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*THE FORMS OF HEBREW POETRY.*

V. VARIETIES OF RHYTHM. THE STROPHE.

HEBREW rhythms fall into two broad classes according as the second line of the successive distichs is equal in rhythmical quantity to, and therefore balances, the first line, or is less in quantity than, and so forms a kind of rhythmical echo of, the first line. Distichs in which a shorter first line is followed by a longer second line are relatively speaking so rare<sup>1</sup> that in a first broad division they may well be neglected; and we may classify the rhythms not merely as distichs consisting of equal or unequal lines, but, so as to bring out the regular and more striking difference between them, as balancing and echoing rhythms respectively.

But before we can discuss the question of the extent to which, or the sense in which, strophe may be said to be either a regular or an occasional form of Hebrew poetry, it becomes necessary to subdivide these two broad classes of rhythms which have hitherto mainly engaged our attention, and then to consider to what extent different rhythms may enter into one and the same poem. This subdivision must be carried through by applying a measure which, as I pointed out in the last article, is less accurate than we could desire, and leaves us with corresponding uncertainties which must not be forgotten. Even when we may be certain of the general class into which a particular distich may fall we may remain uncertain of its exact measurement; for example—

ישראל לא ידע  
עמי לא התבונן

is certainly a distich of equal lines (balancing rhythm): but whether each line contains three or only two stressed words is in some measure uncertain.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *Isaiah* (International Critical Comm.), p. lxxv.

Whether the unit in Hebrew poetry is the line or the distich has been much discussed ; regarded from the standpoint of parallelism, it is obviously the distich that is the unit ; the single line in this case is nothing ; it is incapable of revealing its character as a parallelism. On the other hand it is rhythmically just as easy to measure a single line as to measure a distich ; and at times it is necessary so to do : for, as there alternate with distichs that consist of parallel lines distichs that contain no parallelism, so occasionally there alternate with these distichs single lines or monostichs, and also tristichs in which the third line may or may not be parallel to the first two. For these non-parallel isolated stichoi, or the non-parallel third stichoi of tristichs, measurement of the line becomes necessary.

At the same time unless an anapæstic rhythm such as Sievers claims to discover, or other rhythm equally well defined, can be shown to prevail within the lines, these isolated stichoi owe their rhythmical character, so far at least as we can discern or measure it, to the fact that they contain the same number of stressed syllables as the halves of the distichs among which they occur.

Thus in any case the distich remains so characteristic of Hebrew poetry that it is better, so far as possible, even in a rhythmical classification, to measure and classify by distich rather than stichos : though the stichos when isolated will of course call for measurement too.

Distichs consist of (i.) those in which the lines are equal ; and (ii.) those in which one line (generally the second) is shorter than the other.

The first class of distichs subdivides into (*a*) distichs with two stresses in each line ; (*b*) distichs with three stresses in each line ; and (*c*) distichs with four stresses in each line. Of these three types of balanced rhythm the first and third are intimately connected : for four-stress lines are commonly

divided into two equal parts by a cæsura, and the pause at the cæsura is often strong enough to justify, regard being had to rhythmical grounds alone, treating each period of four stresses as a distich of two-stress lines. Any isolated group of two periods of four stresses is best classified as a single distich of four-stress lines, or two distichs of two-stress lines, according as parallelism occurs between the clauses or sentences of two stresses or of four stresses. But in view of this intimate connexion it is not surprising that combinations of two two-stress clauses or sentences, and combinations of two four-stress sentences occur in the same poem. Such a mixture of rhythms, if in such case we are right in speaking of a mixture of *rhythms* at all, exactly corresponds to the fact that, in the same *kinah* or elegy, parallelism sometimes occurs between the two unequal sections of three and two stresses respectively, and sometimes does not; in the latter case we may, if we will, speak of a line of five stresses, and in the former of a distich in which a two-stress line follows a three-stress line; but the line in the one case and the distich in the other are *rhythmically* identical, since each contains five stresses; there is no real change in the rhythm, though the change in the parallelism introduces a markedly different effect<sup>1</sup> which it is well to render as manifest as possible.

If, at least where parallelism commonly takes place between sections of three and two stresses respectively, we more properly speak of a *distich* of unequal lines than of a *line* of five stresses, then clear examples of distichs of two-stress lines are those which interchange with the 3:2 distichs in Lamentations i., iii., iv.: as, for example, iii. 15:—

השביעני במרורים  
הרוני לענה

<sup>1</sup> Cp., e.g., Isaiah i. 10 f., 18-20, 21-26, and see *Isaiah*, p. lxvi. (Introduction, § 54); see also *ibid.*, pp. 4 f., 26, 31.

However we choose to term them, combinations of parallel clauses of two stresses do, as a matter of fact, interchange within the same poem with distichs of four-stress parallel lines: so, for example, in 2 Samuel i. 22:—

מדם חללים  
 מחלב נברים  
 קשת יהונתן לא־נשון אחור  
 חרב שאול לא־תשוב ריקם

From the blood of the slain,  
 From the fat of the mighty,  
 The bow of Jonathan turned not back,  
 And the sword of Saul returned not empty.

