Taylor, Rev. C.
The Dirge of Coheleth

THE DIRGE OF COHELETH

TAYLOR

THE DIRGE OF COHELETH

IN ECCLESIASTES XII,

DISCUSSED AND LITERALLY INTERPRETED

BY THE

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ADDENDA ET CORRIGENDA.

Umbreit's semiliteral rendering was published in 1818, and was subsequently withdrawn. See p. 72.

Read: El Behá (*or* Behâu'ddin) Zohair, p. 12; *εὖδον*, p. 19; Dhu'r Rommah, p. 26; 195 (*for* 175), p. 37; p. ٢٥٥ . . . wine (*for* iwne), p. 40; *Land of Israel*, p. 48; werden (*for* merden), p. 65; rather (*for* nather), p. 72.

WORKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

In Preparation.

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Preface.

The quaint traditional view which finds in Eccl. XII. 2—7 an anatomy of the human frame has exercised a strange fascination over the minds of commentators and is accepted without misgiving by the latest critics. There survives however in places a feeling of dissatisfaction with the traditional view, although the semiliteral rendering of Michaelis is now well nigh forgotten even among the learned, and that of Umbreit —advocated in England by Dr. Ginsburg—is not unreasonably thought to have received its deathblow in Gurlitt's weighty contribution to the *Th. Studien und Kritiken* for 1865.

In the present essay an attempt is made to shew the inherent weakness of the *Anatomical Rendering*, and to establish in its place a *Literal Rendering* which regards verses 2—5 as a Dirge describing the state of

a household or community on an occasion of death and mourning. From the ending of verse 5:

> for the man passeth* to his eternal home, and the mourners go about in the street—

the inference is obvious that what precedes depicts the state of feeling prevalent on the day of mourning; and it will be found, I think, that of all known theories, this—at first sight the most natural—is the only one which makes the various details at once consistent and significant. **

The anatomical rendering is sometimes commended as containing poetry of the highest order, and indeed so elastic are its details that the amount of poetry which may be put into it is limited only by the faculty of the commentator; but there is a poetry likewise in the literal rendering, having its counterpart in the prophet's description by natural images of the desolation of a land:

> Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the milstones, and the light of the

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* *ἐπορεύθη*, LXX. The whole description might apply to imminent rather than present death, *if* these mourners could be thought of as looking out for employment.

** See p. 75.

candle. And this whole land shall be a desolation—

where the several particulars correspond to Coheleth's description of the darkening of the ladies at the lattices, the falling of the sound of the mill, and the hushing of the daughters of song.

The Dirge of Coheleth corresponds in outline with Ezekiel's Lamentation for Pharaoh:

Eccl. XII. 2—5.	Ezek. XXXII. 7—9.
Ere the sun and the light and the moon and the stars be darkened, and the clouds return after the rain.	I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light.
In the day when the keepers of the house tremble. . .	I will also vex the hearts of many people,
for the man passeth to his eternal home, &c.	when I shall bring thy destruction among the nations, &c.

where in each case there is the same use of a well known figure, with the same transition to a literal statement of the way in which actual persons are perturbed by the fate of the dead.

The vexing of the hearts of many people is represented in detail by Coheleth. In that day the

doorkeepers and the masters alike tremble: the maids cease from their work, and the mistresses from their amusements. Open house is not kept as heretofore, and the mill is no longer heard preparing food for the reveller: but the bird of evil omen raises his dirge, and the merry voice of the singing girl is silent. . . From the house the scene now changes to the garden, or to the country at large. Here also terror encompasses the people. Lowering upon them from above and lurking at their feet, it deadens every sense: so that the almond-flower displeases, and the τέττιξ sounds dull, and the caperberry* palls: because the man passeth to his eternal home, and the mourners go about in the street. . . Or we may suppose this verse to describe a sympathetic affection of external nature, comparing, from the Dirge of King David: "Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no more dew . . . for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away". The whole passage may allude to some special time of public mourning**, or may have been cited from an authorized book of "Dirges", such as were composed on the death of King Josiah and made "an ordinance in Israel".

On verses 6, 7 I will only here remark that they

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* See note p. 71.

** Compare Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* III. 9. 5.

form a distinct paragraph, and are not to be mixed up with what precedes.

A glance at Section II will shew the uncertainty of the several points in the Anatomical Rendering, which is at best but an intermittent series of grotesque or repulsive comparisons. Lest I should seem to speak from prejudice, hear the apology of an anatomist:

Zum Schlusse dieser poetischen Beschreibung des Alters und des Todes bemerke ich noch, dass, wenn wir an ihr keine durchgeführte Allegorie, sondern ein von der unbildlichen Redeweise mehrfach durchgebrochenes Aggregat unvollständiger Vergleichungen haben, dieses Verfahren nicht vorzugsweise unserem Verfasser, sondern fast allen biblischen Schriftstellern mehr oder weniger eigen ist. Herzfeld.

But the fault may be not so much with Coheleth as with his interpreters, who have mistaken a *Midrash* for a primary rendering.

Cambridge 1873.

Section I.

The literal rendering.

The literal rendering, already described in the Preface, contrasts not so much in form as in colouring with the semi-literal renderings to be noticed in section III, where their essential difference will be pointed out.

In the present section the literal rendering will be discussed in detail, some arguments of a general nature being deferred to the Conclusion. As regards particulars there will naturally be a repetition of much that has been written before; but it is the more necessary to discuss the several points at length, because the works which controvert the anatomical rendering are mostly out of print or not easily accessible. In the annexed translation, it is to be observed that the word *olive* (ver. 5) is introduced simply as a more familiar poetical word than *caperberry*, which has authority in its favour. I may remark also that I am very much in doubt about the first hemistich of verse 6, though convinced that the popular interpretation is unsatisfactory.

Some Readings of the Authorized Version.

Ecclesiastes XII.

1 And remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth;
ERE
days of evil come and years draw nigh,
wherein thou shalt say there is for me no pleasure.
2 *ERE*
the sun and the light and the moon and the stars be darkened,
and the clouds return after the rain.
3 *In the day when* the keepers of the house tremble,
and the men of power quake[1]),
and the grinding-maids[2]) cease when they have wrought a little,[3])
and the gazers, at the lattices, are darkened.
4 And doors are shut to the street,
on the falling of the sound of the mill,
and the bird rises to voice[4]),
and all the daughters of song are subdued.
5 When *also* they fear from on high and terrors are on the path,
and the almond-flower displeases[5]),
and the grasshopper is dull,[6])
and the olive palls;[7])
for the man passeth to his eternal home,
and the mourners go about in the street.
6 *ERE*
the silver thread escape[8]),
and the golden reel hasten[9]),
or the pitcher be shattered upon the spring,
and the bucket[10]) be broken into[11]) the well,
7 And the dust return upon the earth as it was,
and the spirit return unto God who gave it.

1) the strong men bow themselves
2) grinders
3) because they are few, or (*Marg*) grind little.
4) he shall rise up at the voice of a bird
5) the almond flourishes
6) is a burden
7) desire fails
8) cord be loosed
9) bowl be broken
10) wheel
11) at

קהלת יב

א וּזְכֹר אֶת בּוֹרְאֶיךָ בִּימֵי בְחוּרֹתֶיךָ
עַד אֲשֶׁר לֹא
יָבֹאוּ יְמֵי הָרָעָה וְהִגִּיעוּ שָׁנִים
אֲשֶׁר תֹּאמַר אֵין לִי בָּהֶם חֵפֶץ׃
ב עַד אֲשֶׁר לֹא
תֶחְשַׁךְ הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וְהָאוֹר וְהַיָּרֵחַ וְהַכּוֹכָבִים

וְשָׁבוּ הֶעָבִים אַחַר הַגָּשֶׁם׃
ג בַּיּוֹם שָׁיָזֹעוּ שֹׁמְרֵי הַבַּיִת
וְהִתְעַוְּתוּ אַנְשֵׁי הֶחָיִל
וּבָטְלוּ הַטֹּחֲנוֹת כִּי מִעֵטוּ

וְחָשְׁכוּ הָרֹאוֹת בָּאֲרֻבּוֹת׃
ד וְסָגְרוּ דְלָתַיִם בַּשּׁוּק
בִּשְׁפַל קוֹל הַטַּחֲנָה
וְיָקוּם לְקוֹל הַצִּפּוֹר
וְיִשַּׁחוּ כָּל בְּנוֹת הַשִּׁיר׃
ה גַּם מִגָּבֹהַּ יִירָאוּ וְחִתִּתִים בַּדָּרֶךְ

וְיָנֵאץ הַשָּׁקֵד
וְיִסְתַּבֵּל הֶחָגָב
וְתָפֵר הָאֲבִיּוֹנָה
כִּי הֹלֵךְ הָאָדָם אֶל בֵּית עֹלָמוֹ
וְסָבְבוּ בַשּׁוּק הַסּוֹפְדִים׃
ו עַד אֲשֶׁר לֹא
יֵרָתֵק חֶבֶל הַכֶּסֶף ירתק קרי
וְתָרֻץ גֻּלַּת הַזָּהָב
וְתִשָּׁבֵר כַּד עַל הַמַּבּוּעַ
וְנָרֹץ הַגַּלְגַּל אֶל הַבּוֹר׃
ז וְיָשֹׁב הֶעָפָר עַל הָאָרֶץ כְּשֶׁהָיָה
וְהָרוּחַ תָּשׁוּב אֶל הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר נְתָנָהּ׃

I now proceed to discuss the passage in detail, premising that it divides itself naturally into three distinct and separate paragraphs, each of which commences with an introductory *ERE*. The first paragraph (ver. 1) is wholly literal; the second commences figuratively (ver. 2), and, as I interpret it, ends *literally* (ver. 3—5); the third also commences figuratively (ver. 6), and ends literally (ver. 7).

Verse 1.

עַד אֲשֶׁר לֹא] *While yet not*, or briefly, *Ere*. The verse describes a time when the man's youthful gladness has left him, but when death is not altogether close at hand. The duration of the period is indefinite: these days of darkness "shall be many" (Eccl. XI. 8).

Verse 2.

עַד אֲשֶׁר לֹא] *Ere*. The recurrence of this formula marks a second stage in the description. The paragraph which commences here ends at ver. 5, and must not be mixed up with ver. 6, 7.

תֶּחְשַׁךְ וגו׳] On darkness &c. as a general symbol of unhappiness or calamity, see ver. 3. The following passages illustrate the darkening of the heavens in particular:

"For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and

will lay the haughtiness of the terrible low" (Is. XIII. 10, 11).

"For this shall the earth mourn, and the heavens above be black: The whole city shall flee for the noise of the horsemen and bowmen; they shall go into thickets, and climb up upon the rocks: every city shall be forsaken and not a man dwell therein" (Jer. IV. 28. 29).

""And when I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light.* All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the *Lord* God. I will also vex the hearts of many people, when I shall bring thy destruction among the nations, into the countries which thou hast not known"" (Ezek. XXXII. 7—9).

"Let all the inhabitants of the earth tremble: for the day of the *Lord* cometh, for it is nigh at hand. A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness. The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining" (Joel II. 1—10).

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* These symptoms are accompaniments of actual death. Hence an illustration of the passage discussed, regarded as a literal dirge.

"I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day. And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day" (Amos VIII. 9, 10).

Compare also by way of contrast:

"Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, *in the day that* the *Lord* bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound" (Is. XXX. 26).

"Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the *Lord* shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended" (Is. LX. 10).

Verse 3.

Transition from the figurative to the literal.

בַּיּוֹם שָׁהּ] *In the day that.* This serves as a formula of transition from the figures of ver. 2 to matter-of-fact. A consideration of the passages above quoted shews that it is a practice with Biblical writers to pass from the figurative to the actual, or at least to the form of the actual. The particular figure of the darkening of the heavens is usually accompanied by something explanatory. It is therefore rather to be expected that Coheleth also would pass from the figurative darkening of the heavenly bodies to something explanatory; and it would be a departure from the usual

practice not to do so. Accordingly I read *Namely in the day when* as introductory to a matter-of-fact description of the actual. It will have been observed that בּוֹם serves in like manner as a formula of transition in Is. XXX. 26. The very parallelism in Coheleth's description is an argument for the transition, since in its third and last paragraph we find, according to the English Version:

"Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken; or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel be 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" (Eccl. XII. 6, 7)—

where the former verse is figurative, and the latter literal and explanatory.

יִזְּעוּ] *They tremble*, for fear. On the root זוע, Gesenius writes in his *Thesaurus*:

"In Targg. est commoveri, contremiscere . . . spec. *timore*, pro חרד Exod. XIX. 16. Itpal. אזדעזע *contremuit*, Aph. *perterrefecit*". It may be uncertain whether mental emotion is implied when it is said (Esth. V. 9) that Mordecai *moved* not before Haman, but the application to fear is evident in such passages as:

"All peoples, nations, and languages
הוו זאעין ודחלין מן קדמוהי,
trembled and feared before him" (Dan. V. 19).

But supposing it at the outset an open question whether the "trembling" in the passage discussed is simply an expression of fear, we cannot do better than take a suggestion from the context, observing that in the same passage (ver. 5) it is distinctly said of the persons there described, that *they shall fear*, יִירָאוּ.

