? Is there an awful judgment before us? Are we probationers of a moral state having its peril proportioned to an inconceivable height of blessedness only to be attained through such a risk? Is there, indeed, a great spiritual evil within us, and a mighty evil One without us against whom we have to contend? Is there a great perdition, a great Saviour, a great salvation? Is man truly an eternal and supernatural being, with eternal responsibilities, instead of a mere connecting link, a passing step, in a never completed cycle of random "natural selections," or idealess developments, having in them nothing that can truly be called higher or lower, because there is no spiritual standard above the physical, by which their rank and value can be determined?

Such questions are suggested by the reading of Koheleth, although not thus broadly and formally stated. In his oft-repeated cry that "all *beneath the sun* is vanity," there is, throughout, a pointing to something *above the sun*, above nature, above the flowing world of time, to that "work of God" which he says (iii. 14) is לְעוֹלָם, "*for the eternal*," immovable, without flow, without progress, perfect, finished,—"to which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can be taken,"—that high "ideal world," that unmoving Olam, where "all things stand,"—that spiritual supernatural paradigm for the manifestation of which in time, nature with all its flowing types and paradigms was originally made, and to which it is subservient during every *moment*, as well as every *age*, of its long continuance. All here, when viewed in itself, was vanity, but בְּעֵל הַשָּׁמַיִם, *supra solem*, above the sun, there stood the real. He was sure of the fact, though he felt himself utterly unable to solve the questions connected with it. This makes the impressiveness of his close, when, after all his "*turnings to see*," and his "*thinkings to himself*," or "talkings to his heart," he concludes, as Job and the Psalmist had done, that the "fear of God is the beginning of wisdom," and the keeping of His commandments "the whole of man" (כָּל הָאֵדָוָה), his great "*end*," his constant duty, his only hope of obtaining that higher spiritual knowledge which alone can satisfy the soul (John vii. 17). This he fortifies by the assurance that all shall at last be clear: "For God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

It is this continual pointing to the "unseen and eternal" [לְעוֹלָם] that constitutes the peculiar poetical character of the book, so far as the thought is concerned. And then there is the subjective style: "I thought to myself"—"I said to my heart"—"I turned again to see"—"I went about, I and my heart;" this, together with the measured diction into which it naturally flows, forms the more outward poetical dress. There are in Koheleth the germs of ideas that extend beyond the utmost range of any outward science, or even of any merely dogmatic ethical teaching. It was the inner spirit of the reader, through his own inner spirit, that he sought to touch. These "thinkings to himself" filled his soul with an emotion demanding a peculiar style of utterance, having some kind of rhythmical flow as its easiest and most fitting vehicle. Why it is, that when the soul muses, or when, under the influence of devout feeling, or inspiring wonder, it is thus moved to talk to itself, it should immediately seek some kind of measured language, is a question not easily answered. It presents a deep problem in psychology which cannot here be considered. The fact is undoubted. The rhythmical want is felt in ethical and philosophical musing, as well as in that which comes from the contemplation of the grand and beautiful in nature, or the heroic and pathetic in human deeds. Some have denied that what is called gnomic, or philosophical poetry is strictly such, being, as they say, essentially prose, artificially arranged for certain purposes of memory and impression. We may test the difference, however, by carefully considering what is peculiar, outwardly and inwardly, to some of the most striking examples of this kind of writing, and noting how the power, character, and association of the

thoughts are affected by the rhythmical dress, even when of the simplest kind. Pope's Essay on Man, for example, has been called simply measured prose; but it is in fact, the highest style of poetry, better entitled to be so characterized than the greater part of his other rhythmical compositions. Certain great ideas belonging to the philosophy of the world and man, are there contemplated in their emotional aspect. Wonder, which enters into the very essence of this highest species of poetry, is called by Plato "the parent of philosophy," and this is the reason why the dry and logical Aristotle, who could intellectually analyze what he could not emotionally create, gives us that remarkable declaration (*De Poetica*, chap. ix.) διὸ καὶ φιλοσοφώτερον καὶ σπουδαϊότερον ΠΟΙΗΣΙΣ ἱστορίας ἐστίν—"Wherefore it is that poetry is a more philosophical and a more serious thing than history itself." In perusing the composition of Pope referred to, we are immediately, and without formal notice, made to feel this contemplative, wondering, emotive power, through the sympathetic influence of the outward dress. The measured style thus disposes us as soon as we begin to read. We are thereby put in harmony with the subjective state of the writer. We begin to muse as he muses, whilst the rhythmical flow causes our emotions, and associations of thought, to move easily, and without surprise, in the same smooth channel, however irregular it might seem if viewed under another aspect. We are not reading for knowledge, or ethical instruction even, but for the reception of that same emotion which prompted the seemingly irregular utterance. Under the binding influence of the melody, we no longer expect logical or scientific connections. There is felt to be a uniting under-current of thought and feeling, so carrying us along as to supply the want of these by the merest suggestions, some of them, at times, very far off, seemingly, whilst others come like inspirations to the meditative spirit, or seem to rise up spontaneously from the bubbling fountain of emotional ideas. Taking away the rhythm from such a work immediately does it great injustice, by destroying this sympathy. Put it in a prose dress, and we, at once, expect closer connections, more logical, more scientific, more formal, more directly addressed to an outward mind. The one soul of the writer and the reader is severed, the inspiration is lost, the dogmatic becomes predominant, whilst the intellect itself is offended for the want of those stricter formulas of speech and argument which its systematic instruction demands. Not finding these, we call it strange, rhapsodical, or unmeaning. What before impressed us now appears as trite truisms, and the fastidious intellect, or fastidious taste, contemns what a deeper department of the soul had before received and valued without questioning. The cause of this is in the fact that there are some thoughts, called common (and it may be that they are indeed very common), yet so truly great, that to a mind in a right state for their contemplation, no commonness can destroy the sense of their deep intrinsic worth. Truisms may be among the most important of all *truths*, and, therefore, all the more needing some impressive style of utterance, some startling form of diction, to arouse the soul to a right contemplation of their buried excellence. Undeterred by their commonness, the musing mind sees this higher aspect; it recognizes them in their connections with the most universal of human relations, and even with eternal destinies. The emotion with which this is contemplated calls out a peculiar phraseology, placing the thought in the foreground of the mind's attention, and divesting it of its ordinary homely look. This startling diction appears especially in the original language, if understood. We turn such meditations into prose; first in our words, as happens necessarily in a process of rigid, verbal translation,—then in our thoughts—and having thus stripped them of that rhythmical charm which called attention to their hidden worth, their real uncommonness, we pronounce them trite and unmeaning.*

Koheleth in his homely prose version—especially our English Version—suffers more, in this

*[Such common-places abound in the best poetry, ancient or modern. Often, when rightly set, they furnish its most precious gems. Especially is this the case with the more sombre and meditative poetry, as in Young's *Night Thoughts*, and the more serious poems of TENNYSON. "Many of the ideas of his *In Memoriam*," says a certain critic, "are the merest common-places; strip them of their stilted verbiage, and there is nothing left but the most vapid truisms." Such criticism is, itself, both vapid and shallow. Common ideas have their uncommon or wonderful aspects, which the common mind fails to see, or loses sight of because of their supposed commonness. Thus, time presents a very ordinary conception, but think of it in connection with its infinite past, its inficite future, its infinitesimal present, or as an immeasurable cycle repeating itself, and "demanding the ages fled," as Koheleth represents it (chap. i. 10; iii. 15), and how full of the most solemn awe, as well as the deepest personal interest. Take, for example, one of the most ordinary truisms that we find in almost every mouth: "The past is gone, we can never recall it." How tame and prosaic it sounds when presented

way, than the Psalms or Proverbs, where the Hebrew parallelism is so clear in its general structure, and the antithesis of emphatic words demanded for each particular arrangement is so striking, that the poetical character appears in almost any version; the poorest translation, that has any claim to be faithful, not being able wholly to disguise it.

