THE SONG OF SONGS

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL HEBREW WITH A COMMENTARY HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL

CHRISTIAN D. GINSBURG

1857

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THE SONG OF SONGS,

WITH A COMMENTARY.

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THE
SONG OF SONGS:
Translated from the Original Hebrew, WITH A COMMENTARY, HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL.

BY
CHRISTIAN D. GINSBURG.

שֶׁקֶר הַחֵן וְהֶבֶל הַיֹּפִי
אִשָּׁה יִרְאַת־יְהוָה הִיא תִתְהַלָּל׃
—Prov. xxxi. 30.

LONDON:
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN,
LONGMANS, AND ROBERTS.

1857.

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PREFACE.

The following is an exposition of the first of the five books called Megiloth, all of which, having engaged the attention of the Author for several years, will

now, God willing, be brought before the Public in regular succession. The Author's aim has been to investigate and elucidate the true meaning of the original, in accordance with the established laws of historico-grammatical exegesis, and to show that, in its literal sense, the Song of Songs teaches a great moral lesson, worthy of Divine inspiration.

The resemblance, however, between the narrative here recorded and the experience of the people of God is striking and apposite. The Shulamite, espoused to her shepherd, is tempted by a mighty potentate with riches and pleasures to transfer her affections; but, strengthened by the power of divine love, she resists all temptation, remains faithful to her beloved, and is ultimately rewarded. The people of God, espoused to "the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls," are tempted by the prince of this world to forsake their Lord, but, strengthened by grace divine, they resist all allurements, and eventually receive the crown of glory.

The references to Genesius' and Ewald's Grammars are to the last editions, which differ in the numbering of the sections from the earlier ones; Fürst's valuable Lexicon, to which frequent reference is made, is not yet completed. [viii]

The author tenders his hearty thanks to his esteemed friend, the Rev. Isaac Salkinson of Hamburg; to the Rev. J. M. Charlton, A.M.; the Rev. R. Robinson, of York-road; the Rev. G. Rogers, of Albany-road; and

to Nathaniel Bridges, Esq., A.M., for perusing the MS. and proofs, and for kind suggestions. Thanks are also due to those gentlemen in London and Oxford, who have facilitated the author's access to MSS. and other rare works in the British Museum and the Bodleian Library.

May the Divine Spirit, whose words the Author has attempted to elucidate, render the attempt profitable to the readers!

LONDON: 16, BARKHAM TERRACE, ST. GEORGE'S,
May, 1857. [1]

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INTRODUCTION.

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SECTION I.—TITLE OF THE BOOK, AND ITS SIGNIFICATION.

This book is called שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים ,which is literally translated by the Septuagint, ᾆσμα ᾀσμάτων, by the Vulgate, *Canticum Canticorum*, and by the English Version, *Song of Songs*; and, according to a Hebrew mode for expressing the superlative degree by repeating the same noun in the genitive, denotes *the finest*, *the most beautiful*, or *the most excellent* Song. Compare עֶבֶד עֲבָדִים ,*servant of servants*, *i.e.* most abject servant (Gen. ix. 25); קֹדֶשׁ קָדָשִׁים ,*holy of holies*, *i.e.* most holy (Exod. xxix. 37; Numb. iii. 32; Deut. x. 14; Eccl. i. 2; Hos. x. 15; Jer. vi. 28; Gesenius, Grammar, § 119, 2; Ewald, Lehrbuch, § 313, c). Medrash Yalkut renders it שִׁיר הַמְּשׁוּבָּח וְהַמְּעוּלֶּה בַּשִּׁירִים ,*a song more celebrated and sublime than all songs*; as Rashi, Ibn Ezra Rashbam, Luther, and many others. The opinion of Kleuker, &c., that this interpretation of the Rabbins is more owing to their preconceived notion of the sublime contents of the book than to the real meaning of these words, is refuted by Rashbam himself, who, having explained this phrase by “most excellent song,” refers not to the contents of the book for its corroboration, but

adduces similar constructions of the superlative from other passages of the Bible, viz., אֱלֹהֵי הָאֱלֹהִים ,and אֲדוֹנֵי הָאֲדוֹנִים (Deut. x. 17). Other explanations, such as a song of songs, *i.e.* a song *from* the songs of Solomon (Kimchi), or a collection of songs (Kleuker), or a chain of songs, or string of strings, comparing שִׁיר with the Chaldee שִׁוּרָה שֵׁיר Greek σειρὰ, *chain* (Velthusen, Paulus, Good, &c.), are contrary to the Hebrew usage of the word שִׁיר and the construction of שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים .More recent commentators, [2]and even those who regard this book as a collection of separate songs (as, for instance, Döpke, Magnus, Noyes, &c.) admit that the Rabbinical interpretation of this title is the only admissible one. The ל prefixed to שְׁלֹמֹה is the so-called *Lamed auctoris*, used in the inscriptions of Psalms and other Hebrew poems to designate *the author*. Comp. Ps. iii. 1; iv. 1, &c. The addition of אֲשֶׁר here, which is not found in the other inscriptions, is owing to the article in שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים , which generally, though not always, is followed by this pronoun; comp. Gen. xxix. 9; xl. 5; xlvii. 4; 1 Kings iv. 2; Gesen. § 115, 1; Ewald, 292 a. The rendering therefore of אֲשֶׁר לִשְׁלֹמֹה by *respecting Solomon*, is contrary to usage, and is rightly rejected by modern grammarians and lexicographers.

This Song is the first of the (חֲמֵשׁ מְגִילוֹת)*five Megiloth*, or books which are annually read in the Synagogues; viz. The Song of Songs on the Feast of the Passover; Ruth on Pentecost; Lamentations on the Ninth of Ab; Ecclesiastes on Tabernacles; and Esther

on Purim. The present arrangement of these five books in the Hebrew canon is according to the order of the festivals on which they are read.

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SECTION II.—CANONICITY OF THE BOOK.

This book possesses all the external marks which entitle other writings to a place in the list of the sacred books. The evidence for its canonicity is as conclusive as that which is commonly adduced to prove the canonicity of any other portion of the Old Testament. In the Mishna Yadim (sect. iii. 5), we find the following testimony respecting it from R. Akiba, one of the most celebrated Rabbins, who lived at the end of the first century, and was president of the academy of Bani-Brac: *No Israelite has ever disputed the canonicity of the Song of Songs. No day in the whole history of the world is of so much worth as the one in which the Song of Songs was given to Israel; for all the Scriptures are holy, but the Song of Songs is most holy.* Another Rabbi (*Simeon b. Azzai*), in the same place, says, *I* [3]*received it from the mouth of the seventy-two elders, at the time when R. Eliezer b. Azzaria was appointed Elder, that the Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes are canonical.*[1] We have here positive evidence that this book existed in the canon in the Apostolic age; and that it was comprised in the sacred books, which our Lord calls τὰς γραφὰς, *the Scriptures*, Matt. xxii. 29. It has, therefore, been transmitted to us both by

the Jewish and Christian churches as canonical. It was translated into Greek, between the years 90 and 130, by Aquila, who was anxious to furnish his Jewish brethren with a faithful version of the *sacred* books; and also by Symmachus and Theodotion, before the end of the second century. It is contained in the catalogue given in the Talmud;[2] and in the catalogue of Melito, Bishop of Sardis (fl. 170, A.D.), which he brought from Palestine, whither this learned and pious prelate expressly travelled to [4]obtain information respecting the number of the sacred books.[3] Those who in modern days have questioned the canonicity of this book have done so, not from external evidence, but from misapprehension of its design.

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SECTION III.—DESIGN AND METHOD OF THE BOOK.

We have no sympathy with those who affirm that the Old Testament Scriptures contain all the national writings which were esteemed valuable in Hebrew literature, that this Song was placed among those writings simply because it possessed much poetic beauty, and was supposed to be the composition of a person so celebrated throughout the East as Solomon, and that it is destitute of any moral or practical instructions. We believe that every book of the Old Testament is inspired; and has, on that account, obtained a place in the Hebrew Canon. This is the unanimous testimony, not of the Jewish church only, but is corroborated by Christ and his apostles. Paul, referring to the Old Testament, most distinctly affirms, that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God; and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” 2 Tim. iii. 16.[4] As this Song undoubtedly formed a part of the Scriptures to which the apostle alluded, it must, therefore, be inspired, and must serve some of those purposes of inspiration.

The particular design of this book has been much disputed. It is here maintained, that, upon careful examination, it will be found to record *an example of virtue in a young woman who encountered and conquered the greatest temptations, and was, eventually, rewarded*; the simple narrative of which, divested of its poetic form, is as follows. There was a family living at Shulem, consisting of a widowed mother, several sons, and one daughter, who maintained themselves by farming and [5]pasturage. The brothers were particularly partial to their sister, and took her under their special care, promising that her prudence and virtue should be greatly rewarded by them. In the course of time, while tending the flock, and, according to the custom of the shepherds, resorting at noon beneath a tree for shelter against the meridian sun, she met with a graceful shepherd youth, to whom she afterwards became espoused. One morning, in the spring, this youth invited her to accompany him into the field; but the brothers, overhearing the invitation, and anxious for the reputation of their sister, in order to prevent their meeting, sent her to take care of the vineyards. The damsel, however, consoled her beloved and herself with the assurance that, though separated bodily, indissoluble ties subsisted between them, over which her brothers had no control. She requested him to meet her in the evening, and as he did not come, she feared that some accident had befallen him on the way, and went in search of him, and found him. The evening now was the only time in which they could

enjoy each other's company, as, during the day, the damsel was occupied in the vineyards. On one occasion, when entering a garden, she accidentally came in the presence of King Solomon, who happened to be on a summer visit to that neighbourhood. Struck with the beauty of the damsel, the King conducted her into his royal tent, and there, assisted by his court-ladies, endeavoured with alluring flatteries and promises, to gain her affections; but without effect. Released from the King's presence, the damsel soon sought an interview with her beloved shepherd.

The King, however, took her with him to his capital in great pomp, in the hope of dazzling her with his splendour; but neither did this prevail: for while even there, she told her beloved shepherd, who had followed her into the capital, and obtained an interview with her, that she was anxious to quit the gaudy scene for her own home. The shepherd, on hearing this, praised her constancy, and such a manifestation [6]of their mutual attachment took place, that several of the court-ladies were greatly affected by it.

The King, still determined, if possible, to win her affections, watched for another favourable opportunity, and with flatteries and allurements, surpassing all that he had used before, tried to obtain his purpose. He promised to elevate her to the highest rank, and to raise her above all his concubines and queens, if she would comply with his

wishes; but, faithful to her espousals, she refused all his overtures, on the plea that her affections were pledged to another. The King, convinced at last that he could not possibly prevail, was obliged to dismiss her; and the shepherdess, in company with her beloved shepherd, returned to her native place. On their way home, they visited the tree under which they had first met, and there renewed their vows of fidelity to each other. On her arrival in safety at her home, her brothers, according to their promise, rewarded her greatly for her virtuous conduct.

The *plot*, if such it may be called, gradually develops itself, like most poetic narratives of a similar kind. Various speakers are introduced in the poem, as the Shulamite shepherdess, the shepherd, the King, the court-ladies, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the brothers of the Shulamite, and the companions of the shepherd, all of whom are represented as speaking more or less, but without any such distinctions as we find in Job, as “After this *Job* opened his mouth and cursed his day—Then *Eliphaz* the Temanite answered and said—Then answered *Bildad* the Shuhite and said—&c.,” and without *separate* names, or *initial* letters of names to indicate the speakers, which renders it difficult to gather the history it contains; and especially as some of the statements appear at first sight to have little or no logical sequence. The Song of Songs differs materially in this respect from all the other books of Scripture; but not, as is well known, from the poems of profane writers.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned difficulty, an attentive [Z]reader of the original will find nearly as much help from the masterly structure of this Song, as can be obtained from the divisions and initial letters in modern dramas, by which the different speakers are distinguished, and the various statements are connected in a regular narrative.

The recurrence, for instance, of the same formula of adjuration three times (ii. 7; iii. 5; viii. 4), and the use of another closing sentence (v. 1), divide the Song into five sections. The heroine of the book, when speaking with her beloved or with the king, is easily distinguished by the feminine gender of the verb, or of the adjective or the noun; as, i. 5, “I am swarthy but comely,” where both adjectives, *swarthy* (שְׁחוֹרָה) and *comely* (נָאוָה) are feminine in the original, and plainly indicate the speaker. The beloved shepherd, when he speaks, or is spoken to, or is spoken of, is recognised by the pastoral language (i. 3, 4, 7; ii. 12; iii. 4, &c.); the King is distinguished by express allusions to his position (i. 9–11; vi. 4–vii. 10); the court-ladies, when speaking to the Shulamite, are recognised by the phrase, “fairest of women” (i. 8; v. 9; vi. 1), and when spoken to by “daughters of Jerusalem” (i. 5; ii. 7; iii. 5, 10; v. 8; viii. 4); the brothers of the Shulamite are introduced as speaking in ii. 15, compared with i. 6 and viii. 8, 9; the inhabitants of Jerusalem, in iii. 6–11, and the companions of the shepherd, in viii. 5, are sufficiently indicated by the context.

On a careful examination of the statements of the various speakers in these five sections, it will be found that the narrative, though not recorded in the order we have stated, may be easily deduced from it.

In the FIRST section—ch. i. 2, 7—the heroine of the Song, who, as is evident from verse 8 and vii. 1, is a Shulamite shepherdess, ardently wishes for the presence and love-tokens of her beloved, who, as she herself most distinctly tells us (ver. 7, and ii. 16; vi. 3), is a shepherd; she wishes him to take her away from the royal apartments into which the King had brought her, for she loves him above all things (verses 2, 3, 4); [8]these apartments (or royal tent), as we learn from iii. 6–11, were out of Jerusalem, and in the neighbourhood of the Shulamite's home, where the King temporarily resided, and where he met with the damsel (vi. 11, 12). In reply to the disdainful looks of the daughters of Jerusalem, in whose presence she had expressed her desire for the shepherd, and who had contrasted their fair and delicate countenances with her own, she insists that her swarthy complexion need not render her contemptible, for it was not natural, but had arisen from the duties which her brothers had unjustly required of her (v. 6); she then resumes the address to her beloved, asking him, as if he were present, to tell her where he tends his flock (7). The daughters of Jerusalem, who, as we see from vi. 9, are the court-ladies, comprising the maidens, concubines, and queens, ironically answer this question (8). The

watchful King, having heard that she wished for her beloved, immediately comes forward, and, with flatteries and promises, tries to win her affections (9, 10, 11); but without effect; for as soon as the King retires she shows her unabated attachment to her shepherd (12; ii. 6), and concludes by adjuring the court-ladies not to persuade her to transfer her affections to another (7).

The SECOND section—ch. ii. 8; iii. 5—though apparently disconnected from the first, is found, upon investigation, to be a proper and natural sequence. The Shulamite, in rebutting the contempt of the court-ladies, had reflected with some severity upon her brothers for sending her to keep the vineyards; but this had been done merely to account for the darkness of her complexion; and having been interrupted in her warm address to her beloved, which she hastened to resume, she was obliged to be satisfied with this passing allusion to that event. It was natural, therefore, to expect that, at the first opportunity, she would state more circumstantially *how* her brothers came to be severe with her, and *why* they had made her a keeper of the vineyards, which she proceeds to do in this section. She tells the court-ladies that her brothers were displeased with her [9]because they had overheard the shepherd inviting her to accompany him into the fields to enjoy together the charms of nature (8–14), on account of which, in their anxiety for her reputation, they changed her employment, told her to be a

"keeper of the vineyards," in order to separate her from her beloved (15). She, moreover, relates that they consoled themselves with the assurance that, though separated bodily, indissoluble ties subsisted between them, over which her brothers had no control (16); that she invited him to come again in the evening, when unobserved (17); and that, seeing he did not come, she went in search of him, &c. (ch. iii. 1–4). Having thus evinced her deep attachment for the shepherd, she again concludes by adjuring the court-ladies not to persuade her to transfer her affections to another (5).

This section, therefore, follows the preceding one, to set forth the cause of the brother's severity in having made her a "keeper of the vineyards," and thus gives a further insight into her previous history.

The THIRD section (ch. iii. 6, v. i.) relates the second unsuccessful effort of Solomon to gain the Shulamite's affections. The King, determined to gain his purpose, takes the damsel, with great pomp, into the capital (ch. iii. 6–11), in the hope of dazzling her with his great splendour; but he is again disappointed. In the midst of the imposing magnificence, the damsel tells her beloved shepherd, who has followed her thither, and obtained an interview with her, and expressed his delight at seeing her again (ch. iv. 1–5), that she is anxious to quit the palace for her rural home (6). Her beloved, on hearing this, offers his assistance to effect an escape (7, 8), and praises her constancy and charms

(9–16); whereupon they both manifest their mutual attachment in so affecting a manner that even some of the court-ladies are moved (ch. iv. 16, v. 1), with whose expression of sympathy the section concludes.

The bearing which this section has upon the whole plan is, in the first place, to develop the progress of the history itself, [10]inasmuch as it records the conveyance of the Shulamite from her rural home into the royal capital; and, in the second place, to relate her faithfulness in resisting another temptation, in which the grandeur of the procession which elicited so much admiration from the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the splendour of the court, which dazzled the eyes and fed the vanity of so many of its inmates, had far less charms for her than the presence of her shepherd in a humble home.

The FOURTH section (ch. v. 2–viii. 4) records the last and greatest trial which the Shulamite had to encounter, and which she also overcame. It commences with a dream which she had recently had, and which she relates (ch. v. 2–8) to the court-ladies whose sympathy with her has been shown at the close of the preceding section. The narration of this dream gives the damsel an opportunity of describing the personal appearance of her beloved (10–16), and thus we are gradually led on to her chief trial and success. The court-ladies, having listened to this charming description, inquire whither her beloved is gone, and offer their assistance to seek him (ch. vi. 1); but she, suspecting the motive, gives

them an evasive answer (2, 3). The King, ever watchful for a favourable opportunity to show his attachment to her, as soon as he hears of the inquiry after the damsel's beloved, comes forward with most alluring flatteries and promises. He begins with praising her beauty (4–7), and then promises to raise her to the highest rank of all his numerous retinue of women (8, 9), who themselves are constrained to extol her beauty (10). But the damsel, having explained how she came to be seen by those court-ladies, spurns all those praises and promises, and goes away (11, 12); the King calls her back (ch. vii. 1), and, having again described her beauty and attractions (2–8), wishes that he might enjoy the favours of so charming a person (9, 10); but she refuses the King's overtures, on the plea that her affections are engaged, and that it is her duty to be faithful to her beloved (11); then, addressing herself to her beloved, she asks him to go with her [11]from the palace to their rural home (12, ch. viii. 3); and concludes with again adjuring the court-ladies not to persuade her to transfer her affections to another (4).

This section, as we have seen, is intimately connected with the preceding one. The damsel, having obtained the sympathies of some of the court-ladies, according to the close of the last section, relates to them, at the opening of this (ch. v. 2–8), a dream which she had recently had; which gives the damsel an opportunity of describing the appearance of her beloved, and this description gradually

introduces the last and the greatest trial which she has to encounter.

The FIFTH section—ch. viii. 5–14—states the result of the damsel's victory over all her temptations. The King, convinced that nothing could induce her to transfer her affections, dismisses her; and accompanied by her beloved shepherd, she quits the court for her humble country residence. On their way, they visit the tree under which they were first espoused (viii. 5), and there implore that the flame which had been kindled in their hearts might be lasting. A most graphic and powerful description of the nature of true love follows, in which all her trials are recounted (6, 7). The damsel then reminds her brothers of the promise they had made her, and obtains *the reward of virtue*.

Thus this Song records the real history of a humble but virtuous woman, who, after having been espoused to a man of like humble circumstances, had been tempted in a most alluring manner to abandon him, and to transfer her affections to one of the wisest, and richest of men, but who successfully resisted all temptations, remained faithful to her espousals, and was ultimately rewarded for her virtue. [12]

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SECTION IV.—IMPORTANCE OF THE BOOK.

Few, it is presumed, will question the importance of a Book, in the sacred canon, which records an example of virtue in a humble individual, who had passed successfully through unparalleled temptations.

The avowed object of Holy Writ is to teach all that is good and conducive to human happiness. Lessons of wisdom and virtue are interspersed throughout the Old and New Testaments. The Apostle Paul urges the Philippians to think of whatsoever is true, noble, just, pure, lovely, and of good report: of everything, in short, that is in any way profitable or praiseworthy. These lessons are not communicated to us in abstract forms, or enforced by powerful argument merely, but they are presented in the most attractive examples drawn from the lives of illustrious men and women, who, amidst the greatest trials and temptations, have pre-eminently maintained their integrity. The Patriarch Job is set forth as an example of patience, and the Prophets as patterns of suffering affliction (James v. 10, 11). An

example of virtue, very similar to the one in the Song before us, is recorded in Gen. xxxix. 7, &c., where a Hebrew slave is tempted by a woman of rank, but resists the temptations; and though left to suffer for a season, is ultimately rewarded for his virtue. Such instances, therefore, are in harmony with the design of Scripture, and its method of teaching.

The individual who passes through the extraordinary temptations recorded in this Song, and remains faithful, is *a woman*. Who can find a virtuous woman? This was the question of the Ancients, was reiterated in the middle ages, and is still asked by many. Here is a reply to Solomon's own enquiry. He has found one at least of spotless integrity, and her virtue is recorded in Scripture, for the defence of women against a prevalent, but unjust suspicion.

The second chapter of Genesis clearly states, that the man and the woman were created with the same intellectual and [13]moral powers. The words used by God respecting the creation of the woman are, "the being of man in his solitary state is not good. I will make him *a help-mate corresponding to him*;" that is, one that shall be exactly like him in affections, in sympathies, in mind, in fact his counterpart; she shall be the reflection of his own person. That this is the meaning of כְּנֶגְדּוֹ is evident from the Septuagint, which renders it in verse 18, κατ' αὐτόν, and verse 20, ὅμοιος αὐτῷ; and from the Syriac and the Vulgate; as well as from the Rabbinical usage of כְּנֶגֶד to express things *exactly like one another*.[5] The word

of God affirms here, that the woman was created exactly with the same capacities as the man, and contains no intimation of subserviency to him, or of being in the slightest degree weaker or less virtuous than he. The fact that the Tempter assailed the woman, and not the man, so far from showing that the woman was weaker, would rather prove that she was stronger; that the cunning serpent knew this, and was persuaded, if he could only prevail over the woman, she, with her superior influence, would be sure to succeed with the man, as the sad result showed.

The curse which God pronounced upon the guilty pair, proves that the woman was created with the same intellectual and moral capacities as the man. Had the woman been weaker in these respects than the man, she would not have been accountable in an equal degree for her sin, and would not have been punished with the same severity.

No alteration has taken place in their relative position, in this respect, since the fall. The curse upon the woman in relation to the man does not refer to any *intellectual* or *moral*, but to a *physical*, inferiority. Hitherto the Protoplasts resided in Paradise, and subsisted upon its delightful fruit; and the employment of the man was mere recreation. Henceforth they were to be driven from that happy abode; the woman was to experience all the sorrow and pain of [14]pregnancy and parturition, and must look to her husband for support from his hard-earned

labour. The man, consigned to rough labour in the field, exposed to the assault of brutes, was henceforth to have more physical strength and daring; while the woman, destined to manage the affairs at home, and to rear up a family, was to exercise the power of patient endurance. The man, with his superior strength and boldness, was henceforth to be the protector; the woman, suffering and mild, the protected. He was to be the tiller of the ground, and she, in addition to the sorrow peculiar to her condition, must depend on what he might provide for her; and hence her desire was to be unto him; that is, she should be looking up to him for protection and maintenance, and thus he would rule over her. That this is the whole meaning of the phrase וְאֶל אִישֵׁךְ תְּשׁוּקָתֵךְ וְהוּא יִמְשָׁל בָּךְ, Gen. iii. 16, is evident from the clause immediately preceding, which describes the woman's constant suffering, and precludes the possibility of securing maintenance for herself; and also from the following verse, where the man is destined to labour hard for bread.

The notion, therefore, that the woman is intellectually or morally weaker than man, is not the teaching of the word of God. While man, through his superior out-of-door qualities, or physical strength and courage, is the supporter, protector, and ruler of the woman; she, through her superior in-door qualities, her endurance and her charms, ameliorates his government, and sways his inmost heart. Their different characteristics, arising from their different

destinations, were designed to blend together so as to produce a happy harmony, and *to make both one*.

But how vilely and treacherously has man employed his superior strength and audacity! Instead of maintaining, protecting, and defending the woman, he has used his strength to oppress, to crush, and to degrade her. As the human race became more and more alienated from their Creator, intrinsic merit and moral character were despised, and physical [15]force became rampant; the stronger, as among animals, oppressed and preyed upon the weaker, and thus woman became the slave of man, and was absolutely sold in the capacity of daughter or wife, as cattle and other property. Thus Eliezer, the servant of Abraham, purchased Rebekah as a wife for Isaac, his master's son, (Gen. xxiv. 53). Jacob, having nothing to give as a compensation for his wives, was obliged to serve fourteen years for them (Gen. xxix. 18–28). Shechem, wishing to obtain Dinah for a wife, and ascribing the unwillingness of Jacob to part with her to the insufficiency of the compensation he had offered, says—"Ask me never so much dowry and gift, and I will give according as ye shall say unto me: but give me the damsel to wife (Gen. xxxiv. 12)." Compare, also, Exod. xxii. 15, &c.; 1 Sam. xviii. 25; Hos. iii. 2. This custom of purchasing wives was general among the Orientals. "In Babylon,[6] the following course was pursued in every village once a-year. All the maidens of a marriageable age were collected together, and brought in a body to one

place; around them stood a crowd of men. Then a crier, having made these maidens stand up one by one, offered them for sale, beginning with the most beautiful; and when she had been sold for a large sum, he put up another who was next in beauty. They were sold on condition that they should be married. Such men among the Babylonians as were rich and desirous of marrying used to bid against one another, and purchase the most beautiful. But such of the lower classes as were desirous of marrying, did not regard beauty, and were willing to take the plainer damsels with a sum of money given with them. For when the crier had finished selling the most beautiful of the maidens, he made the plainest stand up, or one that was a cripple, and put her up for auction, for the person who would marry her for the least sum. This money was obtained from the sale of the most beautiful; and thus the beautiful portioned out the plain and the crippled." Wives were purchased among the Assyrians and Arabians also;[7] among [16]the ancient Greeks[8] and Germans[9] and are still bought among the Orientals of the present day.[10]

Fearful consequences, arising from such a mode of obtaining wives, were inevitable, and soon became apparent. As the procuring of wives depended upon the offer which any one was able to make, those that could afford it purchased as many as they pleased. Hence the practice of polygamy, than which nothing produces more contempt for the proper character of

women, or tends more to their degradation. As these contracts were formed without the parties being previously known to each other, and without any affection subsisting between them, the woman, instead of being *the help-mate or companion* of man became his slave, and was kept for the gratification of his carnal appetites, or at best was regarded as a plaything for a leisure hour. Her rights were denied, her education was neglected, her intellect was degraded, her moral character was questioned. Man, seeking to possess as many wives as he could afford, gave the woman no credit for virtue. Acting upon this suspicion and false accusation, he placed her in the most inaccessible part of the house; dogs or eunuchs guarded the doors of her chambers;[11] the harem was made as impenetrable as a prison; none but the nearest relatives were allowed to see her, and when permitted to pass through the streets her countenance was thickly veiled, and eunuchs watched her every step. Plutarch relates that when women travelled they were placed in a conveyance closely covered on all sides, and that it was in such a covering that Themistocles fled from Persia, his attendants being instructed to tell every inquirer that they were conveying a Grecian lady from Ionia to a nobleman at Court.[12] The sacred books of heathen nations [17]teem with loud execrations against the natural unfaithfulness and immorality of women. “The lust of a woman,” says the pundits, “is never satisfied, no more than fire is satisfied with fuel, or the main ocean with receiving the rivers, or the

empire of death with the dying of men and animals." And again: "Women have six qualities: the first is an immoderate desire for jewels and fine furniture, handsome clothes and nice victuals; the second, immoderate lust; the third, violent anger; the fourth, deep resentment, no person knowing the sentiments concealed in their hearts; the fifth, another person's good appears evil in their eyes; the sixth, they commit bad actions."[13] The wickedness of women is a subject upon which the stronger sex among the Arabs, with an affectation of superior virtue, often dwell in common conversation. That women are deficient in judgment or good sense, is held as an undisputed fact, as it rests on an assertion of the Prophet; but that they possess a superior degree of cunning, rests upon the same authority. Their general depravity is affirmed to be much greater than that of men. "I stood," said the Prophet, "at the gate of Paradise, and lo, most of its inmates were the poor; and I stood at the gate of hell, and lo, most of its inmates were women." In allusion to women, the caliph Omar said, "Consult them, and do the contrary of what they advise," which Moore has thus paraphrased:—

"Whene'er you're in doubt, said a sage I once knew,
'Twixt two lines of conduct which course to pursue,
Ask a woman's advice, and whate'er she advise,
Do the very reverse, and you're sure to be wise."