שֹׁמְרֵי הַבַּיִת] These *keepers of the house* are usually taken to be fighting men or sentinels, whose business it is to defend the house. But the expression may equally well be applied to a class of servants, lit. *housekeepers,* without any regard to fighting qualities. The identical expression, in the infinitive, occurs in 2 Sam. XX. 3: "And the king took the ten women his concubines, whom he had left *to keep the house*, and put them in ward". The word keeper is applied to various kinds of servants; thus we read of keepers of the *wardrobe* (2 Chron. XXXIV. 22), of the *king's forest* (Neh. II, 8), of the *sheep* (I Sam. XVII. 20), of the *carriage* (1 Sam. XVII. 22). To keep the *door* or *threshold* (Mal. I. 10; Ps. LXXXIV. 10) is to hold "the meanest office". To keep the door, and to be a watchman or sentinel, are both commonplace expressions, but even in a large house or "palace" the θυρωρός may be a παιδίσκη (Joh. XVIII. 15—17). The persons here described might be taken to be more especially doorkeepers, but with reference to their social *status* as a class of menservants, *domestics* אנשי חבית (Gen. 39, 11), rather than to physical qualifications. It should be noticed that שמר, is used absolutely and stands in parallelism with עבד in a passage which might be rendered somewhat as follows, in order to shew the parallelism:

"And Israel was a bondman for a wife,
and for a wife he served.
But by a prophet the *Lord* brought up Israel from Egypt,
and by a prophet he was preserved" (Hos. XII. 12, 13);

where 12^a answers to 13^a, since Egypt was the "land of bondmen" (Ex. XX. 2; Deut. XV. 15); while the

wordplay of שמר, נשמר in 12^b, 13^b is reproduced by the use of the likesounding words *serve*, *preserve*. But however the passage be rendered, the point to be observed is the parallelism,

ויעבר באשה
ובאשה שמר:

וְהִתְעַוְּתוּ] They *quake* or *bow themselves*, under the influence of consternation.* The literal meaning of the word, as used elsewhere by Coheleth, is to crook or bend: "That which is crooked (מְעֻוָּת) cannot be made straight" (Eccl. I. 15; VII. 13). The lexicographers give the same meaning *flexit* to this root and to עוה, which latter is clearly used in expressing the emotion of fear:

"Therefore are my loins filled with pain: pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth: *distorqueor*, *ita ut non audiam*" ** (Is. XXI. 3).

Elsewhere, words meaning to bow down are used of *mourning* &c., as

שַׁחֹתִי (Ps. XXXV. 14); לָכֹת (Is. VIII. 5).

It appears then that התעותו may without extravagance be interpreted as indicative of mere emotion; and indeed it is reserved in comparison with Habakkuk's expression (III. 16):

יבוא רקב בעצמי
rottenness entered into my bones.

Many other passages might be adduced which describe mental emotion as violently affecting the body,

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* Compare again יִרְאוּ (ver. 5).

** נָעַוֵּיתִי מִשְּׁמֹעַ.

thus: "Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another" (Dan. V. 6); "All hands shall be feeble, and all knees shall be weak *as* water. They shall also gird *themselves* with sackcloth, and horror shall cover them" (Ezek. VII. 17, 18). There is then no good reason for assuming that Coheleth is describing anything more than the effects of mental perturbation: his expressions are not stronger than such as are so used elsewhere: while the very context shews by the use of unmistakeable expressions, as יִרְאוּ, that the effects of mental perturbation are being described.

Lastly, if we write הִתְעַוְּתוּ in the Arabic form, and turn to Freytag's lexicon, we find as the one meaning of that form, viz.

تَعَوَّتَ,

obstupefactus fuit.

אַנְשֵׁי חָיִל] *Men of power.* The expression might of course refer to physical prowess, but it is equally applicable to other kinds of excellence. The virtuous woman is אשת חיל (Ruth III. 11; Prov. XXXI. 10), and something more than physical prowess is implied in:

"Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people *able men*, such as fear God, men of truth hating covetousness, and place such over them. And Moses chose *able men*" (Exod. XVIII. 21, 25).

Elsewhere חיל denotes wealth, or influence and position generally: "Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in *power?*" (Iob XXI. 7). The expression עשה חיל seems to be used of getting

a good position by one's merits, in Ruth IV. 11: "And *do thou worthily* in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem." Even in: "*valiant men of might* in their generations" (1 Chron. VII. 2; VII. 40), it is to be noted that גִּבּוֹרֵי gives a bias to the expression. It would seem then that the "men of power"* may be, not men distinguished for mere physical prowess, but men of influence and position, in contrast with the menial watchers or keepers of the house.

וְיִבָּטְלוּ] They *cease*, give up work, are idle. The verb does not recur in Hebrew, but its meaning is sufficiently defined by Chaldee and other usage. It is rendered by *hinder* in Ezra VI. 8, and by *cease* in the following passage from the same book:

"Give ye now commandment to cause these men to *cease*, and that this city be not builded, until another commandment shall be given from me: and they made them to *cease* by force and power. Then *ceased* the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem. So it *ceased* unto the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia" (Ezra IV. 21—24).

The comparison of cognate dialects points to a like signification. Thus in Arabic we find s. v.: *vanus, jocatus, otiosus fuit;* and in Aethiopic: *interrumpi, cessare, finem capere.* So in Syriac the word is used of the Jews, who on the Sabbath, „*cease* from all work", &c. &c.

הַטֹּחֲנוֹת] *The grinders*, according to the English Version. It must be admitted that the rendering is literal, except that it fails to express the gender of the original. But even a literal rendering may chance to

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* Matrona *potens*, an *sedula* nutrix. (*Hor. A. P.*)

be unfair, owing to peculiarities of the language into which the translation is made. Now it happens that to the English reader *grinders* naturally suggests teeth, and it does not suggest to any one acquainted only with European customs what is certainly the primary meaning of the original. The word milleresses not being in common use, some such rendering as *grinding-maids* must be adopted: the most nearly corresponding class in an English household is *Kitchen-maids*. Grinding was a servile work, frequently imposed on *prisoners* (Jud. XVI. 21; Lam. V. 13). Otherwise, it was a usual occupation of women of the lower orders, whence the contrasts:

"From the first-born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill" (Exod. XI. 5).

"There is no more throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate. Take the millstones, and grind meal" (Is. XLVII. 1, 2).

The mill was a necessary article of domestic furniture, and allusions to it may be found in compositions of diverse date and style. Thus, in the sacred writings it is made the subject of special enactment:

"No man shall take the nether or the upper millstone to pledge: for he taketh a man's life to pledge" (Deut. XXIV. 6).

Or, to take a comparatively modern illustration of the lighter sort, a poet of the thirteenth century, El Behá-'ddín Zohair,* having lodged with an Armenian

* The Cairo edition being out of print, Professor Palmer is prepa-

woman in his travels, complains satyrically of the sound of the mill among the commonplace household noises which disturb him.* Such illustrations shew the prominence which the mill assumed in Eastern households; while the former represents the cessation of grinding as a very serious matter, which might well be singled out by Jeremiah or Coheleth as a symbol of distress.

כִּי מִעֲטוּ] When they have *wrought a little***: מעטו את הטחינה, *comminuerunt molitionem.* So Rabbinic commentators, who, no doubt rightly, give the Piel a transitive sense, and apply it to the frequentative action of grinding. The Piel, which does not recur, is by some made equivalent to the *kal****, while others introduce the misplaced emphasis: "they have *greatly* diminished". It does not appear why the grinders should have died off, or been turned out of the house, as would be required for the anatomical application to *loss of teeth;* nor does the popular rendering *feiern*, for בטלו†, agree very well with the notion that some serious mischief has befallen the *Müllerinnen.*

וְחָשְׁכוּ] They, the ladies at the lattices, *are darkened.*

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ring an edition for the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press. See also the article *Arabic Vers de Société* in the Cornhill Magazine for August 1872.

* Note that here, in contrast with ver. 4, the voice of the mill rises when there is a guest to be entertained.

** The significance of this is brought out by ver. 4.

*** In the intransitive sense of *diminish* (Is. XXI. 17; Jer. XXIX. 6; Ps. CVII. 39).

† These slaves or drudges would find satisfaction in the diminution of their toil: the cessation of festivities would be their holiday: hence the word בטל is peculiarly applicable.

Darkness symbolizes *unhappiness;* and light, *joy*, as in the following passages, *et passim.*

"All his days also he eateth in darkness, and he hath much sorrow and wrath with his sickness" (Eccl. V. 17).

"Let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many" (Eccl. XI. 8).

"I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath. He hath led me, and brought me into darkness, but not into light" (Lam. III. 1, 2).

"The elders have ceased from the gate, the young men from their music. The joy of our heart is ceased; our dance is turned into mourning. For this our heart is faint; for these things our eyes are darkened*" (Lam. V. 14—17).

"The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honour" (Esth. VIII. 16).

The darkening of the רֹאשׁ might therefore be interpreted of mental gloom, without reference to mere external darkness. Or we might bring in the notion that the festive robe, the "garment of praise", is laid aside, or not put on (2 Sam. XII. 20). In a time of calamity the *Lord* takes away from the daughters of Zion "The bravery of their tinkling ornaments", and brings up sackcloth upon all loins (Is. II. 18; XXXII. 11; Amos VIII. 10; Joel I. 8; *et passim*). It is natural that women in particular should be thought of in connexion with these outward signs of mourning; but an undefined gloom and darkening, without any such special allusion, suffices for our context.

הָרֹאוֹת בָּאֲרֻבּוֹת] Those that *look out of the windows;* or

* A. V. *dim.*

the gazers, who are at the lattices, i. e. the ladies who, being secluded and unoccupied, would be more in the habit than the men of congregating at the windows for amusement and for the gratification of curiosity. The following passages, in which however ארבה does not appear, seem to deserve consideration in connexion with this point:

"The mother of Sisera looked out at a window, and cried through the lattice, Why is his chariot so long in coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariot? Her wise ladies answered her, yea, she returned answer to herself . . ." (Jud. V. 28, 29).

"So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the *Lord* with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet. And as the ark of the *Lord* came into the city of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window" (2 Sam. VI. 15, 16).

"Yet hear the word of the *Lord*, O ye women*, and let your ear receive the word of his mouth, and teach your daughters wailing, and every one her neighbour lamentation. For death is come up into our windows*, and is entered into our palaces" (Jer. IX. 20, 21).

This last passage has not always been rationally explained. Some, comparing Joel II. 9, have indeed thought simply of an enemy coming in at the windows; but it seems that death in the abstract is meant. If now the windows** were places of pleasant concourse,

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* Observe that women are specially addressed.

** The point may be further illustrated from Zeph. II. 14, which will be discussed later. Also see 2 Kings IX. 30.

there would be no lack of significance in the coming in of death at the windows. The idea would be like that of its appearance in the theatre or the ballroom; and we have no need of such farfetched explanations as that, "Deridet stultam Judeorum confidentiam, qui clausis foribus se tutos putabant, quasi vero Dei potentia non conscendat supra nubes, et non possit per fenestras ingredi."

The contrast between the maiden who can only gratify her curiosity by *looking out of window*, and the man who is free to go out into the street, may be further illustrated by the following passage, quoted from Professor Wright's *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*, Vol. II. pp. 119—122:

"And whilst Paul was speaking these great things of God in the midst of the Church, in the house of Onesiphorus, one Thecla, a virgin, the daughter of Theocleia, who was betrothed unto Thamyris, came and sat at a window which was close to their roof, and was listening to the words of Paul, which he was speaking concerning purity; and she did not depart from that window, and by night and day was hearkening to the prayer of Paul, and was wondering at the faith... And she did not stir at all from that window... And Thamyris answered and said to his mother-in-law: Where is Thecla my betrothed? . . Theocleia answered and said to him: I have something new to tell thee, Thamyris! Thecla thy betrothed, lo, for three days and three nights has not got up from that window, neither to eat nor to drink; but her eyes are intently fixed, and she is looking at a strange man, who speaks vain and foolish words as if for a pastime. . . . . Then

Thamyris her betrothed became angry, and sprang up (and) went out into the street, and was looking at those who were going in and out to Paul."

Compare also, from the history of the Martyrdom of St. Apian:

"*Even* chaste virgins of the city, that were wont to be kept in the chamber, hasted to see this wondrous sight". and see the Jerusalem Targum on Gen. XLIX. 22.

In the verse above discussed it will have been remarked that we have a symmetrical specification of the four classes:

house keepers / *men of power*	masc.	*grinding-maids* / *mistresses*	fem.

"As with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress" (Is. XXIV. 2).

The same four classes are again mentioned in the same order in Ps. CXXIII. 2:

"As the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of a mistress; so our eyes &c."

Verse 4.

וְסָגְרוּ דְלָתַיִם בַּשּׁוּק] The anatomists fail to interpret the closing of the doors *to the street*, ἐν τῇ ἀγορᾷ, in a rational and consistent way. The illustrations adduced to support anatomical interpretations of דלתים would be less inadequate if it were not for the occurrence of the matter-of-fact word בשוק. Observe the effect of adding בשוק to Job XLI. 14: "Who can open the doors of his face [to the street]?" Moreover the literal use of בשוק in the next verse confirms the opinion

that the clause in which it stands in ver. 4 is to be taken in its natural sense, and after the manner of: "Every house is shut up, that no man may come in. There is a crying for wine in the streets, צְוָחָה עַל חַמְרִין בַּחוּצוֹת, all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone" (Is. XXIV. 10, 11). The closed door symbolises the exclusion of visitors: a guest who receives his *congé* complains, وتتقاذف بى الابواب, *and the doors repulsed me* (El-Har. *Makam.* 15): in a time of mourning open house is no longer kept. Conversely, the open door is expressive of hospitality: "The stranger did not lodge in the street: but *I opened my doors* to the traveller" (Job XXXI. 32).

בִּשְׁפַל קוֹל הַטַּחֲנָה] *On the falling of the sound of the mill.* The proper significance of this can scarcely be doubtful. As the preceding clause denotes the exclusion of visitors, so this denotes that preparations for their reception are at an end: there is no more grinding to be done for them: no more food to be prepared —

"Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the *sound of the milstones*, and the light of the candle. And this whole land shall be a desolation" (Jer. XXV. 10, 11).

"And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the *sound of a milstone* shall be heard no more at all in thee; And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee" (Rev. XVIII. 22, 23).

Thus we have an explanation of the ceasing of the grinding-maids *When they have wrought a little.* They have comparatively little to do because entertainments are no longer given. Contrariwise, the grinding maids are hardworked on the occasion of an influx of visitors:

φήμην δ' ἐξ οἴκοιο γυνὴ προέηκεν ἀλετρὶς
πλήσιον, ἔνθ' ἄρα οἱ μύλαι εἵατο ποιμένι λαῶν,
τῇσιν δώδεκα πᾶσαι ἐπερρώοντο γυναῖκες
ἄλφιτα τεύχουσαι καὶ ἀλείατα, μυελὸν ἀνδρῶν.
αἱ μὲν ἄρ' ἄλλαι εὗδον, ἐπεὶ κατὰ πυρὸν ἄλεσσαν,
ἡ δὲ μι' οὔπω παύετ' ἀφαυροτάτη δ' ἐτέτυκτο.