For are we not forced by the parallelism to place a much greater pause between the first two sets of two words than between the next two sets? And are not the two short parallel periods really separated by almost as strong a pause as the two longer ones that follow? If we call the two longer ones a distich of four-stress lines, why not the two shorter ones a distich of two-stress lines? Does not the passage really consist of two distichs rather than of a single tristich (cp. R.V.) of three four-stress lines?

For another example of this combination we may turn to Isaiah xxi. 3:—<sup>1</sup>

עליכן מלאו מתני חלחלה  
 צירים אחווני כצירי יולדה  
 נעויתי משמע  
 נבהלתי מראות

Therefore filled are my loins with writhing,  
 Pangs have seized me as of a woman in travail.  
 I am bent (with pain) at what I hear,  
 I am dismayed at what I see.

Here the first two periods must be regarded as a distich of four-stress lines: the lines cannot be subdivided into dis-

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *Isaiah*, pp. 348 f.; also my article *The Strophic Division of Isaiah xxi. 1-10, and xi. 1-3* in the *Zeitschr für die A.T. Wissenschaft*, 1912, pp. 190 ff.

tichs of two-stress lines as which so much of the rest of the poem may be, and, indeed, is best read.

Which is the best way to divide the Hebrew text, or even an English translation, though this at least should as far as possible be divided according to the parallelism, often becomes a delicate question. For example, does

המו גוים ממו ממלכות

(Ps. xlvi. 7) נתן בקולו תמוג ארץ

consist of one distich (R. V., v. 6) of four-stress lines incompletely parallel to one another, or of two distichs of two-stress lines, the lines in the first distich being completely parallel, the lines in the second not parallel at all, thus—

Nations were in tumult,  
Kingdoms were moved;  
He uttered his voice,  
The earth melted.

If Psalm xlvi. 7 be treated as a single distich, then the first line of the distich is marked by an internal and secondary parallelism; and it is to be observed generally that the well-defined cæsura which regularly occurs in four-stress periods renders it particularly easy for the halves to receive such secondary parallelism, and so to assume, when isolated, an appearance of greater independence. Whatever view we take of particular examples, whether we break them up into distichs of two-stress lines or distichs of four-stress lines, the rhythm remains essentially the same, and our only problem is how best to do justice to other formal elements in the poem which differentiate what are, in the last resort, rhythmically identical periods. There is nothing that is peculiar to Hebrew poetry in this particular kind of uncertainty which is produced when, within a rhythm that remains constant, another poetical form is irregularly followed. A popular metre with English poets in the sixteenth century was the "poulter's" measure, in which lines of twelve syllables alternate with lines of a "poulter's"

dozen, i.e., of fourteen syllables; these long but unequal lines rhymed.<sup>1</sup> Divide the twelve-syllable line of the poulter's measure in half, and the fourteen-syllable line into lines of eight and six syllables respectively, supply the four short lines thus produced with two sets of rhymes instead of one so that they rhyme alternately, and the form of the typical short metre of our hymn books is the result. But in some cases the origin of short metre asserts itself, and within the same hymn the first and third lines sometimes rhyme and sometimes do not; as, for example, in these two consecutive verses of Wesley's translation of Gerhardt's hymn:—

Give to the winds thy fears,  
 Hope and be undismayed;  
 God hears thy sighs, and counts thy tears,  
 God shall lift up thy head.  
 Through waves and clouds and storms  
 He gently clears thy way:  
 Wait thou His time; so shall that night  
 Soon end in joyous day—

and so throughout the hymn, though in no regular alternation, we may observe rhymed and unrhymed first and third lines. Rhythmically the two long lines of the old poulter's measure and the four short lines of modern short metre are identical: where rhymes regularly mark off the shorter periods, it is obviously convenient to make this prominent by dividing into four lines; but where the first and third sections only occasionally rhyme, either course might be adopted: and so with a Hebrew poem in which parallelism sometimes, but not invariably or even predominantly, exists between the halves of successive periods of four stresses.

<sup>1</sup> Four lines of Grimald in Tottell's *Miscellany* (ed. Arber, p. 110) may serve as an example:—

Of all the heavenly gifts that mortal men commend,  
 What trusty treasure in the world can countervail a friend?  
 Our health is soon decayed; goods, casual, light and vain;  
 Broke have we seen the force of power, and honour suffer pain.