When woman was created, "the devil," we are told, "was delighted, and said, 'Thou art half of my host,

and thou art the depository of my secret, and thou art my arrow, with which I shoot and miss not.'"[14] They were made so much to feel their [18]inferiority, that Iphigenia is made to say, "One man, forsooth, is better than ten thousand women."[15]

Though the Jewish women were treated more leniently, and enjoyed greater privileges than their sex in other nations, yet it is evident, from a variety of circumstances in Old Testament history, that they were not wholly emancipated from a state of unnatural inferiority. Polygamy was practised amongst the Jews, and its debasing effects were obvious. The harems, the veils, and eunuchs were not uncommon to their women. Weakness of moral character was imputed to them; unfaithfulness and incontinency were dilated upon (Num. v. 12; Prov. xxxi. 10; Eccl. vii. 28). Josephus tells us[16] that women, in consequence of their natural levity, were not admitted as legal witnesses in courts of justice. Maimonides teaches the same; "There are," says this great luminary, "ten sorts of disqualifications, and every individual in whom one of them is found, is disqualified from giving evidence; and these are women, slaves, children, idiots, the deaf, the blind, the wicked, the despised, relations, and those interested in their testimony; these are the ten."[17] The Rabbins endeavour to justify this inhuman treatment of women from the law of Moses. "Women," say they, "are disqualified by the law from giving testimony: for it is said, 'At the mouth of two

witnesses,' where the word 'witnesses' is of the *masculine*, and not feminine gender." It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that the Jew, among his thanksgivings, should say to the Almighty every morning, "Blessed be thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, that thou hast not created me *a woman*."

Now, if one sex of the human family has been so degraded by the other; if she whom God created to be a *help-mate and counterpart* has been reduced by man to the slave of his carnal lusts; if such slavish and inhuman treatment has been justified on the false plea of the natural unfaithfulness and incontinency [19]of the sex; if exclusion from society and imprisonment have been deemed necessary for the preservation of her morals, how greatly has woman been alienated from the original design of her creation! how unjustly has her character been aspersed! how inhumanly has she been treated! and how great is the importance of a book which celebrates the virtuous example of a woman, and thus strikes at the root of all her reproaches and her wrongs!

The importance of this view of the book may be further seen from the fact, that, in proportion to the degradation of women, men themselves have become degraded; for, deprived of the meliorating influences which the delicacy and tenderness of women were designed to have over them, and never more needed than in their fallen state, they have abandoned

themselves to their worst passions and desires, and thus their whole civil and social condition has been proportionally undignified and unblest. Look, on the other hand, at the state of society where woman is restored to her rightful position, there we shall find refinement of manners, purity of conversation, mutual confidence and affection, domestic happiness, intellectual enjoyment, freedom of thought and action, sympathetic repose, and whatever, in fact, tends to mitigate the unavoidable evils of the present life; all referable, in a greater or less degree, to the unrestricted influence of woman upon the child and upon the man. In religion, her influence is still more potent. If first in the transgression, she is first in the restoration; and were man as ready to follow her in doing good as he has been in doing evil, the world would long ago have been in a holier and happier state than it is at present. Who constitute the principal part of our worshipping assemblies? Women. Who form the chief portion of the members of our churches? Women. Who are the chief agents in the religious education of our children? Women. Who are the main support of our various benevolent and evangelical institutions? Women. Let it not be said, then, that a Book which celebrates the ascendency [20]of a virtuous woman in humble life over all the blandishments of wealth and royalty, is unworthy of a place in Holy Writ.

The importance of this book is, moreover, enhanced by the circumstances more immediately connected

with the time in which it was written.

The conduct of Bath-sheba with David was calculated to confirm man in his opinion that woman was naturally unfaithful and incontinent, and that it was requisite to exclude her from society, in order to preserve her morals. But the narrative here recorded forms a contrast to the conduct of Bath-sheba. It shows the power of virtue in a woman, even of humble life. As the wife of an officer of rank, accustomed to luxury and wealth, the temptations of Bath-sheba were not so great, and yet she surrendered to them. Whereas the Shulamite, a humble shepherdess, to whom the promise of costly apparel and of elevation from a low and toilsome occupation to the highest rank, must have been an extraordinary allurement, triumphed over them all. If one woman yielded to small incitements, this book shows that another overcame unparalleled temptations, and thus checked the clamour against woman which might have arisen from the conduct of Bath-sheba with David.

[Contents]

SECTION V.—HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE EXEGESIS OF THE BOOK.

No book has furnished a wider field for the speculation and visionary projects of those who substitute their own imagination and enthusiastic feelings for the teaching of Scripture, than the Song of Solomon; the varieties and absurdities of which are a solemn warning against departing from the rules of sound philology and critical interpretation.

An enumeration of all the different interpretations of this Song would be too lengthy, and is not required. It will be sufficient to glance at the leading expositions. We begin with the Jewish. [21]

323–246, B.C.[18] It has been supposed that the Septuagint, which may be regarded as the oldest Jewish exegetical tradition, contains some intimation that the translators of the Old Testament into Greek and their Jewish brethren of those days must have interpreted the Song of Solomon in an allegorical manner. The only passage adduced in corroboration of this opinion is, Ch. iv. 8, where the Septuagint renders מֵרֹאשׁ אֲמָנָה *from the top of Amana*, by ἀπὸ ἀρχῆς πίστεως, *from the top of faith*. That this appeal

is nugatory is obvious from the rendering of תִּרְצָה *Tirzah* by εὐδοκία, *delight*, vi. 4, and of בַּתנָדִיב *noble daughter* by θύγατερ Ναδάβ, *daughter of Nadab*, vii. 1; whence it is evident that the Septuagint frequently mistook *proper names* for appellatives and adjectives, and *vice versâ*. It appears inconceivable that a profound scholar like Keil, who is well acquainted with the frequent errors of the Septuagint, should quote this as a special and sufficient proof that "the Alexandrian version took this Song in an allegorical sense,"[19] especially as he knew that some have drawn from it the very opposite conclusion, who have argued that if the authors of the Septuagint had understood this book in any other than its obvious sense, they would have betrayed it in the translation.[20]

180, B.C. Jesus Sirach, xlvii. 14–17, is next adduced as furnishing some clue to the Jewish interpretation of this book. Ecclesiasticus, according to some, is a name given to it κατ' ἐξοχὴν, because of its being the most remarkable and useful of the ecclesiastical or apocryphal books; others say it was so called from its resemblance to Solomon's *Ecclesiastes*, and others, again, with more probability, that this name was given to it by the Latins, to denote *its use in the church*. Its Greek name, however, Σοφία Ἰησοῦ υἱοῦ Σειράχ, *wisdom of Jesus* [22]*son of Sirach*, is more appropriate. It specifies at once the author, who mentions his own name in Ch. l. 27. The age given to the book here, is that which is thought most

probable.[21] This apocryphal writer says in his apostrophe to Solomon,—"*How wise wast thou in thy youth, and, as a flood, filled with understanding! Thy mind covered the earth, and thou filledst it with enigmatic sayings. Thy name went forth to the distant isles, and thou wast beloved for thy peace. Countries admired thee for songs, and proverbs, and enigmas, and solutions.*" The 17th verse is supposed to include the whole writings of Solomon contained in the Old Testament; and it is affirmed that παραβολαὶ αἰνιγμάτων in verse 15, cannot be understood to mean the Proverbs (παροιμία) since these are separately mentioned in verse 17, hence it follows that they refer to the allegorical interpretation of this Song.[22]

Even Hengstenberg, who, though a defender of the allegorical interpretation, remarks,[23] "Sirach xlvii. 17, has wrongly been referred to in support of the allegorical interpretation. For the words ἐν ᾠδαῖς καὶ παροίμιαις καὶ παραβολαῖς καὶ ἐν ἑρμηνείαις ἀπεθαύμασάν σε χῶραι depend upon the historical narration in the Books of the Kings, and do not refer to the writings comprised in the Canon. This is evident from the mention of the ἑρμηνείαι, whereby *the solutions* of the enigmas in contradistinction to the enigmas themselves, can alone be meant. Comp. 1 Kings x. 1–3. Whereas in the Canon no such ἑρμηνείαι are to be found. Verse 15, in which Keil finds a special reference to the allegorical interpretation, likewise alludes to 1 Kings x.,

especially to verse 24."

120, B.C. The Book of Wisdom has also been supposed to contain a clue to the interpretation of this Song. The author and the age of the Book are points of great contest. [23]All that can be concluded with any degree of probability is, that the author was an Alexandrian Jew, who lived after the transplanting of the Greek philosophy into Egypt, and that he seems to refer to the oppression of the later Ptolemies.[24] In ch. viii. 2, Solomon is represented as speaking to Wisdom; "*Her I loved and sought from my youth, I sought to bring her home for my bride, and I became a lover of her beauty.*" Because Solomon is here made to speak of Wisdom as his bride, it has been maintained to be an explanation of the Song of Songs, as though the brides were necessarily the same.[25] Let any impartial reader peruse the description of Wisdom in the chapter quoted, and that of the bride in the Song of Songs, and he will be convinced that there is no intentional resemblance whatever.

37–95, A.D. Josephus is also said to have understood this Song in an allegorical sense, although it is not in a single instance quoted by him. His arrangement of the Books of the Old Testament is the only ground of this argument. It is said, as he[26] mentions twenty-two books which are justly accredited as Divine, (τὰ δικαίως θεῖα πεπιστευμένα) and describes five as belonging to Moses, thirteen to the Prophets, and the remaining four as containing hymns to God, and

rules of life for men (αἱ δὲ λοιπαὶ τέσσαρες ὕμνους εἰς τὸν Θεὸν καὶ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ὑποθήκας τοῦ βίου περιέχουσιν) *viz.*, the Psalms, Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, no place is left for this Song except among the Prophets; and if Josephus placed it there, it follows that he must have understood it allegorically.[27] But were we to admit that Josephus placed this Song among the prophetical writings, we should deny the conclusion attempted to be drawn from it. For according to the same mode of argumentation, we might infer that Josephus understood [24]Ruth and Esther allegorically, for he also places these books among the prophetical writings. The fact is, that this historian, as he tells us himself, reckons the historical books among the prophetical ones. But we demur to the assertion that Josephus put this Song among the prophetical writings; it is far more likely that he placed it among the four books which he describes as consisting of hymns to God and precepts for the life of men.[28]

We come now to the Talmud, in which passages from this Song are quoted and interpreted. This elaborate work, consists of what is called the *Mishna*, constituting the text, and the *Gemara*, which is a commentary upon it, derived from two sources, *viz.* —Jerusalem and Babylon. The Jews, from time immemorial, had an *unwritten* law תּוֹרָה שֶׁבַּעַל פֶּה δόγματα ἄγραφα, in addition to the *written* one, תּוֹרָה שֶׁבִּכְתָב ,ἔγγραφος, contained in the Pentateuch. Hillel of Babylon (born 75 B.C.), who, next to Ezra,

was celebrated by posterity as the restorer of the law,[29] first arranged and divided this oral law into six parts:—1, concerning sowing; 2, women; 3, festivals; 4, the rights of property; 5, holy things; 6, pure and impure things. This, which comprises everything that appertains to the Jewish law, was called מִשְׁנָה *Mishna*, δευτέρωσις, or the second recension of the law. In order to reconcile the Sadducees, who denied every law not founded on Holy Writ, Hillel laid down seven hermeneutic rules, whereby the Scriptures might be interpreted in such a manner that the oral law could be deduced from it.[30] When fears were afterwards entertained lest the oral tradition should be lost, Rabbi Judah Hakkadosh (*i.e.* holy), in the year 220 A.D., collected everything that had been said upon the subject, preserving the division of Hillel, and probably making some additions of his [25]own. This he did in a manner so masterly and satisfactory, that it superseded every other previous attempt, and constitutes the present *Mishna*.

The *Mishna* became the chief object of study. The rules of Hillel were increased and much acted on; expositions were given upon the reasons that led to the decisions in the Mishna; the expounders were called אֱמוֹרָאִים *Amoraim*, *public lecturers*, and the exposition גְּמָרָא *Gemara*.

After the death of Judah, many of his learned disciples, objecting to the appointment of his second son Gamaliel, to his father's office, emigrated to

Babylon, and having erected schools there, pursued the study of the Mishna. The academy they established in Sura rivalled the one in Tiberias. The Gemara of Tiberias, collated about 358 (A.D.) by an unknown individual, is called *Talmud Jerushalmi*; and the Gemara of Sura, the compilation of which was begun by R. Ashe (352–427), continued by his disciple and friend, Rabina, and finished about 525, is called *Talmud Babli*. The latter surpasses the former in comprehensiveness, perspicuity, and depth, is about four times as large, and fills 2947 folio pages. Both united are called *The Talmud* תַּלְמוּד *book of instruction*; and also גְּמָרָא *Gemara*. It contains the civil and ceremonial law, debates on various branches of art and science, moral sayings, anecdotes, expositions on different passages of Scripture, &c.[31]

100–500, A.D.—In Yadaim, (Sect. iii. 5.) we find that R. Akiba, one of the greatest Rabbins who lived in the first century, and president of the Academy of Bai-Barc, said, "*The whole world was not worthy of the day in which this sublime Song was given to Israel; for all the Scriptures are holy, but this sublime Song is most holy.*" There can, therefore, be no doubt that the mysteries which this distinguished Rabbi found in the Song of Songs, he regarded as greater than those he discovered in any other portion of the Sacred Scriptures. [26]

Subsequent Rabbins quote and explain different passages. Thus, Ch. i. 2 is discussed in Abodah Sarah

(Sect. 2, p. 35). It is asked, "*How are the words, 'Thy love is better than wine' understood?*" Answer: *When Rabbi Dimi came to Babylon, he said, "This verse is thus understood: the Congregation of Israel said to God, 'Lord of the Universe, the words of thy friends (namely, the sages) are more excellent than even the wine of the Law.'"*

Here we see that the beloved is taken to be *God*, and the loved one *the Congregation of Israel*.

Ch. i. 3, is quoted and expounded, a little further on, in the same tract of the Talmud, in the following manner. "*R. Nachman ben R. Chasdah once said, in his discourse, the words 'Delicious is the odour of thy perfumes,' denote a learned man; for such an one is like a box of perfumes; if it is covered up, no one can smell the perfumes, but when it is opened the odour becomes widely diffused. It is so with a learned man without disciples, no one knows of his learning; but if he gets a circle of disciples his name and his learning become widely diffused. And not only this, but he himself will increase learning by teaching, so that things which he formerly did not understand will now become plain to him; for it is written in the same verse* עלמות אהבוך DAMSELS LOVE THEE; *read* עלומות HIDDEN THINGS *will love thee*, i.e., *will become plain to thee; and not only this, but even the angel of death will love him; read then* על־מות HE WHO IS OVER DEATH *will love thee; and still more, he will inherit both worlds, this world and the world to come; read also* עולמות WORLDS *love thee.*"

Ch. i. 13, 14, and v. 13, are quoted and explained in Sabbath, p. 88, b., "*Rabbi Joshuah ben Levi saith, What is meant by* צרור המור דודי לי בין שדי ילין *is the congregation of Israel, who is saying before the Holy One thus: O Lord, though my beloved (i.e. God) oppresses me, and is embittered against me, yet he still lodges with me.* By אשכול הכופר דודי לי בכרמי עין גדי *is meant, He who is the owner of all things, will forgive me the* [27]*sin of the calf, with which I covered myself.* A question is raised, *How does* בכרמי *signify my covering?* Then Rabbi Mar-Sutra ben Rabbi Nachman quotes כסא של כובס שכורמי עליו את הכלאם from another part of the Talmud (Kelim 35), where כרם means *to cover*. R. Joshuah ben Levi proceeds, *What is meant by* לחייו כערוגת הבושם *is, At every commandment which proceedeth from the mouth of the Holy One on Mount Sinai, the world was filled with aromatics.* A question is asked, *If the world was filled at the first commandment, where was the odour diffused at the second commandment?* Answer, *The Holy One sent his wind from his stores, and carried them away successively, as it is written,* שפתותיו שושנים *do not read* שושנים *but* ששונים *repeating in succession.* Rabbi Joshuah ben Levi concludes, *At every commandment uttered by the mouth of the Holy One, the soul of Israel was drawn out of them, as it is written, 'My soul went out when he spake.'* A question is again asked, *If their soul was drawn out at the first commandment, how could they receive the second?* Answer. *He (i.e. God) caused the dew to come down, by which he will raise the dead, and revived them, as it is written, 'Thou, O God,*

didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary.'" Ps. lxviii. 9.[32]

Here, again, we see that the bridegroom is taken to be the Holy One, the Owner of all things, and the bride the congregation of Israel. The reader, looking into the text of the Talmud quoted in the note, will observe that most of this interpretation has been obtained, either by the separation of words, the transposition and change of letters, or by substituting [28]in the commentary words, similar in sound to those in the Scriptures. Thus, צרור *a bundle, a bag*, is explained by מיצר *oppress*; מור *myrrh* by מימר *embitter*; אשכול *a cluster* by איש שהכל לו *He whose are all things*; כופר *cypress flowers* by כפר *pardon*; עין גדי *En-gedi* by עון עגל *the sin of the calf*.

This mode of interpretation is not confined to the Song of Songs, but is applied to all parts of the Bible, and is an illustration of the way in which the hermeneutic rules laid down by Rabbi Hillel, and augmented by R. Ishmael, and others, were carried out.

550, A.D.—The Targum or Chaldee paraphrase is the first entire commentary upon the Song of Songs which has been handed down to us. The author is unknown. Kitto erroneously affirms, that it was "made several centuries before the time of Christ, and probably before the traditionary interpretation of the author himself (*i.e.* the author of this Song) would entirely be lost."[33] The inferior style in which

it is written, the copious use it makes of legends of a very late date, and especially the mention it makes of the *Gemara* (Ch. i. 2), which was not completed till nearly the middle of *the sixth century*, prove most distinctly that this paraphrase was made in the sixth century. Hävernick,[34] however, is equally wrong in affirming that the Mahomedans are mentioned in Ch. i. 7. That *the sons of Ishmael* here alluded to are not the Mahomedans, is evident from Ch. vi. 7. of the same paraphrase, where we are told that these בְּנוֹי דְיִשְׁמָעֵאל headed by Alexander the Great, came to wage war against Jerusalem at the time of the Maccabees.

The Targum takes the Song of Songs as an allegory, describing prophetically the history of the Jewish nation, beginning with their Exodus from Egypt, and detailing their doings and sufferings, down to the coming of the Messiah, and the building of the third Temple. [29]

Thus, according to this allegory, Ch. i. 3, describes Jehovah's fame, which went abroad in consequence of the wonders he wrought when bringing the Israelites out of Egypt; verse 12 describes the departure of Moses to receive the two tables of stone, and how the Israelites, in the mean time, made the golden calf; verse 14 describes the pardon of that sin, and the erection of the Tabernacle; Ch. iii. 6–11, describes the passage of the Israelites, under the leadership of Joshua, over the Jordan, their attacking and conquering the Canaanites, and the building of

Solomon's Temple; Ch. v. 2, describes the Babylonian captivity; Ch. vi. 2, the deliverance of Israel through Cyrus; and the building of the second Temple; Ch. vi. 7, &c., describes the battles of the Maccabees; Ch. vii. 11, 12, the present dispersion of the Jews, and their future anxiety to learn the time of their restoration; Ch. viii. 5, &c., describes the resurrection of the dead, the final ingathering of Israel, the building of the third Temple, &c., &c.

"The beloved," according to the Targum, is *the Lord*; "the loved one" is *the Congregation of Israel*; "the companions of the beloved" (Ch. i. 7) are *the Edomites and the Ishmaelites*; "the daughters of Jerusalem" are, in Ch. i. 5, *the Gentile nations*; in ii. 7, iii. 5, viii. 4, *the Congregation of Israel*; and in v. 8, *the prophets*; "the brothers of the loved one" are *the false prophets*; "the little sister," in viii. 8, is *the people of Israel*; the speakers in the same verse are *the angels*; the speaker in viii. 13, is *the Lord*; "the companions," in the same verse are *the Sanhedrim*.

The following specimen of the Targum, on the first chapter of this Song, will give the reader an idea of the way in which the paraphrase develops the allegorical construction of this book.

> 1. *The Song of Songs, &c.*—The songs and praises which Solomon the prophet, King of Israel, sang, by the spirit of prophecy, before God, the Lord of the whole world. Ten songs were sung in this world, but this song is the most celebrated of them all. The *first*

song Adam sang when his sins were forgiven him, and when the sabbath-day came, and protected him, he opened his mouth and said, “A song for the sabbath-day,” &c. (Ps. xcii.) The *second* song Moses and the children of Israel sang when the [30]Lord of the world divided the Red Sea for them, they all opened their mouths and sang as one man, the song, as it is written, “Then sang Moses and the children of Israel.” (Exod. xv. 1.) The *third* song the children of Israel sang when the well of water was given to them, as it is written, “Then sang Israel.” (Numb. xxi. 17.) The *fourth* song Moses the prophet sang, when his time came to depart from this world, in which he reproved the people of the house of Israel, as it is written: “Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak.” (Deut. xxxii. 1.) The *fifth* song Joshua the son of Nun sang, when he waged war in Gibeon, and the sun and moon stood still for him thirty-six hours, and when they left off singing their song, he himself opened his mouth and sang this song, as it is written: “Then sang Joshua before the Lord.” (Josh. x. 12.) The *sixth* song Barak and Deborah sang in the day when the Lord delivered Sisera and his army into the hands of the children of Israel, as it is written: “Then sang Deborah, &c.” (Judg. v. 11.) The *seventh* song Hannah sang when a son was given her by the Lord, as it is written: “And Hannah prayed prophetically, and said.” (1 Sam. ii. 1, and the Targum *in loco*.) The *eighth* song David the King of Israel sang for all the wonders which the Lord did for him. He opened his mouth and sang a hymn, as it is written: “And David sang in prophecy before the Lord.” (2 Sam. xxii. 1, and the Targum *in loco*.) The *ninth* song Solomon the King of Israel sang by the Holy Spirit before God, the

Lord of the whole world. And the *tenth* song the children of the captivity shall sing when they shall be delivered from their captivity, as it is written and declared by Isaiah the prophet: “This song shall be unto you for joy, as in the night in which the feast of the passover is celebrated; and gladness of heart as when the people go to appear before the Lord three times in the year, with all kinds of music, and with the sound of the timbrel, to go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to worship before the Lord, the Mighty One of Israel.” (Is. xxx. 29, and the Targum *in loco*.)

2. *Let him kiss me, &c.*—Solomon the prophet said, “Blessed be the name of the Lord who has given us the law through Moses the great scribe, written upon two tables of stone; and the six parts of the Mishna and the Talmud traditionally, and who spoke with us face to face, as a man that kissed his friend, because of his great love wherewith he loved us above the seventy nations.”[35]

3. *Thy perfumes, &c.*—At the report of thy wonders and mighty deeds which thou hast done for thy people the house of Israel, all the nations trembled who heard of thy famous strength, and thy great miracles; and in all the earth was heard thy holy name, which is more excellent than the anointing oil that was poured upon the heads of kings and priests; therefore the righteous love to walk after thy good way, because they shall inherit both this world and the world to come.

4. *Draw me, &c.*—When the people of the house of Israel went out of Egypt the shechinah of the Lord of the world went before them in a pillar of cloud by

day, and in a pillar of fire by night, and the righteous of that [31]generation said, Lord of the whole world, draw us after thee, and we will run in thy good way! Bring us to the foot of Mount Sinai, and give us thy law out of thy treasury in heaven, and we will rejoice and be glad *in the twenty-two letters*[36] with which it is written, and we will remember them, and love thy divine nature, and withdraw ourselves from the idols of the nations; and all the righteous, who do that which is right before thee, shall fear thee and love thy commandments.

5. *I am swarthy, &c.*—When the house of Israel made the calf, their faces became black, like the sons of Cush, who dwelt in the tents of Kedar; but when they returned by repentance, and were forgiven, the shining splendour of their faces was increased to that of angels, because they made the curtains for the tabernacle, and the shechinah of the Lord dwelt among them; and Moses, their teacher, went up to heaven and made peace between them and their King.

6. *Do not look down upon me, &c.*—The congregation of Israel said before all the nations, Do not despise me because I am blacker than you, for I have done your deeds, and worshipped the sun and moon; for false prophets have been the cause that the fierce anger of the Lord has come upon me, and they taught me to worship your idols, and to walk in your laws; but the Lord of the world, who is my God, I did not serve, and did not walk in his precepts, and did not keep his commandments and laws.

7. *Tell me, &c.*—When the time came for Moses the

prophet to depart from this world, he said to the Lord, It is revealed to me that this people will sin, and be carried into captivity; show me now how they shall be governed and dwell among the nations, whose decrees are oppressive as the heat and the scorching sun in the summer solstice, and wherefore is it that they shall wander among the flocks of the sons of Esau and Ishmael, who make their idols equal to thee, as though they were thy companions.

8. *If thou knowest not, &c.*—The Holy One, blessed be his name, said to Moses, the prophet, "I suffer myself to be entreated to abolish their captivity; the congregation of Israel, which is like a fair damsel, and which my soul loves, she shall walk in the ways of the righteous, and shall order her prayers according to the order of her governors and leaders, and instruct her children, who are like to the kids of the goats, to go to the synagogue and the schools; and by the merits of this they shall be governed in the captivity, until the time that I send King Messiah, and he shall lead them quietly to their habitations; yea, he shall bring them to the house of the sanctuary, which David and Solomon, the shepherds of Israel, shall build for them."

