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RECENT CRITICISM OF THE LETTER OF ARISTEAS¹.

THE newer criticism of the Letter of Aristeas dates from 1869. In that year Moritz Schmidt re-edited the Greek text in vol. I of Merx' *Archiv für wissenschaft. Erforschung des AT* (Halle). He relied on two Paris MSS. (Graec. 129 and 5), and on the citations in Eusebius. He cannot be blamed for neglecting Josephus. As Fabricius had already remarked, Josephus is of very little value for the textual criticism of Aristeas. Though he paraphrases about two-fifths of the Letter (omitting the visit to Palestine, the discourse of Eleazar, and the seventy-two questions and answers), Josephus re-wrote almost every sentence, retaining, however, "many of the characteristic words of Aristeas" (but contrast Swete, Introduction, p. 12, with Thackeray, *ib.*, p. 517). As moreover Josephus entirely misunderstood Aristeas in several passages, it is obvious that we can derive slight assistance from him in the difficult task of reconstructing the original. Still, sometimes Eusebius is confirmed by Josephus, and when the two agree their readings are perhaps to be preferred to the MSS. On the other hand, Josephus is "often useful to detect the alterations which have been introduced into the Text by Eusebius or the B group" (Thackeray, Introduction, p. 517; cf. Wendland, Preface to his edition of Aristeas, p. xxii). Schmidt's edition was based on this very B group, and is thus entirely superseded by the later editions of Thackeray and Wendland, which, as will be seen, rely on another and superior group of MSS. Yet Schmidt deserves credit for perceiving that it was no longer possible to regard Aristeas through Hody's spectacles (p. 244). He adds a very strong expression of belief in the genuineness of Aristeas' description of Jerusalem, and of his account of the costly presents bestowed by Philadelphus on the Temple, and he even goes so far as to assert that he can see no ground why the King of Egypt should not have wished to acquire and translate the Hebrew scriptures, nor why the monarch should not have entertained the translators at a banquet, even as Aristeas describes (p. 252).

¹ Read before the Jews' College Literary Society, London, Dec. 16, 1901.

In several particulars Schmidt was right. But the strongest evidence of his accuracy was unknown to him. Hence, the rehabilitation of Aristeas originates not so much with Schmidt as with his critic Lumbroso. In the *Atti della R. Accademia di Torino*, vol. IV (1868-9), there is a paper by Lumbroso entitled "Dell' uso delle iscrizioni e dei papiri per la critica del testo di Aristeas," à propos of Schmidt's edition. Here for the first time, Lumbroso showed that the papyri threw considerable light on Aristeas, and that the text of the Letter cannot be accurately edited without constant reference to this source of information. As we now know, the same is true of the study of the Septuagint, for as Deissmann has shown (Swete, *Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, p. 297), "Many well-known Septuagintal words find a place in the Greek papyri of the Ptolemaic period." Both Wendland and Thackeray have rightly availed themselves of Lumbroso's suggestions, and their editions are all the better for it. Lumbroso, however, was not content with merely asserting the importance of the papyri in establishing true readings in Aristeas. In a slightly later work, *Recherches sur l'Économie politique de l'Égypte sous les Lagides* (Torino, 1870), Lumbroso maintained that the papyri confirm the substantial accuracy of Aristeas in many points. Mr. Thackeray cites a part of the Introduction of Lumbroso, but no apology is necessary for citing it again at somewhat greater length. Lumbroso, describing the materials available for his Researches into the life of Ptolemaic Egypt, refers to the Letter of Aristeas in these terms (p. xii seq.):—

Un seul ouvrage contenant la narrative suivie d'un épisode de l'histoire des Ptolemées nous est parvenu dans son intégrité, mais il est fort court; on ne sait précisément quel en est l'auteur, ni l'époque à laquelle il a été écrit; on conteste de tous côtés la sincérité du récit; et jusqu'à présent quelque savant le retient tout entier pour une pure fable. Je veux parler de la lettre d'Aristée à Philocrate sur la version de la Bible par les 72 interprètes, demandés à Jérusalem, sous le règne de Ptolemée Philadelphie. Cependant la critique basée uniquement sur la collation des manuscrits et l'étude exclusive du texte n'est plus suffisante pour cette lettre si méprisée. Depuis quarante ans un rayon de lumière inattendu a jailli des inscriptions et des papyrus, qui jette sur elle un jour nouveau; chose frappante: il n'est pas un titre de cour, une institution, une loi, une magistrature, une charge, un terme technique, une formule, un tour de langue remarquable dans cette lettre, il n'est pas un témoignage d'Aristée concernant l'histoire civile de l'époque, qui ne se trouve enregistré dans les papyrus ou les inscriptions et confirmé par eux.

"A close examination of the larger evidence from the papyri now available," adds Mr. Thackeray (p. 502), "will probably corroborate

the opinion, to which other evidence seems to point, that the letter was written under some one of the later Ptolemies." This is to leave a wide margin, for the Ptolemaic dynasty does not end till the overthrow of Antony at Actium. Graetz placed Aristeas even later—in the reign of Tiberius. This, however, is far too late, and I may say at once that I entirely agree with Schürer that the Letter is at least as early as 200 B.C. But Wendland, who holds the Letter as post-Maccabean, thinks (Preface, p. xxvii) that the evidence of the papyri is in his favour, for in Aristeas we have a reference to the king's φίλοι, and also to the officers described as τῶν ἀρχισωματοφυλάκων. Now, according to Strack, the earliest use of the technical term "friends" of the king in the papyri dates from 191 B.C. (Rhein. Museum, LV, p. 168 seq.). Mahaffy, however, though thinking it "tolerably certain" that the title τῶν φίλων is only as old as Epiphanes, is constrained to admit that "it is nevertheless possible that both Strack's 60, and another from Thera, which H. von Gärtringen has sent me, attest the origin of the titles in the earlier reign [that of Philometor]" (*History of Egypt under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, p. 161). According to Strabo, the title "Friend of the King" was current under Ptolemy II (Lumbroso, *Egitto*, p. 118 seq.; Mahaffy, *op. cit.* 101). At all events, as Philometor succeeded in 222 B.C., Wendland's argument from the use of the phrase τῶν φίλων by Aristeas is ineffective. Equally indecisive is the argument from the term τῶν ἀρχισωματοφυλάκων. Strack (*ibid.*, p. 187) maintains (from the evidence of the papyri) that while the *singular* is found as early as 264 or 227 B.C., the *plural* is a later introduction, and does not occur before 145 B.C. But it is surely a curious fact that in one of the two passages (Wendland, § 40; Thackeray, p. 527, l. 1) in which Aristeas uses this characteristic Ptolemaic title the text is uncertain. The reading in Wendland's LM, Thackeray's BTZ and Josephus, is τὸν ἀρχισωματοφύλακα, and the variation cannot be forthwith rejected (as Thackeray does, p. 515) on the ground that the singular removes "an idiomatic use of the genitive, frequently attested by the papyri." In the other passage (Wendland, § 12; Thackeray, p. 521, l. 5) the plural τοὺς ἀρχισωματοφύλακας may easily have arisen in error owing to the juxtaposition of two names. Nor is it clear that Aristeas means us to infer that Sosibius and Andreas held the office simultaneously (cf. πολλῶν). Moreover, the plural, as a mere designation, is as old as Alexander the Great (Strack, *ibid.*, p. 169).