Yet clearly allied as 2 : 2 and 4 : 4 are, at times it makes some difference whether we treat the passage as in the one form or the other ; the main difference lies here, that in ambiguous cases we shall naturally give to the separate lines of what we regard as a distich of two-stress lines a greater independence than if we were to regard these two-stress clauses as merely parts of a single four-stress line. I take as an example Psalm *xlvi*. There are in this Psalm, as is well known, some difficult phrases and some doubtful text, but the presence of several short parallel clauses, enough, I think, to be characteristic of the poem, is certain : on the other hand, in the present text there is no single clear case of parallelism between four-stress periods. This being so, verse 4 (R.V., v. 3) ought, I believe, to be taken not as a single four-stress line (R.V.), but as a distich 2 : 2 ; it consists of two independent parallel lines :—

אלהים בארמנותיה  
גודע למשגב

God is in her palaces.

He hath made himself known as a high retreat.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> If, and it surely is, it is a good thing to preserve, when this can be done without detriment to the sense or to the English idiom, as much as may be of the swing and rhythm of the original, the Prayer-Book version of Psalm *xlvi*. is not happy, and A.V. ruins the first verse by omitting a comma. On the other hand, R.V. in *vv.* 1 2 (Hebrew 2, 3) is very happy, and only goes astray with the crucial verse 3 (Hebrew 4). Its rendering, which does not differ here essentially from P.B.V. and A.V., might pass if the rhythm of the original were 4 : 4, but is improbable if the rhythm in the previous verses is, as taken, and correctly taken, as I believe, by R.V. to be, 2 : 2. Dr. Briggs, on the other hand, by the help of some emendation, reduces the whole of verses 1-3 (2-4) to 4 : 4 and renders as follows :—

Great and highly to be praised in the city is our God.

His Holy Mount is beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth.

Mount Zion on the northern ridge is a royal city.

Yahweh doth strive in her citadels, is known for a high tower.

Apart from the validity of the emendations presupposed, this treatment of the passage seems to me to have against it the fact that it gives an aesthetically inferior result. Some corruption of the text there may be, and in particular the tristich in verse 3 is questionable, but substantially we may, I think, reproduce the sense and rhythm of the original as follows :—



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The latter part of verse 3 (2) of the same Psalm offers, if the text is correct, an example of a tristich of two-stress lines. Clearer examples of the way in which the rhythm produced by a succession of two-stress parallel lines or clauses may expand not only into four-stress periods with a cæsura, but also at times into six-stress periods with a double cæsura, may be found in Isaiah iv. and xxi. 1-10: I have already cited two-stress and four-stress distichs from the latter passage: the six-stress passage occurs in verse 8:—

על-מצפה אדני | אנכי עמד | תמיד יומם  
ועל משמרתי | אנכי נצב | כל הלילות

Upon a watch tower, O Lord, am I standing continually by day,  
And upon my guard-post am I stationed all the nights.

The importance of this expansion of 2:2 into 4:4 or 6:6, as the case may be, will appear later.

Of the balanced rhythm, produced by the union of three-stress lines (3:3) it is unnecessary to say much at the present point. These lines *may*, but rarely do, admit a cæsura; and this may occur after the first or the second stress: it may be somewhat strongly marked, as in

(Num. xxiv. 9) וכלביא | מי יקימו

And as a lioness—who shall rouse him up?

or slighter as in both lines of Psalm li. 9:—

תחמאני באזוב | ואטהר  
תכבסני | ומשלג אלבין

While, therefore, 3:3 differs from 2:2 by its greater fullness, it differs from 4:4 not only by its less fullness, but also

Great is Yahweh,  
And highly to be praised,  
In the city of our God,  
The mountain of his holiness.  
Fair in elevation,  
The joy of the whole earth,  
Is the mountain of Sion,  
The recesses of the North,  
The City of the Great King.  
God is in her palaces,  
He hath made Himself known as a high retreat.

by this general absence of cæsura, which is almost constantly present in 4 : 4—a difference which commonly gives to the two rhythms a remarkably dissimilar effect.

We come now to consider distichs with unequal lines, or, as we may prefer to regard some examples, lines unequally divided by a cæsura. With reference to the typical echoing rhythm 3 : 2 it is unnecessary to add anything more to what has been previously said. But as legitimate variations of 3 : 2, Budde, we have already seen, admitted in addition to 2 : 2, which by his theory of heavy words he endeavoured to equate with 3 : 2, distichs of the type 4 : 2 or 4 : 3. Whether 4 : 2 and 4 : 3 really produce the characteristic effort of 3 : 2 remains to be seen ; and also whether either 4 : 2 or 4 : 3 is actually at all a natural or frequent variant of 3 : 2. It is doubtful whether either of these rhythms really occurs in Lamentations i.-iv. ; there is certainly nothing like the evidence for the existence of either of them there that there is for the occurrence of 2 : 2. But unless we correct the text, where nothing but rhythm demands it, Isaiah xiv. 4-21, in which the dominance of the echoing rhythm (3 : 2) is obvious, contains two 4 : 2 distichs (*vv.* 5 and 16 c, d). For Sievers' method of reducing verse 5,

שבר יהוה מטה רשעים | שבט משלים

which to be sure he pronounces a "sehr fragliche Vers," to 3 : 4, by treating מטה רשעים as one stress and its parallel שבט משלים as two, violates the law discussed at the close of the last article. Still 4 : 2 is not really such a natural variant of the *echoing* rhythm 3 : 2 as it may appear to be, when thus named arithmetically ; for the first part of 4 : 2 almost necessarily, and certainly in the example just cited, receives a cæsura, so that the whole closely approximates in *rhythmical* character to a tristich of two-stress lines, i.e. to a *balancing* rhythm.