Odyssey XX. 105—110.

וְיָקוּם לְקוֹל] *And the bird rises to* (*or for*) *voice* — sets up a screech — And all the daughters of song sink down."

The parallelism suggests that צִפּוֹר should thus be made a nominative, in opposition to the English Version: "*he* shall rise up at the voice of the bird;" i. e. the old man, who has *not* been previously mentioned, is either (1) disturbed by the slightest sound, or (2) rises, owing to his wakefulness, with the birds, or at cock-crow (from צפרא dawn, according to the precarious conjecture of Bochart, &c.). But since the voice of the mill is said to fall, and the daughters of song to sink down or become inaudible, the intermediate clause is most naturally applied to a rising of the bird with reference to voice. For the construction, Dr. Ginsburg quotes:

קוּם לְמִשְׁפָּט	קוּם לְמְנוּחָה:	קוּם לַמִּלְחָמָה:
Ps. LXXVI. 10.	Ps. CXXXII. 8.	Jer. XLIX. 14.

In Arabic, not dissimilarly, قَامَتْ تَنُوحُ means *incepit plangere.*

It may be added that the idea of rising *for the purpose of speaking** is a very ordinary one (Jer. XXVI. 17; Prov. XXXI. 28; Lam. II. 19; III. 62), and hence קום may even be used alone as in Job XXI. 27: "The heaven shall reveal his iniquity; and the earth shall *rise up* against him." The following, from Is. LIV. 17, is doubly appropriate:

וְכָל לָשׁוֹן תָּקוּם־אִתָּךְ לַמִּשְׁפָּט תַּרְשִׁיעִי

Lastly, it is to be noticed, that the same two words שחח, שפל which in this verse are used in parallelism, with reference to falling sounds, are used in like manner in Is. XXIX. 4:

וְשָׁפַלְתְּ מֵאֶרֶץ תְּדַבֵּרִי
וּמֵעָפָר תִּשַּׁח אִמְרָתֵךְ
וְהָיָה כְאוֹב מֵאֶרֶץ קוֹלֵךְ
וּמֵעָפָר אִמְרָתֵךְ תְּצַפְצֵף׃

The bird of evil omen.

Many commentators take the voice of the bird as a typical slight sound, comparing צפצף (Is. XXIX. 4; XXXVIII. 14), and understanding either that the old man is disturbed by the least sound, or that the sound of the mill** rises to the piping voice of a sparrow, *Sie erhebt sich zur Stimme des Sperlings.**** But although

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* In Job XIX. 18 the meaning is probably: "When I arose *to speak*, they hooted me."

** Which some take to signify the mouth.

*** Gurlitt.

צפור may be connected with צפצף, it is not proved that the "voice of the bird" could be thus used to designate the feeblest of sounds. It remains to illustrate the meaning suggested by the heading of this paragraph, that it was a sound of evil omen, or a *doleful* sound, contrasting with the voices of singers.

Under certain circumstances indeed the voices of birds are pleasant sounds, as in Cant. II. 11, 12: "the winter is past, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land"; or in a poem of Zohair, describing a pleasant day spent on the banks of the Nile, where, in connexion with the sound of the water-wheels, he mentions also as a source of pleasure, اصوات الشحاريير, the voices of the singing birds. But on the other hand, the voices of doves &c. are used as typical mournful sounds, as in Is. XXXVIII. 14; LIX. 11; Ezek. VII. 16; and in Arabic* *passim;* while the mention of a bird's note as pleasing (Cant. II. 12) is in the Hebrew Scriptures exceptional. But the birds of evil omen do assume considerable prominence, and enter largely into descriptions of desolation, as in the following passages:

"The cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion and the stones of emptiness" (Is. XXXIV. 11).

"Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird**" (Rev. XVIII. 2).

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* The idea is also classical.

** It is important to notice that in the same passage it is

In Zeph. II. 14, discussed below, the birds at the windows of a house are signs of mourning and desolation, their voices being, as we shall see, contrasted with שִׁיר, the song of joy. There is also a passage in the Psalms which shews that the word צִפּוֹר itself might be applied to some particular bird of evil omen:

"I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert. I watch, and am as a *bird** alone upon the housetop" (Ps. CII. 6, 7).

We might also quote such passages as Mic. I. 8; Job XXX. 29, 31, which I give according to the Authorised Version, though without assuming that the names of the animals in question are rightly rendered:—

"Therefore will I wail and howl, I will go stripped and naked: I will make a wailing like the dragons, and mourning as the owls**" (Mic. I. 8).

"I am a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls. My harp also is turned to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep" (Job XXX. 29, 31).

A comparison of these passages goes far to justify the proposed interpretation of the voice of the bird, regarded as of evil omen, in contrast with (1) the sound of the mill and (2) the voices of musicians. The double contrast is given in the Apocalypse, and the second part of it in Zephaniah and Job. In some of these

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said: "the sound of a milstone shall be heard no more in thee" (ver. 22). Coheleth connects the same two ideas.

* E. V. *sparrow.*

** בְּנוֹת יַעֲנָה, which many take to be *ostriches.*

passages the degree of desolation exceeds that in Coheleth's description; but in the Psalm, where the actual word צפור is used, the bird of evil omen, which many suppose to be an *owl*, is merely represented as sitting on the top of a house which is not described as dilapidated.

Compare further:

Solaque culminibus ferali carmine bubo
Visa queri, et longas in fletum ducere voces.
Aeneid. IV. 462, 3.

The voice of an owl is introduced by Shakespeare in connexion with the death of Julius Caesar:

And yesterday the bird of night did sit,
Even at noonday, upon the market place,
Hooting and shrieking.

The raven of separation.

It is worth noticing however that the raven also is mentioned as a sign of desolation in Is. XXXIV. 11, and to compare the following, from Mr. Lane's *Arabic Lexicon* s. v. بين:

"غُرَابُ الْبَيْنِ *The raven of separation* or disunion; i. e. whose appearance, or croak, is ominous of separation .... called الْحَاتِمُ because it makes [or shows] separation to be absolutely unavoidable, according to the assertion of the Arabs, i. e. by its croak. Ḥamzeh says in his Proverbs that this name attaches to the غراب because, when the people of an abode go away to seek after herbage, it alights in the place of their tents, searching the sweepings."

Compare also:

اان زمّ اجمال وفارق جيرة
وصاح غراب البين انت حزين

Because camels have had their nose reins attached, and neighbours have parted from one another; and the raven of separation has cried out, art thou mournful?

The following, from the dirge of Abú Bekr el Daní in Ibn Khallikan, shews conclusively that that "the daughters of song" * are not necessarily singing birds simply because they are mentioned in parallelism with "the bird".

The hâm.

قصور خلت من ساكنيها فما بها
سوى الأدْم تمشى حول واقفة الدّما
يجيب بها الهام الصدى ولطالما
اجاب القِيَانُ الطائرُ المترنّما

*Palaces that are void of their inhabitants, and wherein are only the deer that go round about what is standing of the images. The hâm answers the çada** therein, and it is long since the singing girls answered the trilling finches.*

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* "Here *singing birds*, as is evident from the parallelism and the whole scope of the passage" (Ginsburg). But the parallelism is one of contrast, to say nothing of the misuse of שיר.

** The allusion here may be to a mythical bird which the ancient Arabs supposed to come forth from the head of the slain; but according to Freytag, the words used are applicable to the owl, or any bird of the night, and the parallelism rather favours this interpretation. Compare: "the satyr shall cry to his fellow" (Is. XXXIV. 14).

So in Coheleth:

The *bird* rises to voice:
The daughters of song are hushed;

the *bird* (Ps. CII. 6) being not improbably an *owl*.

וְיִשַּׁחוּ] The daughters of song *sink down*, as regards voice. For the genders compare Esth. I. 20.

וְכָל הַנָּשִׁים יִתְּנוּ יְקָר לְבַעְלֵיהֶן

כָּל בְּנוֹת הַשִּׁיר] According to one opinion the "daughters of song" are singing birds. But the word שִׁיר seems to be used only of articulate song, being applicable for example to a song of David, but not to the song of a bird. The one passage which I find quoted on the other side helps to confirm this view. The passage in question is from Zephaniah, where the Piel of the corresponding verb is said to mean "howl", of animals in the desert (Fürst):

"Both the cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the upper lintels of it; their voice shall sing, קוֹל יְשׁוֹרֵר, in the windows; desolation shall be in the thresholds" (Zeph. II. 14).

But, as when it is said of an occasion of death and mourning, "the songs of the temple shall howl" (Amos VIII. 3, 10), the whole force of the expression depends upon the contrariety of howling and singing, so in Zeph. II. 14 the expression קול ישורר would be pointless but for the inapplicability of the term *sing* to the voices of the birds previously mentioned. It is as if it were said that in the windows, the pleasant places of concourse, the only song should be the screech of the owl. I do not hesitate then to interpret the "daughters of song" of singing

women*, such as are spoken of earlier in the same book:

"I gat me men singers and women singers, שרים ושרות, and the delights of the sons of men" (Eccl. II. 8).

Although the strength of the allusion in the "voice of the bird" is to its being a sound of evil omen, we may still say that it comes into notice all the more for the falling of sound of the mill; and may then superadd its second and more important contrast with the festive sound of music. Its double significance, as (1) a sound of evil omen, which (2) becomes clearly audible owing to the general hush, may be not inaptly illustrated from *Marmion* V. 20:

The moon among the clouds rose high,
And all the city hum was by.
Upon the street, where late before
Did din of war and warriors roar,
You might have heard a pebble fall,
A beetle hum, a cricket sing**,
An owlet flap his *boding* wing
On Giles' steeple tall.

It is a common artifice to express silence by the audibility of slight sounds. The following curious illustration is from a description of the desert by Dhu Remmah:

للجنّ بالليل فى حافاتها زجل
كما تناوح يوم الريح عيشوم

* It makes no great difference whether we say *musicians* or *instruments of music.*

** The contrast between "The merry cricket" and the boding owl serves also to illustrate "the grasshopper &c. (ver. 5).

There is a humming of the djinns by night in its precincts, like the sighing of the tree عيشوم *when the wind blows.*

I am indebted to Hassoun Effendi for the above illustration; as also for the following, relating to the هام, from the same poet Dhu Remmah:

فدويّة تيهآء يدعو بجوها
دعآء الثكالى آخر الليل هامها

A devious little valley in the midst of which its hâm at the end of the night utters cries of the bereaved.

Lastly, to repeat from the Preface, verse 4 may be thus paraphrased:

Open house is not kept as heretofore
And the mill is no longer heard preparing food
for the reveller,
But the bird of evil omen raises his dirge,
And the merry voice of the singing girl is silent.

After this, no further mention occurs of the house and its inmates.

Verse 5.

גַּם] *Also.* This emphatic word extends the area of the description, marking a transition from "the house" to the garden, or to the country at large, according as בית is applied to a particular house, or used generically. As was suggested in the Preface, we may consider that a distinct class of people is now described. It should be noticed that the anatomists fail to make much of the word גם, when they say: "*Moreover* they are afraid of ascending eminences on account of their

weak limbs and short breath, and they are too lame easily to avoid the frights which might meet them on a level road"—no great advance on what had been said (?) before about the incapacity of their limbs &c. Not to say too much on this point, I will merely remark that I prefer a rendering which gives a distinct emphasis to the גם.

מִגָּבֹהַּ וגו׳] They fear *from on high*, and terrors are *on the path*. מן indicates the source of fear. In Hebrew we say to fear *from* or *from the face of* a thing, where in English the verb without a preposition following would suffice. חֲתִתִּים is a ἅπαξ λεγόμενον, but its meaning is not disputed: it is taken in the sense *terrors*, according to an acknowledged usage of the verb חתת. But the question arises, what is the significance of the contrast, *from on high . . . on the path?* Now it is a common mode of expressing extension, totality, and the like, to make mention of limits which are in some sense or other opposite, such as *Alpha* and *Omega;* the *beginning* and the *end; behind* and *before; hands* and *feet;* in the *heaven above* or in the *earth beneath.*

I suppose the last example to indicate the sense in the passage discussed. The scene lies in the field or garden, as the expressions *almond &c.* suggest. The people are oppressed by a pervading dread: the "terrors of death" have fallen upon them. To express this more forcibly a symmetrical contrast is used, and it is said that the terror not only lowers upon them from above but lurks also beneath their feet. This form of expression, as used both of pleasure and its opposite, is well illustrated by the following citations:

"And I will bring them into gardens of pleasantness, and they shall eat

من فوقهم ومن تحت ارجلهم

from above them and from beneath their feet" (*Coran* V. 70).

"Say, he it is that hath power to send upon you punishment

من فوقكم ومن تحت ارجلكم

from above you and from beneath your feet" (*Coran* VI. 65).

"They shall fret themselves, and curse their king and their God, and look *upward*. And they shall look *unto the earth;* and behold trouble and darkness" (Is. VIII. 21, 22).

According to these analogies the clauses discussed may be taken as expressing more fully that "Terrors shall make him afraid *on every side*" (Job XVIII. 11).

Before proceeding to discuss in detail the next three clauses,

וְנָאַץ	הַשָּׁקֵד
וְיִסְתַּבֵּל	הֶחָגָב
וְתָפֵר	הָאֲבִיּוֹנָה

it may be well to notice the argument from their parallelism.

1. With regard to the first verb נאץ, it is disputed whether it is to be taken in a good sense or a bad sense; but its parallelism with two verbs which signify to *grow heavy* and *to fail* respectively, seems to indicate that the bad sense is the more suitable.

2. Comparing the three substantives we may infer in like manner that the second, which is rendered "grasshopper", is to be taken in a good sense.

3. Since אביונה relates to the sense of *taste*, and שקד probably to that of *sight*, we may conjecture for the sake of completeness that חגב relates to the sense of hearing, and therefore denotes the grasshopper with reference to its *voice*.

