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1926

687TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,

HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM D, THE CENTRAL HALL,  
WESTMINSTER, S.W.1, ON MONDAY, MARCH 29TH, 1926,

AT 4.30 P.M.

THE REV. A. H. FINN IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read, confirmed, and signed, and the following elections were announced:—As a Member, Captain Harold L. Penfold, B.A., M.Inst.C.E., and, as an Associate, Percy J. Sowden, Esq., B.A.

The CHAIRMAN then called on the Rev. Canon A. Lukyn Williams, D.D., to read his paper on “The Problem of the Septuagint and Quotations in the New Testament.”

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*THE PROBLEM OF THE SEPTUAGINT AND  
QUOTATIONS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.*

By the Rev. Canon A. LUKYN WILLIAMS, D.D.

**T**HE whole question of the quotations from the Old Testament which are found in the New is extraordinarily interesting and not a little difficult.\* And its difficulty is many times greater for us prosaic Englishmen than for natives of Eastern lands. We have been so trained as to expect quotations made by anyone, and taken from any source, to be exact and accurate, both in wording and in material reference. Probably nothing

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\* The differences may be studied best in Dittmar, *Vetus Testamentum in Novo*, 1903; but E. Hühn's *Die Messianischen Weissagungen des israelitisch-jüdischen Volkes bis zu den Targumim*, 1899, and *Die alttestamentlichen Citate und Reminiscenzen im Neuen Testamente*, 1900, are full of good materials.

of the kind ever occurs to an oriental. Certain it is that the quotations in the New Testament from the Old are very far from answering to our own requirement. How is it that they are so inexact? Of course there is the primitive difficulty about verbal accuracy experienced by all writers who have not at their disposal concordances, or even the actual text for ready reference. But that is nothing. The memories of persons unaccustomed to much reading, who are obliged therefore to depend on what they hear, are often abnormal, judging by the experience of us who are decadents in such things. It is not wise to assume either forgetfulness, much less ignorance, of the true text which is professedly quoted, or even of its meaning.

No! The evidence of the Jewish scholars whose sayings are preserved for us in the Talmud and the Rabbinic writings proves the contrary. We may learn from it to estimate the true nature and worth of the quotations made by those other Jewish writers who composed the New Testament. Generally, no doubt, the quotations are accurate both in words and in subject-matter, but sometimes only in general meaning. So, for example, in Acts vii, 43, "I will carry you away beyond Babylon" instead of "beyond Damascus" (Amos v, 27). There is a parallel to this in Philo (*Leg. Alleg.* III, 3, § 8), when, in his quotation of Num. v, 2, "Let them send away out of the camp every leper," he substitutes for "out of the camp" the words "out of the consecrated soul," "replacing (as Dr. H. A. A. Kennedy says) the very words he is supposed to be interpreting by his own allegorical explanation."\* More often the words are accurate, but the meaning is what we call wrong. So, for instance, the reference in Rom. ix, 24-26, of Hos. ii, 23, and i, 10, to the call of the Gentiles, when Hosea was really thinking of Northern Israel. But two Rabbis of the end of the first century and the beginning of the second gave the same interpretation.† This passage also illustrates a very common practice in New Testament and Rabbinic alike, the joining together of separate verses as though they were consecutive.‡ Sometimes there is even the

\* *Philo's Contribution to Religion*, 1919, pp. 38 sq. See Ryle, *Philo and Holy Scripture*, 1895, p. 225. Cf. also 2 Cor. iii, 16, where St. Paul applies the language of Exod. xxxiv, 34, describing Moses putting off his veil when entering in before the LORD, to the veil being removed from the heart of a Jew when he turns to the Lord Jesus Christ.

† See my *Manual of Christian Evidences for Jewish People*, 1919, § 510.

‡ See *Manual*, §§ 465-7, where, by the by, the strange word "Nepheri" is a printer's error for "Stephen."

purposeful alteration of phraseology, often marked in Rabbinic by "read not" so and so (though that is the true text), but "read" so and so. This may well be the explanation of the queer rendering in Acts xv, 16-18 of Amos ix, 11 *sq.*

While, however, it seemed necessary to say a word or two, very briefly and cursorily, about the New Testament quotations in general, our subject to-day is more limited. It has to do only with the use of the Septuagint which is made in the New Testament. Yet this is perhaps a question of even greater difficulty than that of the quotations in general.

We all know that the extent to which the New Testament writers use the LXX differs immensely. The writer to the Hebrews—who he was matters not in the least, so long as you grant that he was not St. Paul, for that is wholly impossible—never quotes from the Hebrew direct, but always from the Greek. Trained in Alexandria, and writing, as it seems, solely for strictly Hellenistic Jews, it was natural for him to do so. Probably he did not know Hebrew himself. But St. Paul is different. The great Apostle, with all his world-wide knowledge of men, was a trained Hebrew scholar, knowing therefore not only Greek and Aramaic, but also his Hebrew Bible, being also thoroughly used to, and frequently employing, the methods of one who had been trained in those Rabbinic Schools which afterwards produced the Mishna and the Talmuds. So, again, there are in the First Gospel and in the Fourth a good many passages taken direct from the Hebrew. I doubt indeed whether the tax-gatherer for the government of Herod Antipas would have known much Hebrew, even if it was he who wrote the Gospel which goes under his name. But the author was writing for Jewish believers, and would willingly incorporate such references to the sacred language as he could. But St. John—and frankly, I am still unconvinced by the arguments adduced to show that the author of the Fourth Gospel was not the Apostle, but another of the same name—being a man of education, who was connected, as it appears, with those in high position in Jerusalem, may well have drawn upon his own scholarship in making some of his quotations directly from the Hebrew Bible. But what of the other writers? I do not know why St. Luke should have known any Hebrew; perhaps he was not even a Jew. And James and Peter and Jude, hard-working artisans, with Aramaic as their mother-tongue, and Greek as their medium of intercourse with a large number of their neighbours in Galilee,

what right have we to expect them to know Hebrew also? Anyhow, their writings hardly bear out the supposition that they did. Almost the same may be said of St. Mark, the presumed mouthpiece of St. Peter, and of the author of the Apocalypse. We should not expect Christian Jews untrained in the usages of the Rabbinic Schools to make much use of the Hebrew Scriptures, and in fact we do not find that they did.