The occurrence, apparent or real, of distichs 4 : 3 or 4 : 2 as variants in a well-sustained succession of distichs 3 : 2 calls for careful examination ; but the existence certainly of 4 : 2, and probably of 4 : 3, elsewhere is well established. Sievers was, I believe, the first to claim clearly that 4 : 3 was not, or at least was not only, a mere variant of 3 : 2, but, so to speak, a rhythm in its own right ; he thereby made it possible to regard certain poems as more regular than they had previously appeared to be. In his earlier work Sievers himself regarded this rhythm as rare, though in an appendix he briefly stated, what he has since endeavoured to work out, that, though rare in those parts of the Old Testament which have commonly been understood to be poetry, it was the regular rhythm of those Hebrew narratives which, though they have commonly been regarded as prose, are in reality metrical. The one poem among those first studied by Sievers in which 4 : 3 seemed to him to be frequent, was Psalms ix. and x. In some respects this is obviously a bad specimen to be obliged to work from, for the destruction in parts of it of the alphabetic scheme gives us a fair warning that the text is corrupt. Still, making all allowance for this, Sievers seems to me to make out a tolerably safe case for 4 : 3 as an independent rhythm, though, unless he is right in finding it prevalent in narratives commonly regarded as prose, it was nothing like so frequent as 2 : 2, 3 : 3, 4 : 4, and 3 : 2.

Some years ago, before I had familiarised myself with Sievers' work, and I think before I had ever even looked into his book, I attempted a reconstruction of Psalms ix., x.<sup>1</sup> In so doing I remarked : " The lines throughout the poem are of equal or approximately equal length, the normal length being three or four accented words. Of the 83 lines into which the R. V. divides the two Psalms, fifteen are abnorm-

<sup>1</sup> EXPOSITOR, Sept., 1906, pp. 233-253.

ally long or short, i.e. they contain more than four or less than three accented words." But as I then proceeded to show, these fifteen exceptionally long or short lines in the R.V. mostly vanish when even the present Hebrew text is correctly divided and punctuated. The poem, then, consisted almost, if not quite, entirely of *lines* of three or four accents. This conclusion was, of course, consistent with some or all of the *distichs* being 4 : 3 ; but Dr. Cheyne, who had a short time before devoted a careful study to the metre as well as to other aspects of the poem, excluded this possibility, for he found in the fact that the poem was partly trimeters, partly tetrameters, an indication either of the imperfect skill of the Psalmist in the management of his metre, or of the interference of a second writer with the original. Dr. Briggs's view seems to be similar. But if it was the *intention* of the writer to use some 4 : 3 *distichs*, it is that intention and neither lack of skill nor subsequent alteration of the poem that is the real reason why the poem contains both trimeter and tetrameter *lines*. Dr. Cheyne's criticism is tantamount to a denial of the existence of a rhythm 4 : 3, just as it would be tantamount to a denial of 3 : 2 to complain that Lamentations i.-iv. consists partly of trimeters and partly of dimeters.

Of the forty *distichs* measured by Sievers in Psalms ix., x. he regards twelve as clear examples and twenty-two others as probable examples of 4 : 3 ; the latter and larger group depend on some textual corruption, and a few, or perhaps even most, of the smaller group are in some degree ambiguous ; but, even if we had no other evidence than that of Psalms ix., x., it would seem to me unsafe to deny the probability of the actual existence of 4 : 3 *distichs*. We shall have to examine some interesting examples of these in the next article ; meantime, I give two of the clearest examples in Psalms ix., x., viz., x. 16 and ix. 9 :—

יהוה מלך עולם ועד  
 אבדו גוים מארצו  
 יהוה ישפט תבל בצדק  
 ידין לאמים במישרים

There remains for brief consideration the question of 4 : 2 rhythm : this is really only one mode of dividing a complete period of six stresses. Such a period admits of several different modes of division, examples of which actually occur, viz., (1) 2 : 2 : 2, which, if the sections are marked by parallelism, or are otherwise strikingly independent, may be termed a tristich of two-stress lines ; (2) 3 : 3, the commonest of all divisions of the six-stress period<sup>1</sup> ; and finally (3) 4 : 2 and 2 : 4. In these last there may be, and commonly is, a slight pause in the longer part of the period, but it is so much less strong than the pause that divides the entire six-stress period into the two unequal divisions that the difference between 4 : 2 and 2 : 4 on the one hand and 2 : 2 : 2 on the other is clear. The rhythms 4 : 2 and 2 : 4 occur, mainly at all events, as alternatives to 3 : 3. Thus the long poem in Isaiah ix. 7-x. 4, in which 3 : 3 clearly predominates, opens with a 4 : 2 distich :—