The object, therefore, is to give to a translation of Koheleth such a rhythmical dress, be it ever so slight and plain, that the reader may thereby make some approach to the mental position of the original utterer, or assume, instinctively, as it were, something of his subjective state. It is to lead him, by something in the outward style, to feel, however slightly, the meditative, emotional, yet sobered spirit of the writer—to give the mind that turn—(and a mere starting impulse may do it) which shall make it muse as he muses, and soliloquize as he soliloquizes, without being surprised at those sudden transitions, or those remote suggestions, which seem natural to such a state of mind when once assumed. They *are* natural, because the writer, understanding his own thoughts, and even feeling them, we may say, needs, for himself, no such logical formulas, and the reader equally dispenses with them as he approaches the same position. They are like modulations that are not only admissible but pleasing in a musical flow, whilst they would appear as flattened chords, or harsh dissonances, if set loose from their rhythmical band. Such is very much the appearance which the thoughts of this book often present when read merely as didactic prose, and this is doing them great injustice. For one example out of many, of these seemingly abrupt transitions in Koheleth, take chap. vi. 6: “unto one place go not all men alike?” There seems, at first view, little or no connection here. It is, however, the meeting of an objection that silently starts up, making itself felt rather than perceived as something formally stated: “Length of life is no advantage, rather the contrary, if one has *lived in vain*: Do not they both, the man of extreme longevity, and the still-born, or the *born in vain*, go at last to the same mother earth whence they came?” What avails, then, “his thousand years twice told?” If the reader’s mind is in harmony with the writer’s, and with his style, he sees the association, and is more affected by such apparent abruptness than he would have been by the most formal logical statement. He gets into the current of feeling, and this carries him over the apparent logical break.

It may be said, too, that such a rhythmical Version may be all the more faithful to the thought on this very account of its rhythmical form. It may be more literal, too, if by literal we mean that which most truly puts us in the mental position of the old writer, giving not only the thought, as a bare intellectual form, but, along with it, the *emotion* which is so important a part of the total effect, and even of the *thought* itself regarded as an integral state of soul. To accomplish this, Hebrew intensives must be represented, in some way, by English intensives, of like strength, though often of widely different expression. There is often, too, an emotional power in a Hebrew particle which may be all lost if we aim to give only its illative force. This is especially the case with a **וְ** or a **וְ**. The former always expresses more or less of surprise or wonder, along with its additive force of *too*, or *moreover*. The translation is to be helped, in

merely as a truth or dogma. But give it a subjective interest such as comes from the diction and association in which YOUNG presents it, and how full of emotion!

Hark! 'tis the knell of my departed hours;
Where are they? With the years beyond the flood;

or as it appears in the Hebrew parallelism of Koheleth (chap. vii. 24):

Far off! the past—where is it?
Deep! a deep, O who shall find it?

Or as the kindred thought meets us in the musings of TENNYSON:

But the tender grace of a day that is dead,
Will never come back to me.

Of course, it will never come back. As a mere fact, or preceptive statement, we want no teacher, inspired or uninspired, to tell us that. But what, then, has changed the dry truism into a thought so full of the most touching interest that we read the simple lines over and over again, wondering at the strange power that is in them. It is in the rhythm, some would say. This is true, but not in the mere auricular sense. The rhythm *has* an effect, though the measure is of the simplest kind. It will be found, however, on analysis, to consist in the fact of its disposing the reader to the meditative or subjective state of soul. It sets the mind soliloquizing, unconsciously, as it were. It makes the thought and language seem, for the moment, as though they were the reader’s own. It brings the idea to him in its emotional rather than in its intellectual, or dogmatic, aspect. In other words, it presents the *uncommon* side of the seeming truism. It is not only a deep view of being in general, but it is one that belongs to himself; and this is the secret of his emotion.—T. L.]

such cases, by our expressive particle *yea*, or some interjectional form such as, *ah! this too! yea, verily, this too!* Again, the illative power in the Hebrew particle may be much wider, and more varied, than that of any single one which we may select as corresponding to it in any single case. Thus ׀ connects by denoting a *cause, reason, or motive*; but it may be a reason *against*, a reason *notwithstanding*, as well as a reason *for*; just as the Greek *ἐνεκα* may mean *for the sake of*, or *in spite of*,—*for all that*—as *ἐνεκα ἐμοῦ*, “on my account,” or *for all that I can do*. In the latter case ׀ should be rendered *although*, a meaning rare in other parts of the Bible, but quite common, we think, in Ecclesiastes, and furnishing the right key to some otherwise obscure passages. Thus in chap. vi. 4, ׀ִי־בְהִלָּה is rendered, “for he cometh in with vanity,” which simply inverts the illative aim of the particle as determined by the context. It reads as though the “coming in with vanity and departing in darkness,” were assigned as the cause, or reason why, the abortion, or the “vainly born,” is better than he who “vainly lived,”—thus making it the *reason why* instead of the *reason notwithstanding*, as it truly is. When we render it *although*, and supply the same particle in all the connected clauses, the meaning, which is so confused in our common English Version, becomes not only clear but most impressive. Again, this very frequent little word may be a transition, or starting particle, denoting a *reason*, and an *emotion* connected with it, but this emotion arising from an under-current of thought, or from something that starts up to the mind during a pause in the soliloquizing discourse. The speaker sets off again with a ׀, *yet, surely, yea verily so is it*; as though what he had been thinking must have been thought by others near him. There are quite numerous examples of this kind in Koheleth, but the best illustration may be taken from a passage in Job where the ultimate thought is very similar to the one which pervades this book. To explain it there is required the very admissible supposition of a brief pause, or silence, holding still the flow of the discourse after some impassioned utterance. This is in accordance with the nature of grave oriental speaking, whether dialectical or continuous. It may be said, too, that such pauses of emotional silence, though occupying much shorter intervals in the middle of the dialogue, are of the same kind, and of the same spirit, with the silence described Job ii. 13: “And they sat with him on the earth seven days, and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him, for they saw that his grief was very great.” Some such rest of silence may be supposed to have occurred after the impassioned close of the xxvii. chapter. We are almost driven to this view from the fact, that the xxviii. seems to have so little of direct, or, in fact, of any discoverable connection with it. When Job begins again “to take up his parable,” his thoughts seem to have drifted to a great distance; and yet, during the silence, the thread has been preserved. It has been carried away by a devious current, but we recover it again before the new strain closes. So great has seemed the difficulty of connecting these two chapters, that PAREAU (*De Jobi Notitiis, etc.*, p. 247) reasons plausibly to show that there has been a misplacement, and that chap. xxviii. should come immediately after chap. xxvi. But there is a better explanation, and more in harmony with the spirit of this wonderful book. After the strong appeal of the xxvii., and the vivid picture, there presented, of the bad man’s ruin, we find Job, instead of applying it directly to his own defence, or his defence of the ways of God, starting off in a strange manner, and with this particle ׀, presenting no reason for what was said, seemingly, just before, but forming, as it were, the transition chord to a new modulation: “For there is a vein for the silver” (׀ִי׀׀) or, “surely there is an outlet for the silver, and a place for the gold,” etc. What is the illative force of ׀ in this place, or what connective office does it perform at all? Far off, as it would seem, from the former train of thought, the speaker goes on to describe the human zeal and energy in its search for the treasures and secrets of nature. And most graphically is this done. The references in the beginning are to mining operations, in which men had made what might seem a wonderful progress in the earliest times: “He (man) puts a limit to the darkness” [he pushes farther and farther back the horizon of the unknown]; “he searches out to the very end (as CONANT well translates it) the stone (the ore) of darkness, and of the shadow of death.” Away from the ordinary human haunts “he hangs suspended” (over the shaft of the mine). In wilds which even “the vulture’s eye had not seen, nor the fierce lion ventured

to tread, he sendeth forth his hand, and turneth up the mountain from its roots." "He cutteth out channels in the rocks,—he bindeth the fountains from overflowing, and that which is most hidden bringeth he forth to light." Now what is the association of thought that led to this? We soon see it. It reappears in that yearning interrogatory: "*But where shall wisdom be found? O where is the place of understanding?*" All these discoveries, however great they may be conceived to be (and the searching appeal is as much to our own as to the earliest times) are not wisdom—*הַחֵכְמָה*—"the wisdom." They give us not the great idea or reason of God in the creation of man and the world: "The deep" (the great Tehom) still "saith, it is not in me; the sea saith, it is not with me." "It is not found in the land of the living," in the world of active life; and yet, strange as it may seem, "a rumor thereof" has reached the dark, silent unboasting under-world. "Death and Abaddon (the state in which man seems to be lost, or to disappear) say, we have just heard the fame thereof with our ears." It is the wisdom which is known only to God, or to those to whom He reveals it,—His moral purpose in the origination and continuance of nature, and in the dark dispensations of human life. It is the spiritual idea of the supernatural world, to which the natural is wholly subservient, but to which neither its ascending or descending links do ever reach. To this, all unknown as it is, though firmly believed, does Job appeal in repelling the shallow condemnation of his friends, and the shallow grounds on which they place it. This is God's wisdom, which was with Him when He made nature and the worlds. Man's wisdom is to believe in it, to submit himself to it, to stand in awe of it, and to depart from evil, as the beginning of that course through which alone there can come any clearing of the mystery to the human soul. This connects the speaker with the former train of thought, or the vindication of God's ways as righteous, however dark they may seem in the human history, whether of the race or of the individual. The pause, the apparent break, is that which leads to the higher strain. So it is in the musings of Koheleth, less sublime, perhaps, less impassioned, but with no less of grave impressiveness. It is only when we thus read it as meditating, soul-interrogating, poetry, that we get in the right vein for understanding its subtle associations of thought.