But the interesting thing is that while the New Testament writers generally quote Scripture from the Greek, even in cases where it does not represent the Hebrew very exactly, it is not by any means always the Greek of what we call the Septuagint. For example, Dr. Swete, writing on St. Mark, says: "A comparison of the formal and direct quotations with the Cambridge manual edition of the LXX will shew that while St. Mark is generally in fair agreement with the MS. [B] which on the whole presents the LXX in its relatively oldest form, there are some remarkable variations. . . . (1) St. Mark manifests an occasional leaning towards the text of cod. A. . . . (2) In a few remarkable instances he agrees with the other Synoptists against the LXX. . . . (3) While his LXX quotations usually exhibit the same text as St. Matthew's and St. Luke's, he is here and there independent of one or both."\*

So again, speaking of the Apocalypse, Dr. Swete says: "Many of the references depart widely from the LXX in particular words, where the writer of the Apocalypse has either rendered independently, or has used another version, or possibly a text of the LXX different from that which is found in our MSS." Dr. Swete goes on to say: "If it be asked whether there are traces in the Apocalypse of a direct use of the Hebrew Old Testament, the answer must be that the departures from the LXX may perhaps in every instance be otherwise explained."† You will observe then that throughout the New Testament we are not to be surprised if we find quotations from the Old Testament which are taken neither directly from the Hebrew nor from the LXX as we know it.‡ What is to be said about such passages?

Now at this point we find ourselves up against a fact of the severest import. No one knows—I speak under the correction of our best living Greek Old Testament scholar, Mr. St. John Thackeray—what is the Septuagint. Of course we have many

\* *The Gospel according to St. Mark*, 1898, pp. lxxi, lxxiii.

† *The Apocalypse of St. John*, 1906, p. cli.

‡ Cf. Rom. xiv, 11, with Isa. xlv, 23.

manuscripts containing a Greek version of the Old Testament Scriptures. But the manuscripts differ among themselves greatly, much more, for example, than do those of the New Testament among themselves. They agree pretty well in extent, but differ in matter, and particularly in words and phrases. How are we to select which of them best represent the original version ?

Does some one say, That may be determined by the closeness of the Greek to the Hebrew ; the nearer it is, the better the Greek text ? Unfortunately that is precisely what is doubtful. I can understand much more easily that an inaccurate original translation was altered to correspond to the Hebrew by some learned Greek copyist, than that if the Greek originally represented the Hebrew with accuracy it should have been so altered as to diverge from it. In other words, Are those Greek manuscripts which are closest to the Hebrew to be preferred, or are those which are furthest off ? No one knows, and I greatly doubt whether anyone will know until we have more means for deciding than we possess at present. I suppose we all look every day at the newspaper accounts of discoveries in Egypt and the East, in the hope that something may at last have been found which will throw a flood of light upon this question, for of all questions it is perhaps the most fundamental for the study of Holy Scripture.

Meantime we have to do the best we can, making enquiries in all directions about the nature of the Greek version of the Old Testament, the Septuagint as we call it for brevity, and seeing whither our enquiries lead us. For example, was the LXX ever intended to be a literal translation, especially in the books of the Old Testament outside the Law ? Personally, I have the gravest doubts whether it was. I am inclined to think that it was rather a Greek Targum. You see the difference. The Targum purports to be a translation, but is, in fact, much more. As verse by verse was read in the Synagogue the *Meturgeman* "translated" the Hebrew into "a language understood of the people," let us say Aramaic. But as "the people" were by no means always educated, or advanced in knowledge mental or spiritual, he put in a word of explanation here, and a moral and helpful saying there, producing eventually much more than a translation as we use the term. Anyhow, that is what we find in all the written Targums which have come down to us, even in that of Onqelos, which is the earliest. The same procedure may well have been followed in the synagogues of Egypt, where the lesson as it was being read had to be put, not into Aramaic, but into Greek.

The translator may have thought more about the general sense, and about edifying the congregation, than about giving the literal meaning. For an exact translation sometimes fails in its very object just by reason of its exactness. Witness, alas! the attitude which many take towards that most exact of all translations, our own Revised Version. Had it only been a little more targumic, with due attention, of course, to the glories of our native tongue, it would have been much more acceptable to that large body of people who count exactness secondary to beauty of language and attractiveness of style.

Not that I wish for a moment to suggest that all the discrepancies of the Greek from the Hebrew are due to the fact that the Greek version was originally more of a Targum than an accurate translation. For whatever may have been the original text of the Greek, it is certain that now we have not got even that.

Some of its present errors are due to Greek copyists. It is also plain that in not a few cases the translators misread the Hebrew letters. "Tittles," as the differentiating corners of several Hebrew letters are generally called, are little things, and it is very easy, with failing eyesight unassisted by spectacles (as Canon Streeter has lately reminded us), to confuse certain Hebrew letters with others.