וְיָנֵאץ] According to some this is a future Hiphil from נוץ or נצץ *to flourish*, with an inserted א not belonging to the root; but Gesenius and others make it a Hiphil from נאץ *sprevit*, with an unusual pointing. In any case there is some difficulty about the form; but the parallelism, as suggested above, seems to indicate that the bad sense is the most suitable, and hence that the word is most likely to be from the root נאץ, although some take it from נוץ, in the sense *ausblühen*. As regards the pointing, some prefer to alter to the Kal form. So Herzfeld, who quotes Deut. XXXII. 19, וַיַּרְא יְהוָה וַיִּנְאָץ, "And when the *Lord* saw *it*, he abhorred *them*". But perhaps the simplest change, if change be required*, would be to read in the piel וְיִנָּאֵץ (Ps. LXXIV. 10). The Piel is used transitively in 2 Sam. XII. 14: "because by this deed, נִאֵץ נִאַצְתָּ, thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the *Lord* to blaspheme". The usage of נְאָצָה shews that the root נאץ may afford a suitable sense in the passage discussed. Compare: "Thus saith Hezekiah, This day *is* a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and נְאָצָה: for the children are come to the birth, and *there is* not strength to bring forth" (2 Kings XIX. 3); where יוֹם צָרָה is also יוֹם נְאָצָה. So in Coheleth, where a יוֹם צָרָה is

* We might suppose the present pointing to have arisen from accidental assimilation to that of שָׁקֵד.

described, the root נאץ, whatever be its precise meaning, is appropriate.

Assuming then that יִנְאָץ comes from נאץ, we may understand, either

1. that the almond *causes aversion;* which would be an emphatic way of expressing that it has lost its charm and no longer pleases; or

2. that the almond *refuses*, fails to produce its blossoms; the sense being that external nature is represented as mourning. In 2 Kings XIX. 3, יוֹם נְאָצָה is a day of failure, when "there is not strength to bring forth." For the present I shall adopt the former meaning; the latter will be more particularly considered in the sequel.

הַשָּׁקֵד] *The almond*, with reference to its blossom; although some take it of its fruit. It is characteristic of the almond that it flowers early: "Ex his quae hieme, aquila exoriente, concipiunt flores, prima omnium floret amygdala mense Januario" (Plin. H. N. 66, 25). In accordance with this is the play on שקד *to watch* in Jer. I. 11, 12: "And I said, I see a rod of an almond tree. Then said the *Lord* unto me, Thou hast well seen, for I will hasten my word to perform it, שֹׁקֵד אֲנִי עַל דְּבָרִי לַעֲשֹׂתוֹ;" where Rashi and others describe the almond as ממהר להוציא פרח קודם לכל האילנות.

The almond may then be taken as a harbinger of spring, or a *spring blossom.* Spring is a time of cheerfulness, and its flowers, are a source of delight: "Let us fill ourselves with costly wine and perfumes, let no flower of the spring* escape us" (Sap. Sol. II. 7).

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* The reading ἀέρος is found for ἔαρος.

"For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; The flowers appear in the earth" (Cant. IV. 11. 12).

On the almond specially compare the verses of Ibn Tamím,

ازهر اللوز انت لكل زهر
من الازهار تأتينا امام
لقد حسنت بك الايام حتى
كانك فى فم الدنيا ابتسام

*Flower of the almond, thou comest to us a prince of all flowers; verily the days are so adorned by thee that thou art as it were a smile upon the face of nature.**

But in a time of sadness the things which should give pleasure fail to please: "the almond causes aversion": the spring blossom has no charm. So it is a mockery to sing songs to a heavy heart (Prov. XXV. 20); and strong drink is bitter to them that drink it (Is. XXIV. 9), when grief has taken away the capacity of enjoyment.

See also Duschak, *zur Botanik des Talmud*, p. 88. where, after an allusion to the use of the almond as a "Symbol der Zeugungskraft" in Indian mythology, and to its spiritual significance in connexion with the call of Jeremiah to the prophetic office, and with the blossoming of Aaron's rod (Num. XVII. 23), it is added that, "Der Mandelbaum ist auch das Bild der moralischen Hoffnung &c.", and the following expressive lines are quoted:

* Lit. *mouth of the world*, or *fortune*. The word امام points to the early blossoms of the almond; so too does ابتسام, a smile being thought of as introductory to a laugh.

Dem Hoffnungstraum von schönrer Zeit
Der auf des Elends Stirn erglüht
Die Mandelblüthe ist geweiht
Die an dem kahlen Zweige blüht (*Maare*).

But in this day of mourning the very symbol of hope looses its charm.

וְיִסְחַבֵּל] The *ḥagab* or grasshopper *grows heavy* or makes *itself a burden:* its voice instead of giving pleasure is felt to be troublesome. Compare *el Ḥarîrî's* استثقال ظلّه *the deeming his shadow to be heavy.* In this time of mourning the most pleasant sound no longer pleases. It is a mockery to sing songs to a heavy heart (Prov. XXV. 20). Compare Amos VIII. 3; Job XXX. 31.

הֶחָגָב] It appears from the parallelism that we must dismiss such meanings as "the devouring locust", and take *ḥagab* as above in a good sense. The allusion is probably to the τέττιξ, the voice of which was much admired by the ancients. There may at first sight appear to be an objection to making *ḥagab* or ἀκρίς mean τέττιξ, but from some of the illustrations given below it would appear that ἀκρίς and τέττιξ were sometimes used without much discrimination; and if ἀκρίς might stand poetically for τέττιξ, there is no difficulty in supposing that the Hebrew equivalent of ἀκρίς might stand for τέττιξ.

For the following valuable illustration from the poetical works of Gregory Bar Hebraeus (Cambridge M. S.* Gg. 3. 30. pp. 72, 3), I am indebted to R. L.

* The poem quoted, and some others, have been edited, but very inaccurately, by von Lengerke.

Bensly Esq., who has restored the sense of the sixth line by his obviously sound conjecture ܡܕܟܬܐ (for ܡܕܟܬܐ), a word which occurs in 2 Sam. XII, 31; 1 Chron. XX. 3; and is a Syriac form of *collaria*.

ܟ ܐܙܠ ܀

ܐ ܗܘ ܢܝܣܢ ܐܟܝܬܢ ܠܡܥܢܝܐ ܘܢܦܚ.
ܐܬܪܥܝ ܒܙܝܪ ܘܒܣܝܥ ܛܘܪܐ ܘܚܩܠܐ.
ܒܚܬܢ̈ܐ ܕܒܝܬ ܟܢܫܐ ܐܟܐ ܘܟܢܫ ܠܗ ܘܠܒ̈ܥܠ̈ܐ.
ܘܐܬܟܢܫ ܠܗ ܠܟ̈ܠ̈ܐ ܘܠܐ ܢܦܩ ܚܬܢܐ ܡܢ ܒܝܬ ܟܠܬܗ.

ܐ ܗܘ ܕܐܬܟܢܫ ܠܗ ܠܟ̈ܠ̈ܐ ܘܠܒ̈ܥܠ̈ܐ.
ܘܐܬܟܢܫ ܠܗ ܠܟ̈ܠ̈ܐ ܘܠܒ̈ܥܠ̈ܐ.
ܐ ܐܬܬ ܒܝ ܒܝܬ ܡܫܬܝܐ ܘܐܟܠ ܡܢ ܒܣܪܗ.
ܟ ܕܒ̈ܥܐ ܒܢ̈ܝ ܒܝܬ ܐܒܘ ܐܬܐ ܠܗ ܠܡܫܬܐ.

ܐ ܗܘ ܕܐܬܟܢܫ ܠܗ ܠܟ̈ܠ̈ܐ ܘܠܒ̈ܥܠ̈ܐ.
ܡܢ ܕܐܬܟܢܫ ܐܢ ܐܒܕ ܠܗ ܡܫܬܐ ܘܒܣܡ ܠܗ.
ܐ ܐܬܐ ܒܝ ܒܝܬ ܡܫܬܝܐ ܘܐܟܠ ܡܢ ܒܣܪܗ.
ܟ ܕܒ̈ܥܐ ܒܢ̈ܝ ܒܝܬ ܐܒܘ ܐܬܐ ܠܗ ܠܡܫܬܐ.

On the Rose.

Lo Nisan hath come and breathed consolation to the afflicted,
And with flowrets hath clothed hill and field in glory.
At the nuptials of the rose it hath invited and gathered the flowers as guests,
And prepared the way that the bridegroom may go forth from the chamber.

Like brides lo! the flowers of the field are adorned,
And have gotten deliverance from the strong bands of winter.*
Lo! the tongue of the τέττιξ is loosed and she** ever sings,
And on the βήματα of the narcissus and the myrtle pipes to the rose.

Lo! the lilies like brides from the κοιτῶνες,
Come forth adorned and exulting in the splendour of colours.
Lo the τέττιξ is beside herself in love of the lilies,
And pipes poetry to the rose in the midst of the gardens.

Here the chirp of the τέττιξ assumes prominence as a symbol of a time which brings consolation to the afflicted. Contrariwise in Coheleth the afflicted refuse to be comforted by the voice of the τέττιξ.

Over the word ܛܛܝܓܘܣ in line 11 a later hand has written ܒܠܒܠ, i. e. *the nightingale* (Persian). It is remarkable that the τέττιξ was commonly classed with song *birds*. Bar Bahlul s. v. gives the meaning صنف الطائر, a kind of bird. The locust was also called عصفور and פרחא. Symmachus in rendering Jer. VIII. 7

* This illustrates Job XXXVIII. 31, according to one interpretation: "canst thou bind the sweet influences of the Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?"

** Feminine, although generally the male τέττιξ is spoken of as the singer.

has *τέττιξ καὶ ἀγούρ*. In a translation of the Fables of "Sophos", i. e. Aesop, טיטכוס צירפא several times occurs for *τέττιξ*.

In Arabic, the word زم, which is used of musical and pleasant sounds, is applied to the locust (*Lane*); but I have not met with any passages which would serve as illustrations.

Numerous illustrations might be adduced from the Greek. As regards fables relating to the *τέττιξ*, see those numbered 65, 172, 337, 399—401 in Karl Halm's Aesopic collection. The last of these occurs in a versified form among the fables of Babrius.* The *τέττιξ* having begged food of the ant in winter,

τί οὖν ἐποιεῖς, φησί, τῷ θέρει τούτῳ;
οὐχ ἐσχόλαζον, ἀλλὰ διετέλουν ᾄδων.
γελάσας δ' ὁ μύρμηξ, τόν τε πυρὸν ἐγκλείων,
χειμῶνος ὀρχοῦ, φησίν, εἰ θέρους ἦσας.

The Anacreontic ode *εἰς τέττιγα* deserves to be quoted at length. It stands thus in Bergk's text:

Μακαρίζομεν σε, τέττιξ,
ὅτε δενδρέων ἐπ' ἄκρων
ὀλίγην δρόσον πεπωκώς
βασιλεὺς ὅπως ἀείδεις·
σὰ γάρ ἐστι κεῖνα πάντα,
ὁπόσα βλέπεις ἐν ἀγροῖς,
χώποσα φέρουσιν ὧραι.
σὺ δὲ φιλία γεωργῶν,
ἀπὸ μηδενός τι βλάπτων·

* Compare the Latin of Phaedrus.

σὺ δὲ τίμιος βροτοῖσιν,
ὑέρεος γλυκὺς προφήτης·
φιλέουσι μέν σε Μοῦσαι,
φιλέει δε Φοῖβος αὐτός,
λιγυρὴν δ' ἔδωκεν οἰμὴν·
τὸ δὲ γῆρας οὔ σε τείρει
σοφέ, γηγενής, φίλυμνε,
ἀπαθής, ἀναιμόσαρκε·
σχεδὸν εἶ Θεοῖς ὅμοιος.

The following illustrations (see *Fritzsche's* Theocritus) may be added:

τέττιγος ἐπὶ τύγα φέρτερον ᾄδεις.
Theocr. Id. I. 148.

βάτραχος δὲ ποτ' ἀκρίδας ὥς τις ἐρίσδω.
Theocr. Id. VII. 41.

ἀκρίς, ἐμῶν ἀπάτημα πόθων, παραμύθιον ὕπνου,
ἀκρίς, ἀρουραίη Μοῦσα, λιγυπτέρυγε,
αὐτοφυὲς μίμημα λύρας.
Meleagr. Anth. Pal. VII. 175.

τὸ εὔπνουν τοῦ τόπου ὡς ἀγαπητὸν καὶ σφόδρα ἡδύ· θερινόν τε καὶ λιγυρὸν ὑπηχεῖ τῷ τῶν τεττίγων χορῷ.
Plat. Phaedr. 230, C.

ᾄδειν λέγονται οἱ τέττιγες, ἄλλα δὲ θήρια βομβεῖ, οἷον μέλιττα.
Aristot. Hist. An. IV. 9.

γήραϊ δὴ πολέμοιο πεπαύμενοι. ἀλλ' ἀγορηταί ἐσθλοί, τεττίγεσσιν ἐοικότες, οἵτε καθ' ὕλην δενδρέῳ ἐφεζόμενοι ὄπα λειριόεσσαν ἱεῖσιν.
Il. II. 151–3.

Illustrations from the Latin are less numerous. One has already been given from Phaedrus. To this add, from the fable, *Cicada et noctua*,

> Dormire quia me non sinunt cantus tui,
> Sonare cithara quos putes Apollinis, &c.

In Virgil's Culex 151 the "argutae cicadae" are mentioned in connexion with the "dulcia carmina" of birds. The epithet "querulae" in Georg III. 328 does not describe the grasshopper's note as unpleasant. See Culex 149. In one place we find "*raucis* cicadis", which may seem to imply that their sound was held to be unpleasant:

> O crudelis Alexi, nihil mea carmina curas?
> Nil nostri miserere? mori me denique coges.
> Nunc etiam pecudes umbras et frigora captant;
> Nunc virides etiam occultant spineta lacertos;
> Thestylis et rapido fessis messoribus aestu
> Allia serpyllumque herbas contundit olentes:
> At mecum *raucis*, tua dum vestigia lustro,
> Sole sub ardenti resonant arbusta *cicadis*. Ecl. II. 6.