9. *I compare thee, &c.*—When Israel went out of Egypt, Pharaoh and his hosts pursued after them with chariots and horsemen, and their way was shut up on the four sides of them; on the right hand and on the left were wildernesses full of fiery serpents, and behind them was wicked Pharaoh with his army, and before them was the Red Sea, what did the holy blessed God do? He was manifested in the power of his might upon the Red Sea, and dried the sea up,

but the mud he did not dry up. The wicked and the mixed multitude, and the strangers who were among them, [32]said, The waters of the sea he was able to dry up, but the mud he was not able to dry up. In that very hour the fierce anger of the Lord came upon them, and he sought to drown them in the waters of the sea, as Pharaoh, and his army, and his chariots, and his horsemen, and his horses were drowned, had it not been for Moses the Prophet, who spread his hands in prayer before the Lord, and turned away the anger of the Lord from them. Then he and the righteous of that generation opened their mouths, and sang a song, and passed through the Red Sea on dry land, through the merits of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the beloved of the Lord.

10. *Beautiful are thy cheeks, &c.*—When they went out into the wilderness the Lord said to Moses, "How comely is this people, that the words of the law should be given unto them, and they shall be as a bridle in their jaws, that they may not depart out of the good way, as a horse turneth not aside that has a bridle in his jaws; and how fair is their neck to bear the yoke of my commandments; and it shall be upon them as a yoke upon the neck of a bullock which plougheth in the field, and feeds both itself and its owner."

11. *Circlets of gold, &c.*—Then was it said to Moses, "Go up into heaven, and I will give thee the two tables of stone, hewn out of the sapphire of the throne of my glory, shining as the best gold, disposed in rows, written with my finger, on which are engraven the ten commandments, purer than silver that is purified seven times seven, which is the

number of the things explained in them in forty-nine various ways, and I shall give them by thy hands to the people of the house of Israel."

12. *While the King, &c.*—Whilst Moses, their teacher, was in heaven to receive the two tables of stone, and the law and the commandments, the wicked of that generation and the mixed multitude that was among them rose up and made a golden calf, and caused their works to stink, and an evil report of them went out in the world; for before this time a fragrant odour of them was diffused in the world, but afterwards they stank like nard, the smell of which is very bad, and the plague of leprosy came down upon their flesh.

13. *A bag of myrrh, &c.*—At that time the Lord said to Moses, "Go down, for the people have corrupted themselves, desist from speaking to me, and I will destroy them." Then Moses returned and asked mercy of the Lord, and the Lord remembered for them the binding of Isaac, whom his father bound, on Mount Moriah, upon the altar; and the Lord turned from his fierce anger, and caused his shechinah to dwell among them as before.

14. *A bunch of cypress flowers, &c.*—So then went Moses down with the two tables of stone in his hands; and, because of the sins of Israel, his hands grew heavy, and the tables fell and were broken. Then went Moses and ground the calf to powder, and scattered the dust of it upon the brook, and made the children of Israel to drink it, and slew all that deserved to die, and went up a second time into heaven, and prayed before the Lord, and made

atonement for the children of Israel; then was the commandment to make a tabernacle and an ark. Immediately Moses hastened and made the tabernacle, and all its furniture, and the ark; and he put in the ark the two other tables, and appointed the sons of Aaron, the priests, to offer the offerings upon the altar, and to pour the wine upon the offerings; [33]but from whence had they wine to pour? For in the wilderness they had no proper place for sowing; neither had they fig-trees, nor vines, nor pomegranates; but they went to the vineyards of En-gedi, and took clusters of grapes from thence, and pressed wine out of them, and poured it upon the altar, the fourth part of a hin to one lamb.

15. *Behold thou art beautiful, &c.*—When the children of Israel performed the will of their King, he himself praised them in the family of the holy angels, and said, “How fair are thy works, my daughter, my beloved, O congregation of Israel, in the time that thou doest my will, and studiest in the words of my law; and how well ordered are thy works and thy affairs, as young doves that are fit to be offered upon the altar!”

16. *Behold thou art comely, &c.*—The congregation of Israel answered before the Lord of the world, and thus said, “How fair is the shechinah of thy holiness, when thou dwellest among us, and receivest prayers with acceptance; and when thou dwellest in our beloved bed, and our children are multiplied in the world, and we increase and multiply like a tree that is planted by a stream of water, whose leaf is fair, and whose fruit is plenteous!”

> 17. *The beams of, &c.*—Solomon, the prophet, said, "How beautiful is the house of the sanctuary of the Lord, which is built by my hands, of wood of Gulmish; but far more beautiful will be the house of the sanctuary which shall be built in the days of the King Messiah, the beams of which will be of the cedars of the garden of Eden, and whose rafters will be of cypress, pine, and box."

The precedent of the Talmud in taking the beloved as *the Lord*, and the loved one as *the Congregation of Israel*, and in explaining the text in such a manner as to make it square with her doings, has quite prepared us for the Chaldee exposition, the author of which most probably was himself one of the later Talmudists. How could the paraphrast do otherwise? "Are not the words of *the sages* more excellent than even the wine of the Law?"[37] "Is not he who transgresses the words of the scribes more guilty than he who transgresses the words of the Law?"[38] Having, therefore, been once settled by the sages that this Song describes the doings and sufferings of Israel, it only remained for the expositors to apply their exegetical canons, viz.: of transposing, changing, or omitting letters; explaining words by others of a similar sound; making each letter of a word begin another word; reducing an expression to its numerical value, and explaining the text accordingly, &c. &c., in order to palm upon this book, in a consecutive [34]order, the remarkable events in connection with the history of the Jews.

Thus, the love of God to Israel, which was greater than to all *the seventy other nations* mentioned in Ch. i. 2, was obtained by reducing the word יין to its numerical value, *seventy*; *the two worlds*, in verse 3, which the pious are to inherit, were obtained by changing עלמות *maidens*, into עולמות *worlds*, according to the example of the Talmud;[39] *the twenty-two letters* with which the Law is written, in verse 4, were obtained by reducing the word בך to its numerical value; *the Tabernacle*, in verse 5, was obtained from the word ירעות and *the effected peace* by changing the proper name שלמה into שלום *peace*; the worship of *the sun and moon*, in verse 6, was obtained from the word שמש *sun*; *the ploughing bullock*, in verse 10, was obtained by changing תורים *ringlet*, and חרוזים *necklace*, into תור חרז ;*the two tables shining as the best gold*, verse 11, were obtained by rendering תורי זהב *golden Laws*, and *the seven times seven*, or *the forty different interpretations of the Law*, by reducing the word זהב to its numerical value, ז being *seven*, and ה and ב *seven*, and then multiplying seven by seven; *the binding of Isaac*, in verse 13, was obtained by rendering צרור המור by ערור המוריה *the binding of Moriah*; *the sin of the calf*, and *the atonement of that*, in verse 14, were obtained by changing עין גדי *En-gedi*, into עון עגל *the sin of the calf*, and by substituting כפר *pardon*, for כופר *cypress-flower*, according to the example of the Talmud.[40] This is the development of Hagadic exegesis, and this the paraphrase appealed to in support of the allegorical interpretation, and in the track of which future

allegorists more or less follow.

892–942. From the Chaldee paraphrase to R. Saadias Gaon, a period of about 350 years, thick darkness covers the annals of Jewish literature. With him, however, a new epoch begins to dawn. Saadias was born at Pithom, in Egypt, about the year 892, and died in the year 942. He was "Gaon," or spiritual head of [35]the Jews in Babylon, and is well known by his translation of the Bible into Arabic, the Pentateuch of which is inserted in Walton's Polyglott.[41] Among the many philosophical and exegetical works this eminent man bequeathed to posterity, is a commentary on the Song of Songs, which was originally written in Arabic, and was translated into Hebrew by some unknown individual. This work is exceedingly rare, and I have happily found a copy of the original Constantinople edition in the British Museum, of which Dukes was not aware when he wrote his "*Literarische Mittheilungen*." The view that Saadias takes is that "*Solomon relates in it the history of the Jews, beginning with their Exodus from Egypt, and extending it beyond the coming of the Messiah*." Thus far he agrees with the Targum, but his commentary on the text is entirely at variance with that paraphrase.

According to Saadias, Ch. i. 2–iii. 5, describes the bondage of Israel in Egypt, their liberation, the giving of the Law, the battles with Sihon, Og, and the King of Aroar, the wrath of God at the time of the spies, &c. Ch. iii. 6–iv. 7, describes the erection of

the Tabernacle, the various journeys in the wilderness, the high position of Moses and Aaron, &c. Hitherto Israel has been called by the appellation *my loved one*, for they had not as yet entered Canaan; henceforth they are called *bride* (כַּלָּה because God takes them into the promised land; just as a bridegroom calls his loved one *bride*, when he takes her home. Ch. iv. 8–v. 1, describes Israel's entrance into Canaan, the building of the first Temple, the separation of [36]Judah and Israel, the Shechinah departing from Israel and abiding with Judah, and the people coming up to Jerusalem to the three great festivals. Ch. v. 2–vi. 3, describes the rebellion of Israel and Ahaz, God sending prophets to warn them to repent, the destruction of the Temple, the Babylonian captivity, Israel's liberation, the building of the second Temple, and the covenant of God with his repenting people. Ch. vi. 4–ix. describes the twofold condition of the people that returned from Babylon, some of whom were godly, while others took strange women, forgot the holy language, and were therefore called שחר *dawn*, being neither real light nor real darkness, neither pious nor wicked. Ch. vi. 10–vii. 9, refers to the present dispersion, in which the Jews, though being many days without a king, without a priest, &c., say we still live in the fear of God, and are His. Ch. vii. 12–viii. 4, refers to the sufferings of the Messiah ben Joseph, the manifestation of the Messiah ben David, the obedience of Israel to God in those days, and to the Lord's rejoicing over them as a bridegroom over his

bride. Ch. viii. 5, to the end, describes Israel restored, the third Temple built, and all the people walking according to the will of the Lord.

The principal persons in this Song are understood in the following manner: “the beloved” is *the Lord*; “the loved one,” *the Congregation of Israel*; “the companions of the beloved,” (Ch. i. 7,) are *Moses*, *Aaron*, and *Miriam*; “the daughters of Jerusalem,” *the Congregation of Israel*; “the little sister,” *the two tribes and a half*; “the speaker,” *the Lord*; “the inhabitant of the gardens,” is *the sages*; “the companions,” in the same verse, are *the Israelites* wishing to listen to the teaching of their sages.

The following is a specimen of R. Saadias’s commentary, the Hebrew of which is given in the note.[42]

> 1–3. *The Song of Songs*, &c.—Know, my brother, that you will find a great diversity of opinions as regards the interpretation of this Song of [37]Songs; and it must be confessed that there is reason for it, since the Song of Songs is like a lock, the key of which hath been lost. Some maintain that it refers to the kingdom of Israel; others say that it refers to the days of the Messiah; and others again affirm that it refers to the time of the dispersion and the Messiah, and assert that by *beloved* (דוד) the Messiah is meant, and by *bride* (כלה) is meant the law (תורה) But this is a sin, an error, and a great heresy. The truth is, that by *beloved* (דוד) is meant *the Lord*, for it is written, “I will sing to my beloved a song of love respecting his

vineyard" (Isa. v. 1), which the prophet Isaiah explains (verse 7), "The vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel." Solomon relates in this book the history of the Jews commencing with their Exodus from Egypt until after the coming of the Messiah, and compares the position of Israel to God to that of a bride to a bridegroom, because she (Israel) is dear to him, and he to her. When he first takes her from her father's house he calls her *my friend* (רַעְיָתִי when he brings her to his house he calls her *my bride* (כַּלָּה when she finds favour in his eyes he calls her *my sister* (אֲחֹתִי and praises her from head to foot; then he is angry with her, and she returns and praises him from head to foot; then he praises her a second time. And, because it is unlawful for a bridegroom and bride to come together without a marriage-contract and witnesses, therefore Solomon begins with the words, "Let him give me kisses of his mouth;" that is, the commandments and the statutes, comprising both the written and the oral law which the Lord gave to Israel through the pious Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, so that Israel's fame went forth into the world in consequence of their wisdom, as it is written, "And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty," &c. (Ezek. xvi. 14), so much so that many of the nations desired to be gathered under the wings of the shechinah and become Jews; and these are the mixed multitudes, Jethro and others, and therefore it is said, "Thy perfumes are good in odour," that is, the Lord tried them from the departure out of Egypt till their entrance into Canaan whether they would walk in his ways, as it is written, "Thou didst follow me in the wilderness," &c. Jer. ii. 2.

4. *Draw me*, &c.—Having related in this verse how Israel walked in the fear of the Lord, and received the ten commandments in the 6th of [38]Sivan, and then made the calf on the 17th of Tamuz, Solomon in astonishment says in their name,

5. *I am swarthy, &c.*—That is, I am swarthy, but comely; I am swarthy because of making the calf, but comely because of receiving the ten commandments; and Israel says that his sin has been forgiven through the three thousand men, the wicked among Israel, who served idols, who were killed before the sun to atone for the great sin, as it is written, "For thou hadst done it in secret, but I will do it before all Israel, and before the sun" (2 Sam. xii. 11, 12); and the nations made me *keeper* of the service of other gods, for I served strange gods, as it is written, "And they changed their glory into the likeness of a calf that eateth grass" (Psal. cv. 25.)

The reader will have observed that this early commentator does already compare the Song of Songs *to a lock, the key of which has been lost*, and refers to several modes in which it has been interpreted.

1000–1040. The allegorical interpretation was nevertheless introduced into the Jewish liturgical services in the middle ages, when they were seeking, from traditions, dogmas, biblical events, &c., to construct sacred hymns and poems to be said or sung at their feasts and fasts.[43] Being regarded as representing the departure of Israel from Egypt

(יציאת מצרים),and their subsequent history in confirmation of Jehovah's covenant with them, the Song of Songs is used in a poetical paraphrase on the first and second morning services of the Passover feast, which was designed to celebrate the Exodus from Egypt as the commencement of the conjugal relation between God and his people. For the same reason, the book itself is read in the synagogue on the Sabbath of the middle days of the Passover (חול המועד של פסח).The poetical paraphrase above alluded to is in an alphabetical form, has the author's name in it, and each stanza closes with a quotation from the book in regular order, which renders the paraphrastic meaning artificial and obscure. Some idea of it may be gathered from the following version which we have made of R. Solomon [39]ben Judah Hababli's paraphrase, comprising the first five verses of the Song of Songs.

1 The Light and Saviour of the chosen people
Deserving protection,
He shall have from His beloved assembly
"*A song of Songs*."

2 The Graceful One, the object of all longing desires.
The Reviving Cordial of the fainting heart,
The Bountiful Source of abundant supply,
"*He hath kissed me with kisses*."[44]

3 The loved one above all nations,
The keeper of the Law Thou hast given,

Her didst Thou perfume with Thy spices,
"*The odour of Thy sweet ointments*."[45]

4 The chosen of Thy house and nobles,
Lo! we are surrounded with splendour,
We press to the house of Thy glory,
"*Oh draw us after thee*."[46]

5 Oh Thou all majestic, yet mild,
Thou hast crown'd me with grace above many,
Though now with grief I am marred,
"*I am swarthy, but comely*."[47]

It must, however, be borne in mind that the synagogal poetry was not authorized to express the creed of the whole nation; which is evident from the fact that many learned and pious Jews unscrupulously, and without censure, rejected some of its opinions. Some of these poems were composed by prelectors of separate congregations, and for the use of the particular synagogues in which they officiated. The adoption or rejection of any such poem entirely depended upon the influence of the prelector on his congregation, and upon the theme and merit of the composition. The poetical paraphrase of the allegorical interpretation of the Song of Songs was sure to be adopted because of the consolation which it imparts to the [40]dispersed and suffering Israelites, inasmuch as it assures them that God has not cast them off, that He is still their beloved, and they are still his loved ones, and that he

will speedily be reunited to them.

1040–1105. Through R. Solomon ben Isaac, the founder of the Germano-French Rabbinical literature, this encouraging allegorical interpretation was introduced into Germany and France, where the suffering Jews obtained consolation. This distinguished commentator, commonly called *Rashi*, and, through the misleading of Buxtorf, erroneously named *Jarchi*, was born at Troyes, in Champagne, in 1040, where he also died, about 1105.[48]

"*My opinion is*," says Rashi, "*that Solomon foresaw, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, that Israel would be carried into sundry captivities, and undergo sundry dissolutions; that they would lament in their captivity over their former glory, and recall the former love, which God manifested for them above all other nations; that they would say, 'I will go and return to my first husband, for then was it better with me than now'* (Hos. ii. 9); *that they would acknowledge His kindness and their own rebellion*, and the good things which He promised *to give them in the latter days* (*i.e.*, at the coming of Messiah.)

"*This book is written by inspiration, and represents a wife forsaken by her husband, and shut up, longing after him, recalling to her mind her love in youth to her beloved, and confessing her guilt; her beloved sympathising with her affection, and remembering the kindness of her youth, the charms of her beauty, and her good works, which had tied him to her with an*

everlasting love.

"*The design of this book is to show to Israel that God has not afflicted her* (*i.e.*, *Israel*) *willingly; that though He did send her away, He has not cast her off; that she is still His wife, and He her husband, and that He will again be united to her.*"[49] [41]

According to Rashi, דוד represents God as *a husband*, and the "loved one" the congregation of Israel, as *a wife* forsaken for a time by him; the "companions of the beloved" are *the heathen kings and princes*, under the figure of *wolves*; "the daughters of Jerusalem," are *the heathen nations*; the "brothers of the loved one," are *the Egyptians*; the "little sister" is the *forsaken wife* of the Song, &c. &c.

The following is a specimen of Rashi's commentary: —

> 1. *The Song of Songs*, &c.—Our Rabbins state, that whenever Solomon is mentioned in this Song, it signifies the Holy One, the King of Peace. This is confirmed by the fact that the name of Solomon's father is not here given, as in Prov. i. 1 and Eccl. i. 1. This most excellent Song was addressed to God by his people, the congregation of Israel. Rabbi Akiba says, that the world was not worthy of the day in which the Song of Songs was given to Israel; for all the Scriptures are holy, but the Song of Songs is most holy. Rabbi Eliezer ben Azariah says, it is like to a king who took a measure of wheat, and gave it to the baker, saying, Produce from it so much flour, so

much bran, and so much chaff, and make me a refined and excellent cake of the flour; so all Scriptures are holy, but this Song is most holy; for the whole of this book teaches the fear of God and submission to his kingdom.

2. *Let him kiss me*, &c.—This Song Israel utters in her captivity and widowhood. Oh that King Solomon would give me kisses of His mouth, as in the time of yore! Some kiss the hand, and others the shoulders; but I desire that He should behave to me as in former days, viz., kiss my mouth as a bridegroom kisses his bride; for Thy caresses are better than all the banquets of wine, and all joys and pleasures. It is a Hebrew idiom to call every banquet of pleasure and joy by the name of *wine* (Comp. Esth. vii. 2; Isaiah xxiv. 9; v. 12). This is the literal sense; but, according to the allegory, this refers to the giving of the Law, and God's speaking with Israel face to face. These favours still continue to be more precious to them than any delights; and as they are assured by God that He will appear again to reveal the secrets and mysteries of the Law, Israel prays to Him for the fulfilment of His promises. This is the meaning of "Let him kiss me!"

3. *Thy perfumes*, &c.—A good name is called good oil. The fragrance of Thy name is so excellent that the ends of the earth have smelt it when they heard of Thy fame and of Thy great wonders in Egypt. Thy name is called שֶׁמֶן *i.e.*, Thou art oil, and art constantly poured forth, so that Thy sweet odour might be widely diffused. This is the nature of good oil. As long as it is sealed in a bottle, it does not emit any smell; but when the bottle is opened, and the oil

poured into a vessel, the smell is diffused. *The maidens love thee.* Jethro, hearing of the wonderful doings of God in Egypt, confessed the God of Israel (Exodus xviii.); so Rahab, when she heard that the Lord had dried up the waters of the Red Sea, became a proselyte (Joshua ii. 11). By the *maidens* are meant the Gentiles; they are so called because God is represented as a youth. [42]

4. *Draw me*, &c.—I gathered from Thy messengers that Thou didst wish to draw me, and I immediately replied, We will run after Thee to be Thy wife. *He has brought me*, &c. And up to the present time I still rejoice, and am glad that I have been united to Thee. *We celebrate*, &c. Even now, though a living widow, I celebrate Thy love more than a banquet of pleasure and mirth. *They love thee*, &c. I and my forefathers, in their days, have loved Thee with fervent and upright love, without deception. This is the literal meaning according to the context. But, according to the allegory, Israel reminds God of the kindness of their youth and the love of their espousals (Jer. ii. 2), of their following Him in the wilderness, a land of aridity and the shadow of death, whither they took no provisions, because they believed in Him and in His messenger, and did not say, How shall we follow Thee in the wilderness, a place destitute of fertility and food? but went after Him, and "He brought *them into his apartments*:" that is, surrounded them with the protecting clouds. And even now, though in distress and affliction, they rejoice and are glad in Him and delight in the Law; and herein *celebrate His love more than wine*, and manifest *their sincere attachment to Him.*

> 5. *I am swarthy*, &c.—You, my companions, let me not be lightly esteemed in your eyes, although my Husband forsook me because of my swarthiness; for I am swarthy because of the tanning sun, yet I am comely because of the symmetry of my beautiful limbs. If I am swarthy, like the tents of Kedar, which are discoloured by the rain, in consequence of their being constantly spread out in the wilderness, I shall easily be washed, and be as beautiful as the curtains of Solomon. The allegorical meaning is, the congregation of Israel speaks this to the Gentiles,—I am swarthy in my own works, but I am comely in the works of my fathers; and some of my own works even are good. And though I am tainted with the sin of the calf, I have, to counterbalance this, the merit of accepting the Law. Israel calls the Gentiles "daughters of Jerusalem," because Jerusalem is to be the metropolis of all nations, as it is predicted, "And I will give them to thee for *daughters*" (Ezek. xvi. 61); and, again, "Ekron and her *daughters*" (Josh. xv. 44).

Rashi also says, that he had seen "*a number of other commentaries on this Song; some containing an exposition of the whole Book, and others of separate passages, but they are compatible neither with the language of Scripture, nor with the connexion of the verses.*"[50]

1085–1155. The spread of this consoling allegorical interpretation in France and Germany was promoted by the commentary[51] of the distinguished R. Samuel ben Meier, [43]called *Rashbam*, the grandson of *Rashi*, who was born about 1085, and died about 1155.[52]

Rashbam too affirms that this book "*represents captive Israel as a virgin sighing and mourning for her beloved, who left her and went afar off, as describing his everlasting love to her, declaring in a Song, 'Such an ardent love did my beloved manifest when with me,' and telling her friends and companions in a colloquial manner, 'So did my beloved speak to me, and so did I answer him.'*"[53] In the explanations of the principal persons Rashbam generally agrees with Rashi.

The following is a specimen of his commentary:—

1. *The Song of Songs*—That is, a song celebrated above all songs, like אלהי אלהים the great and awful God, above all gods, and אדוני אדנים the great Lord above all lords. *Which is Solomon's.* That is, King Solomon composed it by inspiration. Foreseeing the Israelites in their captivity sighing after the Holy One who went away from them, as a bridegroom separates himself from his beloved, Solomon sings this song in the name of the congregation of Israel, who is like a bride to Him (God). אשר לשלמה describes Solomon as the author, compare תפלה למשה, תהלה לדוד .

2. *Would that*, &c.—Would that my Beloved came, and kissed me kisses of *His* mouth on *my* mouth in his great love as in the days of old; for the expressions of His love are better, pleasanter, and sweeter than any delicious banquet. *Thy caresses.* The loved one sometimes addresses herself to her beloved as if he were *present*, and at other times she speaks of him to her companions, as if he were *absent*. *More than wine*, *i.e.* more than sweet beverages called יַיִן

According to the allegorical meaning, this refers to the law delivered to Israel mouth to mouth.

3. *Thy perfumes*, &c.—Because of Thy good ointment of balsam, the odour of which extended to the end of the earth, and was poured out from vessel to vessel, therefore is Thy name called ointment. Comp. Eccl. vii. 1. “A good name is better than precious ointment.” By the extension of youthful love is meant the wonders which the Holy One performed for the congregation of Israel in Egypt, on account of which His name and power became known among the nations, as it is written, “The priest of Midian heard, &c.” Exod. xviii. 1: and again, what is said by Rahab the harlot, “For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water, &c.” Josh. ii. 10. And again, “The people shall hear and be afraid,” Exod. xv. 14.

4. *Draw me*, &c.—Draw me to Thee, and I and my congregation will run after Thee, as in the days of old, when the King, my beloved, brought me into His chambers; and, while running after Thee, we will rejoice and [44]be glad in Thee, and celebrate Thy love and the expressions of Thy affection above any banquet of wine and beverages; for all the world loves Thee with upright love. This refers to the congregation of Israel, who sighs and makes supplication before the Holy One, to bring her out from her captivity, as He had formerly brought her out of Egypt, and led her into His chambers, *i.e.*, the tabernacle, where they served Him continually.

5. *I am swarthy*, &c.—Oh, my companions, virgin daughters of Ishmael, do not disdain and deride me on account of my blackness, saying, Because I am

> black, therefore my Beloved left me; for, although I am black as regards the appearance of my face, like the tents of Kedar, yet I am comely and graceful in body and stature, like the curtains of King Solomon, which are becoming and suitable to royalty. Thus the congregation of Israel, whom the nations reproach on account of her sins and transgressions which she committed, answers: True, I have sinned; and woe to me, for I am wandering in captivity for it; yet I am comely, I am of royal blood, and have the merits of my fathers; and the Holy One, in the latter days, will restore me to my former state, and liberate me from the iron furnace of captivity. The *daughters of Jerusalem* are the heathen. Compare "I will give them to thee to be thy *daughters*." Ezek. xvi. 61. *The tents of Kedar* are black, because the sons of Kedar sojourn in deserts and dwell in tents, and not in houses.

1093–1168. While Rashi and Rashbam, by means of this allegorical interpretation, assuaged the sufferings of their brethren in France and Germany, the celebrated Abraham Ibn-Ezra ben Meier, also called *Ibn-Ezra* and *Raba*, who was born in Toledo in 1093, and died in 1168,[54] administered consolation through the same medium to his suffering brethren in Spain, shewing them that this Song recounts the past wonderful dealings of God with his beloved people from the very call of Abraham, and the blessings reserved for them at the coming of the Messiah, who shall gather them from among all nations, and bring them back to the land flowing with milk and honey.

Thus Ibn Ezra maintains that "*This book is allegorical, and describes the history of Israel; commencing with the days of our Father, Abraham, and coming down to the days of the Messiah; just as the Song of Moses* (Deut. xxxii.) *begins with the dispersion of the human family, and finishes with the final ingathering of Israel, after the battle of Gog and Magog. Do not wonder that* [45]*the Congregation of Israel is here compared to a bride, and the Lord to a bridegroom; for this is the manner of the prophets*." (Comp. Isa. v. 1, lxii. 5, Ezek. xvi. 7, Hos. iii. 1, Psa. xlv. 10.)

The allegory, according to this distinguished Rabbi, is developed in the suppositious attachment contracted between a damsel who kept a vineyard, and a shepherd. The representation of the love of these parties "*is suppositious, because such an actual manifestation, in so public a manner as here recorded, would be regarded as highly improper*."[55]

"The beloved" represents God; with the exception of viii. 12, where *the Messiah* is meant; "the loved one" is *the Congregation of Israel*; "the companions of the beloved" are *the pious ancestors*; "the daughters of Jerusalem" are *the thoughts of the loved one*; "the little sister," in viii. 8, is *the two tribes and a half*; "the speaker," in viii. 13, *the shechinah*; "the companions," in the same verse, are *the angels*.