In Koheleth, too, as in Job, there are certain underlying ideas, firmly held, and that never change. Though "clouds and darkness are round about" them, they form the *סִיָּן כְּסֵא* "the foundation of the throne,"—the settled basis of his belief in the eternal Righteousness. These no scepticism ever invades. They have not the appearance of inductions from experience, or from any kind of logical argumentation; neither are they so put forth. They are rather holy *intuitions*, inspirations we might style them, which admit of no uncertainty: "*I know that whatsoever God doeth is for the olam,*" the eternity, the world idea; "nothing can be put to it nor any thing taken from it" (iii. 14). Earth may be full of wrong, but "there is One Most High above all height, that keepeth watch" over the injustice and oppression of men (v. 7): "Though a sinner do evil a hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet *surely I know* that it shall be well with them that fear God, but it shall not be well with the wicked" (viii. 12). He *knew* it; his faith not only went beyond sight, but stood strong even in opposition to sense and earthly experience: "I said in my heart, the righteous and the wicked God shall judge;" for "there, too" (*שָׁם*, even there, in the great Olam, or world plan, mentioned just above), "is there an appointment for every purpose, and for every work" (iii. 17). This judgment will not be merely through blind "physical consequences," as though it were man's highest duty to obey nature [according to a favorite modern system of naturalizing ethics], instead of oftentimes having to fight against it,—but by a glorious and unmistakable manifestation of God Himself, somewhere in the *mal'kuth kol olamim*, or cycle of the Olams. It shall be "when God demands again the ages fled" [iii. 15], *בְּקֶשֶׁת אֵת בְּנֵיָךְ*, literally, "makes inquisition," or "seeks that which is pursued." As the solemn proclamation is sent after the fleeing homicide, so shall He demand again the ages of wrong that have chased away each other in the revolutions of time. They shall be summoned to stand before His bar. The past is not gone; it is to appear again in the judgment, as real as in the events for which it is to be judged. Yea, more *real* will be that re-appearing than any thing in the unheeded movements of the present. Neither will it be the exhibition of a general or abstract justice: "For God will bring *every work* into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil" [xii. 14]. It is this strong Hebrew

faith in the Holy Justice which the Rationalist commentators overlook in their absurd comparing of some things in this book with the dogmas of the later * Grecian schools. It wholly severs the reverent, God-fearing Koheleth from the sensual Epicurean, on the one hand, and the fatalizing, naturalizing Stoic, on the other. His darkness is better than their light, his very doubts are more suggestive than their most "positive philosophy." It is this God-fearing, yet man-loving, spirit, that makes his calm utterances so much more impressive than all their babbling disputations about pleasure and pain, the *summum bonum*, and the reality of evil. All good, he teaches, is from God, even the power to find any satisfaction in eating and drinking (ii. 24, when rightly interpreted, v. 18, 19), and yet again, "sorrow is better than mirth" (viii. 3), not on account of any ascetic merit in the endurance of pain and grief, but because a saddened state of soul is more in sympathy with a sad and fallen world, such as the writer evidently conceives it to be [see vii. 29; ix. 3; iii. 18]. "Sorrow is better than mirth," because it has more heart, more thought; it is more becoming, more humane, and, therefore, more *rational* in view of the vanity of life, and its abounding woes. It is better, as purifying and beautifying the soul, and thus producing, in the end, a serener happiness (vii. 3).

"For in the sadness of the face the heart becometh fair;"

as **אִשׁוֹ לֵב** should be rendered, giving a clear and impressive antithesis, and being in accordance with the more common usage of the phrase, as denoting *comeliness*, or even cheerfulness of spirit, rather than moral improvement merely, as our common version gives it: As the face is outwardly marred by such grief for the woes of human life, the heart grows inwardly in serene spiritual beauty. Never was this more impressively illustrated than in the life of the "Man of sorrows," whose "visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men" (Isaiah lii. 14; liii. 3).

These great underlying ideas of Koheleth, and the manner in which they appear, form its most peculiar characteristic. It is its recognition that distinguishes the thoughtful reader from the one who would flippantly characterize the style of the book as homely, and its thoughts as confused and common-place. These immutable truths may be compared to a strong and clear under current of most serious thinking, rising, at times, above the fluctuating experiences that appear upon the surface and as constantly losing themselves in the deeper flow. It is the feeling of this under current that may be said to form the subjective band of thought. It furnishes the true ground of that rich suggestiveness which pervades the whole composition, and thus constitutes an important element of its poetical character.

In giving a rhythmical version, however plain, to such a book as Koheleth, it should be borne in mind that some degree of inversion as well as measured or parallelistic movement, is among the demands of the poetical style in all languages. Such inversion, however, exists to a much less degree in the Hebrew, than in the Latin and Greek, and may, therefore, be more easily represented in English. In truth, a version may be made more clear, and more literal, as well as more musical, in this very way. It may sometimes be accomplished by a faithful following of the original in its scantiness as well as in its fulness. Our English version of the Bible inserts in italics the substantive verb where it is not in the Hebrew. It does this, often, to the marring of the thought, and the enfeebling of the emotion: "From everlasting unto everlasting thou *art*," how much more forcible, and, at the same time, more rhythmical, the literal following of the Hebrew: *from everlasting thou*. This may seem a very slight difference, but the effect on a wide scale, had such literal following been

*[The earlier Greek ideas, as manifested in their solemn dramatic poetry, before the Epicurean philosophy had been fully introduced, remind us strikingly, sometimes, of the language and ideas of the Bible. Nowhere else, out of the Scriptures, is this doctrine of retributive justice, and its awful certainty, more sternly set forth. The manner of expression, sometimes, shocks our more merciful Christian ideas; yet still we recognize in them the primitive dogma of the divine unailing Justice, as inseparable from the divine Power and Wisdom:

ἡ παλαιφάτος
ΔΙ'ΚΗ ξύνεδρος Ζηνός ἀρχαίαις νόμοις:

DIÉE, renowned of old,
Who shares, by ancient laws, the throne of Jove.

SOPH. *Œd.*, Col. 1381.—T. L.]

constantly practised, would have been very strongly felt. "Vanity of vanities," says our English version, "all is vanity." Leave out the useless substantive verb: "Vanity of vanities, all—vanity." A very slight change again, but it has more effect for the ear, as well as for the feeling. It is no longer an abstract, dogmatic affirmation, but an exclamation of wonder. Intensive phrases, however, generally refuse a strict verbal rendering, unless they have become naturalized, as it were, in our language, through a long used literal translation of the Scriptures, or in any other way. Thus that oft-repeated "vanity of vanities" (the Hebrew use of the construct. state with the plural for something superlative) may stand as it does, instead of being rendered "*most vain,*" or "*utterly vain.*" So again for the Hebrew