Thus, while the evidence of the papyri adds a strong testimony to the familiarity of Aristeas with Ptolemaic life, there is nothing so far discovered that militates against a pre-Maccabean date for the Letter. As to the other grounds on which a post-Maccabean date

is maintained by recent critics more will be said shortly. In the meantime, as repeated references have been and must be made to the editions of Thackeray and Wendland, it is advisable to postpone further considerations as to the date and authenticity of Aristeas, and to undertake at once the duty of describing these two editions. Thackeray and Wendland worked independently, and the editions were published almost simultaneously. The former, however, was able to prefix, in a page of Addenda, some "noteworthy emendations and readings adopted in the edition of Wendland and Mendelssohn, which appeared too late for any use to be made of it in constructing the present text." Wendland chronicles emendations far more frequently than does Thackeray, and though the former is laudably judicious in introducing these into the text, he does so, on the whole, the less sparingly of the two. Wendland's edition forms a volume in Teubner's well-known series; it is admirably printed and is convenient in size. The exact title is: "Aristeae ad Philocratem Epistula, cum ceteris de origine versionis LXX interpretum Testimoniis. LUDOVICI MENDELSSOHN schedis usus edidit PAULUS WENDLAND" (Leipzig, Teubner, 1900). Thus Wendland is the editor of Mendelssohn as well as of Aristeas, and in the opening pages of his Preface the former offers generous praise to Mendelssohn, whose intention of editing Aristeas was only interrupted by death. To Mendelssohn is due the collation of the MSS., and from his accumulated notes Wendland derived much help. Mendelssohn had designed a commentary as well as a critical edition of the text, and his work on about a fifth of the letter was printed in Vol. V of the Acta of the University of Dorpat in 1897: ("Aristeae quae fertur ad Philocratem epistulae initium apparatu critico et commentario instructum edidit L. Mendelssohn"). Though, however, Wendland has provided no formal commentary, his accessory matter is so helpful and complete that he might claim that the commentary is not after all wanting in his edition. His "Index Verborum" (pp. 171-220) is more than a vocabulary, for its frequent references to the LXX (Hatch and Redpath's *Concordance*), and to many works on the Papyri and Inscriptions, when added to the admirable citations in the notes of critical essays often scattered in remote periodicals, place the student in a very advantageous position for the fullest understanding of the text. (Readers will not need reminding that Liddell and Scott is also serviceable for the study of Aristeas. Some interesting grammatical notes will also be found in L. Radermacher's *Demetrii Phalarei qui dicitur de elocutione libellus*, Leipzig, Teubner, 1901. See *ibid.*, Index Auctorum, s. v. Aristeas.) Rarely has a scholar conveyed so much help in so brief a space, and Wendland's splendid reputation

will be further enhanced by this work. Another important feature of Wendland's edition is the displayed list of "Testimonia," which occupy pp. 87-166. All the Greek and Latin texts in which Aristeas is directly cited or his narrative alluded to are here printed in full, with all requisite critical aids. One can hardly express in adequate terms one's gratitude for this valuable collection of Testimonia. It is a little strange that Wendland did not complete his list by citing the Rabbinic passages bearing on Aristeas. These are given in part by Swete (p. 14), and by Schürer (III³, 471). Cf. also Friedmann, *Onkelos und Akylas*, p. 5 seq. (esp. pp. 16, 19, 20). These Testimonia are of supreme importance, especially notable being the statement in *Tract. Soferim* that the translators sent from Palestine were only *five* in number. Again, from Philo (*Vit. Mos.* ii, 5) we learn that an annual festival, in which Greeks and Jews participated, was held at the Pharos in memory of the completion of the LXX, and this points to a genuine popular tradition which included at all events some of the elements of Aristeas' story. If, again, the fragment from Aristobulus contained in Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* xiii, 12, 2 be genuine (Wendland, p. 124, and Cohn do not accept it; Swete, p. 13, though expressing a doubt, seems more inclined to believe in it, as does of course Schürer, III³, 384), then his words "establish the fact that the main features of the story were believed by the literary Jews of Alexandria, and even at the Court, more than a century and a half before the Christian era, and within a century of the date assigned by Aristeas to the translation of the Law" (Swete, *ibid.*). On the other hand the Christian fathers (Irenaeus, III, 21, 2, Wendland, p. 123; Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* I, § 148, Wend. p. 124; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.* IV, 34, Wend. p. 138; Augustine, *De civ. dei*, XVIII, 42, Wend. p. 163) as well as the Rabbinic Sages (*Megillah*, 9a: which goes back as early as any of the Christian references, *Soferim*, i. 6-8) add legends such as that of the separate cells occupied by the seventy-two translators which throw undeserved suspicion on Aristeas. Jerome (*Praef. in Pent.*, Wendland, p. 162) stands alone in disputing this particular legend, as well as in strenuously maintaining that Aristeas refers only to the Pentateuch, and to no other part of the Alexandrian Bible (Swete, p. 23). Epiphanius (*De mensuris et ponderibus*, 3, p. 155 Lag. Wendl. p. 139) places the seventy-two in pairs in thirty-six cells, and even "apportions the books of the Hebrew canon among thirty-six pairs of translators" (*ibid.*). Another favourite attack on Aristeas seems to me to owe its point to an unauthorized embellishment of Epiphanius. Scarcely a modern writer but attributes to Aristeas the blunder of imagining that the twelve tribes still preserved their distinctive identity in the 3rd cent. B.C. Willrich with his

usual lack of generosity employs very strong language on this point; he calls the writer of Aristeas "erstaunlich gedankenlos," but all that Aristeas tells us is that six representatives were chosen from each tribe. I see nothing in Aristeas' language to imply that the tribes still retained their identity (cf. Whiston, *Literal Accomplishment*, &c., 1724, p. 132), and as de Rossi acutely points out (in the *Meor Enayim*), Aristeas attributes to Ptolemy and not to Eleazar the suggestion as to appointing delegates from the twelve tribes. The case as it really stands is well illustrated by placing side by side the original statement of Aristeas and the additions of Epiphanius:—

ARISTEAS (Wendland, p. 16,
Thackeray, p. 528).

πρώτης φυλῆς Ἰώσηφος κ.τ.λ.

δευτέρας Ἰούδας κ.τ.λ.

τρίτης Νεεμίας κ.τ.λ.

τετάρτης Ἰωνάθας κ.τ.λ.

πέμπτης Ἰσακος κ.τ.λ.

ἕκτης Ἰούδας κ.τ.λ.

ἑβδόμης Σαββαταίος κ.τ.λ.

ὀγδόης Θεοδύσιος κ.τ.λ.

ἐνάτης Θεόφιλος κ.τ.λ.

δεκάτης Ἱερεμίας κ.τ.λ.

ἐνδεκάτης Σαμούηλος κ.τ.λ.

δωδεκάτης Ἰσάηλος κ.τ.λ.

EPIPHANIUS (Wendland, p. 142).