But with regard to misreading the Hebrew, a theory has lately been brought forward (or rather, I should say, is now in process of being brought forward, for the author has not yet given us more than half of his book), which requires from us some special attention.\*

The author, Herr F. Wutz, was desirous of finding out what was the pronunciation of the Hebrew language in the centuries before Christ, for, as we all know, our present vocalization of the Hebrew consonants dates from five or six centuries after Him. Wutz turned therefore to the Septuagint, to see if it would throw any light upon this interesting subject. Naturally he thought first of the proper names, for these are generally not translated but only transliterated, and the transliteration indicates their pronunciation in Egypt two or three centuries before Christ. They gave him definite results, leading him to suppose that there are various stages in the method of transliterating such names. However that may be, and the absence of the second part of his book makes it difficult sometimes to follow his arguments, he noticed

\* Franz Wutz, *Die Transkriptionen von der Septuaginta bis zu Hieronymus*, Lieferung I, 1925.

that sometimes these names were translated, and translated wrongly, and further that the errors were sometimes due to mistaken readings of the Hebrew which was expressed in the Greek letters. A copyist, that is to say, read the Greek names as Hebrew words, and misunderstanding that Hebrew translated those words wrongly. This led Wutz to wonder whether other words besides proper names had been transliterated into Greek before being translated. To make a long story short, he thinks that the translators of the Greek version did in fact translate not directly from Hebrew documents written in Hebrew characters, but from *Hebrew already transliterated into Greek*. The Septuagint, he holds, is a translation from a *transliterated* text.\*

Wutz is very sure of his theory, and very pleased with himself for discovering it. "To my greatest joy," he says, "I uncovered an entrance into the old mysterious building, an entrance which had been covered up for thousands of years. After the last obstacles had been overcome, brilliant sunshine poured in at once into the dark expanse, and the hieroglyphs on the walls, and the various contents, showed that I had stumbled on an ancient home of Egyptian learning. There lay rare and ancient writings, covered with dust and yellow with age, yes, half mouldered away, written in Greek characters but in foreign tongue. . . . Though the dust and mould of more than two thousand years lay thick upon those rolls, yet," etc., etc. (p. 4).

Unfortunately, we must add, assuming his theory to be true, that workshop has been already long since discovered, and its more obvious contents pillaged. Wutz, that is to say, shares the experience of many another explorer of Egyptian remains. Others have been there before him.

For so long ago as 1772 Professor Tychsen, of Bützow in Mecklenburg (previously one of the workers in that finest and most satisfactory of all missions to the Jews, Callenberg's mission from Halle), published a book called *Tentamen de variis codicum*

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\* Wutz gives innumerable examples, not all of which are convincing. But among them are (a) 1 Kings xi, 23, "Rezon son of Eliada *who fled from*," i.e. 'asher bārach me'ēth, **ΕΣΕΡ ΒΑΡΑΕ ΜΑΕΘ**, which in LXX A (B is absent) is **ΤΟΝ ΒΑΡΑΜΕΘ** (p. 102). (b) Judges i, 19, "For they had chariots of iron," i.e. *Ki rekeb barzel lāhem*, **ΧΙ ΡΗΧΑΒ ΒΑΡΑΣΕΛ ΛΑΕΜ**. The third word was corrupted to **ΦΑΡΑΣ**, and the clause translated, *ὅτι Ῥηχάβ διεστειλάτο αὐτοῖς*, "for Rechab gave them orders" (p. 165). *Διεστειλάτο* may represent *paratz* (1 Sam. iii, 1), or preferably *paras* (cf. Psa. lxxviii, 14).



*Hebraicorum Vet. Test. MSS. generibus*, following that up with a further defence of his theory in his *Befreyetes Tentamen*, 1774. In these two volumes he argued that the Septuagint was made from Hebrew MSS. already transliterated into Greek. Perhaps the fact that he seems to have combined this belief with the opinion that Aristeas' famous Letter concerns such transliteration more than translation, may have had something to do with its having passed out of the memory of scholars. No doubt Wutz goes far more into detail than Tychsen, and deals with the question more methodically, but essentially his arguments are the same.\*

Hebrew manuscripts transliterated into Greek! What can have been the object of such transliterations? Of course, for languages to be written in alphabets of other languages is not uncommon. Turkish, having no alphabet of its own, is written in Arabic, Armenian, or Greek characters. Modern Jews write all sorts of languages in Hebrew letters, *e.g.* German, Spanish, Arabic, Persian. Occasionally too in mediæval MSS. Greek is found written in Latin uncials.† And, of special importance for our subject, while the first column of Origen's *Hexapla* was the Hebrew text in Hebrew characters, the second was Hebrew in Greek characters.‡ Some Hebrew Psalms have also been found transliterated into Greek, the separate words of which are given in the Supplement to Hatch and Redpath's *Concordance*, pp. 199-216.§

\* Doubtless Wutz will refer to Tychsen in his second part. In the first he seems never to have heard of him.

† Dr. Minns refers me to the text of the Nicene Creed in the Gelasian *Sacramentary*, § xxxv (ed. H. A. Wilson, 1804, p. 53), and to the provision sometimes made for reading the Easter Gospel in Greek (*Ev. Spalatense* fo 246R, ed. Novak, 1924). A facsimile of part of the bilingual text of the Nicene Creed is given in Ehrle and Liebart, *Specimina codicum Latinorum Vaticanorum*, 1912, No. 20, MS. Corbeiensis, Cent. viii. The Creed was read at baptisms, first in the Greek and then in the Latin.

‡ See examples in Field. i, p. xiv.

§ A very striking example of transliteration is Professor T. Jarrett's edition of the whole Hebrew Bible in English characters, published in 1882. He hoped, I suppose, that English readers would find it easier to learn the language than if they had to learn the Hebrew characters first. I doubt this. But his work is very well done, and if I were to become blind I should certainly try to get a copy, for any reader of English could, after ten minutes' practice, read aloud any part of the Hebrew Bible in such a way that I could follow it. Those who remember the wearisome first month or two of their study of Hebrew will see the importance of this facility.