כִּנְבַּג כִּנְבַּג (i. 6), the most literal is the best sounding, as well as the most forcible translation: "*Whirling, whirling,*" or "*round, round,*"—"round about, round about"—instead of our tame and prosaic rendering: "*it whirlleth about continually,*" or the still poorer Vulgate: *Lustrans universa in circuitu.* In other cases, a verbal rendering will not do at all; and yet in some way, must their intensiveness be given, or it is no true translation,—that is, no translation, or *setting over,* of what is most essential, which, in such a book as Koheleth, is the *emotion,* the state of soul, rather than the bare description or ethical *thought.* Thus, for example, in the Hebrew, the plural is sometimes used to express what is superlative or very great; as in chap. ii. 8, the expression שָׂרָה וְשָׂרִית, which, in our English version is most strangely rendered, "musical instruments and *that of all sorts.*" The best Jewish authority regarded שָׂרָה as the feminine of שָׂר, the common word for the breast, used here (the only case of its occurrence) as more feminine and voluptuous, and representative of Solomon's numerous wives and concubines. See KIMCHI, and ABEN EZRA who cites as a parallel phrase, נָחַם וְנָחָתַיִם ("a damsel or two," expressed euphemistically) Judges v. 30. Now render this literally, "a breast and breasts," and how tame it sounds; how bare is it of all emotion! We want something to express this intensive sense, be it an intensive particle, or any other intensive word—"the breast, yea, many breasts,"—the seven hundred fair female bosoms on which Solomon, in "the days of his vanity," had the choice of reposing. The manner of saying it, and the feeling with which it is said, would furnish no slight argument that it is a real, and not merely a representative Solomon, who is speaking here. Sometimes this emotion, this intensity, is expressed, or rather suggested, simply by the rhythmical form of the translation, even though it be of the slightest kind;—the inverted or measured style immediately indicating such an emotional state of soul, as other language, in another order, would not have done. For all these reasons, it is no paradox to assert, that a rhythmical version of the book, such as is here attempted, may be the most true and literal, placing the reader's soul in some degree of harmony with that of the writer, not only as regards the general subject, but also in respect to the true thought and feeling of particular passages. To answer this purpose, there is need only of such a degree of inversion as our language most easily admits, and which might have been much more freely used than it has been in our common version. Such a style, freely employed in rendering all the poetical books, would have become naturalized in English through this very means. It might have been called prose, but would have had much more of the power of the poetical, and would have enabled us, whilst rendering most literally, to have entered more deeply into the thought of the sacred books through the emotion which is such an essential accompaniment of the thought, and of which a poor prose translation almost wholly divests it. In addition to this more inverted style, there is required only the simplest iambic movement, made as smooth as possible, but without much regard to the equality of the lines. The Version accompanying may be open to criticism in these respects, but the effect would, in fact, be weakened by having it too labored, even if that could be consistent with literalness. In short, there is wanted, for such a purpose, just enough of rhythm to arrest the attention, and set the mind in the direction of the inward harmony, without occupying it with an excessive artificialness. On these accounts it is hoped that the attempted rhythmical version will give the reader a better *view,* by giving him a better *feeling* of Koheleth (both as a whole, and in its parts) than can come from the very homely and defective prose translation of our English Bible, or even from the German

of ZÖCKLER, which is rhythmical only in appearance; since it simply follows the Hebrew accents in the divisions of the parallelisms, which are less evident in this book than in other parts of the Bible styled poetical. In the version offered, there is very little of what can be called addition or paraphrase. Some few places there are, in which brief explanatory words have been placed in parenthetical brackets, but they are not used to any greater extent than the explanations and connections that are found in the marginal readings of our English Version. These additions, though marked by enclosing lines, are included in the measured movement, and may, therefore, be read without interrupting it. They show the connections of thought, which are virtually in the Hebrew, in cases, often, where a verbal translation would fail to exhibit the full power of its conciseness. In such instances they are not additions, nor explanatory paraphrases, but genuine parts of a true translation. In other cases, the mere inversion discloses the association of thought, which we fail to see in the common rendering, because its unhebraical order divests certain words of that emphasis through which the connection is plainly marked in the original—more plainly, sometimes, than by any logical terms of assertion.

The measure employed is the Iambic, with occasional use of the Choriambus. The most usual lines are the pentameter, or the common English blank verse line, the Iambic of seven feet, the most musical of our English measures, with, occasionally, the less musical, because less used, Senarius. The shorter lines, of three or four feet, are used for the transitions and cadences which mark the flow of thought. One who carefully compares it with the original will see that the translation here attempted keeps to the Hebrew accentual divisions, with very rare exceptions, and, in most cases, (although a somewhat difficult task) to the measure of their verbal conciseness. Some few parts are regarded as bare prose, and are given accordingly, such as the first verse of the book, the passages from ver. 12 to ver. 14, and verses 16 and 17, of the first chapter, as also verses 9 and 10 of the twelfth chapter. These are viewed as simply introductory to what follows. Without at all affecting our view of the authenticity and inspiration of the book, they may be regarded as scholiastic prologues, or epilogues, made by some other hand, as explanatory of the whole poem, or of some particular things in it; as, for example, verses 9 and 10 of chap. xii. seem to be an added note (by some enthusiastic admirer, himself divinely guided) to show that Solomon's own language answers the description given in verse 11 that follows, beginning: "words of the wise, *etc.*" The reader will find remarks on these, both by ZÖCKLER and the editor, in their respective places.—T. L.]

METRICAL VERSION.

SAYINGS OF KOHELETH,

SON OF DAVID, KING IN JERUSALEM.

N. B.—The marginal numbers denote the chapters and verses of the common English Version. The smaller figures in the text refer to the brief notes in the margin, explanatory of differences between this and the common Version, or referring to pages where such explanations may be found.

I.

The introductory Thought and constant Refrain. Continual cyclical changes in Nature and in Human Life. Nothing new beneath the sun.

CHAPTER I.

- 2 O vanity of vanities! Koheleth saith ;
O vanity of vanities! all—vanity.
- 3 What gain to man in all his toil, he toils beneath the sun ?
- 4 One generation goes, another comes ;
But the earth for the world¹ abides.
- 5 Outbeams² the sun, and goes beneath, the sun ;
Then to his place, all panting,³ glowing,—there again is he.
- 6 Goes to the South, the wind, then round to North again ;
Still round and round it goes ;
And in its circuits evermore returns the wind.
- 7 The rivers all are going to the sea ;
And yet the sea is never full ;
Whence came the rivers, thither they return to go.
- 8 All words⁴ but labor ; man can never utter it.
With seeing, eye is never satisfied ;
With hearing, ear is never filled.
- 9 What was is what again SHALL BE ;
What has been made, is that which shall be made ;
There's nothing new beneath the sun.
- 10 Is there a thing of which 'tis said, Lo this is new ?
It hath already been in worlds that were before.
- 11 Of former things the memory is gone ; .
Of things to come shall no remembrance be
With those that shall come after.

I. ¹ See p. 45.—² P. 35, Text Note to v. 5.—³ P. 38, note.—⁴ P. 39, and Text Note, pp 35, 36.

II.

Koheleth gives an account of himself, his kingly estate, his pre-eminence in Wisdom and experience, with meditations on the fruitlessness of human efforts, and the sorrows of knowledge. Prose mingled with verse.

CHAPTER I.

- 12, 13 I Koheleth was king over Israel in Jerusalem, and I set my heart to seek and to explore by wisdom all that is done beneath the sun,—That painful study which God has given to weary with.
- 14 I looked on all the works performed beneath the sun ;
And Lo! all vanity, a chasing⁵ of the wind.
- 15 That which is crooked cannot be made straight ;
The lacking can't be numbered.
- 16 Then said I in my heart, Lo! I have become great ; I have increased in wisdom beyond
17 all before me in Jerusalem ; my heart hath seen much wisdom, and knowledge. Yea, I set my heart to know wisdom, —to know vain glory, too, and folly. This also did I see to be a caring for the wind.
- 18 For in much of wisdom there is much of grief ;
And who increaseth knowledge, still increaseth sorrow.

III.

The Attempt to unite Pleasure and Wisdom—Figure of the Unruly Horse—The reigning of the Flesh—The Heart guiding as Charioteer—Koheleth's ample means for the Experiment—Its wretched Failure—All Vanity.

CHAPTER II.

- 1 Then said I in my heart again—
Go to—I'll try thee now with pleasure.
Behold the good. This, too, was vanity.
- 2 Of laughter, said I, it is mad ;
Of mirth—O what availeth it?
- 3 Then in my heart I made deep search,—
To rein⁶ my flesh in wine ;
My heart in wisdom guiding ;
To take near hold of folly, till I saw
What kind of good is that for Adam's sons
Which they would get, the numbered days they live,
Beneath the heavens.
- 4 Great works I did.
Houses I builded, vineyards did I plant,
5 Gardens and parks ; fruit trees of every kind
6 I planted there. I made me water pools,
To water thence the wood luxuriant⁷ of trees.
- 7 I gat me serving men, and serving women ;
Thralls of my house were born to my estate ;
Whilst store of cattle, yea of flocks were mine,
Surpassing all before me in Jerusalem.
- 8 I gathered to me also silver—gold,—
Treasures of kings, the wealth of provinces.
I gat me singing men, and singing women.
That choice delight of Adam's sons was mine,—
The breast⁸—yea many breasts.
- 9 So I was great, and grew in greatness more than all
Who were before me in Jerusalem.
My wisdom also still stood firm to me.

- 10 Of all mine eyes did ask I nought refused.
 My heart I held not back from any joy.
 For joyful was my heart in all my toil;
 And this my portion was from all my toil.
- 11 Then looked I to the work my hands had wrought,
 The labor I had labored in the doing;
 And Lo! all vanity—a chasing of the wind;
 No gain beneath the sun.

IV.