דבר שלה אדני ביעקב  
 ונפל בישראל

And we may probably find an example of 2 : 4 preceding 3 : 3 in Psalm i. 1 :—

אשרי האיש  
 אשר לא־הלך בעצת רשעים  
 ובדרך הטאים לא־עמד  
 ובמושב לצים לא־ישב

The interest of these rhythms, 4 : 2 and 2 : 4, is consider-

<sup>1</sup> Six-stress periods divided now into two equal parts (3 : 3) by a single cæsura, now into three equal parts (2 : 2 : 2) by a double cæsura, may occur in the same poem (e.g., Is. xxvi.) ; Sievers has compared the alternation of hexameters with a single and a double cæsura as in the first two lines of the "Iliad" :

Μῆνιν ἄειδε, θεά || Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλλῆος  
 οὐλομένην | ἣ μῦρ' Ἀχαιοῖς | ἄλγε ἔθηκεν.

able; though, rhythmically, a distich appears to be the union of two lines, so that the line rather than the distich might be regarded as the rhythmical unit, the practice, which is not, to be sure, very frequent, of equating two periods of six stresses, though in one the two sections produced by the cæsura are equal, in the other unequal, indicates that the unity of the six-stress period was strongly felt—a fact which is further indicated by the occasional parallelism of complete periods of six stresses. Moreover, if we can trust the text in Psalm cxii. 6—

כי-לעולם לא-ימוט  
לזכר עולם יהיה צדיק

we have, as Sievers has pointed out, yet another indication that the division of a six-stress period into two unequal sections was considered as legitimate as the division into two (or three) equal sections, and the two unequal parts in the one case were regarded as each possessing the same degree of independence and completeness as each of the equal parts in other cases; for Psalm cxii. is an alphabetic Psalm in which the alphabetic scheme marks off successive sections of six-stress periods.

I have now indicated, and given a few typical or more secure examples of, certain kinds of differences that may occur within the same poem. I will now briefly resume two or three of the more important points: (1) the typical echoing rhythm in 3:2; with this 2:2 alternates, sometimes occasionally, sometimes, as in Lamentations i., frequently; other distichs of unequal lines, 4:3 or 4:2, are at best much rarer alternatives; (2) of the fundamental balancing rhythms 2:2 and 4:4 are closely allied and interchange, and by expansion a further natural and occasional variant is 2:2:2; (3) but this last-mentioned alternative to 2:2 or 4:4 constitutes a link with the third fundamental balanced rhythm, viz., 3:3; for 3:3 and 2:2:2 are but different

ways of dividing the same higher unity, viz., the six-stress period, which may yet again divide into 4 : 2 or 2 : 4 ; but (4) in respect of these possible variants poems differ much ; some poems contain almost or quite exclusively 3 : 2 distichs, not even admitting the variant 2 : 2, and similarly 3 : 3 is maintained without any break through entire poems or long passages of such a book as Job ; in other poems, the alternatives, clear or ambiguous, are so numerous that even what is the basal or dominant rhythm remains doubtful.<sup>1</sup>

I am perhaps leaving too much insecure for it to be wise to advance further ; but the question of the strophe towards which I have been working in this article I will briefly discuss—briefly because what can be safely said here does not require many words to state it, and what has been both

<sup>1</sup> In many of these cases where parallelism or other features indicate that we have to do with a poem, but the metrical irregularity or ambiguity is so great that we cannot even determine what is the dominant rhythm, the question of interpolation almost necessarily arises, unless indeed we assume that a Hebrew poet mingled not only distichs of different types, but with these also entirely unrhythmical periods. For this we should find an analogy in Babylonian, if we may accept a recent assertion of Dr. Langdon's that "Babylonian poets felt themselves at liberty to insert prose lines at any juncture" in a poem. This assertion occurs in a note (*Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, xxxiv. (1912), p. 77, n. 32) on a transcription and translation of a recently published Assyrian text in which some lines are divided into hemistichs by a space in the middle of the line, and others are not. The tablet certainly seems to contain lines that fit with difficulty into the rhythm 2 : 2 (or 4 : 4) ; but some of the lines without a space in the middle seem as clearly rhythmical as those which have the space. Thus of lines 6 and 7—

Šaru la tábu it-ta-bak U-ri-e-a  
me-ḥu-úndannu                      kaḳḳadi ut-ti-iḳ.

The former lacks and the latter shows the space, but the former is as clearly a four-stress line as the latter, and they are closely parallel to one another, as we may see from Dr. Langdon's translation :—

An evil wind is blown upon my roof,  
A mighty deluge passes over my head.