The commentary consists of three different glosses: in the first, the words are explained; in the second, the suppositious history of the attachment of the

shepherd and shepherdess is developed; and in the third gloss, the allegory is evolved from that history. The following is a specimen of the gloss where the allegory is propounded.

2. *Let him kiss me.*—He (*i.e.* Solomon) begins with Abraham, for he is the root of the Jewish nation. By "the kisses of his mouth" are meant the law and the commandments, as it is written, "Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws." (Gen. xxvi. 5.) Do not wonder that the future (ישקני) is used instead of the past; this is the idiom of the sacred Scriptures, compare אז ישיר ,*then he sang* (Exod. xv. 1, and Psa. cvi. 19); just as we find the contrary, the past used for the future (Psa. lxxix. 1).—*For thy love*, &c. *i.e.*, to be loved by thee; as the Scriptures testify of God's love to his people. Compare "the seed of Abraham whom I love" (Isa. xli. 8); for there is a difference between אוֹהֵב *loving*, and אָהוּב *loved*.

3. *Thy perfumes*, &c.—Abraham proclaimed the works of God, and instructed his generation; and wherever he went he called on the name of the Lord; this is the meaning of "thy name is poured forth like oil." *Therefore do the damsels love thee.*—עלמות are such as have no husbands, and denote the heathen who had no God, and were brought by [46]Abraham into union with God; as it is written, "The souls which they had begotten in Haran" (Gen. xii. 5).

4. *Draw me.*—Abraham was drawn after God, and therefore left his native place (Gen. xii. 1). *The king has brought me*, &c.—God has brought Abraham into

> the land of Canaan; or it may mean, God has made him wise in his secrets, and the words, *we will praise thy love*, denote the altars and groves which Abraham erected and planted wherever he came.
>
> 5. *I am swarthy.*—This refers to the Egyptian bondage. Although I (*i.e.* Israel) am swarthy because of some evil deeds committed there; yet I am comely because of my adhesion to the covenant and to the belief in the unity of God.

It has generally been overlooked that Ibn Ezra distinctly states in the second gloss, in which he professes to give the literal meaning of the narrative, that the lovers are a *shepherd* and a *shepherdess*, and that *the king* is a *separate* and *distinct* person from the beloved shepherd.

Thus he explains Ch. i. 4, "I *rejoice in* THEE (the shepherd) *more than if* THE KING *had brought me into his apartments*." Again, verse 12, the shepherdess says to the shepherd, "*Though my fragrance is so sweet that* THE KING, *whilst reclining, desires to smell my nard, yet* MY BELOVED (the shepherd), *who is a bundle of myrrh, diffuses a still sweeter fragrance*." Compare also Ch. iii. 6–11, Ch. vi. 8, Ch. viii. 11, 12. This is an important step to the right understanding of the Book.

Ibn Ezra also mentions that "*The philosophers explain this book to refer to the mysterious harmony of the universe, and to the union of the divine soul with the*

earthly body; and that others, again, explain it literally."[56] In reference to the last mentioned mode of interpretation, he exclaimed, "*Far be it! far be it! to think that the Song of Songs is an amatory composition*."[57]

1200–1250. The frequent mention made by the preceding commentators of the different views entertained respecting this Song, will have prepared the reader for the philosophical interpretation which has been adopted and defended by a large and influential portion of the Jewish community.

Joseph Ibn Caspe, a learned author, who lived in the beginning [47]of the thirteenth century, and who wrote expositions on several portions of the Scriptures, maintains that "*this book represents the union between the* ACTIVE INTELLECT (*intellectus agens*) *and the* RECEPTIVE MATERIAL INTELLECT (*intellectus materialis*)," typified by the beloved and loved one.

As Caspe's commentary is short and exceedingly rare, we give a translation of it, and subjoin the original in the footnote:—

THE COMMENTARY OF IBN CASPE.[58]

Joseph Caspe saith: Having commented on Ecclesiastes and Proverbs, which Solomon of blessed memory has in wisdom composed, it behoves us also to write a few words on the Song of Songs, which is likewise the composition of Solomon of blessed

memory. I need not, however, explain the words, since they have been explained long before me. I shall, therefore, confine my remarks to the *design* of the book in general, and now and then make some observations in particular. The general design of this book, however, is not my discovery; the luminary (Maimonides) that shone upon the earth has enlightened our eyes also upon this subject when treating upon it, especially in part iii. c. 51 (of the More Nebochim); and his hint there is sufficient for us and for such as ourselves.

I therefore submit that this book undoubtedly belongs to the second kind of parables which the teacher of blessed memory (Maimonides) mentions in the beginning of his book, in which all the words used in the comparison must not be applied to the thing compared, just as in the case there quoted, which treats on the subject of a beloved and loved one, like the book before us, with the only difference that the instance there adduced refers to the union of matter and mind, and this book represents the union between the *active intellect* and the *receptive, material intellect*, which latter is divided into four parts, the highest of which is the *imparted intellect*. With all the particulars of this book, Solomon merely designed to hint at the subject in general. It is most certain that he calls here *the highest order of the human intellect* "the fairest of women," and the *active intellect* "the graceful lover;" frequently the *whole intellectual mind* is meant by the latter phrase, for this is the meaning demanded in several places of this Book.

It is well known that the active intellect (*intellectus agens*) stirs up or brings the receptive intellect

(*intellectus materialis*) from a possibility into activity, as it is known to the philosophers; and that the receptive intellect [48]requires to seek after this; as it is written, “If thou wilt seek it, it shall be found of thee.”

Having explained the general design, we need not dwell upon the particulars; the design is indicated in a few passages only, whilst the whole is treated in accordance with the train of a poetical composition and logical science; and this Solomon declares in the beginning of the book by saying “The Song of Songs.”

It is, moreover, known that Solomon composed three books which we possess; and as the prophets of blessed memory spoke in three different kinds of ways; *the one*, in a plain manner, containing nothing beyond the obvious and literal sense, which is called *all silver*; *the second* entirely symbolical, having no literal meaning whatever, but consisting of mere allegories or parables, which is called *all gold*; and *the third* comprising both the figurative and the literal, which is called *apples of gold* (under plates of silver); so Solomon wrote the three books—Ecclesiastes, which belongs to the first kind; the Song of Songs to the second; and Proverbs to the third. Remember these distinctions, and observe how we are in danger at every step to mistake in the Law, Hagiography, and Prophets, one for the other, and thus change life into death. And this leads us to commit one of two errors; we either put into the words a thing which is false, or, to say the least, make the author say what he did not intend; in such a case, our words can no more be called a

commentary, but form a separate composition or a book for themselves. I only call that a commentary which thoroughly comes up to the design of the author of the book. The appearance, however, of each book of the Bible will indicate to a judicious, clear-headed, and intellectual man, whether it belongs to the one or the other of the above-mentioned classes. We cannot here give rules whereby to test this; it is sufficient to say that truth is her own witness.

There is another important remark to be made, viz., that allusions are made in this book to the writings of Moses, as, indeed, Solomon has made in his other books. This all the prophets have done, in order to explain expressions and synonyms which occur in the Law of Moses, especially when referring to that part of the Law which treats on the Creation and the Chariot, the chief objects of the Law. We must study deeply to understand the wonderful works of the prophets, and after them, the rabbins of blessed [49]memory, in their respective books; for when they intended to be profound, they did not mention the same terms employed in the Law, but changed them for other expressions which are somewhat synonymous with those in the former, *e.g.*, יין חמר, פרדם ,wine, vine, vineyard, &c. From this arose the great hyperbole in the writings of the Rabbins of blessed memory, for wisdom was not hid from them. But this is not necessary here. The above remarks will suffice for this book according to our design. Praise be to God, and blessed be his name! Amen.

Moses Ibn Tibbon, a celebrated writer of the same

age, wrote an elaborate commentary in which he maintains the same view that "*the Song of Songs represents the union of the* RECEPTIVE *or* MATERIAL INTELLECT *with the* ACTIVE INTELLECT."

This commentary has not been printed. A defective MS. containing the Preface, which is very copious, is to be found in the British Museum, Harleian Collection, No. 5797; and a complete MS. is in the possession of the Bodleian Library at Oxford.

1272–1350. The most powerful and ingenious defender of this view is Immanuel ben Solomon. This most charming Hebrew writer, who is poetically called אַלּוּף הַדַּעַת בְּמַגְדִּיאֵל, *the Prince of Science in Rome*, was born in Rome, in 1272, where he was the spiritual head of the Jewish community, and where he died, in the first half of the fourteenth century. As Immanuel gives an analysis of this mode of interpretation in his exposition on the first verse, and as this commentary has not been published, we give a translation of this verse, which will enable the reader to see how this mode of interpretation is applied to the whole book. The MS. used for this purpose is in the possession of the British Museum, Harl. Col., No. 5797.[59]

> *The Song of Songs.*—Immanuel ben R. Solomon of blessed memory, saith, Acknowledging the goodness of the Lord, I agree with the opinion of our Rabbins, that this book is the most sublime of all the Books given by inspiration. Expositors, however, differ in

its interpretation, and their opinions are divided, according to the diversity of their knowledge. There are some—but these are such as go no further than the material world, and that which their eye sees, looking forward to the good of this world [50]and its glory, to the great reward of their labours and a recompense from God, desiring to be restored to their greatness, and to the land flowing with milk and honey, and to have their stomachs filled with the flesh of the Leviathan, and the best of wines preserved in its grapes—such men interpret this sublime song as having reference to the history of the Patriarchs, their going down to Egypt, their Exodus from thence with a mighty hand and outstretched arm, the giving of the Law, the entry into the land of Canaan, the settlement of Israel in it, their captivity, restoration, the building of the second Temple, the present dispersion, and their final ingathering which is to take place. Such interpreters regard this book, which is holy of holies, as some common book, or historical record of any of the kings, which is of very little use, and the reading of which is only a loss of time. But there are other sages and divines, who have attained to know the value of true wisdom; they are separated from the material world, despise the mere temporal things, heartily desire to know the courts of the Lord, and have a footing in the Jerusalem which is above, and with heart and flesh sing to the living God; these have put off the garments of folly, and clothed themselves in the robes of wisdom, and while searching after the mysteries of this precious book through the openings of the figures of silver, glanced at golden apples of the allegory concealed in it.

They, in the vessel of their understanding, traversed its sea, and brought to light from the depth, the reality of the book. Thus they have declared that the book was composed to explain the possibility of a reunion with the incorporeal mind, which forms *the perceptive faculty*, and influences it with abundant goodness.

The shepherds, accordingly, represent the corporeal intellect which longs after the influence of the active intellect, and desires to be like it, as much as possible, to cleave to it, and to come up to its standing, which is the ultimate end of its purpose.

These learned divines above mentioned have expounded the design of the book in general, and explained some of its verses indirectly; but they did not explain it in regular order from beginning to end, till the celebrated [51]sage, R. Moses Ibn Tibbon, came and explained the book according to wisdom, and his exposition is, indeed, full of wisdom and excellency. As he, however, passed by several particulars, not noticing their design, our wise contemporaries, reading the writing of that learned author, and wishing to enter more fully into all its parts, insisted, with a command of love, that I should write a complete commentary on the book, keeping the same path the learned author has pointed out, bringing out all its particulars, and making discoveries not mentioned in the said book, also paying attention to its literal meaning, as far as God may enable me.

Seeing their entreaties, and regarding it a duty to yield to their wishes, I gathered strength, and made

the commentary on the book, according to my feeble abilities. I kept the plan of the said author, mentioned some of his words, and altered others, sometimes adding to, and at other times diminishing from what he said, as I was led by the heavenly Father. Thus I begin. It appears necessary first to mention the design of the book in general, and its division into sections.

I submit that all truly wise men who commented upon this book philosophically, saw clearly that it is divisible into three principal sections.

The first section extends from chap. i. 2, to ii. 17.

The second section extends from chap. iii. 1, to v. 1.

And the third from chap. v. 2, to the end of the book.

These three sections, moreover, refer to three different kinds of men.

The first section—Chap. i. 2,–ii. 17,—represents man, who either ideally or actually, was in the garden of Eden before he sinned, and brought into activity his choice for good and evil; as it is written, “And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil” (Gen. ii. 8, 9). The Lord permitted, or commanded him to eat of all the fruit of the garden; but He pointed out to him one tree of which he was not to eat, lest he should die; as it is said, “But of the tree of the knowledge of

good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. ii. 17). And if, as man, he [52]had the choice to eat of the tree of life, he might have eaten and lived for ever, without mortification or trouble; as it is written, "Behold, I have set before thee life and good, and death and evil: choose, therefore, of the life, that thou mayest live" (Deut. xxx. 15). This represents one who endeavours to learn wisdom in its order, but is afraid lest he should be terrified when looking up to God, seeing that his fruit is not yet ripe. This is the meaning of what is said in the section, "Turn, my beloved, and be thou like a gazelle or a young hind upon the mountains of separation" (Song of Songs ii. 17); and again, "Catch us the foxes, the little foxes, that destroy the vineyards; for our vineyards are in blossom" (ibid. 15). This teaches that the fruit was not yet ripe. There is no mention in this first section that the shepherdess did eat of the fruit. Her saying, "I desired to sit down under its shade, and its fruit is sweet to my taste" (Song of Songs ii. 3), merely declares her desire, which is evident from the word חמדתי The expression פריו is here used in the sense of *words*, *wisdom*, and *instruction*. The whole, therefore, of the first section refers to the mind of man when still young, prior to its developing the end for which its existence was designed, and when the powers of the body have still the dominion over it, for he has not pursued his studies farther than mathematics and physics. This first section is again subdivided into two parts. The first part begins chap. i. 2, and ends ii. 7, and represents one who fears God and shuns evil; but his knowledge of God is derived

from tradition, and has no wisdom of his own. And the second part (chap. ii. 8 to iii. 1) represents one who has studied mathematics and physics.

The second section (chap. iii. 1, v. 1) represents one who has found the virtuous woman whose desire is to her husband, and who seeks her beloved while upon her couch, and in whom her husband may safely trust; that is, a mind which has brought out its possibility into reality, and has, as it were, stretched out its hand and taken of the tree of life, and eaten, and lives for ever. This is meant by the declaration in this section, “Scarcely had I passed them, when I found him whom my soul loveth. I seized him, and would not let him go, till I brought him into the house of my mother, [53]into the apartment of her that gave me birth” (Song of Songs iii. 4). The nuptials, too, are mentioned, and the day of the gladness of his heart (iii. 11), which is the true spiritual nuptial day and union. It is also stated that he had a couch, as it is said, “Behold the couch of Solomon” (iii. 7), as well as a palanquin, and was fit for royalty. He is, moreover, called here *King* Solomon, whereas, in the remainder, he is merely called Solomon, or Shulamite, in the feminine, to denote the effeminate state. The beloved also declares that he had found his loved one a closed garden, and that her branches are an orchard of pomegranates with delicious fruit: (iv. 12, 13), that is, though most of them are generally sour, here, however, they are sweet, pleasant, and ripe: he affirms that she is altogether beautiful, and there is no blemish in her (ver. 7), and calls her *bride* six times, which he has not done before; for she is his true wife, dear to him above all. She therefore asks

her beloved to “come to his garden, and eat of his pleasant fruit” (iv. 16), which befits him. This is the import of the words, “Thy shoots are an orchard of pomegranates with most delicious fruit” (iv. 13): whereby, however, it must not be understood that she will give to her husband, and make him eat of the fruit, which properly belongs to the woman, who listened to the words of the serpent, and was beguiled by him.

The beloved declares that he did come to his garden, and ate and drank, and also caused his friends to eat and drink, and that they indulged together in a sumptuous feast; for “when the righteous have the rule, the city rejoiceth” (Prov. xi. 10). This is the meaning of the words, “I have come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O ye friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved!” (v. 1.) He, as it were, sent forth and took of the tree of life, and did eat and lived for ever, without any trouble or hinderance; for he passed through all the three (degrees) in proper order, he went in and out in peace: that is, he passed through all the degrees, and finished their proper course, without doing any mischief or committing any error; and his carnal powers, which are the watchmen who walk in the city, and especially his intellectual powers, which are those that watch the walls, are all profitable, and point out to the mind the right way, and never mislead, [54]nor hinder, nor delay its course. She then asks of the watchmen, “Have you seen him whom my soul loveth?” (iii. 3,) for they (*i.e.*, the watchmen, who represent the bodily and intellectual

powers) are upright, and their knowledge is perfect, and, as it were, they see and guide; yet they did not answer her, for it is not in their nature to teach. But no sooner had she passed them, and was at a distance from them, than she found her beloved, and was united to him, as it is said, “Scarcely had I passed them, when I found him whom my soul loveth. I seized him, and would not let him go till I brought him into the house of my mother, and into the apartment of her that gave me birth” (iii. 4); whereupon they made themselves a couch and a palanquin, rejoicing, and feasting, and banqueting, as we have already explained.

This second section is also subdivided into two parts; the first is from iii. 1 to verse 6, and the second from iii. 6 to v. 2; the second part is epexegetical of the first.

The third section (v. 2, viii. 14 inclusive) represents a man who has a sinful wife that has been beguiled by the carnal appetites, and has listened to them, and eaten of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and given also to her husband with her and he has eaten. Mark here the expression *with her* (עִמָּהּ for man cannot eat of it unless *with her*; for since God has not revealed it to man, and will not; and man, indeed, has no access to it, except through the woman; for she finds it and takes it up; and she is the one who pursues after pleasure, and is drawn after sensual lust. But she does not seek for her husband when retiring to bed, nor does she wait for him; but, undressing herself, and washing her feet, and perfuming her fingers with myrrh, which is temporal instead of eternal ointment, falls asleep, and is even

too lazy to open when her beloved knocks at the door, saying, “Open to me, my sister, my spouse, &c.” Her husband, however, influences her, and she repents, as she was not in a deep sleep, her heart being awake, and she opens for her husband in spite of her great laziness; but her beloved withdrew, and went away. She then sought him, and found him not; she called him, but he answered her not. The guards of the wall and the patrol of the city found her, and smote her, and [55]wounded her, and stripped her of her cloak; that is, they misdirected her, had hindered her from getting to her beloved; for sin once tasted is hard to forsake. As it is not mentioned in the case of Adam, after being driven from the garden of Eden, that he ever touched with his hand, and took of the tree of life, and was cured, though it was open for him to do so; for it is written, “And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever” (Gen. iii. 22); by which is meant, would that he should do so, for the Lord loves righteousness, and he is not a God desiring condemnation; as it is written, “As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live.” (Ezek. xxxiii. 11.) Yet it is not stated in the Scriptures that after the fall he ever ate of the tree of life. This is, perhaps, a hint that it is almost impossible for one who once has eaten of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, that he should afterwards eat of the tree of life. “For the difficulty of uniting *a couple* a second time is as great as dividing the Red Sea,” which was supernatural, although it is indeed not impossible. Thus Solomon left the thing unexplained; and though he mentioned how they

longed for each other after their separation, and how they praised one another in the manner of lovers, yet they are not any more found united, or to have a nuptial couch, a palanquin, feast and joy, as a husband and wife; nay, at the conclusion we even find the beloved reproving her, saying, “Neighbours hear thy voice,” it being improper for a woman to let her voice be heard by young men, for there is dishonour in a woman’s voice. He therefore asks her to let her voice be heard by him only, and not by others. But she boldly replied, “Haste, my beloved, and be like the gazelle or the young fawn upon the mountains of aromatics;” as if the neighbours were her husbands, and her husband a paramour who must conceal himself, and run away, lest they meet him.

This section also is subdivided into two parts: the first is from v. 2 to viii. 5, and the second from viii. 5, to the end of the book; the second part being epexegetical of the first. The above is the division of the Book in accordance with the learned, who wrote expositions on it.

[56]

This union of the active with the passive intellect is represented by the sincere and ardent attachment formed between a humble shepherd and shepherdess, the literal history of which Immanuel beautifully explains before he attempts to palm upon it his philosophical theory. It is of importance to notice, that this distinguished poet also takes the hero and heroine of the plot to be a shepherd and a

shepherdess, and regards Solomon as a *separate* person, whom the rustic maiden adduces in illustration of her deep and sincere love to her shepherd, affirming, that if this great king were to bring her into his court, and offer her all its grandeur and luxuries, she would still rejoice in her humble lover. The commentary contains valuable philological remarks, and excellent explanations of some of the poetical similes. Pity it has never been published.

1288–1370. Levi ben Gershon, also called Leon de Banolas and *Ralbag*, a learned and influential expositor, who was born in 1288, and died about 1370[60], defends the same philosophical theory. His commentary, which is very lengthy, is published in the Amsterdam Rabbinical Bible 1724.

It will be remembered, that allusion has been made by preceding commentators, to some who rejected the allegorical interpretation, and took this book in its literal sense. A manuscript commentary, in the possession of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, Oppenheim Collection, No. 625, interprets *this Song as celebrating the virtuous love contracted between a humble shepherd and shepherdess*; and likewise regards Solomon as *a distinct person*, whom the shepherdess adduces in illustration of her deep and sincere attachment to her beloved, affirming, that if this great king were to offer her all the splendour and luxury of his court to transfer her affections, she would spurn all, and remain faithful to her humble

shepherd.

This commentary has no title-page, which renders it impossible [57]to ascertain the name of its author or its exact age. From the French expressions, however, occurring in it, and from its style and appearance, it is evident that this commentary was written by a French Jew in at least the twelfth or thirteenth century. The handwriting is peculiarly bad, and very much effaced; but the valuable remarks it contains, both on the verbal difficulties and poetical figures of this book, would amply repay any Hebrew scholar for publishing it, and would be a boon to Biblical and Hebrew literature.

1350. So numerous and diverse were the interpretations of this Song in the middle of the fourteenth century, that R. Isaac Sehula, having been solicited by his friends to comment upon it, consulted the existing expositions, but finding himself so confused by their conflicting theories, as *some explained it literally, others referred it to the union of the body with the soul, others again expounded it according to the Medrash, and others again affirmed, that it represents the union of the active with the passive intellect*, he felt it necessary to reject them all, and advanced a new theory, viz., *that this book represents the love of the people of Israel to their God*.[61]

1360–1730. For a space of about four hundred years, the battle-field was simultaneously occupied by all the parties who strenuously defended those different

views. Thus, the commentary Shear Jashub, which was printed together with that of Saadias and Caspe, and Meier Arma, who was born in Saragossa about the year 1475, and whose commentary is [58]published in the Amsterdam Rabbinical Bible, 1724, maintain the philosophical interpretation of this Song. Whilst Isaac Arma, the father of Meier Arma, Obadiah Sforno, a physician, divine, and commentator, who died in 1550,[62] and whose commentary is published in the Amsterdam Rabb. Bible, Moses Cordovero, born in 1522, and died 1570,[63] whose commentary has not been published, Abraham Levi, whose commentary has been printed, together with that of Ibn Shoeb, Sabionnetta in Italy, 558,[64] Elisha Galicho, who flourished in the second half of the sixteenth century,[65] and whose commentary was published 1587, Venice, and his contemporary, Moses Alshech,[66] whose commentary was published in 1591, Venice, are the combatants for the other views.

While this severe struggle was carried on between the conflicting parties for the maintenance of their respective views, another champion entered the battle-field, occupying and defending another position. It was no less a personage than the celebrated Don Isaac Abravanel, who affirmed that *the Bride of the Song represents Wisdom, with whom Solomon converses*.[67]

His son, Leon Hebræus, defended the same view.[68]

1729–1786. With Moses Mendelssohn, a new era commenced in Biblical exegesis, and in Hebrew literature generally. This distinguished philosopher translated the Song of Songs, which was first published in Berlin, 1788, with an introduction and commentary by his colleagues Löwe and Wolfssohn. Though they did not deem their age prepared for the rejection of the allegorical interpretation, these commentators distinctly stated, that [59]as so many of the Rabbins have written upon this book, and defended such various and conflicting views, *they questioned whether any were right*, and affirmed that the literal explanation is paramount, and therefore confined themselves in the commentary to the literal and philological sense, referring those who are fond of labyrinths to the writings of Rashi, Rabe, Arma, &c.

Seeing that this book describes the love of a *shepherd* and a shepherdess, and also speaks of *a king*, of humble rural life, as well as of courtly splendour, and unable to account for it, Löwe and Wolfssohn divided it into separate songs, some celebrating the love between a shepherd and shepherdess, others describing the same between the king and his princes, and others again not speaking of that passion at all.

1798–1821. Löwisohn, born in 1798, and died in 1821, was the first who recognised and elucidated the true design of this book. This sweet singer of modern Israel shows that *the Song of Songs celebrates*

the victory of true and virtuous love in humble life over the temptations of royalty; that this book records the virtuous attachment of *a shepherdess* to *a shepherd*; that the rustic maiden having been tempted by the wisest and most celebrated king to transfer her affections, spurned every allurement, and remained faithful to her humble lover.[69]

1832. It is surprising that the profound and learned Zunz,[70] did not follow up the remarks of Löwisohn; but regarded this Song as *an epithalamium*.[71]

1848. This view, however, has not gained ground among the Jews; and Dr. Salomon Herxheimer, chief Rabbi of Anhalt-Bernburg, in his translation of the Old Testament with annotations, [60]follows the opinion of Löwisohn.[72] His opinion is that "*the Song of Songs celebrates ardent and virtuous love which resists all allurements. The Shulamite, a rustic maiden warmly attached to a young shepherd, is taken against her will to the court of King Solomon. The king offers everything to win her affections, but she does not suffer herself to be dazzled either by the royal court, or by the sweet flatteries of the king himself, and remains faithful to her absent lover.*"

1854. Dr. Philippson, Rabbi of Magdeburg, propounded the same view.[73] *The design of the book is to show that true and virtuous love is invincible, and is not to be bought, but is a flame of God* (Ch. viii. 6, 7), *exemplified in the conduct of a humble shepherdess, who being attached to a shepherd, was tempted by King*

Solomon to transfer her affection, but who overcame all allurements, and remained faithful to her lover.

The two last-mentioned Rabbins, by virtue of their high position and great learning, may be regarded as representing the view now generally entertained by the Jews respecting the Song of Songs.[74] [61]

185–254. We come now to the CHRISTIAN EXPOSITORS of this book, whom we shall introduce in the same chronological order, and of whose views a concise explanation will be given. The first of these is Origen, who has been justly celebrated for his genius and extensive acquirements. He was born in Alexandria in 185, and died in Tyros in 254. His commentaries upon Scripture are very extensive, and though containing much that is valuable, abound with fanciful allegories and inexplicable mysteries. His attachment to the Platonic philosophy drew him aside from the simplicity of inspired truth, and his instruction in Hebrew by R. Hillel,[75] imbued him with Hagadic interpretations of the sacred text.

His commentary upon the Song of Songs was very voluminous, of which fragments only remain, but these are of a very elaborate kind, and sufficient to reveal his whole design. He admits an historical sense as an epithalamium on the marriage of Solomon with Pharaoh's daughter,[76] but in him we meet with a full exhibition of the allegorical allusion to the marriage union of Christ and his Church, which has been adopted by the majority of

expositors to the present day. He says, "*Blessed is he who enters the holy place, but more blessed is he who enters the holy of holies; blessed is he who keeps the Sabbath, but more blessed is he who keeps the Sabbath of Sabbaths; so blessed is he who sings holy songs, but more blessed is he who sings the Song of Songs.*"

He finds in it four distinct parties; a bridegroom and bride with their separate companions. By "the bridegroom," we are to understand *Christ*, by "the bride," *the Church*, by "the [62]companions" of the former, *angels and saints in heaven*, and by "the maidens" of the latter, *believers on the earth*.