Contemplation of Wisdom and Folly—Kohelah is sure that Wisdom far excels Folly—But he is puzzled to see how slight the practical Difference in Life—One seeming Chance to all—All alike forgotten—Kohelah's Grief—His Hatred of Life and Discontent.

CHAPTER II.

- 12 Again I turned to think of wisdom, madness, folly;
 For what shall he do who succeeds the king?
 [What else than] that which they have done already.
- 13 As light excels the darkness, so I thought⁹
 There surely must be gain to wisdom over folly.
- 14 The wise man's eyes are in his head [they say¹⁰],
 The fool in darkness walketh.
 And yet I know that one event awaits them all.
- 15 Then said I in my heart
 Like the fool's chance so hath it chanced to me;
 And wherefore, then, am I the wiser?
 I told my heart, this, too, was vanity.
- 16 As of the fool, so also of the wise;
 There's no remembrance that abides forever;¹
 In that the days are coming—have already come—
 When all is clean forgotten.
 Alas!² how is it that the wise should die as dies the fool!
- 17 And then I hated life.
 For grievous seemed the work performed beneath the sun,
 Since all is vanity—a chasing of the wind.
- 18 I hated also all the labor I had wrought.
 For I must leave it to a man who shall come after me.
- 19 Will he be wise or foolish? who can know?
 Yet he will rule in all for which I've toiled,
 In all I've wisely planned beneath the sun.
 This, too, was vanity.

V.

Kohelah's Desperation—All vanity again.

CHAPTER II.

- 20 Thus I revolved³ until it made my heart despair,
 Of all the labor I had wrought beneath the sun.
- 21 For so it is; there's one whose toil is evermore
 In wisdom, knowledge, rectitude;
 And then to one who never toiled he yields it as his prize.
 O this is vanity—an evil very sore.

IV. ⁹P. 63, Text Note to v. 13.—¹⁰P. 58, proverbial saying.—¹P. 68, second note.—²P. 58, third note. V. ³P. 59, second note.

- 22 For what remains to man in all his labor?
In all his heart's sore travail, as he toils beneath the sun?
- 23 Since all his days are pain, his occupation grief,
This, too, is vanity.

VI.

The true Good not in the power of man—Who could do more to find it than Kibeletb? All the gift of God.

CHAPTER II.

- 24 The good is not in⁴ man that he should eat and drink,
And find his soul's enjoyment in his toil.
This, too, I saw, is only from the hands of God.
- 25 For who could more indulge?
Who faster, farther, run⁵ (in such a race) than I?
- 26 To him who hath found favor in His sight
Doth God give wisdom, knowledge, joyfulness;
But to the sinner gives He travail sore,
To hoard and gather for the man whom he approves.
This, too, was vanity—a caring for the wind.

VII.

A time for every thing. The great world time, or world problem, which men can never find out.

CHAPTER III.

- 1 To every thing there is a time,
A season fit, to every purpose under heaven;
- 2 A time to be born—a time to die,
A time to plant—a time to dig up what is planted,
- 3 A time to kill—a time to heal,
A time to break—a time to build again,
- 4 A time to weep—a time to laugh,
A time to mourn—a time to dance,
- 5 A time to scatter stones—a time to gather them again,
A time to embrace—a time to refuse embracing,
- 6 A time to seek—a time to lose,
A time to keep—a time to cast away,
- 7 A time to rend—a time to sew,
A time to hold one's peace—a time to speak,
- 8 A time to love—a time to hate,
A time of war—a time of peace.
- 9 What gain to him who works, in that for which he labors?
- 10 I saw the travail God hath given the sons of men,
That they should toil therein.
- 11 Each in its several *time*, hath He made all things fair;
The *world-time*⁶ also hath He given to human thought;
Yet so, that man, of God's great work, can never find,
The end from the beginning.

VIII.

In worldly things, enjoyment and success the only good proposed. This God's gift. The Inquisition of the Past.

CHAPTER III.

- 12 There is no other good *in them*, I know,
But to enjoy, and to *do well* in life ;
- 13 Yea, more,—to every man,
That he should eat and drink, and find enjoyment in his toil—
Even this is God's own gift.
- 14 For all God's work, I know, is for eternity.⁷
No adding to it—from it no diminishing.
And this He does that men may fear before Him.
- 15 What was is present now ;
The future has already been ;
And God demands again the ages fled.⁸

IX.

The Injustice in the world—God's sure Judgment—God's trial of men to prove them—Human Life and its Destiny as judged by human conduct—"Man who is in honor and abideth not is like the heasts that perish"—One chance, seemingly to all.

CHAPTER III.

- 16 Again I looked beneath the sun—
The place of judgment—wickedness was there.
The place of righteousness—I saw injustice there.
- 17 Then said I in my heart :
The righteous and the wicked God will judge.
For *there*,⁹ too, unto every purpose, and for every work,
- 18 There is a time appointed.
This said I in my heart—because of Adam's sons—
When God shall try them—for themselves to see
That they—in their own estimation¹⁰—are as beasts.
- 19 (So seems it)—one event for man, for beast,—one doom for all.
As dieth this, so dieth that—one breath is for them all.
There is no pre-eminence to man above the beast.
Since all is vanity.
- 20 Unto one place (the earth) go all alike.
All come from earth, and all to earth return.
- 21 For who (among them) is it that discerns,¹
The spirit of the man that goeth up on high,
The spirit of the beast that downward goes to earth ?
- 22 And so I saw there was (for them)² no higher good
Than that a man should joy in his own work,
Since this his portion is.
For who shall take him there to see
What shall be after him ?

VIII. ⁷ Excursus on Olamic Words, p. 51.—⁸ Excursus, p. 72. IX. ⁹ P. 69, note.—¹⁰ P. 70, 71, note.—¹ P. 72, note.—² The same.

X.

Koheloth turns again—The sight of oppression changes the view—The Dead seem better off than the Living—Labor, when it prospers, only a source of envy—The envious fool's content in his idleness.

CHAPTER IV.

- 1 And then I turned again—
I looked on all the oppressions done beneath the sun.
For Lo! the tears of the oppressed, who had no comforter;
Whilst on the oppressors' side was power, to them no comforter.
- 2 O then I praised the dead who died long since,
More than the living men who now survive.
- 3 Ah! better than them both is that which hath not been,
Nor ever seen the evil work performed beneath the sun.
- 4 Again I thought of toil as prospering in its work,
That this is cause of hate to one man from his neighbor.
Yea, this is vanity, a caring for the wind.
- 5 The fool (in envy) folds his hands and his own flesh devours.
- 6 For better (saith he)³ is the one hand full of quietness,
Than both hands full of toil and windy vain desire.

XI.

Another vanity—The lone Miser—The good of Society.

CHAPTER IV.

- 7 I turned to look again beneath the sun—
And Lo! another vanity!
- 8 There is one alone; he has no mate, no son or brother near,
And yet there is no end to all his toil.
With wealth his eyes are never satisfied.
Ah me!⁴ for whose sake do I labor so?
Or why do I keep back my soul from joy?
O this is vanity and travail sore.
- 9 Better are two than one, for then there is to them
A good reward in all their toil.
- 10 For if they fall, the one shall raise his friend.
But woe to him who falls alone, with none to lift him up.
- 11 If two together lie, they both have heat;
But how shall one be warm alone?
- 12 If one be stronger, two shall stand against him.
Nor quickly can the triple cord be broken.

XII.

Changes in the individual and political life—The lowly exalted, the high abased—Changes in the world-life—The passing generations.

CHAPTER IV.

- 13 Better the child, though he be poor, if wise,
Than an old and foolish king, who heeds no longer warning.
- 14 For out of bondage comes the one to reign;
The other, in a kingdom⁵ born, yet suffers poverty.
- 15 I saw the living all, that walked *in pride*⁶ beneath the sun.
I saw the second birth⁷ that in their place shall stand.

X. ³P. 81. XI. ⁴P. 81, second note. XII. ⁵Excursus, p. 84.—⁶The same.—⁷Excursus, p. 85.

- 16 No end to all the people that have gone before ;
 And they who still succeed, in them^s shall find no joy.
 This, too, is vanity, a chasing of the wind.

XIII.

Reverence in worship—In speaking—Observance of vows. Against superstition, dreams and fortune-telling—Fear God alone.

CHAPTER V.