But what could have given rise to transliterations in Egypt? No doubt there were some excellent Hebrew scholars there—Wutz is never tired of speaking of the sound scholarship of the original transliterators and original translators\*—but these scholars may have been but few. There must have been many Jews educated in Greek, but ignorant of Hebrew, who yet desired to read Hebrew aloud and accurately. Was it that the accurate pronunciation was in itself a matter of religion—as is common in certain stages of religious development—and thus was important for every one who read the Scriptures even if he was alone? Or was it that some members of synagogues, perhaps even some of the simpler minded officials, desired to read the sacred Rolls accurately but could not do so? These were not vocalized; they had only the bare consonants. What a boon to have the words in Greek letters, vowels as well as consonants, that thus the sacred words could be read aloud, for the benefit of those other Jews who could follow the Hebrew more or less, whether they themselves could read it or not!

Wutz' theory is interesting, and may prove to be important. But we are not in a position to come to a decision about its truth before we have all the author's arguments before us. We may well hope that the second part of his work may be issued at no great distance of time. But if the theory proves to be sound, it will have provided a new tool for the investigation of the true text of the LXX, and the light this throws on the Hebrew text of the second or third century before Christ.

But, even so, I feel sure that too much may be expected from it. Many of the differences between the Hebrew and the Greek can be explained more easily from errors of transmission common to all languages, or from confusion of Hebrew letters rather than of Greek, † and many others from the peculiar notions of the privileges of "translators" to which reference has already been made.

Now how does this new theory affect our special subject, the quotations in the New Testament? Wutz has hardly touched on this as yet, but, presumably, will do so in his second part. He is, however, plainly inclined to think that several of the quotations are taken, not from what we call the Septuagint, but from other perhaps merely local translations, themselves made from

\* *e.g.*, pp. 4 *sq.*

† *e.g.*, Wutz, pp. 42, 85, speaks of the confusion between Δ and P, "as in the papyrus literature," but the confusion between ך and ך is much easier.

transliterated texts. It will be interesting to see what examples he gives of such New Testament quotations as he thinks are ultimately due to the misreading of such texts, or to the errors they contained.

We have seen that as regards the quotations from the Old Testament in general the New Testament writers do not by any means always give the right words, or even the right sense—for they employed the usual Jewish methods. And we have also seen that there is at least the *prima facie* possibility that some of their quotations were made from Greek versions of little importance and of little accuracy.

If all this is so, and much of it cannot be denied, what of inspiration ?

Did they think the Greek was inspired, and, if so, what form or forms of it ? And, again, if they made mistakes, were they themselves inspired ?

With regard to the first question, their attitude to the inspiration of the Greek, one asks what Philo's attitude was. "He assigns," says Professor Kennedy, "the same infallibility to the Septuagint translation as that which belongs to the original," for he accepts the Jewish legend as to the miraculous agreement of all the translators.\* Philo went even so far as to treat the Septuagint as verbally inspired *in cases where it differs from the Hebrew*. For in the opening section of the *De Agricultura* he lays stress on Noah being called in Gen. ix, 20, a husbandman (*γεωργός*), and not merely a worker of the land (*γῆς ἐργάτης*), though the Hebrew has only "a man of the land."† Philo, therefore, was not like many a reader of the English Bible, who is ready to assert that it is inspired, yet, when pressed, answers that he does not mean the Authorized Version as such but only the original for which it stands. Philo, on the contrary, attributed to the Septuagint inspiration for itself, and not only in so far as it truly represents the Hebrew. This seems also to have been the case with the writers of the New Testament.

Secondly, if this be so, surely a curious light is thrown upon the nature of the inspiration of the New Testament writers themselves. We all believe in their inspiration, but have the haziest

\* *Op. cit.*, pp. 30 *sq.*

† So, on Lev. xvi, 17, the force of his argument in three places depends on the absence of "all" in the Greek text which he used, although it is present in the Hebrew, and in all the existing manuscripts of the LXX (*Ryle, op. cit.*, pp. 212 *sq.*).

ideas as to its nature and extent. *A priori*, we should have said that inspiration would save from error, especially (we should have added) in so fundamental a matter as accuracy in quotation from the Old Testament. But no, their inspiration did not save them from inaccuracy. It is natural, no doubt, to say, If a person is inspired of God then he must say this or that, and, in particular, cannot say this or that other. But I suppose we have no right to formulate an *a priori* theory of this kind, and that God wishes us rather to examine what inspired persons actually do say and do not say, and then build up our theory upon a series of inductions from the observed facts.

The writers of the New Testament were indeed in close touch with God, but evidently He was not pleased to keep them from error in their use of the Old Testament. For where the Hebrew and the Septuagint differ these cannot both be inspired with a verbal inspiration, and presumably it is the Hebrew that is inspired, and not the "translation" of it.

In other words, facts show that the inspiration of the New Testament writers did not so far overcome their natural powers as to save them from literary errors. Have we any right to expect that it should ?

#### DISCUSSION.

Mr. H. ST. J. THACKERAY, the well-known authority on the LXX and its problems, attended by special invitation of the Council, and discussed the paper at some length. He divided his treatment into three parts : (I) The Source of Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament ; (II) The Septuagint Text and its relation to the Masoretic Hebrew text ; and (III) A recent theory to account for certain errors.