The following is a specimen of Origen's method of interpretation:—

> 2, 3. *Let him kiss me, &c.* This is the suppliant voice of the bride, of which the meaning is, "How long will my bridegroom send kisses by Moses and kisses by the Prophets? I want to touch his lips. Let him come," she says to the father of the bridegroom, "and give me kisses of his mouth." The father hears and sends his son; she seeing him near says, "*How good are thy breasts above wine, and the odour of thy perfumery above all sweet spices*." The bridegroom Christ, sent by the Father, comes anointed to the Spouse, who says to him, "Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." If the odour of that ointment be upon us, we shall become a sweet savour of Christ. Sin has putrid effluvia, virtue breathes forth sweet perfume.

The one is an emanation of the flesh, the other of the Spirit.

Thy name, &c. This is prophetic. Only so far as the name of God comes into the world is this ointment poured forth. In the Gospel, a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment poured it upon the head of Christ. One who was a sinner poured it upon his feet, and one who was not a sinner poured it upon his head. These are not narratives merely, but mysteries. It is not wonderful that the *house* was filled with the odour of the ointment, since the *world* will be. It is written in the same place concerning Simon the leper. I think the leprous Simon to be the prince of this world, whose house at the coming of Christ was filled with sweet odour. *Therefore do the virgins love thee*, because, through the Holy Spirit, the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts. The maidens at first are not present, but, upon hearing a chorus from them in praise of the bridegroom, she says, *The virgins love thee*. By their coming up it is said, '*After thee and the odour of thine ointments we will run*.'

4. *Draw me, &c.* In a race all run, but one receiveth the prize. This prize is Christ. The bride, pure and fair, having entered into the royal apartments, returns to the maidens, and tells them what she has seen. *The king hath brought me into his chambers.* He praises the bride. He says, Justice hath loved thee. Then the bride says to the maidens,

5. *Black I am, &c.* Do not look upon me because I am blackened, for the sun hath looked upon me. How black and without whiteness, is she beautiful? Black

> with sin, and comely because converted. Because not yet purged from all sin she is called black, but her dark colour will not remain. She is made white as she ascends to greater things, according to ch. viii. 5. "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" Tents of Kedar, say the Hebrews, are dark: skins of Solomon, such as ornamented the temple, were comely.

296–373. Athanasius, Archbishop of Alexandria, was born [63]in that city in 296, and died in 373. He was the principal defender of the Nicene faith, in opposition to Arius. His zealous advocacy of the Deity of Christ led him to seek, and to find that doctrine everywhere. He looked upon the Song of Songs *as a Jubilee song of the Church, at the incarnation of the Son of God*, and thus differs from Origen, who refers it to the experience of the believing soul. *The whole book*, he says, *is an allegory, and is to be understood enigmatically from the beginning to the end. Its doctrines are secrets, and those only who are well versed in allegory ought to study it, as it is sure to be corrupted in the hands of others. It is called the Song of Songs, because it is the chief and last song, and the coming of Christ in the flesh, which other songs regard as future, this celebrates as present. It is an Epithalamium in celebration of the marriage of Him who is the loved of God and human flesh. Here are no threatenings and sorrows as in other books, but as the Bridegroom is present, all is turned into joy. The book is full of dialogues between the Son of God and the human*

race; sometimes between men in general and Christ, sometimes between Him and his ancient people; sometimes between Him and the Gentile Church, sometimes between the Gentiles and Jerusalem; and sometimes between ministering angels and men.

The following is a specimen of Athanasius' Commentary:—

> 2. *Let him kiss me, &c.* This is the entreaty of his ancient people to the Word, that he would descend and take flesh; and also (ch. vii. 13), "The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved," and (ch. viii. 1), "Oh, that thou wert as my brother that sucked the breasts of my mother," which refers to Christ being of the same nature as man, a brother, and yet in reality having a mother only. In ch. v. 1, Christ speaks of his having become incarnate, "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse; I have gathered my myrrh with my spices." The world is his garden, because it is his creation; and his body breathes forth fragrance, because it is joined to the Divine word. The Word having put on flesh, he calls his ancient people to Him, and says (ch. ii. 10–13), "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come, for lo, the winter is past, &c." His first disciples would recognise in his teaching what they had long been listening for, "the voice of the turtle in their land."

[64]

In this fanciful manner our author descants upon the

whole book.

331–396. Notwithstanding the authority and influence of the foregoing fathers, the allegorical interpretation was rejected by many at a very early age. And Gregory, bishop of Nyssa, in Cappadocia, born about 331, and died about 396, who wrote an extensive commentary upon this book, had strenuously to contend for the allegorical or spiritual interpretation, and severely condemned those who adhered to the literal meaning. The soul, he considers, as a spouse who enters into spiritual union with God. The most perfect and blessed way of salvation is here shown to those who wish to come to the knowledge of the truth.

The following is a specimen of Gregory's Commentary:—

> 2. *Let him kiss me, &c.*, is the language of the soul to God, which has become worthy to speak to God face to face. *Thy breasts are better than wine*, that is, divine breasts are better than human wine. All human wisdom cannot equal the milk of the divine word.
>
> 3. *Thy name, &c.* This signifies that all the virtues are nothing to the graces received from above.

Thus he finds some spiritual meaning in every part, for the confirmation of which some other part of Scripture is adduced.

331–420. Jerome, however, (born at Stridon in Dalmatia in 331, and died in the vicinity of Bethlehem in 420,) who was exceedingly fond of the Greek philosophers, and, like Origen, was instructed in Hebrew literature by the Jews,[77] as might have been expected, was not affected by the objections against the allegorical interpretation, but introduced it into the Western Churches. According to him, it is a nuptial and dramatic song on the occasion of the union of Christ with his Church or the soul of man. The bride and her companions, and the bridegroom and his companions are the interlocutors [65]in the drama. He seems to have embraced almost entirely the theory and interpretation of Origen.

354–430. Augustin, who was born at Tagesta in Numidia, in 354, and died in 430, materially aided Jerome in the spread of the allegorical interpretation in the West. He regards the Song of Songs as describing "*the holy loves of Christ and his Church*."

> Of ch. i. 7, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest thy flock, where," &c., he says it is one testimony in behalf of the church in Africa, which lies in the meridian of the world. The church asks Christ to tell her where the one true church is, where it feeds and reclines. The bridegroom answers, In the meridian, I feed in the meridian, I recline in the meridian. The church is in other parts, but in Africa is its meridian. This is the language of believers out of Africa, who also say, "For why should I be as one roaming among the flocks of thy

> companions?" that is, why remain concealed and unknown? Other churches are not thy flock, but the flocks of thy companions. Upon the adjuration, "I adjure you," &c. vii. 7, he observes, The church in these words addresses her own daughters. She is a field of God, fruitful in graces, to which by loving Christ the martyrs come, whom he wishes to lay down their lives as lovingly as he laid down his life for them. Ch. ii. 15. "Take us the foxes," &c., that is, withstand, confute, subdue, heretics that injure the ecclesiastical vines. Bind them by Scripture testimony, as Samson bound the foxes together, and put fire to their tails, by warning them of the condemnation they have deserved. In ch. iv. 16, "Awake, O north, and come, thou south wind," &c., he says, the north wind is from the cold icy regions of the devil and his angels, and the south wind is the spirit of grace blowing at noon from warm and shining regions, that cause the spices to flow out, as the apostle says, "We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish."

360–429. Theodore, bishop of Mopsuestia, who wrote a commentary on this book, also rejected the allegorical meaning, and adhered to its literal and obvious sense. Pity that his commentary is lost, and that the only account of it is from his enemies.

386–457. So general was the dissatisfaction with the allegorical interpretation of the Song of Songs, and so different were the theories respecting it at the time of Theodoret or Theodorit, bishop of Cyrus in

Syria, who was born at Antioch about 386, and died 457, that he was obliged to mention and refute them. [66]

There are some, says this prelate, *who do not admit that the Song of Songs has a spiritual sense, and make of it such a texture of fables, which is unbecoming even to the insane. Some maintain that Solomon is here celebrating himself and the daughter of Pharaoh; others take the Shulamite, not as Pharaoh's daughter, but as Abishag; and others, again, considering the thing with a little more reverence, call this book a Royal address, and take "the bride," to be the people of Israel, and "the bridegroom" the king. I have, therefore, found it necessary, before proceeding with the interpretation, first, to refute this false and pernicious interpretation, and then to fix the obvious design of this book.*

1. *These people*, he submits, *ought to remember that those holy fathers were much wiser, and had more spiritual minds than they had, that this book was incorporated in the sacred writings, and that the Church revered it for its spiritual meaning, &c.*

2. *Through Manasseh and the destruction of Jerusalem, the writings of the Old Testament were lost, but the Holy Spirit restored them to Ezra by inspiration. Now the Holy Spirit could not have inspired any other than a divine book.*

3. *Because the holy fathers saw this, they have either written devotional commentaries on the entire book, or*

filled their writings with its thoughts, as for instance, Eusebius and others, who were near the apostolic age. Now, are we not to believe these holy fathers? not believe the Holy Ghost? not obey the voice of God rather than our own opinions? We must so deal with the sacred Scriptures as not to regard letters merely, but draw out the hidden spirit from obscurity.

"The bridegroom" *is Christ*, "the bride" *his church*; "the daughters of Jerusalem" *are pious, but still unfinished souls (young in a Christian sense), which have not as yet attained the perfection of the bride, but imitate her example*; "the companions of the bridegroom" *are either the angels or the prophets*.

The following is a specimen of his commentary:—

> 1. *The Song of Songs, &c.* This book is called The Song of Songs, because all other songs in the writings of Moses, the Prophets, and Psalms [67]are made for this song, which is not amatory, but a song about the marriage of the Divine Bridegroom with the Church.
>
> 2. *Let him kiss me, &c.* This is the language of the spouse offering a petition to the Father of the Bridegroom; for she has known both the promises made to Abraham and the prophecies of Jacob; as well as the prophecies of Moses, respecting her beloved, and the description of his beauty and power as given in the Psalms; "Thou art more beautiful than the sons of men," &c.; she has learned that her beloved, who is adorned with beauty and grace, is both God and the eternal Son; "For thy throne, Oh

> God, is for ever and ever," &c. Having recognised the beauty, strength, riches, dominion, and power of the bridegroom which he displays above all things, world without end, she draws nigh to him to embrace him and to kiss him in Spirit. Let none whose spirit is low, and who only tastes that which is earthly, be misled by the expression "kisses." Let him remember that we ourselves embrace and kiss the limbs of the beloved at the mysterious time (the Lord's Supper), and that which we see with our eyes, store up in our hearts, and, as it were, feel ourselves in conjugal embraces; so that it is with us as if we were with him, embracing and kissing him, after, as the Scriptures say, "love has driven away fear." Therefore it is that the Bride wishes to be kissed by the Bridegroom himself.

390–444. Cyril of Alexandria, who was born towards the close of the fourth century, and died in 444, went so far as to explain "the palanquin," to mean *the cross*; its "silver legs," the *thirty pieces of silver* which brought Christ to the cross; the "purple cushion," *the purple garment* in which the Saviour was mocked; "the nuptial crown," *the crown of thorns* put on Christ's head, &c. &c.

650. The influence of the Chaldee mode of interpretation seems now to become more apparent in the Christian Church. Aponius, who is quoted by the venerable Bede, and must therefore have lived in the seventh century, regards the Song of Songs as *describing what the Logos has done for the Church from*

the beginning of the world, and what he will do to the end of it; thus, like the Chaldee, he takes the book as a historico-prophetical description of the dealings of God with his people, only that the Chaldee takes the Jews as the object of the description, but Aponius substitutes the Gentile Church.

673–735. Bede, called the *venerable*, who was born at Wearmouth, in Durham, in 673, and died in 735, wrote seven books on the Song of Songs, one being merely a copy from [68]Gregory the Great, in which he defends the doctrine of grace against the Pelagians.

1091–1153. To the scholastics of the middle ages the Song of Songs seemed an unfathomable abyss of mysticism, into whose depths they could dive as deeply as their speculative minds and fertile imaginations prompted them. St. Bernard, who was born at Fountains, in the vicinity of Dijon, in Burgundy, and died in 1153, delivered *eighty-six* sermons upon this book, and this prodigious number comprises the first two chapters only. In the first sermon he says, "*The unction and experience can alone teach the understanding of such a Song. It is not to be heard outside, for its notes give no sound in the street; but she who sings it, she hears it and he to whom it is sung, that is the bridegroom and the bride.*" He divides the Song into *three parts*; in the first part the bridegroom leads the bride into *the garden*, and in the second he conducts her into *the cellar*, and in the third he takes her home into *his apartments*. Upon the

words *Let him kiss me*, &c. (Chap. i. 2), which he explains as referring to the incarnation of Christ, he remarks, "*O happy kiss, marvellous because of amazing condescension; not that mouth is pressed upon mouth, but God is united with man*."[78]

Gilbert Porretanus, the disciple of St. Bernard, continued these sermons, but only lived to deliver *forty-eight*, which extend to Chap. v. 10; so that the one hundred and thirty-four sermons only comprise *four chapters and a half*.

1270–1340. In the Commentary of the celebrated Nicolas De Lyra, a converted Jew, and a native of Lire, in Normandy, we meet more fully the Chaldee mode of interpretation as adopted by Aponius. Like the Chaldee, De Lyra takes the Song of Songs to be a historico-prophetical book, with this difference, however, that he regards Chap. ii.–vii. as describing the history of the Israelites from their Exodus from Egypt to the birth of Christ, and from Chapter vii. to the end, *the origin* [69]*of the Christian Church, her progress, and the peace which she attained in the days of Constantine*. Upon the words, "*We have a little sister*," he remarks, "*This is the Church humble and abject among the worldly enemies, for so she was till the time of Constantine*."[79]

1538. The great reformer, Luther, could not reconcile his mind to believe that the Song of Songs describes the conjugal union of Christ, the bridegroom, with the bride, *i.e.* the Church as a whole, or with the soul

of every individual believer. He therefore rejected the allegorical interpretation of the Fathers, and advanced a new theory, viz., "*that the bride is the happy and peaceful State under the dominion of Solomon, and that the Song is a hymn of praise, in which Solomon thanks God for the obedience rendered unto him as a divine gift: for, where the Lord does not direct and rule there is neither obedience nor happy dominion, but where there is obedience or a happy dominion there the Lord lives and kisses and embraces his bride with his word, and that is the kisses of his mouth.*"[80]

1542. John Brentius, the Suabian reformer, adopted the same theory. He calls the Song of Songs, "*Carmen encomiasticum, quod de laude regni et politiae suae Solomon conscripsit.*"[81]

1544. Castellio, seeing that Luther had rejected the allegorical interpretation of the Fathers, and propounded a theory of his own equally untenable, maintained that the book has no allegorical meaning whatever, but is merely a "*colloquium Salomonis cum amica quadam Sulamitha*," and as such deemed it unworthy of a place in the sacred canon.[82]

1585. Thomas Wilcocks adhered to the opinion that this book celebrates the marriage between Christ and his Church, and especially "*the great love of the bridegroom to his spouse, which is never removed, but always abideth constant, how oft* [70]*soever she fall away, and seem, as a man would say, to forsake her*

husband."[83] This commentary, which is rare, contains many useful remarks.

1600. Thomas Brightman, however, adopted the view of Aponius and De Lyra, that *this book describes historico-prophetically, the condition of the Church*, and "agrees well-nigh in all things with the Revelation of St. John." Solomon, in this Song, and John, in the Apocalypse, "foresaw the same events in like times, and either of them directed his course to the same mark."[84] He divides the book into two parts; the first, chap. i.–iv. 6, describes *the condition of the Legal Church* from the time of David to the death of Christ; and the second, chap. iv. 7–viii. 14, *the state of the Evangelical Church*, from A.D. 34 to the second coming of Christ. We give the following analysis of this curious commentary.

A. The Legal Church.

Chap. i.–ii. 2, describes the condition of the Church *before the captivity*; 1, 2, under David; 3, under Solomon; 4–8, under Rehoboam; 9–11, under Abijah and Asa; 12, under Jehoshaphat; 13, under Jehoram, Ahaziah, Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Jotham, and Ahaz; 14, under Hezekiah; 15, 16, under Manasseh and Josiah; chap. ii. 1, 2, under the other Kings to the last Zedekiah.

Chap. ii. 3–14, describes the condition of the Church *during the captivity*; 3, the comforts of the few left in their own country; 4–7, the preservation of the

whole in the captivity; 8, 9, the foretold deliverance; 10–13, its approach; 14, and the deliverance from it.

Chap. ii. 15–iv. 6, describes the condition of the Church from the deliverance to the death of Christ; 15, 16, the troublesome time from the restoration of the Church by Cyrus to Alexander the Great; 17, the partial rest under Alexander; chap. iii. 1–3, the desolation in the Church caused by [71]Antiochus Epiphanes, and its effects in driving away the beloved; 4, 5, the finding of the beloved; 6–11, the condition of the Church during Christ's sojourn upon this earth; chap. iv. 1–6, Christ's description of her then beautiful aspect.

B. The Evangelical Church.

Chap. iv. 7–11, describes the obedience and perfection of the Church from A.D. 34 to 334; 7, Christ's return to his disciples after his resurrection, and remaining with them forty days; 8, the preaching of the Gospel by Peter and Philip to the Grecians, Samaritans, and in Gaza; 9, the effects upon Antioch from the preaching of Paul and Barnabas; 10, 11, the marvellous constancy of the martyrs who died under Nero, Domitian, Trajan, &c.; the spread of the Gospel through the faithfulness of these sufferers; the beautiful orations of Dionysius the Areopagite, Quadratus, Aristides the Athenian, Dionysius of Corinth, Melito, Apollinarius, Polycarp, &c., and through the setting forth of the sweetness of the garments by Justin, Tertullian, and Cyprian.

Chap. iv. 12–v. 16, describes the decayed state of the Church from 334–1510; 12, the declension of the Church after the death of Dioclesian, when many embraced Arianism; 13, 14, her rising again under Constantine; 15, the convocation of the Council of Nice; 16, Europe and Africa defending the truth against Arian heresy; 17, the decayed state of the Church after the demise of Constantine. Chap. v. 1, Christ knocking by persecution (A.D. 368), in the time of Constance, Julian, and Valens; 2, the attempt of the Church to obtain justification by good works; 3, the withdrawal of Christ in consequence of the Chalcedon Council refusing to root out heresy according to the exhortation of the Emperor Marcian; 4, the rising of the Church in the time of Leo Isaurus, Constantine his son (755), and Charles the Great, in Frankfort (795), who endeavoured to exterminate image-worship; 5, the failure [72]of this endeavour; 6, the Church smitten and wounded through the excommunication of Leo Isaurus, and the conduct of the Council of Nice under Constantine (788); verse 8 describes how, in 1100, a Florentine bishop, Arnold, a Roman, Hildegarde the prophetess, and Bernard, began to seek the bridegroom; 8, multitudes flocked to Peter Waldo, in 1160, to inquire after the beloved; 9, 10, Christ appearing again in 1200, at the battle of the Albigenses with the anti-christian bands of Innocent the Third; 11, the kingdom almost restored to Christ after the battle; 12, the faithful teaching of Michael Cesenas, Peter de Corboria, and John de Poliaco, who were condemned in 1277 by Pope

John; 13, the preaching in 1290 by Robert Trench; 14, the first resurrection, as described in Rev. i. 20, which took place in 1300, when Dante the Florentine, Marsilius Patavinus, William Ockham, and John of Gaunt, boldly declared the truth, when Philip, king of France, and Edward of England despised the authority of the Pope, and when John Wickliff (1370) taught openly; 15–17, the days of John Huss, Jerome of Prague (1415), and the shaking off of the Romish yoke by the Bohemians.

Chap. vi.–viii., describes the Church restored, from 1517 to the second coming of Christ; 1, the teaching of pure doctrine (1517), by Luther; 2, the Church, in the mouth of Melancthon, claims her beloved before Prince Frederick; 3, the unpleasant state of the Church from 1429, when the Argentinenses joined battle with the Helvetians, till the death of Charles the Fifth (1548); and her beauty, when, in the following year, the Reformation spread in Scotland, Geneva, in the Helvetian and German churches, in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden; 4, the declaration of justification by faith by Luther; 5, the newly-called preachers of the Gospel in 1550, such as Luther, Melancthon, Bucer, Zwinglius, &c.; 6, the ecclesiastical and civil government of the Church as restored again in Geneva; 7, the splitting of the Church in 1563, by John Brentius and James Andrewes; 8, the excellency of the faithful; 9–12, the [73]conversion of the Jews, who are called princes. Chap. vii., their conversion a blessing to the Church.

Chap. viii. 1–4, their zeal; 5–7, the calling in of the Assyrians and Egyptians, and all the nations bordering on the eastern regions, and their glorious condition after their conversion; 11, 12, the care which the bridegroom will exercise over the whole Church; 13, what he requires of her; 14, her longing desire to be carried with him into everlasting mansions.

As Brightman's Commentary may be regarded as the fullest development of the Chaldee interpretation Christianized, we shall give a few specimens of his mode of exposition.

> *I sleep, but my heart*, &c. chap. v. 1.—The negligence of the Church lying thus is declared first by her drowsiness, then by his enticing call, and lastly by the slight causes of her excuse. Sleep caused her outward senses to be benumbed, that she neither regarded nor considered how superstitions arose, as it happened to the householder in Matt. xiii. 25. Neither could it be otherwise (when the bridegroom left the garden and his friends or fellows drunken with prosperity, wholly gaping after riches and honours, all common good despised), but sleep would overcome the spouse, wherein outwardly she should not differ from a dead woman, however the heart should move and live, the seed of faith not altogether quenched. This drowsiness crept in, in the time of Constantine, when a gaping heaviness, with a continued desire of sleeping, so oppressed the spouse, that the sharpest-sighted pastors could not use their outward senses: not perceiving how

ambition crept in among the bishops, and not only that, but how they began to consecrate temples to saints, earnestly to seek their reliques, to worship them with prayers, and to believe that prayers made in the honour of saints at their sepulchres did profit much. Who could now tell whether the Church were sleeping or waking? who neither loathed nor perceived such things. When Constantine was dead, Christ found the Church asleep, and sought by all means to stir her up both by knocking and calling. He knocked by persecutions in the times of Constance, Julian and Valens, of whom though Julian were a professed enemy, (A.D. 368,) yet the other two exceeded him in cruelty. After their tyrannous reign God stirred up Valentinian in the west parts, by whom Christ lovingly called his spouse, that, returning unto her former integrity, she should open and let him in. Then taking away Valens, he called more earnestly at both doors (as it were) as well in the west as in the east, by Gratian and Theodosius the elder; after by Arcadius and Honorius, then by Theodosius the younger, and Valentinian the third. And lastly, (that there might be four pair as it were answerable to the four voices, *my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled one*,) by Marcion alone in the east. These emperors studied and laboured very religiously to defend and enlarge true religion; but the Church was in all the fault, who having these helps [74]prepared, would not use them to recover her former brightness. To this readiness of the emperors was added the voice of the most excellent bishops, and best learned men of that time; as Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, Ambrose, Hierome, Chrysostome, Augustine and others, the lights of that

time. But seeing his profession of love could nothing move her, he tried what his shutting out of the doors at night would do.

My head is filled with dew, &c.—The locks of hair signified, before the congregation of the faithful, among whom true religion was now so much deranged by new and foolish ceremonies, borrowed partly of the Jews and Gentiles, and partly invented of their own idle brains, that the grass is scarce more covered with drops of dew in the night, than the Church was at that time with superstitions.

14. *His hands are as gold rings*, &c.—Hitherto hath the bridegroom been set forth to the world in some special members, from Frederick the second to Robertus Gallus by almost 100 years. The hands are the instruments of action, and in scripture they figuratively signify works. The gems included in the rings seem to signify the ministers of the word, which elsewhere Christ carried as stars in his right hand (Rev. i. 20). But these times yielded not such splendour. These things show a change and alteration of that which Christ would bring to pass by the labour of his ministers, as it happened about the year 1300, which was called *the first resurrection of the dead*. For now the thousand years were ended wherein Satan was bound, and the dead raised from their graves. Very many began now more boldly to set forth the truth, as Dante the Florentine, Marsilius Patavinus, William Ockham, John of Gaunt, and many others. Philip the French king despised Pope Boniface, Lewis of Bavaria strove long time with these most humble servants of servants for the rights of the empire. Edward of England made show unto

many how little he esteemed the pope's authority.

His belly is as bright ivory, &c.—By the belly or bowels, bright as ivory overlaid with sapphires, may be understood the two Sacraments. For the word of God is open to the view of every one, as the mouth and countenance, neither is it wont to be hid from strangers; but the Sacraments serve only for the household, as the bowels, which are appointed only to that body whose members they are, but serve to no use for strangers. These things therefore as it were, with the finger, point to those times of John Wickliff (1370), who taught openly, *that the substance of the material bread and wine remains in the sacrament of the altar; the accidents of bread remain not without the subject in the same Sacrament; Christ is not really in the Sacrament, in proper presence corporally*. Berengarius spoke against this wicked error 200 years before, but the time was not yet come wherein the hands of the bridegroom should be seen full of rings, whence his empire wanted success.

How different to this is the opinion of Henry Ainsworth, the celebrated Nonconformist divine, who regards this "book as treating of man's reconciliation unto God, and peace by Jesus [75]Christ, with joy in the Holy Spirit!" "In Solomon's days," says Ainsworth, "the Church before Christ's coming had the greatest glory, having the temple builded, living under that most wise, rich, and peaceable King; the Israelites being as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating, and drinking, and making merry, and dwelling safely,

every man under his vine and under his fig-tree." (1 Kings iv. 10, 25.) Notwithstanding Solomon, being a prophet, foresaw the ruin of his house and kingdom, and in his book of Ecclesiastes proclaimed all things under the sun to be vanity, and *in this Song prophesieth of the Church and Kingdom of Christ. And as he, with many other prophets, and kings, and righteous men, desired to see Christ, and to hear his words, but did not* (Luke x. 24; Matt. xiii. 7), *so here he manifesteth the desire of himself and of all the faithful to enjoy the blessings and graces of Christ, saying, 'Let him kiss me.' Whereby the Church desireth to have Christ manifested in the flesh, and to have the loving and comfortable doctrines of his Gospel applied unto her conscience, that she might not be always under the schoolmaster of the law, which worketh wrath* (Rom. iv. 15), *but might be prevented with the grace of Christ, and have the feeling of his love towards her.*[85]

The difference of opinion respecting the interpretation of this book, which obtained after the Reformation had laid open the Scriptures to all Protestants, and had established the right of private judgment, did not, however, as yet affect the Romish Church. Her followers not only adhered to the allegorical interpretation, but, unlike their predecessors of the middle ages, took the bride of the Song to be *the Virgin Mary*. Thus Michael Ghislerius and Cornelius à Lapide. The latter is especially to be noticed, since he was the first who endeavoured to show that this Song is *a drama in five acts*.