The use of the space to mark the hemistich is not of course peculiar to this tablet ; it is found in some of the texts of the Creation Epic (See Zimmern in Gunkel's *Schöpfung u. Chaos*, p. 401 n. ; King, *Seven Tablets of Creation*, i.)

unsafely and erroneously asserted has already received perhaps sufficient refutation from other writers.

Variations in rhythm would be very readily explained if it could be shown that the poems in which they are found fall into sections in which the same variations recur regularly and in the same manner. But even the alleged evidence of this is slight. Sievers suggests that originally in Lamentations i. each alphabetic section consisted of one five-stress line (or 3 : 2 distich) followed by two four-stress lines (or 2 : 2 distichs); and that the same rhythmical variation 5 : 4 : 4 was thus repeated originally twenty-two times. Unfortunately, this rhythmical scheme can only be imposed upon the poem by much quite arbitrary textual emendation. Again, in Canticles i. 4 Sievers finds two strophes each containing two distichs 3 : 3 followed by a two-stress monostich. But at best such cases seem too rare to point to any strophic system in Hebrew based on this principle.

There are, however, one or two obvious features of certain Hebrew poems that have frequently been admitted to prove the existence of strophes in Hebrew poetry; and rightly, if we use the term strophe in no too restricted sense. The first of these features is the alphabetic scheme in certain poems. It does not seem to me a sound criticism of the argument from that feature to say that the alphabetic scheme cannot point to a strophic division because in Psalms cxi., cxii. it marks off single stichoi. All that follows is that in this instance the units of which the succession is marked by their initial letters being the successive letters of the alphabet is the stichos; and so in Nahum i. and Psalm xxv. it is the distich. It is perfectly possible that, when the alphabetic sections are more than a distich long, these sections may have something more characteristic of them than that they consist of so many distichs or lines.



And as a matter of fact in Lamentations i., ii. and iv., and very conspicuously in ii., the groups of 3 : 2 (or 2 : 2) distichs form real verse paragraphs, for which we may conveniently use the term strophe ; the clear but slight sense-pause within the distich, and the greater sense-pause at the end of each distich are matched by a regularly recurring still greater sense-division at the end of every third distich in Lamentations i. and ii., of every second in Lamentations iv. ; and for this reason a single use of the alphabetic letter at the beginning of each *group* of distichs suffices, for the sense holds the group together and gives it a unity. On the other hand, in Lamentations iii., and, I think, the same may be said of Psalm cxix., the distichs united under the same letter have no regular close sense-connexion with one another, or sense-separation from the distichs united under the neighbouring letters of the alphabet ; and indeed in Lamentations iii., it will be remembered, the best examples of distichs parallel to one another, and, therefore, closely related to one another in sense, are distichs belonging to *different* alphabetic groups.<sup>1</sup> Now it is remarkable that precisely in this poem, where the successive distichs of an alphabetic section are not welded together by sense-connexion and so form no organic unity, their union is secured by the purely external device of repeating the same initial letter at the beginning of each distich of the alphabetic section ; and so in Psalm cxix. Lamentations i., ii. and iv. each consists of twenty-two equal verse-paragraphs which coincide with the alphabetic sections of the poems : Lamentations iii. consists of sixty-six distichs, three consecutive distichs throughout having the same initial letter, but the poem contains no regular system of verse-paragraphs,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See EXPOSITOR, Aug., 1913.

<sup>2</sup> The spaces in the R.V. of Lamentations iii. and the lack of spaces in Lamentations i., ii. and iv. suggest the exact opposite of the actual facts.

and where something approaching a sense-paragraph emerges it, as often as not, does not coincide with an alphabetic section.

The real conclusion suggested by the alphabetic poems of the Old Testament, then, appears to be this : some Hebrew poems were divided into larger sense-divisions consisting of the same number of distichs throughout the poem, and some were not.

The other feature of some Hebrew poems that has often been regarded as pointing to a strophic division is the occurrence of refrains. This, again, does clearly mark off successive sections of a poem from one another, and more directly and naturally than an alphabetic scheme leads to a division of the poem into sections corresponding to the greater sense-divisions of the poems. In some of these poems the refrain occurs at equal, or approximately equal, intervals (e.g., Isa. ix. 7-x. 4, Pss. xlii.-xliii.), in others at irregular intervals (Ps. xlix.). I am, of course, referring to the intervals in the present Hebrew text, or of that text as it may be emended by the help of the ancient versions ; I am not for the moment considering whether the practice of some modern scholars in making conjectural deletions from the text so that the refrain shall always occur at *exactly* equal intervals is sound or not.