קדמיא ' מן שרבתא דרוביל יוסא וכו'

דתרין ' מן שרבתא דשמעון יהודא וכו'

דתלתא ' מן שרבתא דלוי נחמיא וכו'

דארבעא ' מן שבטא דיהודא יונתן וכו'

דחמשא ' מן שבטא דאיסכר איסחק וכו'

דשתא ' מן שרבתא דזבולון יהודא וכו'

דשבועא ' מן שרבתא דגד שמבט וכו'

דתמניא ' מן שרבתא דאשיר תאודיוסיוס וכו'

דתשעא ' מן שרבתא דדן תאופילוס וכו'

דעסרא ' מן שרבתא דנפתלי ארמיא וכו'

דחדעסר ' מן שרבתא דיוסף שמואל וכו'

דתרעסר ' מן שרבתא דבנימין איסאלוס וכו'

Mr. H. St. J. Thackeray's admirable edition of the Letter of Aristeas forms an Appendix to Swete's *Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek* (Cambridge University Press, 1900). The inclusion of it in the Introduction is a notable sign of its continued, or rather revived, importance for the history of the LXX. It is a little inconvenient, for the purpose of reference, that Mr. Thackeray and Prof. Wendland have not divided the text into the same paragraphs. As Prof. Wendland's paragraphic division had already been used by him in his excellent German translation (Kautzsch, *Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des A. T.*, vol. II, p. 1 seq.), Mr. Thackeray might with advantage have placed Wendland's numbers in his margin. Wendland's arbitrary division, however, is not without objection. Why should the twelve series of names be divided into four distinct paragraphs? Why should the letters that passed between Egypt and Palestine be divided up? No doubt, the shorter the paragraph the easier is the

reference, but an excessive subdivision interrupts the reader's attention, and this is the more felt as Wendland has a threefold numbering; pages, paragraphs, and lines. Mr. Thackeray of course divides the Letter into paragraphs, but without numbering them, and much more sparingly (Wendland has 322 paragraphs, Thackeray 129). The variations in this respect between the two editions are frequent, and sometimes startling. Thus Wendland's § 2 begins in the middle of one of Thackeray's sentences; and Thackeray begins a new paragraph in the middle of the last sentence of Wendland's § 4. Altogether, the variations between the two texts are chiefly variations in punctuation, for except that Wendland, rather more often, adopts Eusebius' readings, and other emendations, the two texts agree very closely.

This is not surprising, for both editions are based on the same group of MSS. Mr. Thackeray's grouping of the MSS. is more easily followed by the student than Prof. Wendland's, but as they cite several of the same MSS. with different designations, I have thought it useful to make out the following table:—

A Group (Thackeray), *b*¹ and *b*² Group (Wendland).

MS.	THACKERAY.	WENDLAND.
Vat. 747	H	C (<i>b</i> ²)
Paris 128	A	(<i>b</i> ²)
Paris 130	D	(<i>b</i> ²)
Brit. Mus., Burney 34	F	(<i>b</i> ²)
Vat. 746	L	[C (<i>b</i> ²)]
Vat. 383	K	A (<i>b</i> ²)
Basle O. IV. 10 (Omont 21)	R	
Venice 534	G	V (<i>b</i> ¹)
Palat. 203	I	P (<i>b</i> ¹)
Ottobon. 32	M	
Paris 950	Q	

B Group (Thackeray), *a* Group (Wendland).

MS.	THACKERAY.	WENDLAND.
Florence Laur. Acquis. 44	T	L
Paris 129	B	L Par.
Paris 5	C	(Included by Wendland in his <i>b</i> ¹ group.)
Barberini IV. 56	P	B
Vat. 1668	S	Vat.
Zurich, Bibl. de la Ville C. 11 (Omont 169)	Z	Turicencis

The descriptions of the MSS. are very full in both editions; but the account given by Mr. Thackeray is much the clearer and more informing. Here I will only indicate the relations between groups A and B. Following Mr. Thackeray (p. 504) one may assert that "the B group, which was followed by Schmidt, while presenting a specious text, is in reality based on a recension, although in a few passages it has kept the original readings; in the A group no correction has taken place, and though the text which has here been handed down is not altogether free from corruption, yet the true reading is in most cases rather to be looked for here than in the revised B text." Mr. Thackeray explains subsequently (p. 511) that the corrections in B rarely have the support of Eusebius, and moreover "we find that in places the reading of the HKA and GI groups, which the B text has rejected, is corroborated by the usage of Alexandrian papyri which are contemporary or nearly contemporary with the pseudo-Aristeas." It should be noted that T (=Wendland L) is a far older member of the B group than is the MS. on which Schmidt relied. While, however, it is safe to assert with Thackeray (p. 514) that the "singular" readings of B are in nearly all cases due to a correction of the text, it is open in crucial cases to use B's "singular" if other grounds support it. B in some cases is undoubtedly less corrupt (p. 515). Eusebius, on the other hand, only rarely corroborates B, and Eusebius' importance for the text of Aristeas is as both Thackeray and Wendland rightly hold very great. "On the whole," says Mr. Thackeray, "the Eusebian evidence is of the greatest importance; it tends to show that the GI group, especially if supported by any member of the B group, is nearest to the primitive text." Among the MSS. referred to, but not collated by Thackeray, is Codex Monacensis 9. This is fully described by Wendland (p. xiv); he terms it M, and shows that his MLB form one group, though M has some relations with (Wendland's) *b* group. Wendland identifies M with the particular MS. used by Simon Schard for the editio princeps of the Greek in 1561. The MSS. which Wendland most frequently cites in his footnotes are M, LB, VPAC. Thackeray's collations are thus the fuller, and the omission of M is of the less moment, as the printed edition of Schard was available.

The enormous labour expended by both editors (and more particularly by Mr. Thackeray) on the collation of MSS. forms a striking contrast to the calm refusal of Hody to take the trouble of examining a single MS. "Until 1870," says Mr. Thackeray (p. 501), "the latest edition of the text was that which Hody prefixed to his work, *De Bibliorum Textibus*, published at Oxford in 1705. This was merely a reprint of Schard, Hody naively confessing in his preface

that he did not consider the work of collating MSS. of a work of such doubtful authenticity to be worth the trouble. "Non me fugit servari in Bibliotheca Regia Parisina, aliisque quibusdam, exemplaria istius MSS. Sed de tali opusculo, quod tanquam foetum supposititium penitus rejicio, Amicos sollicitare, et in Partes longinquas mittere, vix operae pretium existimavi. Eas curas relinquo illis, quibus tanti esse res videbitur."

After two centuries, the collation which Hody thought worthless has been undertaken by two scholars, one of Cambridge, and the other of Wilmersdorf, and the result is before us in the two editions of which the foregoing remarks are meant as a grateful recognition. It is interesting to note the exceptional interest that has at various times been taken by Englishmen in Aristeas. Hody takes a front rank in the history of Aristeas, and his Oxford edition contains many of the Testimonia. His attack on the authenticity of the Letter, which held the field until the present generation, was answered by Whiston in *The Literal Accomplishment of Scripture Prophecies* (1724, p. 121 seq.). Many of Whiston's arguments are thoroughly sound. So, too, there are good points in Hayes' *Vindication of the History of the Septuagint* (1736). Of English translators (not over accurate) there were several; Done, 1633 and 1685; Lewis, 1715, Whiston (*Authentic Records*, I, 423-584), 1727. A new English translation is now a desideratum.