N. B.—In the Hebrew this chapter begins with ver. 2.

- 1 O keep thy foot when to the house of God thou goest.
 Draw nigh to hear.
 'Tis better than to give the sacrifice of fools;
 For they know not that they are doing evil.⁹
- 2 O be not hasty with thy mouth, nor let thy heart be rash
 To utter words before the face of God.
 For God in heaven dwells, thou here on earth.
 Be, therefore, few thy words.
- 3 As in the multitude of care there comes the dream,
 So, with its many words, the voice of fools.
- 4 When thou hast made a vow to God, defer not to fulfill.
 He has no delight in fools—pay, then, as thou hast vowed.
- 5 'Tis better that thou shouldst not vow, than vow and not perform.
- 6 Give not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin ;
 Nor say before the angel :¹⁰ "'twas an error."
 Wherefore should God be angry at thy voice ?
 And why the labors of thy hands destroy ?
- 7 Though dreams abound and vanities, presagings numberless,
 Yet fear thou God.

XIV.

Be not stumbled at sight of oppression and oppressors—There are Higher Powers than they—And God is over all.

CHAPTER V.

- 8 When, in a province, thou beholdest the oppression of the poor,—
 Bold robbery of judgment and of right ;
 At such allowance marvel not.
 Since One most high, above all height, is keeping watch.
 Yes—there be higher¹ far than they.
- 9 For every (rank) has profit from the soil,
 The king himself owes² homage to the field.

XV.

Wealth never satisfies—The laborer's contented sleep.

CHAPTER V.

- 10 Who silver loves, with silver ne'er is satisfied,
 Nor he who loves increase of wealth, with revenue.
 This is another vanity :
- 11 When wealth increases, they increase who spend ;
 And what the owner's gain, except to see it with his eyes ?
- 12 Sweet is the laborer's slumber, be it less he eat or more ;
 Whilst the abundance of the rich permits him not to sleep.

XII. ⁸The same. XIII. ⁹P. 89, and note p. 141.—¹⁰P. 90, second note. XIV. ¹P. 91, second note.—²P. 92, note.

XVI.

Another sore evil—The hoarding miser, who loses his wealth and dies poor—Darkness, Sickness, and Wrath.

CHAPTER V.

- 13 There is another grievous woe I've seen beneath the sun,—
 Wealth hoarded to its owner's hurt.
- 14 With the sore travail (it had cost)³ that wealth departs;
 The son whom he begets is left with nothing in his hand.
- 14 Then bare, as from his mother's womb he issued forth,
 Doth he return (to earth) poor as he came,
 And nothing takes he of his toil to carry with him there.
- 16 O a sore evil this!
 In all points as he came, so shall he go,
 And what his profit that he thus should labor for the wind?
- 17 Yea, all his days doth he in darkness eat.
 Abundant sorrow, sickness too is his,⁴ and chafing wrath.

XVII.

The summing up of Koheleth's experience—The true Good, the *Good* that is *fair*—The ability to see good in anything is God's own gift—"His favor is more than life"—Makes the mere enjoyment of life little remembered.

CHAPTER V.

- 18 And now behold what I have seen!
 GOOD⁵ that is *fair*, to eat and drink, and see the good
In all the toil that one may toil beneath the sun,
 The number of the days that God has given
- 19 To be his portion here—yea, every man,
 As God has given him wealth and great estate,
 And power to eat thereof,
 To bear his portion, and be joyful in his toil—
 THIS GOOD⁶ (I say) is God's own gift.
- 20 For little will he call to mind, the days that he has lived,
 When God doth thus respond to him in joyfulness of heart.

XVIII.

Koheleth turns again to the dark side—The rich man to whom God has not given the true good—compared to the untimely birth—He who vainly *lives*, less blessed than the vainly *born*

CHAPTER VI.

- 1 Another evil have I seen beneath the sun,
 And great it is to man;
- 2 There is one whom God endows with wealth,
 And store of goods, and glorious estate;
 Who nothing lacks of all his soul desireth,
 Yet God gives him no power to eat thereof;
 For one, an alien⁷ born, devoureth it;
 This, too, is vanity, a very sore disease.
- 3 Though one beget a hundred sons—though he live many years,—
 Yea, though to countless days his life extends—
 His soul unsatisfied with good, and he no burial have;
 The untimely born, I said, is better sure than he.

XVI. ³P. 93, second note.—⁴P. 94, note. XVII. ⁵P. 94, second note.—⁶The same. XVIII. ⁷P. 99, first note.

- 4 For though⁸ in vanity it comes, and into darkness goes,—
 And darkness cover deep its name,—
 5 Though⁸ it hath never seen the sun, nor aught hath ever known,—
 Yet better rests (the vainly born) than HE [who vainly lived];
 6 Yea, though he lived a thousand years twice told,
 Yet never saw the good.
 Unto one place, go not all men alike ?⁸

XIX.

Unsatisfactoriness of human life and efforts—To the Wise, the Fool, the Poor—Content better than the Wandering of the soul—The frailty and earthliness of man as indicated by his name Adam—He cannot strive with his Maker—Multiplication of words—They only increase vanity.

CHAPTER VI.

- 7 All toil of man is ever for his mouth ;
 And yet the appetite is never filled.
 8 What profit to the wise ('tis asked)⁹ beyond the fool ?
 What to the poor, though knowing how to walk before the living ?
 9 Better the eyes beholding (say)¹⁰ than wandering of the soul.
 This, too, is vanity.
 10 What each thing is, its name was named of old ;
 Known thus for *what he is*,¹ is ADAM (named from earth);
 And that he cannot strive with One so far in might excelling.
 11 Though many words there are, in vain they multiply ;
 What profit then to man ?
 12 For who knows what is good for man in life,
 The number of the days of his vain life,
 He spendeth like a shadow gone ? For who can tell to man
 What shall be after him beneath the sun ?

XX.

The sorrowful aspects of life better than the jovial—Better than the song of fools the chidings of the wise—Here, too, there is vanity—Since insolence of station and bribery may cause even the wise to err.

CHAPTER VII.

- 1 Better the honored name than precious oil ;
 Better the day of death than that of being born.
 2 Better to visit sorrow's house than seek the banquet hall ;
 Since that (reveals) the end of every man,
 And he who lives should lay it well to heart.
 3 Better is grief than mirth ;
 For in the sadness of the face the heart becometh² fair.
 4 The wise man's heart is in the house of mourning ;
 The fool's heart in the house of mirth.
 5 Better to heed the chiding of the wise
 Than hear the song of fools.
 6 For like the sound of thorns beneath the pot,
 So is the railing laughter of the fool.
 This, too, is vanity.
 7 For even the wise may arrogance³ inflate,
 A bribe his heart corrupt.

XVIII. ⁸P. 100, note also p. 177, lnl. to Met. Ver. XIX. ⁹ ¹⁰Question and Answer.—¹P. 101, note. XX ²P. 170, lrl. to Met. Vers.—³P. 106, note, and Text Note, p. 104.

XXI.

Sundry maxims—The end determines—Be patient—Fret not—No mark of Wisdom to praise the past—In Wealth there is defence of life, in knowledge life itself—In prosperity be joyful—In adversity be thoughtful—God hath set one over against the other.

CHAPTER VII.

- 8 Better the issue of a thing than the beginning.
Better the patient than the proud in soul.
- 9 O be not hasty in thy spirit angrily to grieve;
For in the bosom of the fool such anger ever dwells.
- 10 Say not, why is it, days of old were better days than these?
'Tis not from wisdom comes such questioning.
- 11 Wisdom is fair with fair inheritance;⁴
And gain excelling hath it then for men.
- 12 In Wisdom's shade, as in the shade of Wealth,
[Defence of life]⁵; but knowledge hath pre-eminence (in this),
That wisdom *giveth life* to its possessor.
- 13 Survey the works of God;
For who can make that straight which He hath left deformed?
- 14 In days of good, be thou of joyful heart;
In evil days, look forth (consider thoughtfully)
How God hath set the one against the other,
That aught of that which cometh after man may never find.

XXII.

Koheleth's sad experience—the wicked prospering—the good depressed. Over-righteousness—Be not too knowing—The fear of God the only safety—Wisdom stronger than strength—None righteous, no, not one—Heed not slanders.

CHAPTER VII.

- 15 Much have I seen, of all kinds,⁶ in my days of vanity.
The righteous man who perished in his righteousness;
The wicked man, with life prolonged in wickedness.
- 16 Nor over-righteous be, nor over-wise;
For why thyself confound?
- 17 Nor over-wicked be, nor play the fool;
Why die before thy time?
- 18 Better hold fast the one, nor from the other draw thy hand;
But be alone who feareth God comes out unscathed⁷ from all.
- 19 One wise man there may be whom wisdom stronger makes,
Than ten the mightiest captains in the city;
- 20 But *one*,⁸ a righteous man, on earth is never found,
Who doeth always good and sinneth not.
- 21 [Learn this] too, give not heed to every word that flies;
Lest thine own servant thou shouldst hear reviling thee;
- 22 For many the time, as thine own soul well knows,
That thou thyself hast other men reviled.