But this exactly illustrates the proposed interpretation of יסתבל החגב, since it is a person *in an unhappy frame of mind* to whom the cicada sounds hoarse.

וְתָפֵר] It *fails* (hiph. from פרר) viz. to attract appetite.

הָאֲבִיּוֹנָה] *ἡ κάππαρις* LXX. Gesenius and others make the word mean primarily "*concupiscentia*, cibi et Veneris" (from אבה to *desire*), and secondarily *capparis*, this berry being supposed to act as an aphrodisiac. But as Rosenmüller remarks, the passage quoted from Plutarch *Sympos* VI, *πολλοὶ τῶν ἀποσίτων, ἐλαίαν ἀλ-*

μάδα λαμβάνοντες ἢ κάππαριν γευσάμενοι, ταχέως ἀνέλαβον, καὶ παρεστήσαντο τὴν ὄρεξιν, shews nothing more than that the berries spoken of were regarded as stimulating the appetite for food; and it has also denied that a suitable meaning could be derived from אבה, *consentire*. As regards the form of the word "omnino simile non exstat." In later Hebrew אֲבִיוֹנוֹת (see Buxtorf) stands for "*Baccae, minuti arborum fructus, ut lauri, olivae, còrni, myrti, et similium.*" It is used also of caper*berries*, in contrast with the husk קפריס, thus:

זורק את האביונות ואוכל את הקפריסין, abjicit *baccas*, et comedit *cortices*". On the *vinum capparinum*, we read that "Ejus usus fuit olim in confectione suffitus aromatici sacri. R. Salomon tradit, Vinum capparinum esse in quo cappares conditae sunt: alii volunt, Kapparis esse nomen proprium loci ubi vinum provenit generosissimum et fortissimum." It it appears then that the caper may be regarded as a delicacy, or relish, which appeals likewise by its fragrance to the sense of smell. The rendering *caper* is very suitable to the context, but, in the translation I have used *olive* as a more familiar poetical symbol, not without regard to the fact that this meaning appears from Buxtorf's testimony to be actually admissible.

כִּי הֹלֵךְ הָאָדָם] *Because the man*—the lord of the palace above described, but having no longer any superiority over common men—*is going*, or according to the LXX, *has gone*,

אֶל בֵּית עֹלָמוֹ] *to the house of his eternity*, εἰς τὸν αἰώνιον τόπον (Tobit III. 6), to the "house appointed for all living" (Job XXX. 23), in contrast with the

house which he is leaving, or has left. In Syriac, صمد حكصا is used to denote a *sepulchre*. See Wright's *Apocr. Acts* p. حكصا.

וְסַבְבוּ רוֹגְ'] It is more natural to take this of mourners who are actually employed, than of mourners waiting to be hired. See Jer. IX. 17, 18. I suppose the preceding verses to describe the state of feeling while the mourners go about In this verse it is said first of all that there is a pervading awe, and it is added that the sense of enjoyment is taken away. The almond flower, prized for its beauty and its promise of brighter days: the τέττιξ, so grateful to the ear of the ancients: the caperberry, appealing by its pungent taste to the palate, and perhaps also by its fragrance to the sense of smell—one and all have lost their charm. It is as if it were said that no pleasure was derived from such a scene as that described in Cant. II. 11—13: "For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds (?) is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell."

It is after the manner of Eastern poets, when describing scenes of pleasure, to make specific allusions to the several senses. This practice is illustrated in a striking way by a line cited by Mr. Lane from *Ḥalbet el-Kumeyt*, Chap. XI. Mr. Lane thus writes:

"All the five senses should be gratified. For this reason an Arab toper, who had nothing, it appears, but iwne to enjoy, exclaimed—

Ho! give me wine to drink; and tell me, *This is wine.*

for on drinking, his sight and smell and taste and touch would all be affected; but it was desirable that his hearing should also be pleased."

According to the foregoing interpretation, the almond flower, the τέττιξ, and the caperberry are represented as unattractive to the senses of the mourner. According to another interpretation, already alluded to, the figure is that of a sympathetic mourning of external nature, the symptoms whereof would be such as are described in Habak. III. 17: "the fig tree shall not blossom, neither *shall* fruit *be* in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, &c." So Coheleth may intend to describe the "merry cricket" as losing his briskness, and a blight as falling on the choicest of fruits and flowers. The idea of the mourning of external nature is presented in a highly wrought form in the lines preceding those already quoted from the Dirge of Abu Bekr el Dani. It is there said that, "Now that thou art gone, the moon no longer keeps his station in the sky, nor does the sun culminate smilingly at noonday. The rain weeps for thee, and the wind rends her robes, &c." Compare, in a somewhat different sense: "In the day when he went down to the grave I caused a mourning: I covered the deep for him, and I restrained the floods thereof, and the great waters were stayed: and I caused Lebanon to mourn for him, and all the trees of the field fainted for him" (Ezek. XXXI. 15).

But there is no great difference between the two ways of applying the expressions under discussion. According to one interpretation the natural objects in question are said to be themselves affected: according to the other the natural objects remain as before, but

the mourners are in such a frame of mind that they derive no pleasure from them. There is a like difference between Amos VIII. 3 (or Job XXX. 31), on the one hand, and Prov. XXV. 20 on the other. In the one case, the "songs of the temple howl", and cease to be what they were: in the other case, the songs are unchanged, but the "heavy heart" takes no pleasure in them. In the dirge of Coheleth, it is of comparatively slight importance whether ver. 5 be taken subjectively or objectively, the essence of the proposed interpretation being the same in either case.

Verse 6.

עַד אֲשֶׁר לֹא] The third stage in the description now commences.

יִרְחַק חֶבֶל הַכֶּסֶף] There is great difficulty in determining the exact nature of the figure employed in this verse. The idea of the falling and breaking of a lamp is in itself unsatisfactory, and there are also verbal difficulties in the way of its adoption. As regards details, many commentaters read יֵרָתֵק, following the קרי, and they assign to this a meaning in accordance with the vulgate rendering: "antequam *rumpatur* funiculus argenteus". The verb occurs once only, viz. in Nah. III. 10: וכל גדוליה רֻתְּקוּ בזקים, "and all her great men were bound in chains"; and it has to be assumed that the word in Coheleth has the opposite meaning, *entketten*. Some who are dissatisfied with this suppose the true reading to be יִנָּתֵק, while Tobiah ben Eliezer and others take רתק as a collateral form of נתק, the meaning in either case being *to break*. But the break-

ing of the "silver cord", which, *if* the image be from a lamp, may be assumed to be metallic—perhaps ܫܫܠܬܐ ܕܦܪܙܠܐ, *funiculus ferri*, such as we find elsewhere spoken of in connexion with hanging lamps—would be an extraordinary occurrence, and very unsuitable as a type of natural death. For this reason alone the popular interpretation might well be rejected, to say nothing of the difficulty of arriving at the desired meaning *break*. Of modern writers Zöckler reads, according to the כתיב, יִרְחַק, in the sense *give way*. The *ἀνατραπῇ τὸ σχοινίον* of the LXX appears to have been derived from the reading of the כתיב. Supposing the true meaning to be that the silver cord lengthens out, or removes to a distance, it is still a matter of conjecture in what way this meaning is to be applied. The "giving way" of a lamp-chain is not a biblical image of death, and cannot be said to resemble the mere extinction of a lamp—a figure which is frequently employed. It is more probable that the allusion is in some way to the process of *weaving* or *spinning*, which took a prominent place amongst indoor employments (Prov. XXXI. 13), and is therefore suited to stand in parallelism with the subsequent allusions to the *spring* and *well*, which were centres of outdoor work and life. If we suppose the allusion to be to some delicate kind of work with choice materials, we shall have no difficulty in explaining the "silver cord *or* thread." The *lengthening out*, or *coming to an end*, or *breaking off* of the thread of life is a sufficiently familiar image (Is. XXXVIII. 12; Job VII. 6; Ovid. Her. 12, 4). It remains to be considered whather the silver cord is to be taken alone or in connexion with what follows.

וְתָרֹץ גֻּלַּת הַזָּהָב] J. D. Michaelis in his *Deutsche Uebersetzung des Alten Testaments, mit Anmerkungen für Ungelehrte*, renders this clause and the preceding: "ehe der Silberstrick wieder zusammen gekettet, und die güldene Kugel der Lampe wieder gebessert wird;" and he adds by way of explanation: "die Kette bricht, die Kugel fällt zu Boden, und wird beschädigt, dies geschieht im Tode, aber der Werkmeister bessert die zerbrochene Lampe, und stellet sie von neuem wieder auf, dies ist ein Bild des Lebens nach dem Tode." This extraordinary interpretation is truer to the image supposed to be employed than the view now generally adopted. It has been remarked that the metallic suspender of a lamp would be very unlikely to break: it may be added that the "golden bowl" of the lamp might fall and not be so damaged but that a little mending would set it right again. Gesenius attempts to elude the difficulty by assuming that the bowl and the cord are not metallic: "Similitudo petita est a lampade e materia fragili facta, sed deaurata, e funiculo argenteo (h. e. serico cum filis argenteis) pendente, et abruptio fili mortem significat". But we have no right to assume that the *gullah*, *if* a lamp-bowl, would be non-metallic (Exod. XXV. 31 sqq.; Zech. IV. 2; Rev. I. 11); and independently of this there remains the objection that Coheleth is describing the death which is common to all, and would therefore not have used so strange and exceptional a figure as the falling and breaking of a costly and carefully tended piece of furniture. It is in the nature of lamps to burn out or be extinguished, but not to fall and be broken. Lastly, it has not been made out that תרץ could be taken intran-

sitively or passively in the sense *be broken*. The meaning of יָרוּץ in Is. XLII. 4 is disputed.

It is natural to take תָּרֻץ as the future of רוץ, to *run*, but the meaning of גֻּלָּה (LXX *ἀνθέμιον*) is more doubtful. In Zech IV. 3 it is used of the bowl of a lamp: in 1 Kings VII. 41 of the capitals of columns: in Josh. XV. 19 of springs of water. Rejecting these significations, I conjecture that גֻּלָּה may mean much the same as גָּלִיל, their common root denoting *roundness* in form or motion. The latter word occurs in the following contexts: "the two leaves of the one door were folding, גְּלִלִים" (1 Kings VI. 34); "his hands are גְּלִילֵי זָהָב" (Cant. V. 14), where the meaning is not quite certain. "*There were* white, green, and blue *hangings*, fastened with cords of fine linen, בְּחַבְלֵי בוּץ, and purple to silver rings, עַל גְּלִילֵי כֶסֶף, and pillars of marble" (Esth. I. 6). In the second and third of these passages גליל, being parallel with עמוד, might denote something cylindrical. Again, the passage from Esther is the more appropriate as an illustration, because in it חֶבֶל and גָּלִיל are mentioned together, like חֶבֶל and גֻּלָּה in Coheleth. Perhaps גליל should be rendered *roller*, and גֻּלָּה *reel;* we might then take תָּרוּץ to mean *run* or *spin round*, the word being applicable to rapid motion, circular or otherwise. The hurried motion of the spinning wheel typifies life hastening to its close: "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, מִנִּי אָרֹג, and are spent without hope" (Job VII. 6). In Job IX. 25 it is said: "my days are swifter than a רָץ" (lit. *runner*), where the comparison suggests that רץ may be another name for ארג; in corroboration of which it may be remarked that the Greek word for *wheel*,

τρόχος, means literally a *runner*. At any rate it may be said that the use of חרוץ is not unfavourable to the supposition that גלה signifies *a reel*, or some kind of *wheel*. We may either suppose the spinning of the reel to be—as indeed it most probably is—a complete figure like that in Job VII. 6; or we may connect it in some way with what is said of the "silver cord", thus when the thread escapes or comes to an end—viz. at the completion of the spinning—the wheel, being released from the strain put upon it, spins round rapidly. The image would thus be from the *running down*, as we should say, of the machinery employed. Or perhaps גלה (= a roll, מגלה) may denote the fabric which falls off when the work is ended (Is. XXXVIII. 12). So in Job VII. 6 ארג is sometimes said to denote not the shuttle but the texture. We should expect some difficulty in dealing with what may be technical terms in spinning or weaving; but, to speak generally, it is admitted that a metaphor from such operations would be according to analogy, while on the other hand there is no example of anything like the metaphor from the breaking of a costly lamp, as applied to natural death. Moreover, it is by no means certain that the "silver cord" and the "golden *gullah*" are to be taken in connexion with one another. On the contrary, the parallelism favours the idea that this first hemistich, like the second, contains two distinct though analogous figures; and if this be the case it is sufficiently obvious that the lamp-theory would have to be given up, and, I think, almost equally obvious that that the metaphor in חבל is from the thread used in spinning.

וְתִשָּׁבֵר כַּד] The shattering of a common pitcher* is on the contrary a recognized Biblical image. Some have attempted to establish a connexion between the two hemistichs of ver. 6; but it is evident that there are two sets of figures, the one relating to the "pleasant vessels" of the more delicate indoor employments, and the other to the ruder out door life of the drawers of water. Compare: "and his spring shall become dry, and his fountain shall be dried up: he shall spoil the treasure of all pleasant vessels" (Hos. XIII. 15); "The precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter" (Lam. IV. 2. See 2 Tim. II. 20). The breaking of the pitcher is a general figure, i. e. it symbolizes the destruction of the man's whole life, not of any particular member of his body (Jer. XVIII. 6; Is. XXX. 14; Ps. II. 9).

עַל הַמַּבּוּעַ] The pitcher is shattered *over* the מבוע, by which is meant a *spring* appearing at the surface of the ground, as opposed to the deep "well" next spoken of. Compare the reduplication—"spring", "fountain"—in Hos. XIII. 15.