1583–1645. The fact, that the allegorical interpretation [76]could with equal facility be made to describe the history of the Jewish nation and that of the Virgin Mary, awakened the suspicion of Hugo Grotius, the celebrated statesman, philosopher, and divine. He, therefore, adhered to the literal sense of the book, which, according to him, *celebrates the marriage of Solomon with Pharaoh's daughter*, but at the same time also admitted *that the* ARCANA NUPTIARUM spiritually represent, *first, the love of God to the Israelites, and then the love of Christ to the Church*.[86] It will be remembered that Origen was already of opinion that this Song primarily celebrates the marriage of Solomon with Pharaoh's daughter, though with him the literal meaning was of no importance, and that Theodoret mentions some who viewed the Song in no other light than this.

1603–1699. It was to be expected that John Cocceius, the founder of the theological school bearing his name, whose doctrine was, that the whole history of the Old Testament is a mirror, accurately reflecting the transactions and events that were to happen under the New Testament dispensation to the end of the world, would find in this Song something in accordance with his views. Enlarging upon Aponius' and De Lyra's mode of interpretation, and, like Brightman, still more approaching the Chaldee, in a manner peculiar to himself Cocceius *regards this book as a prophetical narrative of the transactions and events that are to*

happen in the Church, and divides the whole into seven distinct periods, similar to the seven trumpets and seven seals in the Revelation of St. John. [77]

	Chapter.
1. The period of the preaching of the Gospel to Jews and Gentiles	i.–ii.
2. The period of the increase of the Church, and persecution from without	iii.–iv.
3. The period of peace from without and danger within	v.–vi. 8.
4. The period of the Reformation	vi. 9–vii. 10.
5. The period of unsettlement after the Reformation	vii. 11–viii. 3.
6. The period of the persecution	viii. 4–6.
7. The period of rest after the sufferings and longing for the spread of the Gospel	viii. 7–14.[87]

1648. Strange as this mode of interpretation may appear, yet, as we have seen, it is not confined to a single individual or country. John Cotton also affirms that Solomon in this book "*describes the estate of the Church towards Christ, and his respect towards her from his* (*i.e.* Solomon's) *own time to the last judgment.*"[88]

Chap. i. describes the estate of the Church

from the days of Solomon to the repair of the temple by Josiah.
Chap. ii. describes the estate of the Church from the repair of the temple to the days of the Maccabees.
Chap. iii. describes the estate of the Church from the days of the Maccabees to the time of Christ's sojourning here on earth.
Chap. iv. describes the estate of the Church—first, in Christ's time, under his ministry, ver. 1–6; secondly, after his ascension, under the Apostles, ver. 7–11; thirdly, after their departure, during the first ten persecutions, ver. 12–16.
Chap. v. describes the estate of the Church from the time that Constantine entered it to the time of restoring [78]the Gospel and reforming of the Church by the ministry of Luther and other late divines.
Chap. vi. describes the state of the Church reformed by the ministry of Luther and other late divines, and the calling in of the Jews.
Chap. vii.–viii. 4, describes the estate of the Jewish Church when they shall come to be converted unto the Lord.
Chap. viii. 5–14, describes the solicitude which the Church of Judea and Assyria cherished for the growth and establishment of the good people in Egypt, the destruction of the Turks, the union of all Christians, the coming of the Lord, &c.

1650. John Trapp, however, adhered to the more general view, and regarded this Song as "*a treasury of the most sacred and highest mysteries of Holy Scriptures, streaming out all along, under the parable of a marriage, that full torrent of spiritual love that is betwixt Christ and the Church*." … "The form of it is dramatical and dialogistical; the chief speakers are, not *Solomon* and the *Shulamite*, as Castellio makes it, but Christ and his Church. Christ also hath associates (those friends of the bridegroom), viz., the prophets, apostles, pastors, and teachers, who put in a word sometimes; as likewise do the fellow-friends of the bride, viz. whole churches or particular Christians."[89]

1688. Hennischius not only adopted the view of Brightman and Cocceius, but even exceeded it, and called his commentary upon this book,[90] "*The Apocalypse in the Canticles*." He found in the Song of Songs seven periods of the Church described, answerable to the states of the seven Asiatic Churches in the Revelation of St. John. [79]

		Rev.	Cant.	A.D.
1.	The Church at Ephesus	ii. 1–7	i. 5–17	33–370
2.	Smyrna	8–11	ii. 1–17	371–707
	,,			
	,,			
	,,			

3.		12–17	iii. 1–11	708–1045
	,, ,, ,, Pergamos			
4.		18–29	iv. 1–v. 1	1046–1383
	,, ,, ,, Thyatira			
5.		iii. 1–6	v. 2–vi. 2	1384–1721
	,, ,, ,, Sardis			
6.		7–13	vi. 9–vii. 14	1722–2059
	,, ,, ,, Philadelphia			
7.		14–22	viii. 1–14	2060 and onwards.
	,, ,, ,, Laodicea			

1693. The profound scholarship and exquisite taste of Bossuet, though a Roman Catholic Bishop, would not allow him to follow these extravagant theories. Presuming that the marriage of Solomon with the daughter of Pharaoh is the primary object of this Song, and that the nuptial feast among the Jews was hebdomadal, Bossuet divides the poem into seven parts, corresponding to the seven days of the supposed duration of the wedding.[91] The following is his division:—

	Chapter.
1st day	i.–ii. 6.

2nd day ii. 7–17.

3rd day iii.–v. 1.

4th day v. 2–vi. 9.

5th day vi. 10–vii. 11.

6th day vii. 12–viii. 3.

7th day viii. 4–14.

1700. Bishop Patrick, however, would not admit any literal meaning, but found, almost in every word, some delightful mystery. Even the words, “Thy navel is like a round goblet which wanteth not liquor; thy belly is like a heap of wheat set about with lilies,” (chap. vii. 2,) at which so much umbrage has been taken, this pious prelate says, may mean “*the* TWO SACRAMENTS *which the Church administers to her children*; THE FONT IN BAPTISM *being represented by the former, and* THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD’S SUPPER *by the other part of the figure.*”[92] [80]

1710. Shortly after the publication of this commentary appeared the Exposition of Matthew Henry. And though Henry confessed, “on the one hand, that if he who barely reads this book be asked, as the eunuch was, *Understandest thou what thou readest?* he will have more reason than he had to say, *How can I, except some man shall guide me?* that the books of Scripture history and prophecy are very much like one another, but that this Song of Solomon is very much unlike the Songs of his father David; here is not the name of God in it; it is never quoted

in the New Testament; we find not in it any expressions of natural religion or pious devotion; no, nor is it introduced by vision, or any of the marks of immediate revelation; thus it seems as hard as any part of Scripture to be made *a savour of life unto life*." Yet he affirms, "on the other hand, that with the help of the many faithful guides we have for the understanding of this book, *it appears to be a very bright and powerful ray of heavenly light, admirably fitted to excite pious and devout affections in holy souls, to draw out their desires towards God, to increase their delight in him, and improve their acquaintance and communion with him.*"[93]

1723. Durham tells us the import of the Song of Songs much more positively and dogmatically than either Patrick or Henry. "*The great scope of this Song is to set out that mutual love and carriage that is between Christ and the Church in five distinct branches. It holdeth out the Church's case, and Christ's care of her, in all her several conditions, and under all dispensations; such as*, I. *Her sinful infirmities, and failings in duties*, chap. i. 6; v. 2, 3, *and also under liveliness in duties*, chap. i. 2, 3, 4, and v. 5, *and almost throughout.* II. *Under crosses*, chap. i. 6, *as being 'a lily among thorns,' and hated of the world*, ii. 2, *and also in prosperity, wherein she is commended as terrible*, vi. 10. III. *As deserted and sick of love*, chap. iii. 1, 2, and v. 4, 5, *and again as enjoying her beloved*, i. 4; iii. 4, 5. IV. *As under faithful shepherds and lively ordinances*, chap. i. 4; iii. 4, 5, *and also* [81]*as under carnal watchmen*, v. 7.

And in all these, her various conditions, in all ages, are painted forth, before Christ's incarnation, as well as now, without respect to any particular time or age; for ceremonial things are not here meddled with, but what was spiritual; besides the Church then and now is one, as in the next consideration will be cleared. V. *As in private dealing with Christ, and longing after him and praying for him*, chap. iv. 16; viii. 1, *and almost throughout, and also what she was in public duties, going to the watchmen*, chap. v. 7, and iii. 3, *and what she was in fellowship with others*, v. 8, 9; vi. 1, 2. VI. *It sets out believers as more strong, and it furnishes a greater measure of grace and knowledge; and also, as more weak in gifts and grace.* VII. *And lastly, it holds forth the same believers as more and less lively in their conditions.*

"*This book, in its matter, is a comprehensive sum of all those particulars formed in a song, put together, and drawn as on a board, for the believers' edification, to show*, 1. *What should be, and will be their carriage, when it is right with them as to their frame.* 2. *What are their infirmities, and what they use often to fall into, even they who are believers, that they may be the more watchful.* 3. *To shew what they meet with, that they may make for sufferings, and not stumble at them when they come.* 4. *That the care and love of Christ to them, in reference to all these, may appear, that they may know upon what grounds to comfort themselves in every condition, and may have this Song as a little magazine, for direction and consolation in every condition.*"[94]

Upon the words "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines," &c. (Chap. ii. 15), Durham remarks:

> "This fifteenth verse contains the last part of Christ's Sermon; wherein, as he had formerly given directions in reference to her particular walk, so here he evidenceth his care of her external peace. That Christ speaks these words, the continuation and series of them with the former, the scope (which is to make full proof of his case), and the manner how the duty here mentioned is laid on, to wit, by way of authority, makes it clear. [82]There are three things in them, 1. On external evil incident to the Church, and that is, to be spoiled by '*foxes*.' 2. A care given in a direction, '*Take them*,' &c. 3. He gives reasons to deter all from cruel pity in sparing of them, '*For*,' &c."

Having descanted at large upon the first and second heads, Durham remarks on the third:

> "*Thirdly*. There is a motive to press, implied, while he (i.e. Christ) saith this; '*Take us*,' which words insinuate that it is service both to him and her, and that ministers are his servants, and the Church's for Christ's sake. It shows also his sympathy in putting himself, as it were, in hazard with her (at least mystically considered), and his love in comforting her, that he thinks himself concerned in the restraint of these foxes as well as she is.
>
> "*Fourthly*. The direction is amplified, to remove an

> objection (say some) 'All heresies, or all heretics are not equal; some comparatively are little to be regarded, and it is cruelty to meddle with these, that seem to profess fair.' '*No* (saith he), *take them all, even* THE LITTLE FOXES; *for though they be but little, yet they are foxes; though they be not of the grossest kind* (as all scandals in fact are not alike, yet none is to be dispensed with), *so they are* (saith he) *foxes, and corrupt others; for a little leaven will leaven the whole lump* (often small-like schisms, or heresies, such as the *Novations* and *Donatists*, &c., have been exceedingly defacing to the beauty of the Church), *therefore*, saith he, *hunt and take them up*.' How small a friend is our Lord to toleration! and how displeased is he with many errors, that the world thinks little of! Magistrates, ministers and people may learn here, what distance ought to be kept with the spreaders of the least errors; and how every one ought to concur, in their stations, for preventing the hurt that comes by them."[95]

1723. Whether this commentary, with its affirmation that "this Song is a little magazine, for direction and consolation in every condition," and whether the doctrine of intolerance palmed upon Chap. ii. 15 of the Song were published in time to be seen by Whiston, who was neither convinced by Durham's arguments nor daunted by his appeal to the magistrates, ministers, and people; or whether they appeared too late to be seen by him, I cannot tell. But, in the same year that Durham's commentary was published Whiston's Essay appeared, in which he

declares that he finds in the Song of Solomon, "*from the beginning to the end marks of folly, vanity, and looseness*," and assures us that "*it was written by Solomon when he was wicked* [83]*and foolish, and lascivious and idolatrous*,"[96] and that the sooner this immoral book is rejected from the sacred canon the better.

1728. About five years afterwards appeared the bulky Exposition of Dr. Gill on Solomon's Song, consisting of one hundred and twenty-two sermons, which the Doctor delivered to his congregation. In this confused mass of accumulated learning Gill warmly refutes both Whiston and others who had written against this book. He acknowledges "the profit and advantage" which he had received from "the sweet observations of the excellent Durham," and affirms that this divine poem is wholly allegorical; "*and sets forth in a most striking manner the mutual love, union and communion, which are between Christ and his Church; also expresses the several different frames, cases, and circumstances which attend believers in this life, so that they can come into no state or condition, but there is something in this Song suited to their experience; which serves much to recommend it to believers, and discovers the excellency of it.*"[97] In vain do we look even here for an exposition based upon the sound rules of grammar and philology.

1753. It was reserved for Bishop Lowth to commence in this country a new era in the interpretation of this book. Two of his admirable "Lectures on the Sacred

Poetry of the Hebrews" are devoted to the investigation of the import and interpretation of this Song, and the conclusion he arrived at is almost the same as that of Grotius and Bossuet. "The subject of the Canticles," says this learned Prelate, "appears to be the marriage-feast of Solomon, (who was, both in name and reality, the Prince of Peace); his bride is called Shulamite.… Who this wife of Solomon was, is not clearly ascertained; but some of the learned have conjectured, with an appearance of probability, that she was the daughter of Pharaoh, to whom Solomon was [84]known to be particularly attached. May we not, therefore, with some shadow of reason, suspect that, under the allegory of Solomon choosing a wife from the Egyptians, might be darkly typified that other Prince of Peace, who was to espouse a church chosen from among the Gentiles?"

As to the explanation of the allegory, this learned prelate properly advises, "that we ought to be cautious of carrying the figurative application too far, and of entering into a precise explication of every particular; as these minute investigations are seldom conducted with sufficient prudence not to offend the serious part of mankind, learned as well as unlearned."[98]

Bishop Lowth also takes this poem to be of a dramatic form, and adopts the division of Bossuet into seven parts.

1764. The excellent and judicious remarks of Lowth

were followed by an elegant version of Solomon's Song, with a brief Commentary and Annotations, by Thomas Percy, D.D., Bishop of Dromore. The author vindicates the theory of Grotius, Lowth, &c., that this poem literally describes the nuptials of Solomon; and, like Bossuet and Lowth, divides it into seven parts, answering to the seven days of the supposed duration of the nuptials, which are distinguished from each other by different solemnities. In terms, even more severe than those of Bishop Lowth, Percy censures those commentators, "who have been so busily employed in opening and unfolding the allegorical meaning of this book as wholly to neglect that literal sense which ought to be the basis of their discoveries. If a sacred allegory may be defined a figurative discourse, which, under a lower and more obvious meaning, delivers the most sublime and important truths; then it is the first duty of an expositor to ascertain the lower and more obvious meaning. For till this is done, it is impossible to discover what truths are couched under it. Without this all is vague and idle conjecture. It is erecting an edifice without a foundation, which, [85]however fair and goodly to the view, will be blown down by the slightest breath of true criticism."[99]

1765. Wesley, however, opposed this theory. He maintained that "the description of this bridegroom and bride is such as could not with decency be used or meant concerning *Solomon* and *Pharaoh's* daughter; that many expressions and descriptions, if

applied to them, would be absurd and monstrous; and that it therefore follows that this book is to be understood allegorically, concerning that spiritual love and marriage which is between Christ and his Church."[100]

1768. Harmer advanced a new theory. Whilst advocating with Grotius, Bossuet, Lowth, Percy, &c., that this Song in its literal and primary sense celebrates the nuptials of Solomon with the daughter of Pharaoh, he maintained that the heroes of the plot are not *two*, as generally believed, but *three*—viz., *Solomon*, the *Shulamite*, who is the principal wife and a Jewish queen, and *the daughter of Pharaoh*, whom Solomon afterwards married, with which the Jewish queen was exceedingly displeased, and looked with jealousy upon the Gentile wife as an intruder. "This event of Solomon's marrying a *Gentile* princess, and making her *equal in honour and privilege* with his former Jewish queen, and of *her* being *frequently mentioned* afterwards in history, while the other is passed over in *total silence*, resembles *the conduct of the Messiah towards the Gentile and Jewish Churches*." … "Nothing more, according to that," says Harmer, "is to be sought for of the mystic kind, than the making out the general resemblance between Solomon's behaviour with respect to his two queens, and the situation of affairs between the Messiah and the two Churches; of those that observed the laws of Moses and those that did not."[101] [86]

The following analysis is gathered from Harmer's

singularly confused work. Chapter I. describes Solomon and his attendants meeting the Egyptian bride and her companions; ii. 1–iii. 5, describes the complaining language of the Jewish queen; iii. 6–v. 1, resumes the account of Solomon's journey with the Egyptian bride up to Jerusalem, and describes the consummation of the marriage; v. 2–vi. 3, relates Solomon's conversation with his Jewish wife; vi. 4–9, Solomon's conversation with the Egyptian wife in the garden; vi. 10–viii. 7, begins with Solomon's astonishment at his being surprised by his Jewish wife whilst in the garden with the Egyptian wife, and the ensuing conversation between them; viii. 8, describes the imaginative hope of the Jewish wife that Solomon's marriage with the Egyptian would not be consummated, and that she would, therefore, not be treated as a wife; viii. 9, gives Solomon's reply, that the Egyptian princess should be treated with the highest honours; viii. 10–12, contains a smart reply of the Egyptian princess to the Jewish queen, in which she at the same time also notices the addition her marriage had made to the King's possessions; viii. 13, states Solomon's appeal to the Jewish queen in the presence of all to give her final thoughts respecting her future conduct; viii. 14, gives her resolution to keep her distance; but at the same time there appears no thought of *renouncing her relation* to Solomon on her part, as "there was not on his." "Such actually," concludes Harmer, "is the state of things with respect to the Messiah, and the two churches of Jews and Gentiles. The Jewish Church

persists in not receiving the Gentiles as fellow-heirs, but they renounce not their relation to the Messiah, nor has he utterly excluded them from hope. The state of distance has long continued, but as they still remain a *distinct body* of people, waiting for great events that are to happen, so the New Testament leads us to expect their reconciliation."

1770. Different to these strange outlines of Harmer were the effects which Lowth's remarks upon this Song produced in [87]Germany. Michaelis, the celebrated professor at the Göttingen University, in his edition of the Praelectiones, took a more advanced and decided step in the interpretation of this book. He not only rejected the allegorical interpretation, as unsupported by internal evidence, but denied the theory, defended by Lowth, &c., that this poem celebrates the nuptials of Solomon, because there is no direct mention made in any part of this long poem of the marriage ceremony, nor of any circumstance attending it; no time appearing appropriated to the nuptial banquet itself, the bride and the bridegroom being separated from and in quest of each other, wishing and enjoying solitude, always showing themselves in the street or field when conversing together, or with the virgins, and never found with the guests or at the banquet; because it cannot be possibly imagined that a bridegroom would be so necessitated to labour as not to be able to devote the few days of his nuptial week to the celebration of his marriage; that he would be

compelled immediately to quit his spouse and his friends for whole days in order to attend his cattle in the pastures; and especially because we could not imagine that the bridegroom would at this time of the festival leave his bride, to whom he professes to be so deeply attached, alone and unhappy, and not return at night. The learned professor, therefore, concludes that this Song describes *the chaste passion of conjugal and domestic love; the attachment of two delicate persons who have been long united in the sacred bond*; and then asks, *Can we suppose such happiness unworthy of being recommended as a pattern to mankind, and of being celebrated as a subject of gratitude to the great Author of happiness?*[102]

1771. The honour, however, of first elucidating the true design of this book is due to J. T. Jacobi; notwithstanding the imperfections of his attempt. He showed that the importance of this Song is not to describe the chaste passion of conjugal love, but *to celebrate fidelity*. The pattern of this [88]conjugal fidelity is the Shulamite, the heroine of the book. This humble woman was married to a shepherd. Solomon, being struck with her beauty, tempted her with the luxuries and splendour of his court to forsake her husband and enter the royal harem; but the Shulamite spurned all the allurements, and remained faithful to her humble husband.[103] However strange the manner in which Jacobi divides this book, and the interpretation of separate passages, it must be acknowledged that he was the

first in Germany who showed that Solomon was not the object of the Shulamite's affections, and that the beloved was a humble shepherd from whom the King endeavoured to separate her. It will be remembered that Ibn Ezra, Immanuel, and the Anonymous Commentary,[104] have already taken the lovers to be *a shepherd* and *shepherdess*, and regarded Solomon as *a separate* person, whom the rustic maiden adduces in illustration of her sincere attachment to her shepherd, affirming that if this great King were to bring her into his court, and offer her all its grandeur and luxuries, she would still rejoice in her humble lover.

1772. It seems unaccountable that though the increased attention paid in this country to the sound exegesis of the Scriptures compelled expositors to propound the literal meaning of this book, that Durell[105] could still overlook the *two distinct* persons referred to in this poem, viz. the King and the Shepherd, and maintain that the Song of Songs is an epithalamium on Solomon's marriage with Pharaoh's daughter.

1776. It was not to be expected that the opposition of sound critics, and much less the newly propounded view of Jacobi, would at once subvert the old allegorical theories, or check fertile imaginations from inventing new speculations. The Song of Songs was too darling an object of those whose minds were addicted to allegories and mysticisms to be so [89]easily surrendered to the

simple meaning of the text. So far from being surprised, we rather expect that every one who rejects the obvious sense of the Song will find in it some new view which his predecessors had overlooked. And Herr von Puffendorf's new theory, therefore, only realises our expectations. He explained this Song hieroglyphically, and by a process of reasoning as sound as that of the other allegorisers, found his interpretation corroborated by analogy. The sacred picture language constituted the wisdom of Solomon's days, and was therefore used among all nations to express everything divine. As Solomon was more versed in the Egyptian mysteries than any of his contemporaries, he would necessarily write the divine mysteries contained in this book in hieroglyphics, in accordance with the custom of those days. According to the deciphering of these hieroglyphics by Puffendorf, "this much disputed Song treats almost exclusively of the sepulchre of the Saviour, and his death, and the communion of believers, especially of Old Testament saints; but it also describes their longing for his Advent, whereby, however, the condition of the New Testament community, and even the resurrection from the dead, are represented in prophetical types."[106] On the clause,

> "*The virgins love thee.*" Puffendorf remarks, "These are the pure and chaste souls which are locked up in the dark sepulchre, and wait for the light;" and in a note says, "the root עָלַם whence עֲלָמוֹת *virgins*, is

> derived, signifies *to be concealed*, as those souls were. The Egyptian Neitha, or Minerva, was the tutelar deity of pious souls, and was covered with a veil, which none were allowed to uncover. The virgins, concealed in the same manner, have to expect that through marriage they will emerge into light. Thus the souls are here represented, which in the dominion of darkness wait for salvation and light."

The curious reader must consult the Commentary itself to see how this extraordinary mode of exposition is carried through the book. [90]

1778. About two years after the publication of the deciphered hieroglyphics of this Song, the allegorical interpretation sustained some most severe blows from the eminently pious and celebrated poet Herder. He denounced the allegorisers as violating common sense, and the established laws of language, and maintained that *this Song celebrated true and chaste love in its various stages*.

Upon the question, whether there may not be *another sense* concealed under the obvious and literal meaning, Herder remarks—"When I read the book itself I do not find the slightest intimation, or even the faintest trace that such a sense was the design of the author. Were I to admit it, I should also expect to find it in the Song of Ibrahim, in the odes of Hafiz, and in all the oriental erotic poems which in form entirely resemble this Song. In the life of Solomon I discover still less reason for this concealed sense, be

it historical, mystical, metaphysical, or political. For Solomon's wisdom did not consist in mysticism, much less in metaphysics, or scholastic church history. His wisdom was displayed in his common sense, as seen in his view of the things of this life, in his acute penetration and extensive knowledge of nature. Subsequent Arabian tradition has indeed attributed to him also the art of sorcery, and of driving out evil spirits, but never did even this tradition ascribe to him the downcast look of a mystic, or represent him as indulging in airy speculations, or as writing a compendium of Christian Church History."[107]

Herder admits that this book describes the love of *a shepherd* and shepherdess, as well as that of *a king*; but finding great difficulty to account for this, he divides the book into separate songs, or amorets, while at the same time he acknowledges that there is a marked unity throughout, and that love is [91]described from its first germs to its full maturity, its ripened fruit, and its first regermination.

1780. This beautiful commentary was followed by an elaborate work of Kleuker on this Song.[108] He too, with an overwhelming force of argument, opposes the allegorical interpretation, and maintains that the book consists of detached songs.

1781. Ann Francis, a lady of much poetical taste, who, assisted by the learned Parkhurst, published a poetical version of the Song,[109] was the first who

adopted and defended the theory of Harmer, that this book speaks of *two* wives, one a Jewish lady, who had been married to Solomon long before, and the daughter of Pharaoh, whom the king had recently espoused.

1786. Hodgson, however, was not influenced by the theory of Harmer, but, with Bossuet, Lowth, Percy, &c., regarded this poem as "an epithalamium written by Solomon, on his marriage, as some have supposed, with the daughter of Pharaoh."[110]

1789. The theory maintained by Abrabanel and Leon Hebraeus,[111] seems at this time to have found its way into the Christian Church. An unknown author, mentioned by Magnus,[112] defended the view that *the bride of the Song represents wisdom, with whom Solomon converses*.

1790. It is indeed cheering to meet again with some glimpses of light amidst the dense darkness which gathered around this book. Ammon not only vindicated its unity against some of his contemporaries, but showed that it *celebrates the victory of true and chaste love in humble life over the allurements of courtly grandeur*.[113] [92]

1801. In this country those who paid more regard to the established laws of language, and were therefore constrained to admit a literal sense, mostly adhered to the opinion that this poem is a nuptial song. Thus Williams maintained that it celebrates the marriage

of Solomon with Pharaoh's daughter.[114]

1803. Mason Good could not acquiesce in this opinion, because the matrimonial connexion of the Hebrew monarch with the Egyptian princess was of an exclusively political character, without any preceding personal intimacy or interchange of affection; whereas, the connexion celebrated in this Song, "proceeded from reciprocal affection, from the gentleness, modesty, and delicacy of mind, which are uniformly and perpetually attributed to this beautiful and accomplished fair one."[115] He, therefore, regards this book as celebrating in distinct amorets, the reciprocal attachment of Solomon and a female, who was a native of Sharon, which was a canton of Palestine; conveying also a spiritual allegory.

1813. Hug,[116] rejecting the literal interpretation, exercised, like the rest of the allegorisers, the right of introducing a new theory. According to him, "the bride" means *the ten tribes*, and "the bridegroom" is *King Hezekiah*, and the book *describes allegorico-politically the longing of Israel after the destruction of Samaria to be re-united with Judah, and the opposition of the citizens of Judah, represented under the image of the brothers* (chap. viii. 8, 9) *to this re-union*.

1820. The feeble arm raised by Jacobi, Ammon, &c. in the defence of the true design of this book against the mighty host of allegorisers, was greatly supported by the learned Umbreit. In the introduction to his exposition of this Song, Umbreit

maintains that the design of the poem is *to celebrate the conquest of virtue in humble life over the allurements of royalty*. A [93]virtuous country-maiden, who was attached to a shepherd, was brought into Solomon's harem, and there tempted by the king with flatteries and promises to transfer her affections; but she, armed by the power of virtue, resisted all his allurements, and remained faithful to her shepherd, to whom she was afterwards re-united.[117]

Though it cannot be said that either Clarke or Boothroyd in any way elucidated the design of this book, yet they have done great service by their rejection of the allegorical interpretation.