XXIII.

Koheleth's desire to learn the great past. He then turns to seek wisdom in human life. The evil woman—A good one hard to find—One man in a thousand. Man made upright; now fallen.

CHAPTER VII.

- 23 All this have I essayed for wisdom's sake.
O that I might be wise, I said, but it was far from me;
- 24 Far off—the past, what is it?⁹ deep—that deep, O, who can sound?
- 25 Then turned I, and my heart, to learn, explore,
To seek out wisdom, reason—sin to know,—
Presumption,—folly,—vain impiety.
- 26 Than death more bitter did I find the wife
Whose heart is nets and snares, whose hands are chains.
The blest of God from her shall be delivered;
The sinner shall be taken.
- 27 Behold, this have I found, Koheleth saith;
[As reckoning] one by one, to sum the account;
- 28 That which my heart was ever seeking though I found it not:
Out of a thousand, one man have I found;
Amidst all these, one woman seek I still.
- 29 This only have I found—behold it,—God made man upright;
But they have sought devices numberless.

XXIV.

Wisdom lighteth up the face. Koheleth's kingly admonition—Submission to right authority. The rebellious spirit—Safety of obedience.

CHAPTER VIII.

- 1 Who like the wise, or him who knows the reason of a thing?
Man's wisdom lighteth up his face,—its aspect stern is changed.
- 2 I, a king's mouth (do speak it),¹⁰ heed it well;
By reason, also, of the oath of God;
- 3 In anger, from the [ruler's] presence hasten not;
Nor boldly stand in any evil thing;
For that which he hath purposed will he do.
- 4 Where'er the mandate of a king, there, too, is power;
And who shall say to him, what doest thou?
- 5 Who simply keeps the statute knows¹ no harm;
Yet still, the wise in heart doth time and judgment heed.

XXV.

Man's evil great, yet reason and justice in it all—No resistance in the warfare with death. Impotency of wickedness.

CHAPTER VIII.

- 6 For surely unto every purpose is there time and judgment fixed,
Although² man's evil be so great upon him,
- 7 Unknowing, as he is, of all that is to come.
For how it shall be, who is there to tell him?
- 8 Over the spirit, none has power to hold it back;
No strength availeth in the day of death;
For in that warfare there is no release;
And wickedness is impotent to free the sinner there.

XXIII. ⁹Note pp. 113, 114. XXIV. ¹⁰P. 113, Text Note to v. 2.—¹P. 117, note. XXV. ²P. 118, first note.

XXVI.

A close survey—Power hurtful to its possessors—The wicked rulers dead—Buried in Pomp—Forgotten.

CHAPTER VIII.

- 9 This too I saw—'twas when I gave my heart
To every work that's done beneath the sun—
That there's a time when man rules over man to his own hurt.
- 10 'Twas when I saw the wicked dead interred ;
And to and from³ the holy place (men) came and went ;
Then straight were they forgotten in the city of their deeds.
Ah! this was vanity.

XXVII.

Human presumption arising from impunity—Judgment slow but sure—No good to the sinner notwithstanding appearances—
"Wee to the wicked, it shall be ill with him—Joy to the righteous, it shall be well with him."

CHAPTER VIII.

- 11 Since sentence on an evil work is not done speedily,
Therefore the hearts of Adam's sons are filled with thoughts of wrong.
- 12 Yet though the sinner sin a hundred times, with life prolonged,
Still know I this—it shall be well with those who worship God,—
Who stand in awe before Him.
- 13 But for the sinner there is nothing good ;
Nor shall he lengthen out his days that like a shadow (flee),
This man who hath no fear (to sin) before the face of God.

XXVIII.

Koheleth's faith grows weak again—He stumbles at the sight of the same seeming chance to all—It is then that he extols pleasure—No good except to eat, etc.

CHAPTER VIII.

- 14 'Tis vanity, what's done upon the earth, for so it is,
That there are righteous unto whom it haps as to the vile,
And sinners, too, whose lot is like the doings of the just.
For surely this is vanity, I said.
- 15 'Twas then⁴ that pleasure I extolled :
How that there was no good to man beneath the sun ;
Except to eat, and drink, and here his joy to find ;
And this alone attends him in his toil,
During all the days of life that God has given beneath the sun.

XXIX.

The mystery deepens—No human philosophy can solve the problem of life—We can only say, "all things are in the hands of God:" Human Love and Hatred—The unknown All as it bears upon all—The seeming outward confusion in moral states—The still greater invisible evil in the hearts of men—Then to the unknown after state—Hope in the living—The highest form of death inferior to the lowest life.

CHAPTER VIII.

- 16 According as I gave my heart to know what wisdom was,
And to explore the travail sore that's done upon the earth,
[So sore that day and night the eyes no slumber take]
- 17 'Twas then I saw that man can never find the work of God ;
That work which now is going on beneath the sun.
For though one labor in the search, his search is all in vain.
Yea, though the sage⁵ may boast his knowledge, still he finds it not.

CHAPTER IX.

- 1 For this before my heart I set—all this to understand—
Even this (great mystery) how that the righteous and the wise,
With all their works, are in the hands of God.
Their love, their hatred too; man knows it not, the all⁶ that lies before him;
- 2 The all according as it is to all—one fate to all—
The just, the vile, the good, the pure, the one with sin defiled;
To him who offers sacrifice—to him who gives it not;
As to the good, so unto him that sins;
As to the perjured, so to him who fears to break his oath.
- 3 Yes, this the evil sore in all that's done beneath the heavens:
That thus one doom should come to all alike.
And then, so full of evil are the hearts of Adam's sons!
Yea, madness in their hearts, whilst they do live;
Then to the dead they go.
- 4 For there is hope in one whose life still joins⁷ the living throng.
To a living dog there's greater worth than to a lion dead.

XXX.

Kobelet's views of the state of the dead—Not as a state of extinction, but as opposed to the present active, loving, hating, scheming life—The unknown state of being to which there is no participation in the works of this world "beneath the sun."

CHAPTER IX.

- 5 The living know that they must die, the dead they nothing know.
For them there is no more reward, forgotten is their name.
- 6 Their hate, their love, their zeal, all perished now;
Whilst the world lasts, no portion more have they,
In all the works performed beneath the sun.

XXXI.

On this there follows a strain of sorrowing irony—[In language the opposite of 1 Cor. vii. 29]—Alas O man!—If it be all of life to live—Then go thy way eat, drink thy wine—There is no judgment—God accepts thy works—Get all the good thou canst out of "thy day of vanity"—There is no work or scheme in Sheol. Comp. Wisdom of Solomon, II. 6.

CHAPTER IX.

- 7 Go then, with gladness eat thy bread, and merrily drink thy wine,
For God already hath accepted all thy works.
- 8 In every season be thy garments white,
And oil be never wanting to thy head.
- 9 Live joyful with the wife whom thou hast loved,
During all the days of thy vain life,—that life⁸
Which God hath given to thee beneath the sun—
Yea, all thy days of vanity.
For this thy only portion is in life,
And in thy weary toil which thou hast toiled beneath the sun.
- 10 Do then whate'er thy hand shall find in thine own might⁹ to do,
For there's no work, no plan, no knowledge, no philosophy¹⁰,
In Sheol, where thou goest.

XXIX. ⁶ Vaihinger, p. 124, 2d col.—⁷ P. 125, 1st note. XXXI. ⁸ P. 126, second note.—⁹ Excursus II., p. 135, 1st col.—
¹⁰ Excursus I., p. 131, 1st col.

XXXII.

Koheleth turns again—He revises and retracts what had been said—All such advice to live merrily is vain, because there is no certainty in human affairs, and human efforts—All Wisdom, therefore, and all resolving to be happy may be in vain.

CHAPTER IX.

- 11 I turned again to look beneath the sun.
 Not to the swift the race I saw, nor victory to the strong,
 Nor to the wise secure their bread, nor to the prudent wealth,
 Nor favor to the knowing ones, but time and doom to all.
- 12 For man knows not his time.
 Like fishes taken in the net, or like to birds ensnared,
 So are the sons of Adam snared when comes the evil hour,
 And falls upon them suddenly, unwarned.

XXXIII.

Koheleth gives an historical example of the little avail that wisdom is to its possessor, yet still protesting its desirableness, and its intrinsic superiority to strength and weapons of war—How sin and folly, too, may render it ineffectual, and even turn it to evil.

CHAPTER IX.