וְגָרַץ הַגַּלְגַּל] This figure is a variation on that of the shattered pitcher, but there is some difficulty in determining its precise meaning. I should conjecture from the parallelism that גלגל denotes the vessel which in a בור or well corresponds to the כד of a "spring". According to this conjecture it would denote a *bucket*, with reference to its rounded form. A similar application of the root appears in גֻּלְגֹּלֶת, "*cranium*, a figura

* Compare the contrast in Levit. VI. 28.

globo simili dictum"; while the word itself in later Hebrew means a *sphere*. The use of רצץ fits in with this hypothesis. It denotes a less complete breaking than שבר, with which it contrasts in קָנֶה רָצוּץ לֹא יִשְׁבּוֹר (Is. XLII. 3. see Ezek. XXIX. 7). In the present context it might describe the wearing out of the bucket (attached to a simple rope) by friction against the side of the well. The usual interpretation is that גלגל is a *wheel* which was used in drawing water from the well; but it is doubtful whether such an apparatus was in use at the time and place of writing, whatever they may have been. Elsewhere in the Old Testament there is no corresponding allusion, and even in the New Testament the winding apparatus is not recognized: "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep" (Joh. IV. 11). In the *Desert of the Exodus*, p. 389, there is a woodcut of the well of Beersheba, and it is remarked: "the Bedawin, to whom the Scriptures are unknown, still point with pride to the great work which their father Ibrahim achieved; and, as they draw water from it for their flocks, the ropes that let the buckets down still glide along the same deep furrows in the masonry by which the Patriarch's servants let down theirs." To the same effect see Tristram's *Land of Sinai*, p. 373. Nachtigal assigns some importance to the question when he writes: "In Absicht des Rades der Cisterne vergleiche man die Abbildung des persianischen Brunnenrads in Shaws Beschreibung der Reise durch die Barbarey und die Levante. Vielleicht könnte man aus diesem "Rad der Cisterne" eher als aus den persischen Worten, die man in diesem Buche zu finden glaubt, auf eine späte Verfertigungsperiode desselben,

oder doch einiger Theile schliessen. In andern hebräischen Büchern finden wir nemlich nur Beschreibungen von einfachen Cisternen; und so könnte man vermuthen, dass die Israeliten diese künstlichen Vorrichtungen erst in den neuen Verbindungen kennen lernten, in welche sie durch ihren Aufenthalt in den babylonischen Ländern kamen. Doch kannten sie diese schon seit Salomo's Zeiten." But whatever date be assigned to Ecclesiastes, the difficulty to some extent remains (Joh. IV. 11). Even if it were granted that a wheel was in use, we might suppose גלגל to mean not the machinery for winding but the thing moved by it (Ps. LXXXIII. 4), i. e. either the *bucket* or the water drawn up by winding. I doubt whether an injury done to the wheel itself is a natural image of a man's death. Here again Michaelis finds an allusion to life after death: "der Eimer, mit dem man das Wasser heraufzog, zerbricht, aber das Werk wird wieder hergestellt: so stirbt der Mensch, und Gott giebt ihm ein zweites Leben". Certainly the breaking of the wheel does not express an irretrievable loss. The simile wanted is more like that of "broken cisterns, that can hold no water" (Jer. II. 13); or burst bottles from which the wine is lost (Mark. II. 22). Compare 2 Sam. XIV. 14: "For we must needs die, and are *as* water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again". The breaking of the wheel so that water can no more be drawn, does not make a good parallel to the returning of the spirit to God. The pouring back of water once drawn, whether from the wearing out of the bucket or otherwise, is a more suitable idea.

אֶל הַבּוֹר] The bucket is broken *towards*, or in

such a way that its contents are poured back into, *the well.*

וְרוּחַ וגו׳] There are cases in which אל and על are used indiscriminately; but the parallelism suggests that they are here used accurately. The body returns עַל *upon** the earth as it was, like the pitcher which is shattered visibly *upon* or over the spring: while the spirit returns to God who gave it, like the contents of the bucket which are poured back אֶל into the hidden depths of the well (Prov. XX. 5): "*Unto* the place from which the rivers come, thither they return again" (Eccl. I. 7).

But to conclude, I think it clear that the images in 6^b are of an altogether different kind from the image or images in 6^a. In 6^b there are two analogous but distinct images, the one referring to a spring, the other to a well: hence the parallelism leads us to infer that 6^a also comprises two distinct images. If so, it may be assumed that the „silver cord" is simply the familiar image of the thread of life, and that the meaning of the obscure *gullah* is in some way analogous.

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* Like על פני השדה, Ezek. XXXII. 4.

** Compare Jud. IX. 53 for the use of נֵרֶץ. This properly belongs to רוץ, but see the lexicons.

Section II.

The Anatomical rendering.

The anatomists not unfrequently state the principle of their rendering as follows:—

"Corporis senilis fragilitatem sub perpetua allegoria *domus* ante oculos ponit, quae concussis et labefactatis fundamentis manifesta dat ruinae signa" (Rosenmüller).

They then proceed to cite passages which describe the body as *τοῦ ζώου σκῆνος*, and omit to notice that their rendering does not really correspond with the illustrations adduced. The fabric of the house is but slightly alluded to, the attention being concentrated on its inhabitants. If the house itself is mentioned it is only subordinately, in the expression *housekeepers:* the windows are not directly mentioned, but only the *lookers out* at the windows: even the doors, as I venture to think, merely symbolize by their being closed the exclusion of *visitors:* but at any rate they are not represented as off their hinges or in any way damaged: nor is the faintest allusion to the dilapidation of the house anywhere to be found. That which makes the

staple of Coheleth's description is the condition of the household as distinct from the fabric, and the real question is whether the individual body was likely to have been described as a collection of *grinding-maids*, *lookers out of window*, and the like. We might indeed cite the fable of the contention between the belly and the limbs, where the latter, which are described as persons, complain that they have to work while the belly reaps the fruit of their labour; or again, Cicero's:

"Sensus autem, interpretes ac nuntii rerum, in capite tamquam in arce mirifice ad usus necessarios et facti et collocati sunt. Nam oculi tamquam speculatores altissimum locum obtinent, ex quo plurima conspicientes fungantur suo munere" (De Nat. Deor. II. 140); which is the best illustration of any detail in the anatomical rendering that has been adduced. But although the eyes may be called *speculatores*, it does not follow conversely that *speculatores* in any given context means eyes; and it should be borne in mind that it is this converse form which requires illustration in the passage discussed. The question is not whether Coheleth is likely to have said directly that the eyes are like lookers out of window, but whether by the bare mention of ראות וגו׳ he is likely to have meant eyes. The important difference between the direct and converse comparisons may be further illustrated from the Song of Songs. Could the word *doves*, without explanation, stand for eyes, simply because it is said (IV. 1) conversely: "Thine eyes are doves"? or could *sheep* in like manner stand for teeth, because it is said (IV. 2): "Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which come up from the washing; whereof

every one bear twins, and none is barren among them"?

If the anatomical rendering is to be retained it ought to be shewn that its details are consistent. Not to make too much of the mere mixture of images sanctioned by most interpreters, who, having a vague conception that the body is described as a "house", proceed to make some member parts of the fabric, as *doors*, and others the inhabitants, *keepers of the house*, &c., I think that it will be found scarcely possible to harmonize the various details on any rational plan. But assuredly, unless a consistent whole can be made out, there is but slight reason for granting the details of the interpretation. "Grinding-maids" and "lookers out of window" are not such obvious expressions for teeth and eyes as to be quite independent of the context for their anatomical meanings; and yet these, be it remarked, are emphatically the strong points of the rendering, which has very little else but tradition to rest upon. That consistency may be fairly demanded would be doubtless admitted to a certain extent by all anatomists. Compare the argument of Professor Tayler Lewis on the closing of the doors (ver. 4):

"The old sensualist, he who had lived so much abroad and so little at home, is shut in at last. 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.

* This is a common view, since the *doors* are mentioned in connexion with the *mill*, and the *milleresses* are "teeth".

It is rather the door to the interior, the cellar door, that leads down to the stored or consumed provision, the stomach, or belly".

But let us say that the doors are *ears:* the grinders *teeth:* the lookers out of window *eyes:* the housekeepers, including of course doorkeepers, *arms:* the strong men *legs;* and we may deduce that it is a function of the arms to open and shut the ears, which inclose the eyes, teeth, and legs. The propriety of thus applying the test of consistency is pointedly suggested by the foregoing argument cited from an anatomist.

The same writer, whose judicious attempts to bring out "a primary meaning" prove that he is well nigh a convert to the literal rendering, remarks in another place:

"The outward figure is that of a lordly mansion — a palace or castle with its soldiers &c. It is a luxurious mansion with its gates once standing wide open to the street *to admit the revellers*, now closing to the street".

But if the outward figure is that of a house excluding revellers, there must be some reason to be assigned for their exclusion; and what can this be except that the master of the house is no longer in a condition to give entertainments? If this be granted, what more is required? and why express the same thing over again hieroglyphically? or to put this argument generally, if, as anatomists agree, the picture is that of a "house" of which the members are in a state of perturbation, to what is this perturbation to be referred, if not to the terrors of death? but if the presence of

death is literally described, the conditions of the context are already satisfied.

The most complete example of enigmatical anatomy which I can recall is given by *el Ḥaríri;* but it is only a sort of converse of the popular rendering of Coheleth, and even *el Ḥaríri*, with all his excruciating subtlety, puts the reader on his guard; the whole run of the passage shewing that a literal rendering is impossible. The following is cited from Professor Chenery's translation of *el Ḥaríri.* Makam. 13:—

"Know, O ye who are the refuge of the hoping, the stay of the widowed, that I am of the Princes of the tribes, the ladies that are kept jealously:—My people and my husband were wont to settle on the Breast, and to journey at the Heart, to burden the Back, to advance the Hand; but when Fortune destroyed the Arms, and pained the Liver by means of the Limbs; and turned about till Back was Belly; then the Eyeball grew dim, and the Eyebrow restless, and the Eye went forth, and the Palm was lost and the Forearm grew dry, and the right hand broke, and the Elbows departed, and there remained to us neither Front tooth nor Eye tooth. —Now since the Green life was become Dust-coloured, and the Yellow loved one has been tarnished, my White day is made Black, and my Black temple is made White, so that the Blue-eyed enemy has pitied me, and now, welcome the Red death!

The explanation of this speech is as follows:—

My people and my husband were wont to sit in the first place in the assembly; to march at the centre or headquarters of the army; they mounted their friends on the backs of their camels; they conferred

favours: but when Fortune destroyed those who helped them, and afflicted them by taking away their children and servants, who laboured for them and brought them gain; and when their state was completely overthrown; then, whoever looked to them with respect withdrew; and their attendants were insolent; and their coin left them; and their quiet was lost; and their fire-staff gave no spark; their power was broken; their comforts and conveniences were scattered; there remained not a camel, young or aged. Now, since the plenty of life has become barren, and the loved gold coin has turned aside from me, my happy day has been saddened, and the black hair of my temples has been whitened, so that the blue-eyed Greek, my enemy, has pitied me, and now, welcome death in war!"

This, and other illustrations that have been given, may appear to some to favour more or less the anatomical rendering. Let the reader judge for himself. I now proceed to particulars, remarking that the great contrariety of opinion amongst the commentators seems to shew at any rate that no particular anatomical combination has been even approximately made out, and to suggest grave doubt as to whether it is possible to combine the details harmoniously in any way whatever. The more thorough anatomists begin to allegorize at ver. 2, and carry on their anatomy to the end of ver. 6: others begin at ver. 3 and break down after ver. 4, or even make the latter mainly literal.

Details.

Verse 2.

The *sun* is the *forehead,* which is wrinkled and no longer bright in old age: or *superior pars animae rationalis.*

The *light* is the *nose,* which stands for the countenance.

The *moon* is the *cheeks:* or the *breath,* which being taken away from a man the light of his eyes has gone from him: or the *irrational part* of the *anima.*

The *stars* are the *pupils:* or the *cheeks:* or the *bowels.* *

The *clouds* which continually return are the *tears* for his many ills: or the *watering* of his weak eyes: or "pingitur hic senectus *rheumatibus* obnoxia, quae rheumate liberata multa ejectione pituitae, seu ore, seu naribus, seu transpiratione cujusvis partis, nova fluxione denuo obruitur; de quo proinde dicere queas, Nubes post pluviam revertuntur."

Verse 3.

The *keepers of the house* are the *hands* and *arms:* or the *ribs*, *back*, &c. which protect the soft parts: or the *faculties* which consult for the safety of the body: or *facultates quatuor* quibus vita continetur, attractivam, concoctivam, retentivam, et purgativam".

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* I quote this at second hand from the English edition of Lange's *Bibelwerk.*

The *strong men* are the *arms:* or *back:* or *legs:* or *thighs:* or *knees.*

The *grinders* are the *teeth*, which are apt to be the dirtiest part of an old man's person.

The *lookers out of window* are the *eyes*, the windows being the eyelids: or the other *four senses*, excluding the sight which some suppose to have been mentioned in ver. 2.

Verse 4.

The *doors* which are shut to the street are the *anus* or *pudenda*, old men suffering from constipation &c.: or the *mouth* and *lips* (Ps. CXLI. 3; Mic. VII. 5; Job XLI. 6); or the *ears.* The Chaldee has: "Et erunt pedes tui ligati ut non prodeant in plateam". Some commentators quoted in *Poli Synopsis* boldy allegorize the *street* itself into a part of the body: "Intellige labia: vel os, quod cordis ostium est. Hoc autem referri possit tum ad comestionem, tum ad loquutionem; tum ad oesophagum, sive fistulam cibariam, per quam cibus descendit in ventriculum; tum ad arteriam sive fistulam spiritualem, qua spiritus sive halitus descendit in pulmones. Hae fistulae forsan conferuntur *plateae*, vel viae qua descenditur in varias corporis partes; quae etiam fores habent, quae unam viam claudunt et alteram aperiunt, ut cibus recta in stomachum, non autem in pulmonem, deferatur. Hae fores in senio quasi occluduntur, nec officio suo rite funguntur.".

The *sound of the mill* which falls is the sound of *chewing*, "dentes inter masticandum non strident,

ceu in juventute ubi crustas, ossicula, &c. fortiter ac sonore confringimus": or the *voice**: or the reference is to *digestion*, &c. the "interior mola ventriculi, ut parum crepat, ita parum comminuit": but some anatomists interpret this detail literally**, "The most familiar *household sounds*, such as that of the grinding of the mill, are faintly heard."