It now remains to approach a little closer to the subject-matter of the Letter of Aristeas, and to exhibit, in the light of recent research, the case as it stands for and against its credibility. I trust that my own position will not be misunderstood. I think that the accuracy of Aristeas may now be vindicated in so many points, that it is unjust to reject his statements where no positive evidence against them is forthcoming. Because the work is pseudepigraphic, it is not therefore just to regard its assertions with suspicion. On the face of it, the Letter is undoubtedly a "forgery." It emanates not from a heathen, but from a Jew, for its easily detected motive, the glorification of Israel and of Israel's Law, betrays the Jewish hand. Where I think the newer facts, as well as the newer psychology, entitle us to reverse the old verdict, appears just in this: a work written with a tendency, with a romantic colouring, may nevertheless be thoroughly trustworthy, not only in its details but in its main outlines. The tendency lies on the surface; the truth rests deep in the body of the work. To me it seems that the Letter is the work of a Jew who lived about half a century after the events recited, but who relied almost exclusively on heathen and contemporary sources of information, the authenticity of which is coming more and more to be probable

or even demonstrable. Even the pseudepigraphic theory must be based on general rather than specific grounds. Wendland cites two specific cases in which he thinks that Aristeas momentarily forgets his rôle and discriminates his own later age from the age of Philadelphus (§§ 28, 182 Wendland; Thackeray, p. 524, l. 18 seq., and p. 550, l. 16). These passages are inconclusive. The phrase ἀ μὲν ἔτι καὶ νῦν ὄρα̅̅̅ς (like the Hebrew עַר הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה) does not necessarily imply any long interval, while in the earlier passage Josephus is supported by a small amount of MS. authority in using the present tense.

At all events, the compiler of the Letter, though a Jew, relies entirely on non-Jewish sources of information. This is clearly shown by two large incidental sections of the Letter, the Table-discourses and the description of Palestine. As Wendland himself points out (*Pseudep.* II, p. 3) in the Table incident the writer utilizes only Greek materials, and the "Jewish Gnostic wisdom seems scarcely used at all." So, too, with regard to the description of Palestine; the Jewish Scriptures are not used at all, and the heathen standpoint is so well mentioned that "Aristeas" if a forger was a most artistic one. Sir Charles Wilson's remark on the description of Palestine is worth citing (see Preface to vol. XI of *Publications of the Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society*):—

Aristeas and Hecatacus visited the Holy City before any change had been made in the walls and other fortifications erected by Nehemiah. The truthfulness of the description of Jerusalem attributed to Aristeas is not affected by the question of its authorship. There is evidence, internal and external, that it was written by some one who actually visited the Jewish capital during the time of the Ptolemies (circa B. C. 250). Special interest attaches to the description of the citadel, which is said to have stood high, and to have protected the precincts of the temple. It apparently occupied the ground upon which the Macedonian Akra and the Herodian Antonia were afterwards built.

Yet the reference in Aristeas to the Akra is one of the chief grounds on which Wendland, Willrich, and Wellhausen in his third edition (*Isr. u. jüd. Geschichte*, ed. 3, 1897, p. 232) base their theory that the Letter cannot be earlier than the first century B. C. In his fourth edition (1901, p. 236) Wellhausen, while retaining his theory as to the date, omits the argument from the Akra. That a citadel existed in pre-Maccabean times is strongly and I think successfully argued by Schürer (III³, 469), who is convinced that Aristeas belongs to the period c. 200 B. C. One may say in general that the whole letter makes the impression that it was written *before* the Syrian domination over Judea (198 B. C.). There are certainly no indications of post-Maccabean conditions.

It is incredible that an Alexandrian should have introduced a Ptolemy so prominently into the story, if, when he wrote, Judaea had been wrested from Egyptian rule. So, too, Aristeas's conceptions of the position of the High Priest is completely pre-Maccabean. A strong point made by those who discredit the pre-Maccabean origin of Aristeas, viz. the reference to the harbours, is again a confirmation of the pre-Maccabean date. This argument originates, in its modern form, with Mendelssohn, but Schürer (III³, p. 470) effectively disposes of it. The argument that the Judean possession of the harbours of Ascalon, Joppa, Gaza and Ptolemais (Aristeas, W., §§ 107, 115, Th., pp. 538, 9) points to the time of Alexander Jannäus is untenable, for Ascalon and Ptolemais *never* belonged to the Judean government. The writer of Aristeas makes no claim that those harbours belonged *politically* to Judaea, but had he written when certain of these were politically in Jewish hands, he would hardly have added those which were not. Schlatter, who also holds with a post-Maccabean date, nevertheless admits that the geographical data are pre-Maccabean (*Zur Topographie u. s. w. Palästina's*, p. 332). The other considerations on which a late date are defended are equally insecure. The most important of these, the date of the Hekataeus cited by Aristeas, (W., § 31, Th., p. 525), is certainly feeble. Willrich (*Juden und Griechen*, p. 21) maintains that this Hekataeus is a pseudo-Hekataeus who wrote "frühestens um 100 vor Christ." Here again, Wellhausen apparently withdraws the argument, for while it is present in the third edition it is absent in the fourth. Schürer (III³, 461 seq.) has a brilliant vindication of both Aristeas and Josephus in this matter, and there is no reasonable ground for doubting that the Hekataeus quoted is the Greek writer of the third century B. C. Willrich argues that this pseudo-Hekataeus (as cited by Josephus, *Agst. Apion*, I, 22) must have written after the Maccabean age because he (Hekataeus) asserts that the Jews bravely bore torment and death rather than renounce their ancestral religion. Prof. Schürer replies: "We know too little of the history to be able to say that such circumstances never arose before the Maccabean times." But surely we can go further, for Josephus proceeds to cite, *from Hekataeus*, similar martyrdoms and acts of Jewish fidelity in the age of Alexander the Great! How critics argue in a circle is well illustrated in this connexion. Willrich places Aristeas late *because* he cites Hekataeus; Schürer places Hekataeus early *because* he is cited by Aristeas. Prof. Büchler (who treats the Letter as composite, and attributes, *Oniaden und Tobiaden*, p. 225, the passages referring to the freeing of the Egyptian Jewish slaves to the Roman period after 63 B. C.) maintains (p. 228) with Schürer that Aristeas cites the genuine Hekataeus; so also does Wendland

(*Apokryphen und Pseudepigr.*, II, 1), whose remarks on the relations between Aristeas and Hekataeus must be given in full:—