I.—As to the Old Testament quotations in the New Testament, they bear testimony to the wide influence and popularity in Palestine of what may be called the normal source, the LXX. Occasionally one meets with independent renderings—and that is not surprising—especially in the first and fourth Gospels and the Apocalypse. One notable example of diversity of practice is presented in a single book—in *Matthew* there are quotations in common with the other Synoptists, taken from the LXX ; but a group of eleven "proof-texts" ("that it might be fulfilled") come from another source, an independent version, and derived, apparently, from some early "Testimony

Book." Were such already in Greek before being incorporated in Matthew ?

II.—Though strictly applicable only to the Greek Pentateuch, the term Septuagint is commonly used to designate the whole collection of Greek Scriptures—the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings—translations and books of Greek origin, made *mainly* at Alexandria in the last three centuries before Christ. As to the character of the translations, it may be said : work on the *Law* is good ; there is liberty without licence ; work in the *Prophets* is less so, but still there is a sense of reverence for canonical Scriptures ; the translator of Isaiah was unequal to his work : as to the *Writings*, they are mainly free paraphrases.

Where is the " true " text of the LXX to be found ? That is an unsolved question, possibly insoluble. There is Swete's Manual edition, there is the Larger Cambridge Text ; the final text is a problem for the future. The long history, wide diffusion, and mixture with later (rival) versions, produced a great variety of text. (This applies mainly to books after the Pentateuch, in which the Greek text is fairly established, and there are only minor variants.)

The period 1st–2nd centuries was a turning-point in the history of the text ; the LXX was taken over by Christians, and it, or other versions, was quoted in proof of their tenets. There was a consequent alienation of Palestinian scholars from the LXX, and rival MSS. by Palestinian or Asiatic scholars appeared in the 2nd century, to meet the demand for a version nearer to the Hebrew text of their day (**A**, **C**, and **Θ**). The Hebrew text had not stood still, and there came a revision, *circa* A.D. 100. These new versions were partly based on earlier work : one finds traces of **Θ** in the New Testament quotations from Daniel, and of **C** in Josephus. Were these local versions ? Origen, in his *Hexapla*, set himself to correct the LXX by means of later versions ; his LXX column is a mixture of old and new, and led to a serious mixture of texts. In the 4th century, Jerome speaks of three recensions in use in different parts of the world—Hesychian (Egypt), Lucianic (Syria and Asia), Eusebian (Palestine). The work of isolating, or identifying, these recensions, and getting behind them to the " original " text, still remains. Our earliest MS. is B.

I come to the relation of the Greek and Hebrew texts, to ascertain the merits and defects of the LXX.

(1) With many imperfections, the LXX often preserves (or points the way to) the restoration of a text better than the Masoretic ; it has the great merit of going back a few centuries earlier than the Rabbinical revision, *circa* A.D. 100 (*see*, for example, Ps. lxxvi).

(2) Was the text a targum ? There is not much trace of this in the *Law* and the *Prophets* : they are much nearer the Hebrew than are the Aramaic targums, but there is occasional interpretation, *e.g.* Lev. xxiii, 11 (τῆ ἐπαύριον τῆς πρώτης). Like the targums, it avoids anthropomorphisms, *e.g.* Exod. xxiv.

(3) But there are many errors of *eye* and *ear* ; there is constant confusion of radical letters, especially *resh* and *daleth* (" Edom " and " Aram "). There are other variants which indicate *dictation*.

III.—Of the theory of Wutz, I cannot express opinion without careful previous examination. It is interesting, and possible, in view of the concrete instance of transliteration in the second column of Origen's *Hexapla* ; but was there any necessity for such an intermediate stage ? The ordinary confusion of letters by translators will account for much, without a transliteration stage. How is it to be detected and proved ? What purpose did it serve ? To fix pronunciation of an unvocalized text ? For the synagogue reader ? That might apply to Palestine, to the school of Akiba and Aquila, but would it apply to Alexandria ? I doubt if the theory will clear up many obscurities, and my impression is that the examples quoted by Dr. Williams are not convincing.

In conclusion, Mr. Thackeray expressed sincere thanks to Dr. Williams for a paper that could not fail to stir helpful thought.

Dr. THIRTLE : I join in the sincere thanks already expressed to Dr. Lukyn Williams for the paper to which we have listened. In the nature of things, there are points that must still be regarded as open ; but it seems to me that we may hope for more light in due time when the investigations of Dr. Wutz, to which our attention has been directed, shall reach their conclusion. Singular to say, those investigations receive remarkable support, if, indeed, they have not, in some degree, been anticipated by researches conducted by Chief Rabbi Dr. Moses Gaster, and recently given to the world in the Schweich Lectures (1923) in a volume entitled *The Samaritans*. Incidentally, Dr. Gaster found himself face to face with the subject

of the LXX, and on grounds of Jewish tradition, and inferences reached after prolonged investigation, he has come to the conclusion that the LXX was made from a transliterated copy of the Hebrew text. He maintains that, for Jews unacquainted with the Hebrew language, such a transliterated version was assuredly provided; and he further tells us that in the British Museum there are numerous fragments of such documents as prepared for the use of Karaite Jews in comparatively recent times. Such a text, then, as lies at the base of the *Hexapla* of Origen was behind the Greek version known as the LXX, and, so far as the Books of Moses are concerned, both of these approximate more or less to the text preserved by the Samaritan community, and known as the Samaritan Pentateuch.

It is interesting to note that Dr. Gaster gives reasons for believing that the origin of the LXX must be traced, not to Egypt, but to Palestine, and that the Greek version came into existence for a specific purpose, namely, to safeguard the Jewish people from the Samaritan schism: in a word, it was in opposition to what has come into history as the Samariticon, that is, a Greek translation of the Samaritan recension of the Mosaic Law, of which mention is made in early Christian writings. Dr. Gaster finds in the shortcomings and mistakes of the scribes reasons for the conclusions thus advanced, and he gives substantial form to the Samariticon, which hitherto has been a disembodied shade in literature—a thing of doubt in the region of Palestinian writings. May we not indulge the hope that, on the strength of the case presented this afternoon, research may go forward and yield important results when more is known of the conditions, ethnic and religious, out of which the LXX version came into being?