The *voice of the bird* is taken literally, and the clause is made to mean that the mill rises *to the voice of a sparrow*: or that the old man rises *at the voice of the cock:* or *at the voice of any small bird*, since he is wakeful and easily disturbed. Dr. Smith, having extracted an allusion to *sleepiness* from ver. 2, notices the objection which might be made to bringing in the opposite symptom of wakefulness and thus proceeds: "Utrumque symptoma senibus ascribit Hippocrates. Deficit nimirum illi somnus naturalis, redundat autem somnus praeter naturam."

The *daughters of song* which sink down are the *vocal organs*, "labia, pulmo, guttur, lingua, palatum, dentes &c.": or the organs receptive of sound, viz. the *ears:* or actual *musicians.*

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* The mill sounds only while the grinders (= teeth) work. Hence *talking* and *chewing* are necessarily contemporaneous.

** Dr. Grätz shews considerable independence in his comments on ver. 4. The mill is a *mill:* but the doors are *ears*: the man is stone-deaf, his ears being closed "bei dem *vielfältigen* (כפל) Geräusche der Mühle" — compare "die Müllerinnen feiern" (ver. 3). As for the emendations כפל, רחשו, compare again Is. XXIX. 14.

Verse 5.

The *height* which they fear means *hills:* or *ladders*:* or *heaven* to which they are going: or *God.* The plural יראו being in want of a nominative, some supply *his legs*, and others *his thoughts.*

The *almond*** which flourishes is *white hair*, since its pink blossoms "seem at the time of their *fall* exactly like white snow flakes": or *old age* which comes quickly, like the almond which blossoms in the early spring: or *pudenda feminae:* or *glans virilis:* or *os sacrum*, which seems to sprout out as the flesh falls away: or a *fruit* too hard for old men to bite, or too high for them to reach: or the *waking* spirit which takes wing at the time of death.

The locust or *grasshopper* which grows heavy is*** the *fundament:* or *membrum virile*, which in the old man seems like a dead weight: or the meaning is that "*particula salax* herniam contrahit"—Dr. Grätz writes: "Das poetische Bild deutet Luzzatto allein ganz richtig vom Springen der Heuschrecken, übertragen auf das ganze *membrum*". Or it is the *ankles* and *legs*, swelling "podagrae tumoribus" (Jerome): or the stiffening *caput femoris:* or the scraggy *old man* who looks like a locust, "quia ossa exstant, et corpus est exhaustum": or the *abdomen* "qui gravis fit in senibus obesis, ut

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* Or say *stairs*, if the old man stays indoors, according to the Targum on ver. 4.

** Taken as a flower, or a fruit, &c. as the case may be. ינאץ is also taken in various senses.

*** This involves an interchange of ע and ח.

plurimum, et nimia pinguedine laborantibus. Notum est autem locustas solo fere abdomine constare": or the once *active creature* which now walks with difficulty, or has to be carried: or *destructive influences* which impair the constitution: or the *thorn tree* bearing love apples: or the *spirit*, like the locust at the time of its transformation raising itself to fly. Or the meaning is "convenient *cicadae*" with reference to their "stridula et quaerula *vox*". Professor Tayler Lewis thus sums up, with reference to a similar list of meanings. "Most of these hypotheses seem absurd, and all of them inconsistent with the simplicity and directness of the whole picture. After all, none of then seems 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 hyperbolical expression of feebleness: *He cannot bear the least weight.*"

The so-called *desire* which fails is *sexual desire**: or *penis erectus:* or the old man like a dead ripe *caperberry:* or the *miserable* spirit or life: or *discernment.*

The *mourners* who go about in the *street* are actual mourners who go about actual streets. Thus the allegory again collapses, to be revived again in the following verse.

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* "Sed quum quaedam senectutis incommoda in iis quae praecedunt Noster per figuras descripserit, non est verisimile eum nunc in proprium sermonem transire". This argument of Rosenmüller's is valid on the assumption that what precedes *is* figurative; but the same sort of argument consistently applied would seem to indicate that ver. 3—5 are wholly literal.

Verse 6.

Dr. John Smith and Moses Mendelssohn interpret this verse of the *circulation of the blood:*

Magna in hoc et praecedente membro continetur mysteria, ab aliis nondum patefacta. Nempe ut Prophetiae Danielis et Apocalypticae *Clausae sunt et obsignatae usque ad tempus finis*, quum earum impletio verum sensum aperit: pariter, quum verus cordis usus et verus, h. e. circularis, sanguinis in corpore motus ab aetate Salomonis ad nostra usque tempora ignotus fuerit, sensum hujus loci nondum perceptum esse necesse est: eum autem sic eruo. Ad vitalem facultatem haec refero. Vita hominis praecipue in sanguine consistit. Sanguinis primaria sedes et fons est cor, ubi fit, et unde dispergitur per totum corpus. In corde duae sunt cavitates sive ventriculi, dexter et sinister. . . . . Sic ergo praesens locus explicandus est. Per *cadum* sive *urceum* intelligo venas . . . per *fontem* dextrum cordis ventriculum. . . Hoc adeo luculentum est ut veteres etiam interpretes hunc fontem exponant de jecore, unde venas oriri falso putarunt; quod si cognovissent venas a dextro cordis ventriculo proficisi, hujus unius vocis emphaticae ductu ad veram loci intelligentiam indubie perducti essent. . . . . Ex dictis patet doctrinam illam de circulatione, quae hodie merito *Harvaeana* dicitur a nostrate Cl. D. Harvaeo, prius fuisse Salomonicam, et ipsi compertam.

This and a good deal more to the same effect may be found in *Poli Synopsis.* But to pass on:

The *silver cord* is the *spinal cord* or *marrow**: or *funes amoris* (Hos. XI. 4): or *urine:* or the *lacteal ducts.* But some anatomists take this and what follows literally, "de *ornamentis* vel de magis necessariis *instrumentis* vitae."

The *golden bowl* is the *skull:* or the *cerebral membrane:* or *membrum virile:* or the *heart.* Another commentator writes: "Locum intelligo de bile, quae in senecta minus solet vasis suis contineri."

The *pitcher* is the *belly.*

The *wheel* is the *heart:* or the *lungs:* or the *skull:* or the *alvus,* which "minus respondeat temporibus suis, modo citatior, modo adstrictior": or the man who becomes *clods* and rolls into the grave.

The *fountain* is the *bladder:* or the *reins;* or the *veins.*

And so *in inf.*, the whole passage anatomically considered being as vague as the clouds on which Hamlet comments:

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in shape of a camel?
Pol. By the mass; and 'tis like a camel, indeed.
Ham. Methinks, it is like a weasel.
Pol. It is back'd like a weasel.
Ham. Or like a whale.
Pol. Very like a whale.

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* "Solent enim senes breviari quod illis brevietur medulla" (*Vatablus*). It is buried in the body "sicut argentum est in profundis terrae" (*Smith*).

Section III.

Semiliteral renderings.

An attempt to displace the Anatomical Rendering was made by Johann David Michaelis in his *Deutsche Uebersetzung des Alten Testaments mit Anmerkungen für Ungelehrte*, 1771. His interpretation amounts to a working out in detail of the figure: "The night cometh, when no man can work"; the approach of death being supposed to be described by Coheleth under the form of the Approach of Night. His interpretation is therefore pervaded by metaphor; but on the other hand, as against the anatomists, he explains the "keepers of the house" &c. literally, and attempts to shew that actual persons are described as retiring to rest or making preparations for the approach of night. I therefore call the interpretation of Michaelis *semi-literal*—as also that of Umbreit, who supposes death to be described under the figure of a Storm. Although the semiliteral renderings are very like the literal rendering in many details, it will be seen that the metaphors by which they are pervaded give them a distinctive colouring,

and indeed, as I think, vitiate them to such an extent that their failure to gain acceptance need excite no surprise.

The Night-rendering of Michaelis.

V. 3. *die Wächter des Hauses beben, und die Starken sich krümmen*] Vielleicht redet Salomon von eigentlichen Wächtern und Starken, und dann würde ich, mit einiger Abweichung von den Jüdischen Punkten, lieber übersetzen: *die Wächter das Haus bewahren, und die Starken sich krümmen.* Dies wäre eine Beschreibung der Nacht, in der der Starke und Tapfere sich zur Ruhe begiebt, und im Bette liegt, andere aber wachen, und das Haus gegen nächtlichen Einfall verwahren müssen. Mit der Nacht würde das schwache Alter verglichen, da der tapfere Mann, der Held, sich nicht mehr selbst schützen kann, sondern von andern geschützt merden muss.

Die Mühlenmägde, — — die schönen Gesichter] Salomon mahlt das Bild der Nacht noch weiter aus, und setzt nun auch in dies Nachtgemälde Frauensleute von den höchsten bis an den niedrigsten, so wie vorhin das männliche Geschlecht. Das allerniedrigste in der hebräischen Haushaltung ist die Sclavin, die in einer Handmühle das Getraide mahlen musste. 2 B. Mos. XI. 5. Diese bekommt nun Feierabend, weil sie ihre Arbeit gethan, und ausgemahlen hat: ihr entgegen stehen die Schönen, die bei Müssiggang und Uebermuth in den Fenstern lagen, zu sehen, und gesehen zu werden; diese verhüllet nun die Nacht in ihren allgemeinen Schatten. Auch hier will man Glieder des Leibes, unter den Mühlenmägden die Backenzähne, und unter

den Schönen im Fenster die Augen verstehen: ich denke es sei genug, wenn das Alter auch so fern der Nacht gleich ist, dass die niedrigste Sclavin feiert, weil sie nicht mehr tüchtig zur Arbeit ist, und die vorhin angebetete Schöne nicht mehr an das Fenster kommt, sondern in unbekannter Dunkelheit wohnt.

V. 4. Noch eine weitere Fortsetzung des Gemähldes der Nacht. Man verschliesst die Hausthür: der Schall der Handmühlen in den Häusern wird immer schwächer, weil sich ein Haus nach dem andern zur Ruhe begiebt, und endlich erfolgt eine Todtenstille. Wenn diese der Morgenländer beschreiben will, so sagt er, *man höre den Schall der Mühle nicht mehr.* Jerem. XXV, 10. Offenb. Johannis XVIII, 22.

Man beim Laut eines Vogels aufsteht] Wenn in der stillen Nacht auch nur ein Vogel ein Geräusch macht, so wird man aufmerksam, und siehet zu ob Diebe da sind. Eben so im furchtsamen Alter, das sich bei seiner Ohnmacht überall Gefahren einbildet.

die Sängerinnen] Die Vögel, die am Tage, oder gegen Abend, ihre Gesänge so laut erschallen liessen.

V. 5. *Ehe man sich vor der Höhe fürchtet u. s. f.*] Noch Beschreibungen des furchtsamen Alters.

Ehe der Mandelbaum blühet] Von hier an scheinen nicht mehr Bilder des Alters, sondern der grossen Veränderung zu folgen, die dem Menschen nach dem Tode bevorsteht, der Erneuerung zu einem künftigen Leben: wenigstens kann der blühende Mandelbaum nicht füglich, wie man geglaubt hat, ein Bild der weissen Haare des Alters sein, denn seine Blüte ist nicht weiss, sondern ohngefähr Pfirsichfarben, nur etwas blässer. — Wenn in diesem traurigsten Monat des Jahrs, wo die

Natur zu sterben scheint, die schöne und prächtige Blüte des Mandelbaums ausbricht, und ihn in die angenehmste Mischung von Roth und Weiss kleidet, so wäre dies ein sehr bequemes Bild der Verneuerung und des Frühlings, den unsere Natur nach dem Tode zu gewärtigen hat, und bei dem wir, eben wenn wir sterben, verjüngt aus unserm Tode hervorblühen.

Blühet] Nach einer andern Lesart übersetzt man es: *abwirft.* Denn wäre es noch eine Beschreibung des Alters unter dem Bilde des Decembers, bei dessen Ende der Mandelbaum seine Blüte abwirft.

Die Heuschrecke nach ihrer letzten Häutung vollkommen wird] Die Heuschrecke ist zu Anfang ein Wurm, wird aber nach der ersten Häutung ein gehendes und springendes Insect: in diesem Zustande bleibt sie noch nach der zweiten und dritten Häutung, allein nach der vierten wird sie geflügelt. Es scheint, die Hebräer haben diese letzte Verwandlung nach Vervollkommnung der Heuschrecke eben so zum Bilde eines bessern Lebens der Seele nach dem Tode gebraucht, als die Griechen die Verwandlung der Raupe zum Schmetterling.

Die Kapper sich aufthut] Da das hebräische Wort äusserst dunkel ist, und nur einmal vorkommt, bin ich der ältesten Uebersetzung, die wir haben, gefolgt. Die Kapper trägt erst grüne Knospen, oder, wie es andere nennen, Knöpfe, und diese sind es, die wir eingemacht zu den Speisen thun, um ihnen Geschmack zu geben. Lässt man aber diese Knospen nur einige Stunden zu lange an der Staude sitzen, so sind sie zum Einmachen nicht weiter brauchbar, und brechen in eine schöne Blüte auf, in der sich viele männliche Staubfäden ausbreiten. Vielleicht wird dies Aufblühen einer

Knospe, die man schon als reife Frucht siehet und isset, zum Bilde eines künftigen Lebens gebraucht.

Sein ewiges Haus] So nannten Egypter und Hebräer das Grab, und stellten sich das Leben als eine Wanderschaft vor, ohngefähr so, wie die Hirten in Gezelten herumziehen, ohne eine stete Wohnung zu haben. — — Sollte jemanden das Wort *ewig* hier anstössig sein, und als Verleugnung der Auferstehung des Leibes vorkommen, so trifft sein Tadel eigentlich nicht Salomon, sondern den Uebersetzer, denn das hebräische Wort bedeutet nicht gerade die eigentliche sogenannte unendliche Ewigkeit, sondern eine lange Zeit, ein Menschenalter, oder auch den Ablauf vieler Jahrhunderte. Zu meiner Entschuldigung also, nicht für Salomon, muss ich bemerken, dass wir im Deutschen das Wort *ewig* eben so gebrauchen, sonderlich wenn wir alle Jahrhunderte, die noch bis an das Ende der Welt verfliessen werden, zusammenfassen.