Aber abgesehen von dem Hauptinhalte der Legende, bietet der Verfasser eine Reihe zum Teil wertvoller thatsächlicher Angaben, nach deren Quellen gefragt werden muss. Hier zeigt zunächst eine Fährte die Berufung auf des Abderiten Hekataios Zeugnis über die Heiligkeit des jüdischen Gesetzes (§ 31). Diesem Hekataios, der wohl nicht in einem besonderen Buche, sondern im Zusammenhange seiner zu Ptolemaios' I. Zeiten verfassten ägyptischen Geschichte die jüdische Geschichte und die jüdischen Verhältnisse, namentlich der letzten Zeit, behandelte, verdankt Aristeas wohl einen Teil seines historischen Materials. Denn er zeigt sowohl mit dem in Josephus' Schrift gegen Apion I, 22, § 183 ff. erhaltenen, ganz mit Unrecht als Fälschung angesehenen Bruchstücke des Hekataios, als auch mit dem ersten Buche des Diodor, dessen Hauptquelle Hekataios ist, auffallende Berührungen. Auf ihn gehen nachweislich zurück die Nachrichten über die Entstehung der jüdischen Diaspora in Ägypten (§ 12. 13, vgl. 22. 35, 36). Ganz in seinem Sinne (Diodor. I, 12, 2) ist die Gleichsetzung des Zeus mit dem jüdischen Gott (§ 16). Aristeas betont den Wert des Ackerbaues (§ 107 ff.), ähnlich wie Hekataios bei Diod. XL, 3, 7 (in dem Abschnitt über jüdische Geschichte) und Diod. I, 74, 1. Aber man darf wohl noch weiter gehen. Hekataios hat nach dem knappen Auszuge bei Josephus Grösse, Fruchtbarkeit, Umfang, Bevölkerung Judäas, Jerusalem, den Tempel und den Priesterdienst besprochen. Was Josephus kurz rubriziert, findet sich alles ausführlich bei Aristeas behandelt. Für die Schilderung des weitgeriesten Hekataios würde die Anschaulichkeit und der heidnische Standpunkt des Beschauers, die man bei Aristeas bemerkt hat, sehr gut passen. Dass Hekataios hier aus eigener Beobachtung schilderte, ist um so wahrscheinlicher, als er sich nur für die in seinem Berichte bei Diodor sich deutlich zeigende Bekanntschaft mit dem jüdischen Gesetz auf Belehrung durch einen Hohenpriester Hiskia beruft.

All the other arguments for a post-Maccabean date are insignificant compared to the foregoing. The papyri attest that Egyptian Jews Hellenized their names in the third century, and further, that an important Jewish diaspora was established there under the early Ptolemies. "In the time of Philadelphus," says Willrich (p. 36), "there was possibly no Diaspora at all in Egypt, anyhow, it was very unimportant." This assertion is untenable in face of the evidence which has accumulated of recent years. It is very pleasing to note that English scholars have been well to the fore in providing and utilizing this evidence. Prof. Swete (Introduction, p. 3 seq.) proves the antiquity of the Jewish settlement in Egypt. "Long before the time of Alexander, Egypt possessed the nucleus of a

Jewish colony." And further: "When Alexandria was founded in 332 B.C., although the design of the conqueror (Alexander) was to erect a monument to himself which should be essentially Greek, he not only assigned a place in his new city to Jewish colonists, but admitted them to full citizenship. Mommsen indeed expresses a doubt whether the grant of citizenship was made before the time of Ptolemy I, but in the absence of any direct evidence to the contrary the repeated statement of Josephus justifies the belief that it originated with Alexander." This is an attitude which does honour to English scholarship, and Prof. Driver's position (Daniel, *Cambridge Bible for Schools*, p. xxxiv seq.) is identical. It is, however, to Prof. Mahaffy that we owe our latest knowledge regarding Ptolemaic Egypt, and hence I cite his most recent utterances on the Diaspora as against Willrich (whose *Juden und Griechen* Mahaffy rightly terms a "very unconvincing tract"). "The existence at this time of settlements of Jews in Egypt, and even in Upper Egypt, is quite proven by the existence of the village in the nome called Samareia (its Egyptian name was Kerkesephis, at least in later days), which is mentioned more than once in the Petrie Papyri. We even know of two inhabitants who were retailers of oil—Pyrrias and Theophilos, which are probably Greek translations of Esau and Eldad." Prof. Mahaffy adds in a footnote: "This evidence is by no means solitary. There was a Jewish section of the people of Psenuris, concerning whom I found the following (*P.P.*, I, 43): ενοικουν εν Ψενυρει παντο' | εις τα αποδοχεια της κωμης | παρα των Ιουδαιων και των | Ελληνων εκαστου σωματος | και τουτο λογευεται δια | Δι[. . .]ου του επιστατου. I commend," continues Prof. Mahaffy, "this fragment to Willrich, who has only quoted the evidence of the P.P. at second hand, and has missed this passage (*Juden und Griechen*, p. 151). Here is a tax of half a drachma set upon every slave belonging to any Jew or Greek in Psenuris. In one of the wills, dated 237 B.C., a man, whose name is Συριστι 'Ιωναθας, appears as owing the testator 150 (silver) drachmae. We have also on the back of a λογος χωρων with assessments of value, dated in the thirty-seventh year of Philadelphus, της παρα Σιμωνος ουν σοι αν(τιγραφον) επιστολης απεσταλκα (*P.P.*, II, p. 18). Hence Simon was an official in the Fayyum in 248-7 B.C. These sporadic, but perfectly unsuspecting, bits of evidence are quite conclusive" (*A History of Egypt under the Ptolemaic Dynasty*, pp. 92-3).

Wendland makes an ingenious and acute point when he tries to show that Aristeas was acquainted with the Prologue of the Greek translation of Sirach ("written about 130"). Here are his parallels (Preface to his Greek *Aristeas*, p. xxvii):—

Prologue to Sirach.

οὐ μόνον αὐτοὺς τοὺς ἀναγνώ-
σκοντας δέον ἐστὶν ἐπιστήμονας εἶναι,
ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς ἐκτὸς δύνασθαι τοὺς
φιλομαθοῦντας χρησίμους εἶναι καὶ
λέγοντας καὶ γράφοντας . . . ἐν
τούτοις ἰκανὴν ἔξιν περιποιησάμενος.

Aristeas, § 7, Th. p. 520; § 121,
Th. p. 540.

§ 7. φιλομαθῶς γὰρ ἔχοντι τῶν
δυναμένων ὠφέλησαι διάνοιαν δέον
ἐστὶ μεταδιδόναί μάλιστα μὲν πᾶσι
τοῖς ὁμοίοις.

§ 121. οὐ μόνον τὴν τῶν Ἰουδαϊκῶν
γραμμάτων ἔξιν περιποίησαν ἑαυτοῖς.

But is not the inference just the reverse of Wendland's? The kind of literature referred to by the translator of Sirach is precisely of the Aristeas type. Of the verbal identities, two out of three are *common usages* of Aristeas. It is also argued that had the Siracid known of the glories attaching to the suggested initiation of the LXX he must have alluded to them. On the contrary, he can hardly be expected to so depreciate his own private work as to draw a contrast between it and the public fame of the LXX. He particularly brings into prominence the fact that *his* translation was made on his own personal initiative. On the other side, not only is Aristeas illustrated (Thackeray, p. 502) by 3 Macc. (which I hold to be contemporary, see *J. Q. R.*, X, 39), but I think that there are some slight confirmations of Aristeas's story in 1 and 2 Macc.