1825. We must, however, not suppose that the allegorisers, though considerably diminished in number, had exhausted their inventive faculties. Kaiser maintains that "the bride" is *a new colony* near the Jordan, and the bridegroom represents *Zerubbabel*, *Ezra*, and *Nehemiah*; and that *the Song celebrates their restoration of the Jewish constitution in the province of Judah*.[118]

1826. The little band, who struggled hard for the defence of the true design of this book, could now rejoice at the accession of a mighty leader to their ranks. The celebrated Ewald showed in a masterly manner that "*this poem celebrates chaste, virtuous, and sincere love, which no splendour is able to dazzle, nor flattery to seduce*."[119]

1829. Döpke, in his elaborate philologico-critical commentary, though not espousing this view, materially aided the combatants for the literal interpretation.[120]

1830. It is surprising that the sharp-sighted Rosenmüller, who could not follow the allegorical interpretation of the church, instead of adhering to the obvious sense of the poem, [94]adopted the view of Abrabanel, Leon Hebraeus, &c., that "the bride" represents *wisdom*, with whom Solomon is described as conversing.[121]

Whilst the battle between the allegorisers and literalists was being waged on the continent, the few champions who came forward in England to defend the literal interpretation received an important addition to their number in the person of Dr. Pye Smith, who denounced this method of treating Scripture as contrary to all laws of language, and dangerous to real religion. He regards this Song as "a pastoral eclogue, or a succession of eclogues, representing, in the vivid colour of Asiatic rural scenery, with a splendour of artificial decoration, the honourable loves of a newly married bride and bridegroom, with some other interlocutors."[122]

1839. The controversy between Drs. Pye Smith and Bennett[123] about the Song of Songs produced a salutary effect, inasmuch as it added considerably to the number of those who in this country defended the literal interpretation. A version of Chap. ii. 8–17

appeared in the Congregational Magazine,[124] in which the translator boldly affirms that “it celebrates the beautiful scenery of the spring, the attachment of two individuals to each other, and their meeting in that season of nature’s gaiety and loveliness.” He, moreover, declares that he can “see no more reason for the spiritual interpretation which Mr. Williams, Mr. Fry, and others give it, than for its application to the revival of letters, the termination of feudalism, or any other gratifying circumstance in civil or political life.”

1840. Whilst the ranks of the literalists grew stronger in England, the band that defended the true design of this poem in Germany, also under the able leadership of Ewald, became [95]stronger, and Hirzel now contended for the view that the Song of Songs *celebrates the victory of virtuous love in humble life over the allurements of royalty*.[125]

1842. The learned but “lynx-eyed” Magnus, however, could see in this book nothing else than a collection of various erotic pieces, some perfect, others imperfect, some amended, others interpolated, all the work of different authors, and written in various ages.[126] Yet his commentary is full of learning, and well deserves to be mentioned in this historical sketch.

1845. Entirely different is the opinion of Professor Stuart, the great Biblical scholar of America, who says, “It seems better and firmer ground, to regard

the Canticles as expressing the warm and earnest desire of the soul after God, in language borrowed from that which characterises chaste affection between the Jews."[127]

1846. It must not be supposed that all the American Professors were of the same opinion. Dr. Noyes, Professor of Hebrew, &c. in Harvard University, published a translation of the Canticles with notes, shortly after the appearance of Stuart's work, in which he maintains that it is a collection of erotic songs, *without any moral or religious design*,[128] and most powerfully opposes the allegorical interpretation.

1847. Another Professor, Dr. Stowe, affirmed that "the general idea of the book, which has just been pronounced '*as injurious to morals and religion*,' if interpreted allegorically,[129] is descriptive of the mutual love of God and his people; the vicissitudes, the trials, the backslidings, the repentings, and [96]finally the perfect and eternal union of the church with its Lord and Saviour."[130]

1849. Though not entirely defeated, yet the ranks of the allegorisers were materially thinned, and they were driven to adopt a different course. They no longer sought for some *Christian* mysteries and doctrine in every chapter, verse, and word of the Song, but satisfied themselves with a general allegorical idea, which may be seen both from the above article of Dr. Stowe, and Keil's "Introduction

to the Song of Songs." Dr. Keil submits that it allegorically describes the mutual love subsisting between God and his chosen people, and how this communion was in various ways interrupted through the unfaithfulness of Israel, and how, through their return to the true covenant-God, and through his unchanging love, it was again restored.[131]

1851. Not even this mild view of the allegory, however, could conciliate Delitzsch. This learned author, after having interpreted the book as representing "the mutual love subsisting between Solomon and Wisdom," was at last constrained to reject every allegorical interpretation as untenable. Though adopting the view that *the book poetically describes a love-relationship formed by Solomon, and that "the idea of marriage is the idea of the Song,"* and may figuratively represent *the union of God with his people*, he frankly confesses, that amongst other views, that which regards the poem as celebrating the victory of virtuous love in humble life over the allurements of royalty, is to be preferred.[132]

1852. Immediately after the publication of this commentary, containing some of the most cogent arguments against the allegorical interpretation, a new translation appeared with an allegorical exposition by Hahn. Denying that Solomon represents [97]the Messiah, because at that early period the notion of *a personal* Messiah was not yet developed in the minds of the people, this commentator advances a new theory, that "the

bridegroom" represents *the kingdom of Israel*, and "the bride" *Japhetic heathenism*, and that the poem describes, allegorically, "*the kingdom of Israel as destined, in God's service, eventually to overcome heathenism with the weapons of justice and love, and to bring the Heathen into a state of fellowship and love with itself, and consequently with God.*"[133] He takes the Song to be a dramatico-didactic poem, divisible into six sections.

The first section, Chap. i. 2–ii. 7, describes the longing of the maiden, who represents Japhetic heathenism, for the pleasurable love of the king of Israel; her humble supplication to be received into his fellowship, and the ultimate realization of her desire in that union.

The second section, Chap. ii. 8–iii. 5, supplementing the first, describes the friendly invitation which the king of Israel gives to this maiden (the Japhetic heathen) to catch with him the foxes, which represent the kingdom of Satan upon earth, the Hametic heathen, and to unite herself with him in the land of Canaan, which is the kingdom of God, and her acceptance of this invitation.

The third section, Chap. iii. 6–v. 1, supplementing the first and second, represents this maiden, after being conquered by the power of the king's love, and from sincere reciprocal attachment, devoting herself as an acceptable offering to the service of God, as introduced into the land of Canaan, which is the type

of the kingdom of God, and describes the completion of her never-ending union with the king of Israel.

The fourth section, Chap. v. 2–vi. 9, a supplementary explanation of the first, describes the early love of the king of Israel when he visited the maiden in the dark night as she lay in a deep sleep, void of all love to him, entreating to be admitted; [98]her refusal; her repentance after having become acquainted with his glory; her long search after him; his accepting her after her repentance had been tried, &c. &c.

The fifth section, Chap. vi. 10–viii. 4, which explains the second, and supplements the fourth, describes how the king of Israel revealed himself ultimately to the maiden; the king, after being long and painfully sought by the maiden, who, despairing of success, and in a dejected state, had returned home, was again incited, by some new charms of hers, followed her, attended by his martial hosts, once more offered her his love, met with a hearty response, and then she offered herself to him with all she had, as his property.

The sixth section, Chap. viii. 5–14, which is a supplementary exposition of the third, and a completion of the fifth, describes how the maiden, after long and painfully searching, and longing for the king of Israel, yielded herself up to him in her home, whither he had followed her, and how she entreated for the favourable reception of her younger sister, that is, the Hametic heathen, and how the

king promised the maiden that her sister shall eventually be received.

1853. Though this allegorist has repudiated the idea that Solomon represents the Messiah, at the same time, another allegorist, and that a no less writer than Hengstenberg, assures us that Solomon can be regarded only as *the Messiah*, and that the bride is not Japhetic heathenism, but *the people of God*. According to him, *the poem celebrates the Prince of Peace and all the mercies which through him flow to the people of God*, and is divisible into two parts.

The first part, Chap. i.–v. 1, describes the advent of Messiah, the heavenly Solomon, to save his people; the tribulations and sorrows which will precede his coming, and especially the bondage of the people of God to worldly power, as the merited punishment of their unfaithfulness. These sufferings are represented under the figure of swarthiness, i. 6; winter and rain, ii. 11; dark nights and a wilderness, iii. 6. Connected [99]with the coming of Messiah is the admission of the heathen into the kingdom of Christ, iii. 9–11, effected through the mediation of the Old Testament people, as indicated by the name “daughters of Jerusalem.”

The second part, Chap. v. 2–viii. 14, describes the sinning of the daughter of Zion against the heavenly Solomon, her punishment, repentance, and the re-union effected through the mediation of the daughters of Jerusalem (the heathen), whose

salvation she had first assisted to accomplish; the complete restoration of the former mutual love, in consequence of which the daughter of Zion becomes again the centre of the kingdom of God; and the immutability of the new covenant of love in contrast with the mutability of the old.[134]

1853. Simultaneous with this commentary of Hengstenberg, an allegorical exposition appeared in America, by Professor Burrowes. He differs again from the preceding in regarding *this Song as illustrating by imagery drawn from the court of Solomon, the mutual love of Christ and the Church, as exercised in the case of individual believers*. He divides it into three parts.

The first part, Chap. i.–ii. 7, describes the way in which the soul, longing after the manifestation of the love of Christ, is conducted in the gratification of that desire, from one degree of pious enjoyment to another, till, by the vicissitudes of fortune, and by the diversities in its progress towards heaven, and the enjoyment of Christ's love as manifested in private communion in "his chamber;" 7–11, in the way of duty and self-denial; 12–14, in social communion with him; 15–17, in delightful repose with him, amid enlarged prospects of spiritual beauty; chap. ii. 1–3, in the protection and delight here set forth; 4–7, it possesses the greatest possible pleasure on the earth.

The second part, Chap. ii. 8–vii. 9, describes the

motives by which the Lord Jesus would allure such souls away from [100]the present world to be with him in glory; chap. ii. 8–17, as by the beauty of heaven; chap. iii. 1–11, by the splendour of the reception awaiting them there, as well as by the grandeur of the conveyance thither; chap. v. 1–vii. 9, and by his love for them, which remains constant even amidst their greatest neglect.

The third section, Chap. vii. 10–viii. 14, describes the effects which these manifestations of love produce on the heart of saints; chap. vii. 10, assurance of hope; 11, desire to be much alone in communion with Christ; 12, their engagement in labours of love; 13, consecration to him of all their gifts; chap. viii. 1, 2, a desire that everything interposing between Christ and them may be removed; 3, 4, their avoidance of everything that would cause the withdrawal of Christ's love; 5, the pleasing consciousness of leaning on Jesus, and of being upheld by his everlasting arm; 6, their desire to be constantly near him, and sustained by his power, and willingness to make every sacrifice for him; 7, their conviction of the insufficiency of everything the world could offer to tempt them from Christ; 8–10, their interest for the salvation of the impenitent; 12, the sense of their accountability as stewards of God; 13, the privilege of continual access to the throne of grace; 14, desire for the completion of their redemption, and for the perfecting of their love to Christ, and of his to them, by the prospect of his second coming.[135]

From the analysis of the three latest commentaries upon this book, it will be perceived that allegorical interpreters, even to this day, differ in their views of its application and design.

1854. After quitting the bewildering maze of allegorism, it is cheering to come to the commentary of Meier, in which the view that this poem celebrates the victory of virtuous love in humble life over the allurements of royalty is defended.[136] [101]

1855. This is also the view propounded by Friedrich[137] and Hitzig,[138] though the latter embraces a similar theory to Harmer, that there are *two* women as chief speakers in the poem.

1856. In this opinion of the superiority of virtuous love to all the temptations of royalty, the Jew and the Christian, the Englishman and the German, are beginning to unite. The reviewer in the Jewish Monthly Journal of History and Science, declares himself in favour of *regarding the Shulamite as resisting all the offers of Solomon and remaining faithful to her shepherd*.[139] Meier, the author of a commentary mentioned above, in his History of the poetical National Literature of the Hebrews, recently published, maintains the same opinion.[140] This poem, says Dr. Davidson, "*warns against impure love, encourages chastity, fidelity, and virtue, by depicting the successful issue of sincere affection amid powerful temptations. The innocent and virtuous maiden, true to her shepherd lover, resists the flatteries of a monarch,*

and is allowed to return to her home."[141] Umbreit, in an article upon this book, just published, states that he still adheres to the view propounded in his commentary of 1828,[142] noticed above, that it is a celebration of virtuous love over the allurements of royalty.

How mournful is the thought which irresistibly forces itself upon the mind, in reviewing this imperfect sketch of what has befallen this poem! This book, we have seen, is made to describe the most contradictory things. It contains the wanderings of the Jews, how they will ultimately "fill their stomachs with the flesh of the Leviathan and the best of wines preserved [102]in grapes," and is the sanctum sanctorum of all Christian mysteries. It is denounced as a love song, and extolled as declaring the incarnation of Christ; it speaks of the meridian church in Africa, and of the betrayal of the Saviour; it contains a treatise upon the doctrine of free grace against Pelagianism, and an Aristotelian disquisition upon the functions of the active and passive mind; it is an apocalyptic vision, a duplicate of the Revelations of St. John, and records the scholastic mysticisms of the middle ages; it denounces Arianism, and describes the glories of the Virgin Mary; it "treats of man's reconciliation unto God and peace by Jesus Christ, with joy in the Holy Ghost," and teaches lewdness, and corrupts the morals; it records the conversation of Solomon and Wisdom, and describes the tomb of Christ in Egyptian

hieroglyphics; it celebrates the nuptials of Solomon, and gives us a compendium of ecclesiastical history to the second advent of Christ; it records the restoration of a Jewish constitution by Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, and the mysteries of marriage; it advocates monogamy and encourages polygamy; it assists devotion and excites carnal passions. What a solemn lesson we have here never to depart from the simple meaning of the word of God!

[Contents]

SECTION VI.—THE DIFFERENT VIEWS CLASSIFIED AND EXAMINED.

The various opinions, enumerated in the preceding section, respecting the design of this book, may be divided into *three classes*, the *literal*, the *allegorical*, and the *typical*. The first considers the description as real, that the words should be taken as representing an historical fact; the second considers that the description has no historical truth for its basis, but contains some latent meaning; whilst the third admits the literal meaning, but regards it as typical of spiritual truth. The literal view adopted by us having been given in sections iii. and iv., we have to examine here only the claims of the allegorical and typical. [103]

THE ALLEGORICAL VIEW.

The allegorical view principally maintained is, *that this poem, in language borrowed from that which characterises chaste affections between the sexes, expresses the mutual love subsisting between the Lord and his Church*.

REASONS FOR THE ALLEGORICAL VIEW EXAMINED.

1. The existence of this book in the sacred canon has been adduced as an argument for its allegorical interpretation.

"In what part of the Hebrew Bible can we find any composition of an analogous nature? All—every Psalm, every piece of history, every part of prophecy—has a religious aspect, and (the book of Esther perhaps excepted) is filled with theocratic views of things. How came there here to be such a solitary exception, so contrary to the genius and nature of the whole Bible? It is passing strange, if real amatory Idyls are mingled with so much, all of which is of a serious and religious nature. If the author viewed his composition as being of an amatory nature, would he have sought a place for it among the *sacred* books? And subsequent redactors or editors—would they have ranked it here, in case they had regarded it in the same light? I can scarcely deem it credible. So different was the reverence of the Jews for their Scriptures from any mere approbation of an amatory poem as such, that I must believe that the insertion of Canticles among the *canonical* books, was the result of a full persuasion of its *spiritual* import. Had the case stood otherwise, why did they not introduce other secular books, as well as this, into the canon?"[143]

Granting that the design of the book was simply to

describe *love*, we deny that it would have been deemed unworthy of a place in the sacred canon. Why should the pleasures of chaste love be considered less worthy of record in the sacred books, [104]than the sorrow for bereaved friendship, in 2 Sam. i. 17, &c.? "To those," says Dr. Mason Good, a defender of the allegorical interpretation, "who disbelieve the existence of such an allegory they (the amorets) still afford a happy example of the pleasures of holy and virtuous love; they inculcate, beyond the power of didactic poetry, the tenderness which the husband should manifest for his wife, and the deference, modesty, and fidelity with which his affection should be returned; and, *considered even in this sense alone, they are fully entitled to the honour of constituting a part of the sacred Scriptures*."[144] "Why should a passion," remarks another allegorical interpreter, "so strong, so universal, so essential to happiness—to the very existence of the human race, be denied a place in a Revelation from God to man? As a matter of fact, has it not a place in every part of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation? God is the author of the human constitution as well as of the Bible; and he has in all respects adapted his revelation to the nature of the beings for whom it was designed. It would be strange indeed, if one of the most important and never absent phenomena in the moral and physical creation of men should never be noticed in a revelation to him from his Creator. If the viciousness and licentiousness of men have loaded this subject with vile and filthy associations

in vile and filthy minds, this is not the fault of God or of his revelation. The vine will not be destroyed, nor the grapes annihilated, because wicked men make themselves beasts with wine."[145]

The design of the book, in our view, however, is not to celebrate love, but *to record an example of virtue*, which is still more worthy of a place in the sacred canon.

2. It has been urged, that the language put by the sacred writer into the mouth of the bride, shows that the poem is to be allegorically interpreted, because in its literal sense such [105]language would be contrary to nature and to the modesty of women.

"That this is *not* a song of human loves," says Dr. Bennett,[146] "is clear from the beginning to the end. It opens with the language of a female: 'Let him kiss me;' it is full of her solicitous seeking after him; it abounds with praises of his person, and her dispraises of herself, of her person and her conduct; it invites other females to love him, and it speaks of him as her brother, and of her as his sister. Let any one examine the Song, and then muse over these facts, recollecting that Solomon is, in the opening of the poem itself, said to be the writer. Was ever such a human love-song composed by mortal, since man either loved or wrote verses? What writer, with the feelings, or the reason, of a man, would begin a poem on his fair one by describing her as courting him? Let it not be said, 'We must not transfer our

modern and northern ideas to the ancient Orientals, who had not our delicate notions of the female character;' for this would only make my case stronger. It would be more abhorrent from the secluded, submissive character of Eastern brides to ask the gentlemen to come and kiss them, than it would be from the dignified confidence of British women. It is not a question of climate or age, but of *nature*. The bridegroom, who is supposed to love this fairest of women, himself puts into her lips this speech: 'Let him kiss me!' Never would human love speak thus. Though men like to court, they do not like to be courted; and while they think it cruel to be rejected when they court, they without mercy reject her that courts them; as the forward female has usually found, from the days of Sappho to this hour. Women were endowed with the form and the qualities intended to attract courtship, and they feel it; and when they do not feel it, men despise them. No man, therefore, in his senses, would think to compliment his fair one by writing of her, to her, as if she had lost her retiring modesty, her female dignity, and degraded [106]herself by doing that for which every man would despise her. The very first word of this Song, then, stands a witness against the notion of its being a human love-song; for it would better suit Solomon's strange woman, that with an impudent face caught and kissed the young simpleton, than Solomon's princess-bride, or Dr. Smith's supposed chaste monogamist. Till fishes mount to sing with larks on the shady boughs, and

nightingales dive to ocean's depths to court the whales, no man, of any age, of any clime, of any rank, can be supposed to write ordinary love-songs in such a style. We are told, by the first word, that a greater than Solomon is here, one who must be courted, and that loves more than human are the theme. This is the Bridegroom of whom the Psalmist says, 'He is thy Lord, and worship thou him:' 'Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way.' Such a spouse may exhibit his Bride as *asking* for his love; every other must present *himself* as asking for hers, and begging the acceptance of his."

It is allowed by scholars of taste, that, regarded as a mere human production, this poem is inimitable. "Every part of this Song," says the learned Bishop Bossuet,[147] "abounds in poetical beauties; the objects which present themselves on every side are the choicest plants, the most beautiful flowers, the most delicious fruits, the bloom and vigour of spring, the sweet verdure of the fields, flourishing and well-watered gardens, pleasant streams, and perennial fountains. The other senses are represented as regaled with the most precious odours, natural and artificial; with the sweet singing of birds, and the soft voice of the turtle; with milk and honey, and the choicest of wine. To these enchantments are added all that is beautiful and graceful in the human form, the endearments, the caresses, the delicacy of love. If any object be introduced which seems not to harmonize with this delightful scene, such as the

awful prospect of tremendous precipices, the wildness of the mountains, [107]or the haunts of lions, its effect is only to heighten, by the contrast, the beauty of the other objects, and to add the charms of variety to those of grace and elegance." Bishop Lowth, after having descanted upon some passages, remarks, "Nothing can be imagined more truly elegant and poetical than all these, nothing more apt or expressive than these comparisons."[148] If the poet is so charming in his style, so exquisite and true in his picture of nature, surely it is but reasonable to give him credit for understanding his art, that he was acquainted with the manners and habits of the women of his age, and that he would be as true to *nature* in the description of the bride as he is in depicting nature herself. If it be true that language of such exquisite taste would outrage female decency and modesty when addressed to *a human love*, it will surely be more outrageous when put into the mouth of the humble, penitent, and submissive Church in addresses to *the Lord of lords*. Where in the Old or New Testament do we find any address from the saints to God or Christ resembling the opening of this poem? The addresses of Abraham, (Gen. xviii. 23–33,) Jacob, (Gen. xxxii. 10–13,) and of Solomon himself, (1 Kings viii. 23–53,) and the language in which Christ has taught us to appeal to God, are characterized by the greatest reverence and humility. How, then, can it be affirmed, that language which would violate female modesty and decency in the mouth of a woman to a

lover whom she prizes above all things, is becoming in the mouth of the Church when addressing *the Holy One* of Israel?

Dr. Bennett, however, misunderstood the design of the book. The Song, in its literal meaning, does not *begin with representing a woman courting a man*, but describes how a humble and virtuous rustic maiden was taken away from her beloved into the court of Solomon, and tempted to transfer her affections, by the splendour and luxuries of royalty; but even there, amidst all the grandeur, and in spite of all alluring promises, the [108]maiden was faithful to her espousals, and desired that he whom she prized above all things would come and rescue her.

3. It is urged that the same language and imagery employed in the Song, and the bridegroom and the bride here introduced, are elsewhere spiritually applied to the Lord and his people.

“This sort of imagery,” says Professor Stuart, “is frequent in the Old Testament, and in the New. Frequently are the Jews charged with ‘going a *whoring* after other gods,’ Exod. xxxiv. 15, 16; Lev. xx. 5, 6; Numb. xv. 39; Deut. xxxi. 16; 2 Chron. xxi. 13; Ps. lxxiii. 27; Ezek. vi. 9. Here the idea is, that they were affianced to the true God, and could not seek after idols without incurring the guilt of adultery. So God calls himself the *husband* of the Jews, Isa. liv. 5. The nation of Israel is his *bride*, Isa. lxii. 4, 5. In Isa. l. 1, Jehovah asks, ‘Where is the bill

of divorcement' on his part, that Israel has departed from Him? Jeremiah speaks of the espousals of Israel, when young, in the wilderness.

"In Jer. iii. 1–11, the prophet speaks of Israel as playing the harlot, and committing adultery, in forsaking Jehovah. In Ezekiel, two long chapters (xvi., xxiii.) are occupied with carrying through the imagery drawn from such a connexion. Hosea (i.–iii.) recognises the same principle, and carries out the imagery into much detail. These are merely specimens. Ps. xlv. presents the Mediator, the King of Zion, in the attitude of a husband to the Church, and celebrates the union between the former and the latter. So in the New Testament this imagery is very familiar: see Matt. ix. 25; John iii. 29; Rev. xix. 7; xxi. 2. Especially consult 2 Cor. xi. 2, and Eph. v. 22–32, where the Apostle has gone into much particularity as to the duties of the marriage relation, and then avows that he 'speaks concerning Christ and the Church.'

"Such is the custom of the Hebrew writers and of the Apostles. If, now, this imagery is so often employed in all parts of the Bible, what forbids the idea, that there may be one short book in which it occupies an exclusive place, and is designed to [109]symbolize the love that existed between God and his ancient people, or the Church; or rather, which ought to have existed on their part between God and his spiritually regenerated people, who have become one (in a spiritual sense) with him, and are for ever

united to him? It cannot be shown, *à priori*, that it is even improbable."

First. What does this argument prove? Surely not what the representation of this poem IS; it only shows what *it might have been*. It shows that if we had *indubitable proof, as in the passages cited*, that a whole book in the sacred canon is entirely devoted to symbolize, under the figure of *husband* and *wife*, the covenant-relationship subsisting between *God* and *his people*, we ought not to be surprised at it, since it would be in harmony with those alleged passages. But surely it does not follow, that, because we are distinctly told in some passages of Scripture that the terms, husband and wife, are employed to symbolize the relationship between God and his people, that they should have this signification as often as they are employed.

Second. We utterly deny that the covenant-relation which subsisted between the Lord and Israel was represented by the terms, *husband* and *wife*, *before* the days of Solomon. The phrase, זנה אחרי אלהים אחרים ,*to go whoring after other gods*, to which reference has been made, does not mean that Israel, by worshipping idols, committed *spiritual adultery* against the true God to whom they were affianced,—thus presupposing God to be their *husband*, and Israel his *wife*,—but describes *a literal fact*, the libidinous orgies and prostitutions identified with heathen worship which the Jews indulged in when worshipping idols. Numb. xxv. 1; Hos. iv. 13, &c.

This is evident from Exod. xxxiv. 15, 17, where this phrase first occurs, and is applied to *heathen women* worshipping their *own* gods. And though these women stood in no such covenant-relation to the God of Israel, and therefore could not incur the guilt of *spiritual adultery*, yet they are described as "*whoring after* THEIR *gods*." [110]From these licentious rites, therefore, originated this phrase, afterwards used to describe the worship of idols. But even admitting that it does suggest a marriage relationship between God and his people, the distance between a *suggestive phrase* of this kind and an *entire book* of marital descriptions is so great, that the one cannot be reasonably supposed to have suggested the other.

Third. We deny that even the language used by the prophets *after* the days of Solomon, in the passages cited, is at all analogous to that of this poem. Let us examine some of the passages themselves. Isa. l. 1:—

"Where is the bill of your mother's divorce
With which I dismissed her?"

Isa. liv. 4–6:—

"Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed,
And be not abashed, for thou shalt not blush;
For thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth,
And the reproach of thy widowhood thou shalt remember no more.
For he weddeth thee who made thee.

Jehovah of hosts is his name,
And the Holy One of Israel redeemeth thee.
He is called the God of the whole earth.
For Jehovah calleth thee, as a forsaken wife, when spirit-broken,
And as a wife of youth when melting in repentance, saith thy Lord."

Isa. lxii. 4, 5:—

"No more shall it be said to thee, Thou forsaken!
And no more shall it be said to thy land, Thou desolate!
But thou shalt be called, The object of my delight,
And thy land, The married woman;
For Jehovah delighteth in thee,
And thy land shall be married;
For the young man shall marry the virgin;
Thy children shall marry thee;
And with the joy of a bridegroom over his bride
Shall thy God rejoice over thee."

Jer. iii. 20:—

"As a wife faithlessly departeth from her husband,
So have ye acted faithlessly towards me,
O house of Israel! saith Jehovah."

These, and several more of a similar kind, are the passages referred to, to prove that the bridegroom and bride in this Song mean the Lord and his people! How totally different [111]is the strain of thought and

expression in those passages to that in the Song!