The New Testament quotations from the LXX raise a question that is deeply interesting. As Dr. Lukyn Williams has pointed out, in some cases they were from the Hebrew text, in others from the LXX, or some Greek version. That is to say, some of the writers, in their quotations, went to the original, while others went to what may be styled a Targum, or paraphrase. Can it be questioned that there is a place for both text and interpretation? In particular, we must recognize a demand for the Targum in connection with written arguments demanded in missionary labour, as we find it in such a writing as the Epistle to the Hebrews, prepared for Greek-speaking

Jews. I would suggest that, while serving as a practical substitute for the original text, a Targum need not be regarded as setting aside the proper authority of such text, and that to quote a version does not imply contempt for the original. No such thought was in the mind of Ezra the scribe when he ordained that, by using a paraphrase, the sense should be given when the Law was read; nor is such an idea entertained by translators into, say, our own modern English, however confident they may feel themselves to be in the execution of their versions of Holy Scripture. One may use a text or Targum at convenience, without making for such version the claims that properly belong to the original text; for example, if one quotes Weymouth or Moffatt, one does not for a moment call in question the higher authority of the text, which all translators are glad to acknowledge. There is room for the version as well as the original work, and the New Testament writers seem to have found no difficulty in using one or the other as circumstances demanded. Is it worth while to suggest that in doing this they acted without judgment, and apart from direction which we are not competent to discuss? If an interpretation—call it a Targum—is accepted as supplying a rendering—practical though not literal, and so accepted by men “in touch with God,” as Dr. Lukyn Williams expresses it, or under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as we believe was the case with the New Testament writers, the result was canonical. And does not canonical integrity supply a safeguard against error and imply inspiration in the New Testament sense of the word?

Many may recall that, some forty years ago, when the Salkinson-Ginsburg translation of the New Testament into Hebrew, for distribution among the Jews, was given to the world, the translators were careful to place in the margin, as alternative readings, the Masoretic text of passages wherein, in quoting the Old Testament, the New Testament writers had followed the LXX version. By such a measure, followed in some degree by Franz Delitzsch in his Hebrew New Testament, the translators indicated a disposition to regard the LXX as having the nature of a Targum, and as lacking (for Jews, at least) the character that properly belongs to the Masoretic text. In similar manner, the New Testament writers, in their quotations, used the Greek Targum, sometimes without question, at other times with modification. May we not accept their judgment



and follow their lead? For one thing, we shall find the LXX of service as throwing exegetical light upon many a passage—for at least it is an interpretation; and moreover, by reason of its antiquity, we may at times consult it with confidence for the solution of questions that arise in the criticism of the text.

Mr. THEODORE ROBERTS expressed his agreement with the lecturer's position, that it was not for us to dictate to Almighty God that He must only communicate with us through flawless literature, although he did not think the three instances quoted by the lecturer on pp. 153 and 154 as mistakes in quotation were really anything more than applications (by the speakers in two cases, and the writer in the third) of the passage quoted to a new situation; and he thought this was in accordance with the unique character of the Scriptures, in that no prophecy was confined to its particular subject—"for men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. i, 21).

He remembered receiving a letter in which the writer declared that a Bible with a single clerical error in it was no Bible for him; to which he replied that, whether his correspondent used the Authorized Version or the Revised, or any other translation, his Bible must necessarily contain many errors. His correspondent then declared that he meant the autographs, which, of course, he had not got, and never would have. But this question of accuracy raised no difficulty if we recognized that the Bible was not an end in itself, but rather the vehicle which God used to communicate His mind to us, so that our faith would not be in the Book but rather in the God who gave the Book. This was illustrated by the Apostle Paul's encouragement to his fellow-passengers in the storm on his way to Rome, when he told of an angel having visited him in the night with a message assuring him of the safety of all on board, so that he could tell them to be of good cheer for, as he said, "I believe (not the angel, but) God that it shall be even as it was told me." Therefore, as a plain man, he still accepted the Scriptures as a God-given revelation, and had no fear from mistakes of quotation and the like, even if they could be proved to exist.

Mr. Roberts further inquired as to an English version of the LXX issued some years ago by S. F. Pells, and, at the conclusion of the meeting, he was informed by Dr. Thirtle, Chairman of Council,

that the publication in question was a translation from the Greek by Charles Thomson, first issued in the United States over a century ago. The better-known English version of the LXX, however, was made by Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton, and published in this country about eighty years ago. The contention of Mr. Pells that the Greek version carries higher authority than the Hebrew text cannot be said to command the judgment of scholars having all-round knowledge of the subject. Mr. Roberts also inquired with reference to other Greek versions of the Old Testament, those of Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus. Of these it may be said that they survive in fragments only, and were obviously designed to meet (and express) Jewish prejudice in a definite sense; and they were made upon principles different from those which dominated the LXX translators.

The CHAIRMAN'S remarks: My own studies in the LXX have been chiefly confined to the Pentateuch, so I am hardly qualified to say much about the quotations from the later books.

One instance of agreement with the Hebrew text is worth noting. Both the Epistle to the Romans and that to the Hebrews give a correct version of Deut. xxxii, 35, instead of the LXX, probably due to a various reading.

That most of the New Testament quotations are taken from the LXX is only natural. Those who wrote in Greek would inevitably use the best-known Greek version, even if it were not precisely accurate, just as English writers and preachers will often use the familiar Authorized Version, though they are fully aware that the Revised is more technically correct. Only where the popular version is glaringly wrong or unsuited to the particular argument would they have recourse to some better version or an independent rendering of their own. This would account for quotations where part agrees with the LXX and part with the Hebrew.