In 2 Macc. v. 16, among the spoils taken by Antiochus IV are τὰ ὑπὸ πολλῶν βασιλέων ἀνασταθέντα πρὸς αὔξησιν καὶ δόξαν τοῦ τόπου καὶ τιμῆν. This is illustrated by the gifts of Ptolemy II described by Aristeas. Cf. his phrase: ἅπαντα φιλοτιμηθέντες εἰς ὑπεροχὴν δόξης τοῦ βουσιλέως ποιῆσαι (*W.*, § 79, Th., p. 533). Even more clear seems to me to be the reference in 1 Macc. i. 22, a passage which has given very much trouble to commentators, but seems to me explained by Aristeas. Cf. in the former καὶ τὰς φιάλας . . . τὰς χρυσᾶς . . . καὶ τοὺς στεφάνους with Aristeas (*ibid. and often*) τὰς δὲ χρυσᾶς φιάλας . . . στεφάνους. The whole description of the table in Aristeas is important. Prof. Büchler holds its triangular design and its emblems as Dionysian (*Oniaden*, &c., p. 198) and thus appropriate to Ptolemy II. Prof. Mahaffy has a very interesting note on another aspect of this splendid work of art: "While the ornaments (of the shew-bread table), all worked in gold and precious stones, contained both Greek and Egyptian patterns—the egg and dart along the edge, the lily or lotus for the legs—there was a careful avoidance of any human or animal forms in all the design. This, which Josephus (=Aristeas) does not specially note, seems to imply that the design was really intended for its peculiar place in the Jewish temple" (*Greek Life and Thought*, p. 509). Side-lights of this kind, in favour of Aristeas, are numerous. Willrich audaciously says (p. 35): "Von einem Raffinement in der Reproduction

ptolemäischer Zustände ist also nichts vorhanden, dagegen fehlt es nicht an groben Schnitzern." Contrast with this Nestle's remark: "Dass der Aristeasbrief in vielen Einzelheiten *genaueste Kenntniss* der Verhältnisse der Ptolemäerzeit beweist, bestätigen die Papyrusfunde mehr und mehr" (Hauck-Herzog, s. v. *Bibelübersetzungen*, pp. 3-4). Even more emphatic is Ulrich Wilcken, who produces the minutest confirmation of the reference in Aristeas (§ 298, Th., p. 570) to the daily records kept by Ptolemy's officials; a cross between the business gazette and the Court Journal. Wilcken conceives that the narrative of Aristeas is a fiction, but that the writer placed it in an accurate setting. But is this true of an ancient writer? Rather, the genuineness of the frame proves the genuineness of the picture. But here are Wilcken's own words, worthy of being specially brought into contrast with Willrich's error: "Ich erinnere daran, dass wenn auch der Hauptgedanke dieser Schrift auf einer Fiction beruht, doch die Einzelheiten, die der Verfasser über die aegyptischen Verhältnisse nebenbei einfließen lässt, durch die Urkunden in *erstaunlicher Weise ihre Bestätigung finden* (wie Lumbroso zuerst nachwies) *und überhaupt so vortrefflich sind, dass man ihnen mit dem allergrössten Vertrauen begegnen muss*" (*Philologus*, LIII, 1894, p. 111). The complete confirmation respecting the written Journals (*πάντα ἀναγράφεισθαι*) also removes suspicion from another incident mentioned by Aristeas. It is, to my mind, no longer improbable that the king would communicate in writing with his librarian as Aristeas asserts, though Hody directs his satire against this very point.

So many of Aristeas' allusions have now been confirmed, that where there is no direct evidence against him his assertions can no longer be treated with contempt. But Aristeas is not to be relied on with regard to the names of his *dramatis personae*. Thus, there is no sufficient ground for accepting the existence of a high priest Eleazar, but though the correspondence between Jerusalem and Alexandria in Aristeas bears all the marks of artistic elaboration, such an embassy may well have taken place. There is no point in Jewish history more obscure than the *order* of the High Priests, and it is inevitable rather than disappointing that Schürer in his new edition (I, 182) has little if anything to add. Willrich's remarks (*Juden und Griechen*, p. 107 sq.) certainly indicate some of the difficulties, but the author, as Schürer rightly says: "zwar über das Ziel hinaus schießt." (The Simon of 3 Macc. is certainly not Simon the Just as Willrich assumes, p. 111.) Cheyne in 1891 (*Origin of Psalter*) held (p. 144) that under Ptolemy Philadelphus "it is in a high degree credible that the captives *were* released [as Aristeas asserts], and that on hearing of the glad news and receiving the rich presents intended for the temple, the Jews at

once offered sacrifices and public prayer for the gracious monarch." Hitzig sees in Ps. lxxii a reference to this, and Cheyne (though he does not adopt this view) thinks the theory plausible enough.

May he give doom to thy people in righteousness,
 And to thine afflicted ones according to right.
 Before him let foemen bow,
 And let his enemies lick the dust . . .
Because he delivers the needy when he cries,
 The afflicted also who has no helper.—Psalm lxxii. 4, 12.

So, too, Mahaffy (*Greek Life and Thought*, p. 508) says of the release of the captives: "There seems to be some basis for this story." It is not easy to speak confidently, but the view of Dr. Büchler (p. 225) that the release points to the Roman period does not seem probable. It is clearly not unlikely that Philadelphus desired to make Judaea his basis for an attack on Syria. Hence he would use every means to win the affection of the Jews. As to Eleazar, Cheyne conjectures (*ibid.* p. 170) that this High Priest was the author of Psalm xlv, written upon the marriage of Philadelphus to Arsinoe daughter of the Thracian king Lysimachus. The Arsinoe, however, of the letter of Eleazar in Aristeas is the *second* Arsinoe, the king's sister. Aristeas has been accused of ignorance regarding Arsinoe on very inadequate grounds. Wendland (in *Pseudepigr.* p. 1) says that while the author of Aristeas knew that the second Arsinoe was Philadelphus' sister-wife, he did not know that she was childless. Is this so?

Aristeas simply makes Eleazar refer to ἡ βασίλισσα Ἀρσινόη, ἡ ἀδελφή, καὶ τὰ τέκνα (§§ 41 and 185; Thackeray, pp. 527, 551). Now Ptolemy had children by the first Arsinoe, and when the second Arsinoe found herself childless, she "advised or acquiesced in the adoption of her step-children, of whom the eldest was therefore declared crown prince" (Mahaffy, *History of Egypt*, p. 76). The phrase καὶ τὰ τέκνα seems specially chosen in Aristeas as avoiding the suggestion that the children are Arsinoe's own offspring. Again, Wendland thinks that Aristeas (§ 180, Th., p. 550) transforms Philadelphus' defeat at Cos into a brilliant victory. But (a) would Philadelphus admit himself defeated at Cos? True, Antigonus won a victory, but not over the Egyptian fleet. It is by no means certain that Theocritus wrote his Idyll xvii before Antigonus' victory. (b) Cos is not named, why may not Aristeas refer to Philadelphus' sea-victory at Andros in 247? (Mahaffy, *Empire of the Ptolemies*, p. 490). True this brings us very near Philadelphus' death, but if the compiler of the Letter of Aristeas lived under the fourth Ptolemy, this would still leave ample time for the reference. With regard

to Aristeas's references to Theopompos (§ 314, Th., p. 572), Theodektes (§ 315, Th., p. 573), and Menedemos (§ 201, Th., p. 554), Wendland seems right in accusing Aristeas of inaccuracy. The case with regard to Menedemos is not so certain, for even Willrich (p. 35) admits that "die Einführung des Philosophen Menedemos nach dem Seesieg des Philadelphos über Antigonos mag noch hingehen." Wendland rightly suspects the list of names of the seventy-two given by Aristeas, but he quite fails to make out his case that the Letter was written between 96 and 63 B.C. Every requirement is met by assuming a date about 200 B.C. at latest. And, as regards the authenticity and credibility of the story, the evidence that has accumulated is all so favourable to Aristeas, that the attempt to discredit him by criticism of *details* can no longer be made with effect. Aristeas must stand or fall by our verdict as to his *general* and *central* statements.