Some Hebrew poems consist largely or even entirely of a succession of very loosely connected lines or distichs ; now and again one or two distichs may be more closely connected than the rest, but for the most part we cannot speak of greater sense-divisions in such poems at all ; and then nothing that can with any degree of propriety be termed a strophe disengages itself. But other poems do develop a theme in such a manner that greater sense-divisions necessarily result ; in this case it seems to me convenient in a translation to distinguish the verse-paragraphs resulting

from these greater sense-divisions by spacing between them : otherwise we fail to mark externally, though we should do so in prose, the distinction between paragraph and paragraph. This, however, is merely a question of translation, and has nothing to do with any intention of the writer to give to the expression of his thought any further artistic form beyond the distich with its rhythm and parallelism. But we may fairly detect the intention of the writer to submit to such further artistic form, if we find, though his poem contains no refrain and is fitted to no alphabetic scheme, that the greater sense-divisions occur throughout the poem *at regular intervals*. But this raises the further important question—What are regular intervals? How ought the paragraphs to be measured? By lines? or by distichs? How are tristichs to be treated if they interchange irregularly with distichs? In discussions of strophe, Psalm ii. has often been selected as a clear example of regular strophic structure; and so it is, if we count by Massoretic verses. The articulation of the poem is perfectly clear; the greater sense-divisions occur, and are correctly indicated in the R.V. by the spacing, at the end of every third verse. But the author of Psalm ii. was certainly innocent of the Massoretic verse-division, and of this mode of counting. Now, if we count by lines the four parts are not equal, for while the first, third and fourth parts contain each seven lines, the second contains only six. If we count by distichs and assume that a tristich was a legitimate substitute for a distich, the poem falls into four well-marked sense-divisions, each containing three distichs (or tristichs).

I cannot here examine this aspect of the question in further detail, and will merely record my opinion that groups of two, three, four, and occasionally, as in Isaiah ix. 7-x. 4, of a larger number of distichs, occur in many poems with

such exact or approximate regularity as to make it probable that the writer deliberately planned and carried out this division into *equal* verse paragraphs or strophes.

But if a writer might deliberately distribute his poem into equal strophes, might he not also distribute it into unequal strophes? The occurrence in some poems of a refrain at unequal intervals might seem to indicate that he did. Yet even this is doubtful: the regular recurrence of *equal* sections in any considerable poem cannot easily be attributed to accident; on the other hand, sections of unequal length are precisely what would naturally result from a writer expressing his thought free from any further restraint beyond that imposed by the distich: unless, therefore, we can detect some method in the irregularity, poems in which the greater sense-divisions though well-marked consist of a varying number of distichs must be considered to have been written free from the restraint of any strophic law: in this case, if we use the term strophe, it must mean simply a verse-paragraph of indeterminate length uncontrolled by any artistic scheme.

Attempts have from time to time been made, however, to discover method in the irregularity of poems divided into unequal paragraphs, and so to make good the claim that strophe is as constant as parallelism. Köster, in the year 1831, first offered an elaborate examination of the Hebrew strophe; <sup>1</sup> he reached the conclusion that parallelism of verses is as regular as parallelism of lines, and consequently that all Hebrew poetry is more or less strophic in nature. The "more or less" is an important saving clause; but a still more important one follows, and this secures Köster's accuracy of observation at the expense of his theory; he claims that no one can point to any poetical passage of the

<sup>1</sup> *Die Strophen, oder der Parallelismus der Verse der hebräischen Poesie untersucht in Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, vol. iv.

Old Testament which does not, *within the same degree of license that is permitted in parallelism within the distich*, follow to some extent a symmetrical plan. But since Köster has previously admitted that the parallelism between verse-groups is generally synthetic, and since, as I have maintained, synthetic parallelism is really not parallelism, all that Köster succeeds in maintaining is that in every Hebrew poem there is between verse-groups a parallelism that is generally of the type that is, strictly speaking, not parallelism at all. And this is only a roundabout way of saying that in Hebrew poems there are greater sense-divisions than those of the successive single distichs; and this, as I have suggested above, though scarcely true of all, is true of very many Hebrew poems.

One other point in Köster's discussion may be briefly indicated: in some of his specimens he claims that the sense-divisions, though not equal, are regularly or symmetrically unequal; he claims, for example, that Psalm xxvii. divided according to the main sense-divisions falls into two groups of three (Massoretic) verses each, followed by two groups of four verses each, the scheme being accordingly 3+3+4+4. This kind of hypothetically intentional scheme was later discovered everywhere by D. H. Müller, who is the author of perhaps the most extensive work on the strophe in Hebrew poetry; <sup>1</sup> Müller also claimed to be able to find not only symmetrical inequality in the verse-groups, but also repetition of the same words in corresponding positions of such verse-groups, as, for example, in the second lines of the first and fourth verse-groups, or in the first and last lines of the same verse-group. Such symmetrical arrangements and correspondences would remain as impressive as are the re-

<sup>1</sup> *Die Propheten in ihrer ursprünglichen Form* (1895); *Strophenbau und Responsion* (1898). For a severe criticism of Müller's and kindred theories, see Ed. König, *Stylistik, Rhetorik, Poetik*, pp. 347 ff.

markable arithmetical formulæ by means of which Müller claimed to represent them, if on examination these formulæ proved to rest on any exact and probable basis of calculation. What is all-important for such schemes to be anything more than the self-delusions of a modern student is that the unit of reckoning should be clearly defined and consistently maintained; and this neither with Köster nor Müller is the case. The Massoretic verse not only rests on a division of the text made long subsequent to the composition and writing of the poems, but it is anything but a clear and consistent unit, for it consists sometimes of a single line, oftenest of a single distich or tristich, but not infrequently of two or more distichs. Yet the Massoretic verse is made the basis of Köster's reckoning with the result that the symmetrical formulæ  $3+3+4+4$  can have no relation to any intention of the author of Psalm xxvii.; and any scheme based either on the line or on the distich as the unit would give a different and much less remarkable result.