As to the theory of Herr Wutz, in the instance alluded to by Mr. St. John Thackeray (p. 158, *note*), the transliteration ΒΑΡΑCΕΛ is open to question (I do not know whether Herr Wutz had any authority for his transliterations, or whether they are only his own idea of how the words would be transliterated. The second alpha is superfluous, and the sigma should rather be zeta. Even then

it has to be guessed that the word was afterwards corrupted into PHARAS to account for the Greek rendering. There is, I think, a much simpler explanation from the Hebrew. If the initial beth of the word "Barzel" were mistaken, as it might very easily be, for a caph, and the final lamed dropped or disregarded because of the lamed immediately following, the word could be read as CARAZ, "to proclaim" (a word not found in Biblical Hebrew, but found in the Talmud and in the Targums\*). That would at once account for the Greek *διεστείλατο*, and as the verb would need a subject, the preceding "Rekeb" was taken to be a proper name.

In the Pentateuch there are several instances of words transliterated, not translated, but these appear to be words the translators did not understand, and there are other indications that the translators were more familiar with Greek than with Hebrew. One such transliteration is suggestive. In Gen. xxviii, 19, the LXX has it that the name of Bethel was *Ὀὐλαμμὰς*, taking the word "Olam" ("of old") as if it were part of the name. As the word is elsewhere translated correctly enough, this suggests that they were working from a document in which the words were not separated, and that would also account for BARAMEETH in 1 Kings xi, 23.

Is it quite fair to characterize the variations in New Testament quotations indiscriminately as "errors" (p. 162), and thence to infer a theory of inspiration?

It is asserted that in the reference in Rom. ix, 24-26, "the meaning is what we call wrong" (p. 153). It is, of course, true that Hosea's prophecy referred to Northern Israel, while St. Paul is writing about the call of the Gentiles. Does that constitute a wrong meaning? Is it not rather a case of applying the same principle to parallel cases? Just as there was the promise that Northern Israel should yet be called "My people," so it was part of the divine purpose that the nations which had formerly been "not My people" (Lo-'Ammi) should be sharers in the same privilege.

Again, Acts vii, 43, is part of the speech of St. Stephen, and Acts xv, 16, 17, from that of St. James. The "errors" then (if error there be) are due to the speakers, not to the historian. His task would be limited to recording correctly what was actually said.

\* It is also the common Arabic word for "preach."

But is there error at all? St. Stephen was addressing an audience familiar with the words of Amos, but also familiar with the fact that the actual carrying away had been very far beyond Damascus. His substituting "Babylon" would be an intentional reminder of how more than amply the prophecy had been fulfilled. If St. James spoke in Greek (which may be doubtful), all he did was to condense and rearrange the familiar Greek version of the words of Amos, even though that included a different reading of the Hebrew.

Mr. St. John Thackeray spoke of the softening down of anthropomorphisms in the LXX. For a considerable time I have been engaged in a minute comparison of the three texts of the Pentateuch—Hebrew, Samaritan and Greek. From this I find that this tendency to soften down, fairly common in the LXX, is much less common in the older Samaritan. That shows that the dislike of anthropomorphic expressions was a gradual growth of later ages. [Hence it would follow that the Hebrew, in which there is no such softening down, is the earliest of the three.]

#### WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS.

MISS HAMILTON LAW: May it not be that in some cases the various renderings in the LXX, about which we have been hearing, are owing to some connection of thought in the Eastern mind? To take an ordinary Arabic word which is in daily use in the Near East, as an instance, the word "sagada" means carpet. Also, this word "sagada" means "he worshipped" (3rd person sing., past tense), and is the root of the verb "to worship." The idea behind the word appears to be prostration—lying flat—one might almost say humility. God in His greatness possibly meant to give more than one thought in the inspired words of the translation of the Scriptures.

MISS L. M. MACKINLAY: This is confessedly a difficult subject. To me the solution is found in our Lord's quotation of Ps. viii, 2. Instead of "ordained strength," He said "perfected praise" (Matt. xxi, 16).

These words of His supply the ellipsis in the psalm, explaining *what* was in the mouth of "the babes"—praise—which brought power over the enemy. His addition to the Psalmist's words were no mistaken quotation, but on purpose. If we accept divine inspiration

of the Apostles' writings, may we not say that in those instances where their quotations differ from the Old Testament the alteration was also to supply the ellipsis? Then, it matters not what translation they quoted from, the changed words were divinely inspired at that moment, as an explanation of the Old Testament passage, sometimes showing it was of local application as well as a future prophecy, which interpretation was not apparent without divine revelation.

The Rev. J. M. POLLOCK : Some of us are so profoundly convinced as to the equal inspiration of both Old and New Testaments that we must question the main conclusion of the writer of the paper, viz. "*facts* show that the inspiration of the New Testament writers did not so far overcome their natural powers as to save them from literary errors." When we find the Holy Spirit, through the Apostle Paul, building an argument on a single letter of the alphabet, as in Gal. iii, 16, we may well pause before we commit ourselves to such a conclusion. "Facts" may apparently point to the conclusion arrived at by the lecturer, but if I may venture a criticism of his paper, it is that he has provided us with extremely few, if any, examples of such facts. And the explanation given by the lecturer of such apparent examples is not the only possible one. May there not be in the Old Testament Scriptures deeper meanings and applications than appear on the surface of the text, and which can only be brought out by an interpretation rather than by an actual quotation of the text? I prefer the explanation of the variations given by Dr. C. I. Scofield in his "Reference Bible," viz. "the rule applicable to *all* modifications of the form of quotations in the New Testament from the Old Testament writings is that the Divine Author of both Testaments is perfectly free in using an earlier statement to recast the mere literary form of it. The variant form will be found invariably to give the deeper meaning of the earlier statement." (*Note on Heb. x, 5.*)

Colonel H. BIDDULPH, C.M.G., D.S.O. : With reference to the lecturer's opinion that the LXX (outside the Law) was a Greek Targum, I would hazard the conjecture that in the historical portions sacred MSS. were not the sole basis of this Targum, the departure being a maximum in the books translated last; and in this connection

it is interesting to note that Simeon ben Gamaliel (Rector of the School at Jamnia after Bar-Cochba's revolt) considered that Aquila's version was based on an Aramaic Targum.