We may now proceed to face the main question, and to consider the credibility of Aristeas in regard to the principal outlines of his story (cf. on this Swete, Introduction, pp. 16-22, a work which places all students of the LXX under the deepest obligations). These outlines are (1) that the translation of the Pentateuch was made in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus; (2) that the version was instigated by Demetrius of Phalerum and the king; (3) that the Hebrew Scrolls and the translators were imported from Jerusalem; and (4) that the translation, when finished, was welcomed alike by Jews and Greeks. The full consideration of (1) would carry us too deep into the history of the LXX, but it is now very generally held that Aristeas' assertion as to the date or the Greek version of the Pentateuch is absolutely accurate. Graetz stands almost alone in placing this part of the LXX so late as Philometor, but Swete's reply that the rendering of *מסחרת השבת* (Lev. xxiii. 11) by *τῆ ἐπαύριον τῆς πρώτης* betrays the hand, not of a Pharisaic translator, but of a Pharisaic corrector, is perhaps met by Graetz's note in the *JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW*, III, p. 154. As regards (2) Aristeas cannot be so easily justified. It is now held that the LXX grew out of the needs of the Alexandrian Jews themselves, and that Aristeas is romancing when he ascribes the work to royal initiative. Many moderns go so far as to modify this condemnation by admitting that "it is not improbable that the king encouraged the work of translation with the view of promoting the use of the Greek language by the settlers (cf. Mommsen, *Provinces*, II, p. 164), as well for the purpose of gratifying his own curiosity" (Swete, p. 20). It would serve little to cite the numerous writers who see no improbability in the part assigned by Aristeas to Ptolemy II (cf. Mahaffy, *Greek Life and Thought*, p. 508, and *Empire of Ptolemies*, p. 180, but contrast his later view in *Hist. of Egypt*,

p. 86; Streane, *Age of the Maccabees*; Otteley, *Short History of the Hebrews*, p. 253; Conybeare, in Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible*, s.v. Greece, p. 262). The real ground for disbelieving Aristeas's statement is his introduction of Demetrius of Phalerum, though it must be remembered that Aristobulus (if Eusebius' citation be genuine), not only names Philadelphus and Demetrius, but also does this in an address to Philometor. Hence this part of the story was current at the Ptolemaic court in the middle of the second century B. C. Now Aristeas seems to make Demetrius royal librarian (*κατασταθεὶς ἐπὶ τῆς τοῦ βασιλέως βιβλιοθήκης*), which he never was. Zenodotus and Eratosthenes were Philadelphus' librarians. But K. Kuiper (who almost stands alone in making the fair and obvious suggestion that Aristeas, if he erred, may have done so from error and not from fraud), suggests that Aristeas does not call Demetrius *προστάτην τῆς βιβλιοθήκης*, and that the Letter might be true if Demetrius was librarian of the *private* royal collection (*Mnemosyne*, XX, 1892, pp. 250-272). This suggestion is not plausible, for Aristeas conveys the clear impression that he is referring to the museum and its annexes. Again, a fragment of Hermippus Callimachus (Müller, *Frag. Hist. Graec.*, III, p. 47, frag. 50) informs us that Demetrius stood in ill favour with Philadelphus, and was banished by him. Hermippus is not to be quite so readily accepted against Aristeas as many critics do (e.g. Susemihl, II, p. 606; I, p. 138). As Müller says of him, and is quite certain (p. 36): "Multa enim in fragmentis occurrunt, quae aperte falsa sunt." Still the facts about Demetrius are, in our present state of knowledge, a serious difficulty in the way of believing Aristeas. Dr. Swete, to a certain extent, saves the situation by his clever suggestion (p. 19) that "if Demetrius took part in the inception of the LXX, he must have done so during the reign of Soter. This is not in itself improbable. He had taken refuge in Egypt as early as B.C. 307, and for many years had been a trusted adviser of the first Ptolemy; and it is not unlikely that the project of translating the Jewish law was discussed between him and the royal founder of the Alexandrian library, and that the work was really due to his suggestion, though his words did not bear fruit till after his death." Cf. Plutarch, *Apophthegm.* viii Δημήτριος ὁ Φαληρέως Πτολεμαίῳ τῷ βασιλεῖ παρήνει τὰ περὶ βασιλείας καὶ ἡγεμονίας βιβλία κτᾶσθαι καὶ ἀναγιγνώσκειν. Hence Aristeas may have followed a genuine tradition in associating Demetrius with the work, though his exact statements cannot be reconciled with the counter-statement of Hermippus. Before leaving this point, it must be said that several Jewish critics refuse to believe that the Alexandrian Jews themselves took the initiative in the matter of the Greek version. Friedmann

(*Onkelos und Akylas*, 1896, p. 5 seq.) stoutly maintains the theory of a royal intervention in the matter. Graetz (in the article apparently overlooked by Swete, but cited above) thinks that "positive proof exists that the translator avoided the plain rendering, and substituted another less likely to excite prejudice—out of deference to a Greek ruler" (*J. Q. R.*, III, p. 152). In Deut. xvii. 14–19, which deals with the election of a ruler, the word מֶלֶךְ occurs three times, and in each case the LXX renders, not βασιλεύς, but ἄρχων (Aq., Theod., and Symm. all have βασιλεύς). Now let us look at the passage in Deuteronomy: "When thou . . . shalt say, I will set over me a *king*, thou shalt set a *king* over thee: one from amongst thy brethren shalt thou set *king* over thee. Thou mayest not put a foreigner over thee who is not thy brother." Graetz argues on this as follows: "A delicacy of feeling prevented him rendering the sentence, Thou shalt not appoint a stranger *king* over thee, literally, or mentioning the throne of his fatherland. How shall we account for this variation if we do not assume that the translator's respect for the foreign ruler to whose government the Jews were at the time subject, restrained him from letting the king read that, according to their Scriptures, the Jews were to select their ruler [rather king] from their own body? And this is equivalent to the admission that the translation was prepared with special reference to a sovereign of Alexandria. It was assumed that he would glance at the version of Deuteronomy, as of the rest of the Pentateuch, and care was therefore taken to omit phrases that might give umbrage. The pith of Aristeas's letter would thus be confirmed, viz. that an Alexandrian king gave his countenance to a translation of the Pentateuch." As an interesting curiosity one may here refer to Prof. D. S. Margoliouth's suggestion (*Lines of Defence*, ch. I) that the Greek version of the Song of Solomon was much liked by Ptolemy Philadelphus because the royal lover and his bride frequently call each other brother and sister.

Closely connected, though certainly not identical with the strong doubts as to the royal initiative, there arise serious difficulties against accepting Aristeas's statements with regard to the nationality of the translators. Prof. Swete is very emphatic on this point, and leaves no loophole for escape from the conviction that Aristeas conveyed a falsehood when he reported that the translators of the Pentateuch were Palestinians. "The Greek of the Alexandrian Pentateuch is Egyptian, and, as far as we can judge, not such as Palestinian translators would have written" (p. 20). He contrasts the Greek of the Palestinian translator of Sirach, the clumsy Greek of the prologue, the stiff artificiality of the book, with the simple style of the Pentateuch. (Yet Wendland, as we have seen above, thinks the style

of Aristeas, undoubtedly an Alexandrian, similar to the prologue of the Palestinian Siracid.)