Müller avoids the error of making the Massoretic verse the unit of reckoning, but he is not constant to any single real unit. König has sufficiently criticised Müller's strophic division of Amos i. 2-ii. 5.<sup>1</sup> I select here as another example of the arithmetical symmetry of Müller's formulæ and the unreality which they express his treatment of Amos iv. According to Müller this chapter opens and closes with a strophe of 8 lines; between the initial and final strophes are strophes consisting successively of 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 lines, and the arithmetical formula for the whole poem is therefore  $8 + (8 \times 2) + 8$ . This looks symmetrical enough, but how is it obtained? Müller divides the chapter as follows:—

vv. 1-3 said to contain 8 lines.

4-6 „ „ „ 5 lines and a refrain.

7-8 „ „ „ 4 „ „ „

<sup>1</sup> *Stilistik*, p. 348.

vv. 10 said to contain 3 lines and a refrain.

9	„	„	„	2	„	„	„
11	„	„	„	1	„	„	„
12, 13	„	„	„	8 lines.			

It will be observed (1) that vv. 10 and 9 are transposed to secure the exact arithmetical progression ; (2) that  $5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1$  only amount to 15, while if we add to this all five occurrences of the refrain the sum is 20 ; but neither 15 nor 20 is a multiple of eight ; so the symmetrical figure  $16 = 8 \times 2$  is obtained by reckoning five occurrences of the refrain as one line only ! But this is only part of the capriciousness that underlies the formula. When we examine the “ lines ” we find some to be true lines, while others are a large number of Hebrew words constituting, or consisting of a quantity equivalent to, at least a distich. In verse 9,

הכיתי אתכם בשדפון וירקון

is reckoned a single line, but in verse 11, which the arithmetical progression requires shall contain one line and no more, this *single* “ line ” consists of *הכיתי בכם כמהפכת אלהים את סדם ואת עמרה ותהיו כאיד מוצל משרפה הרגתי בהרב בהורים עם שבי סוסיכם* which is somewhat more in quantity than *וואעלה כאש מחניכם ובאפכם* (v. 10) which counts as *two* lines !

With the breakdown of the arithmetical part of Müller's scheme there breaks down also the significance of the correspondences. In strictly measured sections it might be significant of intention if the same word should occur, say, in the first line and the last of two corresponding sections ; but as soon as the measurement ceases to be exact the mere recurrence within a few lines of such frequently recurring words as Yahweh becomes entirely insignificant.

There may be here and there a certain artifice in the repetition at given intervals of particular words, and to such an artifice is probably to be attributed the almost regular recurrence, even in the present text of Psalm cxix., of the

same eight different words for law ; but such artifices are scarcely more frequent than the use of alphabetic schemes, and have just as little power to create real strophes or verse-paragraphs.

G. BUCHANAN GRAY.

## THE SANITY OF THE "ESCHATOLOGICAL" JESUS.<sup>1</sup>

### I. TYPICAL ALIENIST THEORIES.

A SUGGESTION, first appearing in the works of David Friederich Strauss, has recently been brought forward again by a number of historical and medical writers, to the effect that Jesus, living as He did in the world of ideas characteristic of the Book of Daniel and the late Jewish apocalypses and holding Himself to be the "Son of Man" and "Messiah who was shortly to appear in glory," is to be considered as affected by some form of mental disorder. It is the purpose of the following pages to subject this theory to a thorough examination.

I felt a certain obligation laid upon me to undertake this task for the reason that in my *Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung* (*The Quest of the Historical Jesus*) I have insisted more strongly than any other writer in this department, on the apocalyptic and, according to modern ideas, "fantastic" element in the conceptions of Jesus, and have therefore repeatedly had it pointed out to me, by H. J. Holtzmann among others, that I had described a Jesus whose world of thought had rather the air of "systematic delusion," while warning references have not been wanting to medical writers who professed to have proved the "paranoia" of the Jewish Messiah.

<sup>1</sup> In conformity with its scientific spirit, Dr. Schweitzer's monograph bears the title "The Psychiatric Estimate of Jesus." The title given above, however, indicates the aspect of it which is of special interest to theological readers, and its applicability will be evident from the introductory paragraphs.—TRANSLATOR.