With regard to Biblical quotations in general, I would point out that inspiration, in the fullest sense, does not necessarily demand verbal repetition. The Bible has its message for every age and race, and contains much more than lies on the surface: *cf.* Ps. lxxviii, 2; Prov. i, 6; ii, 4; Is. vi, 9, and our Lord's usual method of teaching (Matt. xiii, 34).

If, therefore, a statement or argument is one reinforced by the Old Testament *that* interpretation (for the sake of lucidity) is necessarily brought forward which explains the apposite teaching contained in the text in question. For instance (Matt. ii, 23), "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene," is not a "quotation" from any prophet, but a brief epitome of apposite Old Testament prophecy. The recognition of this fact is the basis of all expository teaching; and the New Testament is pre-eminently the exposition of the Old Testament.

With regard to translations in general, the consideration arises that words are intended to convey initial ideas, and that the best translation is that which best conveys the ideas in question; parallel verbiage is a secondary matter. Consequently, owing to the differences between languages in genius, idiom, etc. (and especially where the comparison is between an Oriental language and a Western one or a primitive and a modern language), in order to convey accurately to the ordinary hearer in good idiomatic language the original ideas, the best translation will often partake of the nature of a Targum, as the italicized words of the Authorized Version testify; the brain is reached through the senses, a fact which was grasped by the translators of that Version, appointed to be read in churches, and therefore listened to by the outward ear.

Mr. HOSTE regretted that absence from London prevented his being in his place to hear Canon Williams read his interesting and suggestive paper. He sent a few remarks.

It would have been a great boon for the uninitiated to have had more concrete instances of the presumed misquotations of the New Testament writers, and some more definite explanation of the passages, *e.g.* Luke iv, 18, our Lord's quotation from Isa. lxi, 1, where

the Hebrew, the LXX, and the Greek Testament are at variance. I remember the late Dr. C. H. Waller saying that Hebrew is so full as a language that it is often difficult to say which of two complementary meanings it contains, if not both. May not the above passage in Luke be explained by the root *pā-kāch* in the word *p'kāch-kōāch* ("opening of the prison")? Was not the saying of the Rabbis, that giving sight to the blind was a miracle reserved for the Messiah, founded on the LXX of this very passage?

Philo was no doubt a remarkable man and religious philosopher, but his belief in the equal inspiration of original and translation would to-day hardly be compatible with a sane outlook. I do not see that his gloss "out of a consecrated soul" for "outside the camp" is parallel with the substitution of one geographical locality for another. Amos no doubt refers to the captivity of the ten tribes, and Stephen, addressing the descendants of Judah, brings the quotation up to date by substituting Babylon for Damascus because their ancestors had been carried there.

Is not the point of the quotation in Rom. ix simply the possibility of persons "not the people of God" becoming so? If the lost tribes would one day regain their place, why not Gentiles who had also been "not His people"?

The Canon does acknowledge the difficulty of the whole question of the New Testament quotations from the LXX, and utters such a wise caveat on p. 153 (end of first paragraph) that one cannot repress a feeling of disappointment that he should close upon p. 161 with the hypothesis that the writers of the New Testament regarded the LXX as equally inspired with the original. "This seems" he writes "to have been the case with the writers of the New Testament," and then, on a mere "if this be so," he enunciates a theory of inspiration, compatible with inaccuracies as to matters of fact (which may be otherwise explained) a theory which many will feel to be quite untenable. It seems that we are asked to believe that the Hebrew text *as we have it* can alone claim infallibility. But is it certain, for instance, that the LXX translator of Deut. xxxii, 43, merely inserted out of his own head the words "And let all the angels of God worship Him," and had not before him a Hebrew text containing these words, subsequently quoted in Heb. i, 6?

## LECTURER'S REPLY.

In the course of some remarks by way of reply, Dr. LUKYN WILLIAMS thanked Dr. Thirtle for calling attention to Dr. Gaster's volume on *The Samaritans*, and intimated that it had been in his mind to study the book, though hardly expecting that it would treat so definitely of the issue raised by his paper.

He also sends the following notes :—

Since this article was in proof, the first part of a striking essay, on "The pronunciation of Hebrew according to the transliterations in the *Hexapla*," has appeared in the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, vol. xvi (April, 1926), pp. 333-382. Some material may also be found in Driver's *Samuel*, 1913, pp. lxxv-lxix.

With regard to the ignorance of Hebrew on the part of Hellenistic Jews, a Hebrew Christian friend who lived some years in Palestine (the Rev. L. Zeckhausen) tells me that he never met there a Jew who could not understand people who spoke to him in Hebrew. "How much more in the first century!" He thinks St. Stephen, like a modern *maggid* (a popular preacher), freely introduced into his speech traditional stories and interpretations, as indeed Rashi does. Further, he adds, if Stephen's speech had been originally spoken in Greek, this would also have been the language of the Ecclesiastical Court (*Beth-Din*) before which he was tried. But this is unthinkable.