V. 6. *Ehe der Silberstrick wieder zusammengekettet, und die güldene Kugel der Lampe wieder gebessert wird*] Ich glaube nicht, dass das Bild von einem Brunnen hergenommen ist, denn bei dem hat man keine Silberstricke und keine güldenen Kugeln, sondern von einer Lampe, und um der Deutlichkeit willen habe ich das Wort *Lampe*, das nicht im Hebräischen steht, hinzugesetzt. Das menschliche Leben wird mit einer brennenden Lampe verglichen, (ein Bild, das die Hebräer mehrmals haben, z. B. wenn sie sagen, Gott habe David eine brennende Lampe gegeben, d. i. Nachkommen), die an einer silbernen Kette hängt, und das Oel zur Nahrung des Lichts in einer güldenen Kugel hat: die Kette bricht, die Kugel fällt zu Boden und wird be-

schädigt, dies geschieht im Tode, aber der Werkmeister bessert die zerbrochene Lampe, und stellt sie von neuem wieder auf, dies ist ein Bild des Lebens nach dem Tode.

Der Eimer u. s. f.] Hier ist nun das Bild von einer Quelle hergenommen: der Eimer, mit dem man das Wasser heraufzog, zerbricht, aber das Werk wird wieder hergestellt: so stirbt der Mensch, und Gott giebt ihm ein zweites Leben.

The objection to this interpretation considered as a whole, is that it is a weakening by expansion of a striking and natural metaphor. Much of it belongs merely to the description of night, and has only a forced application to death. The meaning of the watchmen, who watch the house *during the night* is both feeble and forced. What is said on the voice of the bird (ver. 4) is unsatisfactory, and the like might be said of other details. But, though the interpretation as a whole could never be accepted, it is very suggestive in some particulars. The objection to taking the almond blossom, which is the harbinger of spring, as a symbol of decay and death has never been refuted; while the peculiar sense put upon the supposed image of the hanging lamp in ver. 6, suggests reasons for abandoning that figure altogether. On the whole, while rejecting the Night-rendering, I think it less unsatisfactory than the Storm-rendering considered below. The theory of Michaelis has however been undeservedly neglected, having no doubt escaped notice because his views on the book were supposed to be contained in an earlier special work upon the subject. It is remarkable that Nachtigal, while advocating the

same theory in 1798, should have referred to Michaelis as an anatomist, who considered the grinding maids to stand for "Backenzähne, theils wegen ihrer Verrichtung, theils weil sie bei alten Leuten eins der unreinlichsten Theile des Leibes zu sein pflegen"; where the earlier work of Michaelis is cited, while no mention is made of that published in 1771, and containing the semiliteral interpretation adopted by Nachtigal himself.

The following is Nachtigal's exposition:

Verse 3.

The day means the night: the watchers who are on guard, for attack or defence, go to rest: the former "ziehen sich mit einbrechender Nacht zurück, und auch die Vertheidiger können die Ruhe geniessen": the strong men bow themselves down to rest: the grinding-maids drop asleep one after another till scarcely one (Odyss. XX. 110) remains: on the ladies also who look out of window (Jud. V. 28, 29) night falls.

[Although יום may be used so as not to exclude night, yet when night as distinct from day is meant, it is not the word to use. The introduction of the idea of besieging a fortress throws that of nightfall into the background: it is no longer an ordinary night that is described.]

Verse 4.

The doors are closed as is usual at nightfall: the sound of the mill falls as the grinders drop asleep: it

wholly stops (*μύλην στήσασα. Odyss.*) at cockcrow: and the singing birds go to roost.

[This verse, unlike the former, describes an ordinary night of peace. But even if cockcrow means very late at night, the mention of the singing birds going to roost is not happily placed.]

Verse 5.

Those who fear are inhabitants of high country and low: or they are riders and walkers, of whom the former, perched say on white asses (Jud. V. 10), "von der Höhe herabschaun": in either case the meaning is: "Dann erbeben Alle." The remainder refers to a time when man no longer enjoys life: the almond flower is not regarded: the chirping *τέττιξ* (Anacr.) is wearisome: and he scares away the turtle dove. Here it is suggested that we need not. in אֲבִיּוֹנָה,* think precisely of the *dove*, יונה, which cries אבי, *ach!*, but "Vielleicht bezeichnete das אֵב die Grösse dieser Taubenart."

[Although Nachtigal still carries on the idea of nightfall, his rendering of ver. 5 might be regarded as a literal one, faulty in some details, but on the whole suggestive. The exposition of ver. 3, 4 however, is by no means literal, but involves an elaborately worked out double allegory, wherein *siege* and *night* combine to represent death. The rendering fails both directly and indirectly because it is not literal.]

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* This may be a form of diminutive from an אבה collateral with אבב the root of אבא *fructus*. Hence its application to "*minuti fructus*" (p. 39).

The Storm-rendering of Umbreit.

Umbreit supposes a gathering tempest to be described. This view is adopted by Dr. Ginsburg (1861), from whose *Coheleth* the following account of the Storm-rendering is mainly taken.*

Verse 3.

In that portentous day every one shall be seized with consternation. The keepers of the house are menial servants, whose business it is to guard the house against marauders; the men of power are superiors: the grinding-maids cease because they have greatly diminished. "כִּי is causal, giving a reason why the women stopped grinding &c.": the women who look out of the windows are women of a higher class, who amuse themselves in this way, as is still done in the East.

[On this it may be remarked that ver. 2 describes nather a continued drizzle than an alarming tempest: it is not that a sudden storm approaches, but the time is one of gloom, and the clouds return after the rain. Moreover even if a storm were approaching, the description would be extravagant. The reason why the maids cease grinding is much emphasized, but is still not quite intelligible: moreover בָּטְלָה is a feeble word

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* Ginsburg's exposition of the rendering is very similar to that of Elster, 1855. I have not had an opportunity of consulting Umbreit's works on Coheleth. I am uncertain whether Umbreit ultimately abandoned his theory.

to express "den plötzlichen Stillstand aller Arbeit zur Zeit eines allgemeinen Schreckens" (*Gurlitt*). If as Gurlitt remarks, the אַרֻבּוֹת were capable of being shut, it does not appear why the ladies should continue to look through, when the doors (ver. 4) are closed as a protection against the storm.]

Verse 4.

Out of terror every door shall be barred, and the noise of the mills shall grow very feeble, because the grinders shall hide themselves, frightened at this gathering storm. Exceedingly beautiful and characteristic is the description of the change of birds in the gloomy atmosphere. The portentous swallows, in anticipation of the storm, quit their nests with shrieks to fly about, whilst the singing birds descend and retire.

[What is here said about the mill adds nothing to the statements of ver. 3; nor is a sufficiently close connexion made out between this and the closing of the doors. The interpretation of the remainder: "Der Vogel sich zum Geschrei erhebt" &c. may be regarded as one of the stronger points of this rendering; but although the *construction* suits the parallelism, is is by no means obvious that the "daughters of song" can denote birds.]

Verse 5.

Yea they are afraid of the storm gathering over their heads, so that they shrink from going out on the roads: and in the midst of such a confusing and ter-

rifying scene, the delicious almond, the locust, and the caperberry, create disgust and are left untouched. Great indeed must be the consternation of an Oriental which makes him disgusted with these delicacies.

[That the storm should be thought of as coming from above is natural, but the expression rather suggests that an out-door scene is described. Dr. Ginsburg offers no explanation of בַּדֶּרֶךְ: that quoted above from another source adds nothing to the previous statement about the closing of the doors. The conclusion is an anticlimax. The locust seems to have been no great delicacy, nor is it quite likely to have been mentioned as an edible between two kinds of fruit. The Storm-rendering as a whole is a diluted allegory, and, like the Night-rendering, *not* literal.]

It will have been seen that there is an essential difference between the literal and semi-literal interpretations. In the former, I suppose that after the figurative mention of the darkening of the sun &c. in ver. 2, there comes, as is usual with Biblical writers, a parallel matter-of-fact description, viz. of the way in which actual persons are affected by the actual circumstances of death. According to the semi-literal renderings, the figure of the darkening of the sun and moon &c., whether indicative of night or storm, is kept up throughout the passage; and the result is that—more especially in the storm-rendering—the bulk of the description becomes a mere working out of the figure, without any intelligible application to the main subject of the context, viz. *Death*. It is said, for example, that the doors are shut to keep out the *storm*, which

means *death*. But since there is no meaning in saying that the doors are closed to keep out death, we are reduced to giving up all idea of an application, and merely saying that the closed door belongs to the description of the storm. In this way the greater part of the passage is made to mean nothing at all; while contrariwise, in the literal rendering every detail is significant.

Section IV.

Conclusion.

1. It has been noticed that the passage discussed falls naturally into three paragraphs, each commencing with ERE, and complete in itself. Considering the second paragraph, ver. 2—5, we may say that the literal rendering is *prima facie* the most natural: the words "for the man passeth to his eternal home, and the mourners go about in the street", suggest that the verses preceding describe the state of affairs while the mourners go about in the street. The man himself is addressed (ver. 1) on the way in which his death will affect not only himself but others. Compare Ezek. XXXII. 10; "Yea, I will make many people amazed at thee" &c.

2. The various classes are described as in a state of mental perturbation: there is a cessation of business and pleasure: the keepers of the house tremble (ver. 2): they fear from on high (ver. 5), &c. An impression may arise that some of the words used would better

suit a time when calamity is impending than a time of mourning for the actual death of a great personage; and from this consideration perhaps the chief objection to the literal rendering will arise. But such passages as Ezekiel's description of the princes of the sea trembling as they mourn for Tyre, will go far to remove any objection of this nature: —

"Then all the princes of the sea shall come down from their thrones, and lay away their robes, and put off their broidered garments: they shall clothe themselves with trembling; they shall sit upon the ground, and shall tremble every moment. And they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and say to thee, How art thou destroyed, &c." (Ezek. XXVI. 16, 17).

In like manner the kings and merchants who mourn for Babylon are horrorstricken (Rev. XVIII. 15); and this illustration is the more valuable because, as has been already remarked, the description from which it is taken coincides in several particulars with the dirge of Coheleth. In both alike the mill ceases to be heard: the unclean bird takes possession: the light of joy is quenched. (Rev. XVIII. 2, 22, 23). The Apocalyptic dirge is couched in the same strain as that of Coheleth, and differs from it chiefly in being applied to the case not of an individual but of a city.

3. There are some verbal coincidences which afford additional arguments for a literal rendering, and against the anatomical rendering. The mourners are said to go about the *street*, or ἀγορά (ver. 5): the doors are closed to the *street* (ver. 4). From this coincidence it may be assumed provisionally that "street" is literal in ver. 4, as it is allowed to be in ver. 5, until some

reason has been assigned for taking the word literally in the one case and not literally in the other.

4. If "street" is literal in ver. 4, it is only natural to assume that an actual "mill" is spoken of in the same context. This conclusion is confirmed by a further examination of the two verses; thus, in ver. 5 the last clause is allowed to be literal, and it is also supposed that the opening words describe actual persons as awestricken. Add to this, that the intervening expressions, *almond*, *locust*, &c. are in themselves at least as naturally taken in a literal as in an anatomical sense, and there remains no valid reason for asserting that in their present context—viz. in a verse which begins and ends literally—they have any other than their natural meanings. Again, in ver. 4, the "bird" is allowed to be literal, and some even of the anatomists take the parallel "daughters of song" literally. Thus throughout ver. 4. 5 there is no place where it can be confidently affirmed that the literal rendering should be given up.

5. If the "mill" in ver. 4 is literal, I think it sufficiently obvious that the "milleresses" in ver. 3 are literal: the sound of the mill falls when the milleresses cease from work. It would follow that the remainder of ver. 3 is literal. Perhaps the strongest point in the literal rendering is the interpretation of the first hemistich in verse 4 (see section I); and if it be granted that this is literal, there remains very little to be said for the anatomical theory as a whole.

6. The "house" in ver. 3 must be, for all purposes of comparison, homogeneous with the "house of eternity" in ver. 6. The latter is external to the man

himself: hence we infer that the former is not the man himself or any part of him, but the mansion in which he lived.

7. The darkening of the sun &c. (ver. 2) is clearly figurative. Between this and the allusion to literal mourners going about an actual street, there must somewhere be a point of transition from the figurative to the literal. As we have seen, it is very difficult to find such a point of transition anywhere after the commencement of ver. 3, but on the other hand the expression "in the day when" might serve, and does elsewhere serve, as an indication that what follows is literal, and explanatory of the preceding general metaphor. Now not only is the darkening of the heavens a stereotyped figure of calamity in general, but it is also the practice of Biblical writers to pass from this general figure to matter-of-fact explanatory statements. To the numerous examples given in Section I one more may be added, in illustration of Coheleth's:

Remember thy Creator
Ere the sun and the moon be darkened
In the day when the doors are shut to the street.

The passage runs as follows:

"Give glory to the *Lord* your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness. But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the *Lord's* flock is carried away captive. Say unto the king and to the

queen, Humble yourselves, sit down: for your principalities shall come down, even the crown of your glory. The cities of the south shall be shut up, and none shall open them: Judah shall be carried away captive all of it, it shall be wholly carried away captive" (Jer. XIII. 16—19).

8. As in Eccl. II. 4—9 the pleasure of possession is dwelt upon: "I made me great works; I builded me *houses*... I made me *gardens*... I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house.... I got me men-singers and women-singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts;" so in the passage under discussion we may see contrasted with this the gloom cast over a great house, with gardens, &c. when the life of its owner has passed away. It is not that the house is dilapidated, but that it is desolated, *the man*, now reduced to the level of ordinary mortals, leaves it for another: "when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him" (Ps. XLIX, 17).

It is unnecessary to add anything to what has been already said on the details of the literal rendering. It certainly gives a consistent picture, and so far has the advantage over the anatomical rendering; which again, if it cannot claim consistency, has little to rest else to rest upon. It is remarkable that the latter should so long have held its ground in spite of its grotesque repulsiveness and defiance of analogy, when the mention of the mourners who go about in the street suggests with the utmost plainness that the preceding verses are of the nature of a literal Dirge.