- 13 This, too, I saw, a mystery¹ great [to me] beneath the sun :
 14 A little city—few its men—a monarch great invading,
 With hosts surrounds, and builds against it mighty mounds of siege.
 15 A man was found therein, a poor man, yet most wise.
 This man the city by his wisdom saved ;
 Yet no one did that poor wise man remember.
- 16 Then said I, true it is, that wisdom's more than strength ;
 Yet see—the poor man's wisdom—how despised, his words unheard !
 17 Words of the wise! in quiet are they heard
 Beyond the shout of him who rules o'er fools.
- 18 Sure, wisdom is a better thing than instruments of war ;
 Though all its good so great one sinner may destroy.

CHAPTER X.

- 1 Like as dead flies, with frothy taint, the fragrant oil corrupt,
 So taints² a little folly, one for worth and wisdom famed.

XXXIV.

A series of moral meditations, having more of suggestive than of logical association—Their main drift, that men should employ their faculties in the best way they can, notwithstanding the little efficiency of human wisdom in securing good and avoiding evil.

CHAPTER X.

- 2 The wise man's heart is on his right, the fool's heart on his left.
 3 Even by the way, as walks the fool, his understanding fails,
 And unto every one he meets, his folly he proclaims.
- 4 If e'er against thee swell the ruler's rage, leave not thy place ;
 Though great the offence, the yielding spirit calms.
- 5 Another evil have I seen beneath the sun :
 An error such as comes from princes' favor ;
 6 Folly is set on high, the rich sit lowly on the ground.
- 7 Servants on horses mounted have I seen ;—
 Princes, like servants, walking on the earth.

XXXV.

There is danger, too, in the ordinary avocations of life.

CHAPTER X.

- 8 Who digs a ditch himself may fall therein.
 Who breaks a hedge, a serpent there may bite him.
 9 He who removeth stones, gets hurt thereby,
 Who cleaveth trees, by them is put in peril.
 10 If dull the iron, and its edge he fails to sharpen well,
 Then greater force he needs,³ and help of wise dexterity.

XXXVI.

The babbler—Speech of the wise—Of the foolish—Vain predictions.

CHAPTER X.

- 11 A serpent that without enchantment bites—
 So is the slanderer's tongue; no gain hath it to its possessor.
 12 Words of the wise man's mouth,—they're words of grace;
 Lips of the fool,—the fool himself they swallow up;
 13 His words in folly that began, in raving madness end.
 14 Predicting⁴ words he multiplies; yet man can never know,
 The thing that shall be, yea, what cometh after who shall tell?
 15 Vain toil of fools! it wearieth him,—this man that knoweth naught
 That may befall his going to the city.⁵

XXXVII.

Evils of bad government—A blessing on the well-ruled State—Evils of slothfulness—The feast for joy—But money answers all—Revile not the powerful, or the rich.

CHAPTER X.

- 16 Woe unto thee, O land,—thy king a child,—
 Thy nobles rising early to the feast.
 17 Blessed art thou, O land,—thy king the son of princely sires,—
 Thy nobles timely in their feasts, for strength,—not revelry.
 18 Through slothfulness the building goes to ruin;
 When hands hang down, the house lets⁶ in the rain.
 19 For mirth do men prepare the feast, and wine to gladden life;
 But money is the power that answers all.
 20 Not even in thy thought revile the king,
 Nor in thy chamber, dare to curse the rich;
 The bird of heaven shall carry forth the sound;
 The swift of wing the secret word reveal.

XXXVIII.

Be boldly liberal—Let nature have its course—But do thy present duty—The Spirit's mysterious way—The secret of life known only to God—Be diligent and leave the issue to God—Life is sweet, but remember the day of darkness.

CHAPTER XI.

- 1 Upon the waters boldly cast thy bread;
 For thou shalt find it after many days.
 2 To seven a portion give, yea, more, to eight;
 Thou knowest not what evil may be coming on the land.
 3 If clouds be full of rain, they pour it on the earth.
 Whether to North, or South the tree shall fall,
 Where'er it falls, there shall it surely lie.

- 4 He who observes the wind shall never sow.
Who gazes on the clouds shall never reap.
- 5 'Tis like the spirit's way;⁷ thou knowest it not;
Or how the bones do grow within the pregnant womb;
Even so thou knowest not the way of God,
Who worketh all.
- 6 Then in the morning sow thy seed;
Nor yet at evening stay thy hand.
For which shall prosper, this or that,
Or both alike shall profit bring,
Lies all beyond thy ken.
- 7 Sweet is the light, and pleasant to the eye to see the sun,
8 Yet if a man live many years, rejoicing in them all,⁸
The days of darkness let him not forget,
That they are many; all that cometh, still is vanity.

XXXIX.

Youth warned of Judgment—Declared to be Vanity—Early Remembrance of the Creator—Old age and its gathering Darkness—The dissolving Earthly House. Figure of the Castle with its Keepers—Its men of Might—Its Purveyors, or Grinders—Its Watchmen—Its closing Gates—Fears of old age—Its Burdens—Its Hoary Hairs—Its failing Desire—The Beth Olam, or House of Eternity—Other Figures—The Broken Lamp—The Ruined Fountain—The Flesh to Dust—The Soul to God. The closing cry of Vanity—Hebel Hehalim—"A vapor that appeareth for a little while," Jas iv. 14.

CHAPTER XI.

- 9 Rejoice O youth in childhood; let thy heart
Still cheer thee in the day when thou art strong,⁹
Go on in every way thy will shall choose,
And after every form thine eyes behold;
But know that for all this thy God will thee to judgment bring.
- 10 O then, turn sorrow from thy soul, keep evil from thy flesh;
For childhood and the morn¹⁰ of life, they, too, are vanity.

CHAPTER XII.

- 1 Remember thy Creator, then, in days when thou art young;
Before the evil days are come, before the years draw nigh;
When thou shalt say—delight in them is gone.
- 2 Before the sun, the morning light,¹ the moon, the stars, grow dark,
And after rain the clouds again do evermore return;
- 3 Before the keepers of the house do shake,
Its men of might [its strong supporters] bend,
And they who grind, in strength and numbers, fail;
When darkness falls on them who from the turret windows watch;²
- 4 And closing are the doors that lead abroad;³
When the hum⁴ of the mill is sounding low,
Though it rise⁵ to the sparrow's note,
And voices⁶ loudest in the song, do all to faintness sink.

XXXVIII. ⁷ Excursus, p. 147.—⁸ P. 151, note. XXXIX. ⁹ Pp. 151, 152, note.—¹⁰ P. 152, second col.—¹ P. 154, first note—² P. 155, first note—³ P. 155, second note.—⁴ P. 155, third note.—⁵ The same.

- 5 When they shall be afraid of what is high ;
 And terrors fill the way ;
 And the almond⁷ tree shall bloom,
 The insects' weight oppress,⁸
 And all desire shall fail ;
 For thus man goes to his eternal house,⁹
 Whilst round about the streets the mourners walk—
- 6 Before the silver cord shall part,¹⁰ the golden bowl be dashed,
 The bucket broken at the spring, the wheel at cistern crushed,
- 7 And dust goes down to earth from whence it came,
 And soul returns again to Him who gave it at the first.
- 8 O vanity of vanities, the preacher saith,
 O vanity of vanities ! all—vanity.

XL.

A prose Scholium by the general author, or compiler, praising the wisdom of Koheleth, and the excellence of his doctrine, with a closing poetic extract from the Solomonic meditations, as suitable to it. This is followed by the solemn conclusion to the whole as taken from the same ancient source.

CHAPTER XII.

9 And moreover ; Because the Preacher was wise,¹ he continued to teach the people know-
 10 ledge. Yea, he gave an attentive ear, and sought out, and set in order, many parables. The
 Preacher sought to find acceptable words, and what he wrote was upright, even words of
 truth.

- 11 Words of the wise ! like piercing goads are they ;
 Like driven nails their gathered² sentences,
 All from One Shepherd given.

THE GRAND CONCLUSION.

- 12 Be warned, my son,—'tis only left to say—
 Of making many chapters³ there's no end ;
 And thinking long is wearying to the flesh.
- 13 The great conclusion hear :
FEAR GOD AND HIS COMMANDMENTS KEEP, FOR THIS IS ALL OF MAN.
- 14 For every work, yea, every secret deed,
 Both good and evil, God will surely into judgment bring.

XXXIX. ¹ P. 157, first note.—² P. 157, second note.—³ Excursus, p. 158.—¹⁰ P. 160, second note. XL ¹ Notes 165, 166.—
² P. 165, Text Note to v. 11.—³ P. 168, first note, and Appendix to Int., p. 30.

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