That the latter [the LXX Pentateuch] is mainly the work of Alexandrian Jews appears from more than one consideration. An older generation of Biblical scholars pointed to the occurrence in the LXX, and especially in the Pentateuch, of such words of Egyptian origin as ἄχει (Gen. xli. 2), κόνδυ (Gen. xliv. 2), ἴβις (Lev. xi. 17; Deut. xiv. 16), βύσσος (Exod. xxv-xxxix passim), and such characteristically Egyptian terms as δίδραχμον, ἀλήθεια (= ⲁⲗⲏⲏⲥ), ἀρχιμάγειρος, ἀρχινομοχόος, and the like. The argument is not conclusive, since after the time of Alexander the κοινή contained elements drawn from different localities. But recent discoveries in Egypt have yielded a criterion of Egyptian Greek which has been applied to the LXX with definite results. In 1892 Professor Mahaffy was able to write: "in the vocabulary of the papyri we find a closer likeness to the Greek of the LXX than to any other book I could name." This statement has been abundantly justified by the publication of Deissmann's *Bibelstudien* (Marburg, 1895), and *Neue Bibelstudien* (1897), where a number of the peculiar or characteristic words and forms of the LXX are shown to have been in common use among Egyptian Greeks of the third and second centuries B. C. The vocabulary and style of the LXX will be treated in a later chapter; for the present it is enough to say that they are such as to discredit the attribution of the Greek Pentateuch to a company consisting exclusively or chiefly of Palestinian Jews. The LXX as a whole, at any rate the earlier part of the collection, is a monument of Alexandrian Greek as it was spoken by the Jewish colony in the Delta under the rule of the Ptolemies.

The force of this contention is almost irresistible: almost, but not quite. Aristeas tells a story of rolls written in letters of gold and sent to the king by the High Priest. "This story," says Dr. Swete, "may be dismissed at once, it belongs to the picturesque setting of the romance." But there is some Rabbinic confirmation that the χρυσογραφία (Ar., § 176, Th., p. 549) was associated with scrolls of the law used in Alexandria. The statement in Aristeas confuses the whole MS. with the divine name. The name of God (according to *Tract. Soferim*, I, 10) was so written in an Alexandrian codex, and from Josephus' remark as to the "name of God inscribed in sacred characters" on the High Priest's forehead (*Antiq.*, III, vii, 6), added to Aquila's custom of writing the Tetragrammaton in the ancient Hebrew script, we may infer that the name of God was often specially distinguished. Evidently Josephus found nothing incredible in the story, and L. Löw (*Graphische Requisiten bei den Juden*, 1870, p. 162) holds the incident as accurate, "Sie ist ein glaubwürdiges Zeugnis, dass man sich gegen Ende der Periode des zweiten

Tempels der Goldschrift bediente." He even thinks that the use of gold-illumination was an original Jewish invention (p. 161). The passage in *Tract. Soferim* runs thus: אין כותבין בזהב מעשה בתורתו של אלכסנדרוס (בתורתו של אלכסנדריים. MSS.) שהיו כל אזכרותיה כתנבותו בזהבו ובה מעשה לפני חכמים ואמרו תגנו Müller (in his edition, note 54) thinks that this is a direct reference to Aristeas, but Friedmann (*Onkelos und Akylas*, p. 24) thinks that the phrase ובה מעשה לפני חכמים implies an accidental case and not an historical instance. It may be hazardous to suggest that there is in 1 Macc. iii. 48 an underlying attack on such illumination of Bible scrolls, but the passage seems to me to bear that meaning.

Though, however, Dr. Swete dismisses the gold-written scroll as a romantic invention, he thinks that "there is nothing improbable in the statement that the Hebrew rolls were freshly brought from Jerusalem, for communication between Jerusalem and Alexandria was frequent during the reigns of the earlier Ptolemies." If this be so, and we know that it was, why should not the Greek of Palestinian Jews be strongly Alexandrian in vocabulary? The contrast with the Siracid does not weaken this supposition. He translated a full century after the LXX Pentateuch, and in the meantime Judaea had passed from Egyptian into Syrian hands, and a temporary reaction had occurred against the familiar use of Greek in Jerusalem. Lumbroso, who also holds with Swete that the translators of the Pentateuch were Alexandrians, nevertheless thinks (*Recherches*, p. xxi) that it is to the last immigrants rather than to the old settlers that the translation was due. The LXX is Alexandrian in vocabulary, but Hebraic in syntax. "The manner of the LXX," says Dr. Swete (p. 299), "is not Greek, and does not even aim at being so. It is that of a book written by men of Semitic descent, who have carried their habits of thought into their adopted tongue. The translators write Greek largely as they doubtless spoke it; they possess a plentiful vocabulary and are at no loss for a word, but they are almost indifferent to idiom, and seem to have no sense of rhythm. Hebrew constructions and Semitic arrangements of the words are at times employed, even when not directly suggested by the original." If we suppose a body of Palestinian translators at work in Alexandria, with local Alexandrian Jews to help them, is not this precisely what would result? The vocabulary of the translation would be Alexandrian, the style and idioms Palestinian; and this is what the LXX is. If it be true that (as the final note to the LXX Esther asserts) the Greek translation of Esther was the work of a *Palestinian*, then the case for a Palestinian influence on the LXX Pentateuch is much strengthened. For the LXX Esther is thoroughly Alexandrian in vocabulary, and

in its use of technical terms (Jacob, *ZATW*, 1890, p. 280), but, adds Jacob, p. 290 (and most must agree with him): "Die Uebersetzung (of Esther) ist in Aegypten verfasst." Still the fact remains, as Cornill, *Einleitung in das AT*, p. 297 (ed. 1891), points out, that "an allen Stellen, wo von den Uebersetzern etwas Näheres angegeben wird, Palästinenser als solche erscheinen," and he cites with apparent approval Buhl's conclusion (*Kanon und Text des AT*, p. 124): "Wirklich werden wohl in den meisten Fällen die Palästinenser besser Griechisch verstanden haben, als die eingeborenen ägyptischen Juden Hebräisch." The evidence of the papyri must clearly weaken our belief in Palestinian influence on the LXX Pentateuch, but it does not seem to me to justify us in pronouncing this part of the story of Aristeas a fiction. He wrote a full half century after the event, and his information may have been defective. He does not emphasize sufficiently perhaps the part played in the LXX version by local Jews, though his remark (§ 302, Th., p. 571) τὸ δὲ ἐκ τῆς συμφωνίας γινόμενον προπόντως ἀναγραφῆς οὕτως ἐτύγχανε παρὰ τοῦ Δημητρίου hints at local intervention in producing the final result. As to (4), the welcome given to the rendering by Greeks and Jews, Dr. Swete sees no ground for doubting Aristeas. "The welcome accorded to the Greek version by the Jews of Alexandria," he says (p. 22), "was doubtless as Aristeas represents, both cordial and permanent; nor need we doubt that Philadelphus and his scholars approved what had been done." The subsequent feelings in Jewish circles regarding the LXX have no bearing on the Letter of Aristeas.

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