In the former, the *wedded-relation* forms the comparison; in the latter, *ante-nuptial* love is the theme. In the former, the *general* idea of the figure is briefly used, without any particulars of the accompaniments; in the latter, particulars of the persons, dresses, scenery, are largely described. In the former, God is represented as the High and Holy One inhabiting eternity, and, in his infinite condescension and compassion, loving, with the tenderness of a husband, Israel, who is represented as an unlovely, ungrateful, and unfaithful wife; in the latter, the bridegroom and the bride are placed upon *an equality*, nay, the bridegroom declares that his heart has been ravished by the charms and faithfulness of the bride. In the former we are *distinctly told* that the husband means the Lord, and the wife the people of Israel, so that the most superficial reader is compelled to perceive it; in the latter we have *no intimation whatever* that the lovers are intended to represent God and his people, and no reader would ever gather it from the poem. This will appear all the more forcible when we remember that, supposing this poem to be a description of the covenant-relation subsisting between God and his people, it contains the completest representation of this kind. We should, therefore, naturally expect that subsequent writers, employing the same figure, would borrow something of the imagery and colouring from it. But, so far from this being the

case, there is not the slightest analogy between the strain of thought and expression of this poem and that of subsequent writers.

Fourth. The 45th Psalm, which is *supposed* to celebrate, allegorically, the union of the Messiah and the Church, has been adduced as analogous to the Song of Songs, and therefore an evidence in behalf of the allegorical interpretation.

“If we admit,” says Hengstenberg, “the allegorical interpretation of this Psalm, we shall also be obliged to drop the literal meaning of the Song of Songs.” [112]

Is it certain, however, that this Psalm is all allegory? The Psalm itself gives not the slightest intimation that it is to be understood in any other than its literal sense. Let us examine it:—

“My heart boils with good matter;
When I think my work is for the king,
My tongue becomes as a style of a quick writer.
Thou art beautiful, beautiful above the sons of men:
Charm is poured upon thy lips,
Therefore God has blessed thee for ever.
Gird thy sword on thy thigh, O hero!
Thy splendour and thy glory, yea, thy glory,
Ride on victoriously for truth and mildness and right.
Great things shall thy right hand teach thee!
Thy arrows are sharp—people fall under thee—
They dart into the heart of the king’s enemies!

Thy throne, O God, stands for ever and ever;
A sceptre of justice is the sceptre of thy kingdom;
Thou lovest right, and hatest wrong;
Therefore God, thy God, anointed thee
With gladdening oil above thy companions!
Myrrh, aloes, and cassia are all thy garments,
Out of ivory palaces stringed instruments joyfully greet thee;
Kings' daughters are among thy dear ones—
Upon thy right hand stands the queen in gold of Ophir.

Hear, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear;
Forget thy people and thy father's house,
That the king may desire thy beauty,
For he is thy Lord, and honour thou him.
O daughter of Tyre, now with presents
The rich of the people salute thy face.

The king's daughter stands in the palace in all the splendour,
Her clothing is of fabricated gold,
She is led to the king in wrought raiment;
Behind her are the virgins, her companions, brought for thee;
They are conducted with joy and rejoicing,
They enter the palace of the king.

Instead of thy fathers shall be thy sons;
Thou wilt set them as princes over the whole land.
I wilt celebrate thy name from generation to generation;

Therefore shall nations praise thee for ever and ever."

This Psalm is evidently a congratulatory nuptial-song, composed for the occasion of a king's marriage with a princess of Tyre. The sacred writer begins by stating that such is the greatness of the subject, that it awakens thoughts too big for [113]utterance; but recollecting that his work is for the king, at once his tongue is loosed, and glides as rapidly as the stylus of a quick writer (2). He then celebrates the king's beauty and eloquence, recognising in it God's blessing (3), his valour, symbolized by the conquering sword, the prosperous chariot, the terrible arm, the well-directed arrow (4–6), his divine throne, and love of justice (7), his great happiness, resulting from his love for justice (8), which consists in the splendour around him (9), in his magnificent harem, and especially in the new princess-bride at his right hand (10). Having gradually arrived at the subject which is the occasion of the poem, the sacred writer now addresses the bride, and, in accordance with Eastern custom, which represents brides as unwilling to leave their parents on the day of espousals (Comp. Deut. xxi. 13), telling her to forget her father's house, as she will have such glory as is just described (11, 12). The bride is then presented with gifts, according to Oriental manners, from the first ladies of the kingdom (13); she appears in all the splendour in the first palace (14), and thence conducted in grand

procession to the king's palace (15, 16). The marital procession now being over, the inspired writer congratulates the king, wishing him a happy issue (17), and concludes by saying that his renown will rapidly spread (18).

What is there in this Psalm compelling us to understand it allegorically? The quotation of the sixth verse in Hebrews i. 8, 9, only proves that *this verse* refers in a higher sense to the Messiah, but not that the *whole* Psalm is descriptive of him. Who would think of allegorizing the eighth chapter of Isaiah, because verses 17 and 18 are quoted in Hebrews ii. 13? The throne of David is declared to be an *everlasting* throne, 2 Sam. vii. 13, 16; a *throne of God*, i.e. a divine throne, since the Messiah was to be the last and *ever reigning* king. Hence it is said, וַיֵּשֶׁב שְׁלֹמֹה עַל כִּסֵּא יְהוָה לְמֶלֶךְ תַּחַת דָּוִיד אָבִיו, "and Solomon sat upon the *throne of Jehovah* as king instead of his father David."—1 Chron. xxix. 23. Every king, therefore, [114]of that lineage, occupying the throne, was regarded as the representative of God; as the predecessor and type of Him who was to be born of the seed of David to occupy the throne in the highest sense. So that, whether we translate כִּסְאֲךָ אֱלֹהִים *thy throne, O God*, taking אֱלֹהִים as *a vocative*, or *thy God-throne*, *i.e.* the throne committed to thee by God, or, *thou art seated upon a throne of God*, or regard the phrase as an *ellipsis* for כִּסְאֲךָ כִּסֵּי אֱלֹהִים, *thy throne is a throne of God*, comes substantially to the same thing. It is, therefore, a groundless assertion, that the whole

Psalm is an allegory, and the reference to it in proof of the allegorical interpretation of the poem before us is nugatory.

But, even admitting that the 45th Psalm is an allegory, this would by no means prove that the Song of Songs is also an allegory, for the two cases differ essentially. In the former the bridegroom is addressed in verse 8 as *God*, and this verse is quoted in the New Testament, whereas in the latter there is nothing of the kind.

4. The custom of oriental nations to express their religious and devotional sentiments under the disguise of amatory and drinking songs has been adduced as an argument in favour of the allegorical interpretation of the Song of Songs.

"The durweesh,"[149] says Lane, "pointed out the following poem as one of those most common at Zikrs, and as one which was sung at the Zikr which I have begun to describe. I translated it verse for verse, and imitate the measure and system of the original, with this difference only, that the first, third, and fifth lines of each stanza rhyme with each other in the original, but not in my translation.

'With love my heart is troubled,
And mine eyelid hindereth sleep:
My vitals are dissever'd,
While with streaming tears I weep.

[115]

My union seems far distant,
Will my love e'er meet mine eye?
Alas! did not estrangement
Draw my tears, I would not sigh.

'By dreary nights I'm wasted,
Absence makes my hopes expire;
My tears, like pearls, are dropping,
And my heart is wrapt in fire.
Whose is like my condition?
Scarcely know I remedy.
Alas! did not estrangement
Draw my tears, I would not sigh.

'O turtle dove! acquaint me
Wherefore thus dost thou lament?
Art thou so stung by absence?
Of thy wings deprived, and pent?
He saith, 'Our griefs are equal;
Worn away with love, I lie.'
Alas! did not estrangement
Draw my tears, I would not sigh.

'O First and Everlasting!
Show thy favour yet to me.
Thy slave, Ahh'mad El-Bek'ree,[150]
Hath no Lord excepting Thee.
By Tá-Há,[151] the great prophet,
Do thou not his wish deny.
Alas! did not estrangement

Draw my tears, I would not sigh.'

"I must translate a few more lines, to show more strongly the similarity of these songs to that of Solomon; and lest it should be thought that I have varied the expressions, I shall not attempt to translate into verse. In the same collection of poems sung at Zikrs is one which begins with these lines:—

'O gazelle from among the gazelles of El-Yem'en!
I am thy slave without cost;
O thou small of age, and fresh of skin!
O thou who art scarce past the time of drinking milk!'

"In the first of these verses we have a comparison exactly agreeing with that in the concluding verse of Solomon's Song; for the word which, in our Bible, is translated a 'roe,' is used in Arabic as synonymous with *ghaza'l* (or a gazelle); [116]and the mountains of El-Yem'en are 'the mountains of spices.' This poem ends with the following lines:—

'The phantom of thy form visited me in my slumber.
I said, "O phantom of slumber! who sent thee?"
He said, "He sent me whom thou knowest;
He whose love occupies thee!"
The beloved of my heart visited me in the darkness of night;
I stood, to show him honour, until he sat down.
I said, "O thou my petition, and all my desire,
Hast thou come at midnight, and not feared the

watchmen?"
He said to me, "I feared, but, however, love
Had taken from me my soul and my breath."'

"Compare the above with the second and five following verses of the fifth chapter of Solomon's Song. Finding that songs of this description are extremely numerous, and almost the only poems sung at Zikrs; that they are composed for this purpose, and intended only to have a spiritual sense (though certainly not understood in such a sense by the generality of the vulgar); I cannot entertain any doubt as to the design of Solomon's Song."

To this we cannot do better than quote the able reply of Dr. Noyes:—"Now, as to the first of these religious love-songs of the Mahometan dervishes, whatever slight resemblance it may have to any part of the Canticles, it differs essentially from any of them in the circumstance, that the Supreme Being is expressly introduced as the object of worship. Without this essential circumstance, no one could tell whether it were originally composed for a love-song, or a religious hymn expressing a longing for a union of the soul with God, according to the Sufi philosophy and religion.

"In the second poem, quoted by Mr. Lane, it is to be regretted that he did not quote the whole of it; for I can by no means admit the circumstance, that it was sung by the dervishes in their morning devotions, to be conclusive in regard to the original design of the

hymn. Mr. Lane expressly tells us, in a note, that he found the last six lines inserted, with some slight alterations, as a common love-song, in a portion of the 'Thousand and One Nights,' printed at Calcutta, vol. i. [117]p. 225; Lane's translation, ii. p. 349. Whether the whole was originally composed as a love-song or a devotional hymn, does not appear from the parts of it which Mr. Lane gives us. If in the parts omitted there is any clear reference to the Deity, it is unlike any of the Canticles. If there is no such reference, the meaning of the hymn is too doubtful to allow any inference to be drawn from it. For we might as well allow the singing of Dr. Watts's version of the Canticles to be an argument for their original design, as to admit the singing of the mystic dervishes to be an evidence of the original design of the hymns.

"Before making some general remarks on this whole subject of attempting to show the character of the Canticles by reference to the pantheistic poetry of the Mahometan Sufis, it may be well to mention that reference has been made even to the poets of Hindostan for the same purpose; especially to the Gitagovinda, the production of a celebrated Hindoo poet, named Jayadeva. This appears to be a mystical poem, designed to celebrate the loves of Crishna and Radha, or the reciprocal attraction between the divine goodness and the human soul. Now, whatever may be the resemblance between the Gitagovinda and Canticles in some of their imagery, there is this

essential difference, that, in the former, Crishna was the chief incarnate god of the Hindoos,[152] and that there are references to other gods, and to various superstitions of the Hindoo mythology; whilst in the Canticles there is no reference to any but human characters. Besides, the author of the Gitagovinda clearly intimates its religious character in the conclusion of the poem.

"We have seen, then, that there are material differences between the Canticles and the religious love-songs to which [118]reference has been made. But supposing the resemblance to be much greater than it is, those mystical songs do not in any essential respect resemble the Canticles more than they do the odes of Anacreon, or some of the eclogues of Virgil, and the idyls of Theocritus. And it is not easy to see why the resemblance does not prove the religious character of the odes of Anacreon as much as that of the Canticles.

"But, after all, the great objection remains to any conclusion drawn from the pantheistic mystic poets, whether of Persia or India, whether Mahometans or Hindoos, namely, that their productions are founded on a religion and philosophy entirely different from the Jewish. The Canticles are productions of a different country, and separated from any of the songs of the Sufi poets by an interval of nearly two thousand years. The Jewish religion has nothing in common with the pantheistic mysticism on which those songs are founded. There is nothing in the Old

Testament of a similar character. If any production similar to those mystical love-songs had existed in the religious literature of the Hebrews, undoubtedly we should have found some in the Book of Psalms, which comprises compositions from the age preceding that of David to a period long after the return of the Jews from the captivity at Babylon. But in the most fervent Psalms, the forty-second, for instance, nothing of the kind is found. Neither is anything similar to those mystic songs ascribed to the Jewish sect, as described by Josephus and Philo. Nothing of the kind is laid to the charge of the Essenes. It is needless to say, that nothing approaching to the like character is found in the New Testament. Nothing similar is discovered even in the allegorical paraphrase of the Targumist on the Canticles. All those religious love-songs are founded on the Sufi religion, or rather religious philosophy, which, whether it was borrowed from India, as Von Hammer supposes, or arose independently among the Mahometans, according to the opinion of Tholuck, has no connexion with, or resemblance to, the Jewish. It is as different [119]from the latter as darkness from light. The argument, therefore, which is drawn from the mystical songs of the Mahometan devotees for ascribing a mystical character to the Canticles, is without foundation."[153]

REASONS AGAINST THE ALLEGORICAL

INTERPRETATION.

1. In every allegory, or parable, employed in the Scripture, or in any good human composition, something is wrought into its texture to indicate most unmistakably its allegorical design; that, under the garb of an immediate representation, is conveyed one more remote. Thus, in the 80th Psalm, 9–17, where Israel is represented under the allegory of a vine which came out of Egypt, the design is distinctly wrought into the texture of the allegory. The expression, *heathen* (גּוֹיִם) at the very beginning of the allegory, and especially the words, "*the Son* whom thou hast chosen for thyself," (עַל בֵּן אִמַּצְתָּה לָּךְ) in the second clause of verse 15, which, when compared with "*the Son of man*, whom thou hast chosen for thyself," (עַל בֶּן אָדָם אִמַּצְתָּ לָּךְ) in verse 17, are evidently explanatory of the words, "and protect what thy right hand hath planted," (וְכַנָּה אֲשֶׁר נָטְעָה יְמִינֶךָ) in the first clause, clearly to show the more remote concealed under the immediate representation. Thus, also, in the allegory of the vineyard, and by the prophet Isaiah (chap. v.), we are distinctly told, in verse 7, that "the vineyard of Jehovah of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are his pleasant plantation." Compare also Judges ix. 7–20; 2 Kings xiv. 9, 10; Ezek. xvi., xxxvii. 1–14; the parables of our Saviour, Acts x. 10–17; Gal. iv. 22–31. Now, if the author of this poem had intended it to be understood allegorically, he would have given some indication to that effect; especially

since the allegories occasionally used in some parts of this very book, chap. iv. 12, v. 1, vii. 7, 8, are rendered plain and obvious. As there is, however, not the slightest [120]intimation in the whole of this lengthy poem that it is designed to be allegorical, we are unwarranted to assume it. To take one portion of the Scriptures allegorically, without even an obscure hint of it in the writing itself, is to violate the established laws of language, and to expose all other portions of the sacred volume to a similar treatment. If one chooses to allegorize one part without any sanction, another may choose to allegorize another. But we have no right to depart from the literal and obvious meaning, without some authority for it from the inspired writer. This argument is applicable to every allegorical interpretation, whether historical or hieroglyphical, whether political or metaphysical.

2. The total silence of our Lord and his apostles respecting this book is against its allegorical interpretation. If this Song, according to the first and last allegorisers, “celebrates the glories of the Messiah, and all the mercies which through him flow to the people of God,” it is more spiritual and more evangelical than any other portion of the Old Testament; surpassing even the writings of Isaiah, who is called the fifth Evangelist, and is, in fact, what Origen called it, “The Holy of Holies.” Is it possible, then, that our Saviour, and his apostles, who, in their disputations with the Jews, so frequently quoted the prophecies of Isaiah and other

passages of the Old Testament, far less evangelical and Messianic, would never have referred to this book? Is it possible that the apostle Paul, who so frequently describes the relation of Christ to the Church by the union subsisting between husband and wife (2 Cor. xi. 2, Rom. vii. 4, Eph. v. 23–32), would be silent about a book which, more than any other in the Old Testament, sets forth that union? The fact, therefore, that our Saviour and his apostles never once refer to this book is against the allegorical interpretation.

3. Is Solomon the man from whom a production of such preeminent spirituality and evangelical truth could have been reasonably expected? Is there anything in his private history, [121]his habits of thought, his moral inclinations, or in the general tone and tendency of his religious emotions, at any period of his life, as far as they can be gathered from his history and writings, that would lead us to anticipate such evangelical piety as this interpretation presupposes? The same agreement which exists between ordinary writers and their productions is perceptible in the inspired records. Inspiration, like Providence, selected the fittest instruments for its work. Thus, between the history of Moses and his writings, of David and his writings, of Paul and his writings, of John and his writings, a natural uniformity exists; and so of other sacred authors. Accordingly, we have not only to suppose Solomon to have been more spiritually-minded than

any under the Jewish economy, but to have stood upon a level with the most enlightened and Christ-loving under the present dispensation, in order to write in such a strain. Where is any such qualification in Solomon, even remotely intimated in any part of Scripture? The wisdom which he asked, which he received, and for which he gained celebrity, was that displayed in his civil government, in social and moral teaching, of which the first-fruit was given in the decision upon the litigation of the two mothers. The poetry which he wrote, consisting of one thousand and five songs, upon natural history, not having been deemed worthy of a place in the sacred canon, shows that his muse did not indulge in a devotional strain. The Book of Ecclesiastes, which is attributed to him by tradition, is the experience of a thorough-going worldling and libertine, and a confession to men rather than God. The extensive harem which he had, displays his inordinate desire for revels and foreign women, which in old age inveigled him into the practice of idolatry. “His wives,” as the Scriptures teach us, “turned away his heart after other gods.” And the last we hear of him is, that “his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of his father David.” Is this, then, the man whose love-song is to be regarded as pre-eminently [122]spiritual, and to be exalted as more evangelically rapturous than any other portion of Holy Writ? To what period of his life is this pre-eminent piety to be assigned? If to the latter, that is the period of his greatest degeneracy; if to the

former, how are we to reconcile his apostasy with so high a degree of spirituality? It is difficult to conceive of such a mind as that of Solomon brought at any time into sympathy with the prevailing allegorical exposition of this Song. Who can conceive that he who caused an irreparable breach in his kingdom should represent *himself* as the Prince of Peace, or that he who was the embodiment of the carnal propensities should describe, under the figure of *chaste love*, the union of Christ and his Church? It is inconceivable. As David was not qualified to build the temple, because he had been a man of war, and had shed blood, so Solomon was not qualified to write in such a spiritual strain concerning Christ and his Church as the prevailing allegorical exposition of this Song, because he had been a man of lust, and had turned aside to idolatry.

4. For the same reason we cannot conceive that any other writer would represent the Messiah as symbolized by Solomon. Is it conceivable that he of whom the whole congregation of Israel complained to Rehoboam, “Thy father made our yoke grievous—now, therefore, make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, light,” would be chosen to represent the Saviour of the world, “whose yoke is easy, and his burden light?” We can understand why the painter of the Judgment Scene, among the celebrated frescoes in the cloisters of the Campo Santo at Pisa, in Italy, in which the righteous and the wicked are gathered in

their respective positions, placed Solomon midway between them, as an intimation of his inability to determine to which he belonged; but we cannot understand how an inspired writer could choose Solomon, whose lusts were displayed in the revels of an Eastern harem, and who was seduced to practise idolatry, to represent Him who was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and [123]separate from sinners," together with the pure and holy union subsisting between him and the Church.

5. In the allegorical interpretation language is attributed to Christ inconsistent with his dignity and purity. It is almost blasphemous to suppose Christ thus to address his Church:—

"The circuits of thy thighs are like ornaments,
The work of a master's hand.
Thy navel is a round goblet,
Let not spiced wine be wanted in it!
Thy growth is like a palm tree,
And thy bosom like its clusters:
I long to climb this palm tree,
I long to clasp its branches.
May thy bosom be unto me
As the cluster of the vine,
And the odour of thy breath
As that of apples."—Chap. vii. verses 2, 3, 7, 8.

This is the language of seduction, but it is blasphemous when put into the mouth of Him who spake as never man spake.

6. The fact that *three* individuals are the principal persons represented in this Song, and not *two*, is subversive of the allegorical theory. That the poem speaks of three individuals, a shepherd, a shepherdess, and a king, and that the shepherd, and not the king, is the object of the maiden's affections, will be evident to every unbiassed reader of the book, and has been recognised by some of the Rabbins of the middle ages. For the sake of avoiding repetition, we refer the reader to the commentary, where the passages pointing out the distinctions of persons are dwelt upon at large.

THE TYPICAL INTERPRETATION.

The defenders of this view maintain that *this book records an historical fact; that it celebrates the nuptials of Solomon with the daughter of Pharaoh, or some other heathen princess; and that this marriage typically represents the union of Christ with the Gentiles*. [124]

REASONS AGAINST THIS NUPTIAL THEORY.

As we concur with those who seek "*nothing more than a general resemblance*" between the history recorded in this poem and the experience of the people of God, we have merely to state here our reasons for rejecting their view of the narrative.

No direct mention is made in any part of this long poem of the marriage ceremony, nor of any circumstance connected with it. The bride is described as a shepherdess and keeper of the vineyards (chap. i. 6; ii. 15; viii. 12, &c.); as walking in the streets in the night to seek her beloved, and as being beaten by the watchmen (iii. 1–4; v. 6, &c.); which are incompatible with the notion that she was Pharaoh's daughter, or any other princess. Besides, the bridegroom is not a king, but a shepherd; Compare chap. i. 7, ii. 8, and v. 2–4. These, and other considerations which might have been mentioned, are entirely subversive of this nuptial theory.

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SECTION VII.—AUTHOR, DATE, AND FORM OF THE BOOK.

The *title* of this poem designates Solomon as the author, but internal evidence is against it. The writer mentions David in such a manner as if he were not his father (iv. 4). The words, "Solomon *had* a vineyard," (כֶּרֶם הָיָה לִשְׁלֹמֹה)in viii. 11, show that the author was not a contemporary of Solomon. The subject, especially of the poem, is decisive against Solomon's authorship. It is impossible that he should describe himself as having attempted to gain the espoused affections of a country maiden, and being defeated by her virtue. The title is evidently the addition of some other person; for the author of the book never uses the pronoun אֲשֶׁר but invariably employs the form שׁ; nor would he announce his own production as "*the finest or most celebrated Song*." [125]

The exact *date* of this poem has been much disputed. The powerful and fluent style in which it is written, the originality of the figures, the freshness of the landscapes, the life-like descriptions of local circumstances, the imagery drawn from the royal court of Solomon, the horses of Pharaoh, the tower

of David, the tower of Solomon, the pools of Heshbon, show that the poem must have been written in the most flourishing age of the Hebrew language, and about the time of Solomon. The Aramaisms, which used formerly to be adduced in order to transfer the book to an age after the captivity, are now rightly rejected by modern critics as inconclusive, since almost every poetical composition of the earliest age contains such Aramaisms. The word פַּרְדֵּס (iv. 13), to which a Persian etymology has been assigned, and which has especially been used to show the late period of this poem, is of a Shemitic origin. See Comment, *in loco*. The form, שׁ for אֲשֶׁר is also used in Judges v. 7, vi. 17, vii. 12, viii. 26, and דָּוִיד with *god* in Amos vi. 5, ix. 11, Hos. iii. 5.

The *form* of the book has also been a matter of great dispute. From its earliest age it has been regarded as one continued poem in a dramatic form. Since the time of Richard Simon, however, who pronounced this book, "*summam confusionem, in quo vix ac ne vix quidem personas discernere queas*,"[154] it has been split by many into fragments, and in turn been regarded as consisting of a number of eclogues, or armorets, as an epithalamium, or nuptial song, and as a regular drama. Having traced the unity of the poem in Section III., we need not again show the unsoundness of the fragmentary theory, which originated from a misunderstanding of the design of the book. It seems to approach nearest in form to a *drama*. Yet we

cannot think, with Ewald and others, that it is a regular *drama*. The genius, character, and manners of the Shemitic nations, their deficiency in plastic art, and their aversion to females appearing on a public stage, seem to militate against it. [126]

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SECTION VIII.—EXEGETICAL HELPS.

ANCIENT VERSIONS.

1. The Septuagint, being the oldest version, occupies the first place; its deviations from the Hebrew have generally been noticed in the Commentary.

2. The Vulgate, which chiefly follows the Septuagint.

3. The Syriac, which is far superior to the Vulgate.

JEWISH COMMENTATORS.

4. Rashi, found in Buxtorf's Rabbinical Bible.

5. Rashbam, recently printed for the first time.

6. Ibn Ezra; found in Rabbinical Bible.

7. Immanuel, MS. in the British Museum.

8. An Anonymous MS. Commentary in the Bodleian.

9. Philippson, an excellent modern commentator.

CHRISTIAN COMMENTATORS.

10. Wilcock, an old writer.

11. Bishop Lowth, Praelect. xxx., xxxi.

12. Bishop Percy, Commentary and Annotations.

13. Michaelis, Notes to Bishop Lowth's Praelect.

14. Jacobi, Das Gerettete Hohelied.

15. Durell, Critical Remarks on Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles.

16. Williams, The Song of Songs.

17. Good, The Song of Songs.

18. Umbreit, Lied der Liebe.

19. Ewald, Das Hohe Lied Salomonis, &c.

20. Döpke, Philologisch-critischer Comment.

21. Rosenmüller, Scholia in Vet. Test.

22. Hirzel, Das Lied der Lieder.

23. Magnus, Kritische Bearbeitung und Erklärung des Hohen Liedes.

24. Noyes, A New Translation of the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Canticles.

25. Heligstedt's Continuation of Maurer's Commentary, which, by an oversight, is omitted in the Historical Sketch, deserves special mention: Leipzig, 1847.

26. Delitzsch, Das Hohe Lied untersucht und ausgelegt.

27. Hengstenberg, Das Hohe Lied Salomonis.

28. Meier, Das Hohe Lied in deutscher Uebersetzung.

29. Friedrich, Cantici Canticorum.

30. Hitzig, 16th Lief. des Kurzg. Exeg. Handb.

For a further description of the dates and places of these commentaries, see the Historical Sketch. [127]

[1] אמר ר"ש בן עזאי מקובל אני מפי שבעים ושנים זקנים ביום שהושיבו את ר' אליעזרבן עוריה בישובה ששיר השירם וקהלת מטמאים את הירים. אמר ר' עקיבה חם ושלום לא נחלק אדם מישראל עד שיר השירים שלא תטמא את הידים שאין כל העולם כדאי כיום שכתן בו שיר השירים לישראל, שכל הכובים קרש ושיר השירים קדש קושים. As the phrase מטמא את הידים, *polluting the hands*, has recently been quoted by Dr. Davidson (The Text of the Old Testament, &c. p. 796), in direct contrariety to its meaning, we shall here give an explanation of it. Let it be observed, that in the Mishna, whence the above passage is quoted, the phrase is applied to *all* the Holy Scriptures (כל כתבי הקדש מטמאין את הידים).The reason of this is given in the Talmud, (Sabbath, 14 a,) where the question is asked, why Holy Writ is reckoned among the eighteen subjects which are decreed as *polluting the hands*? The answer there given is, because the Theruma-food and the Thorah, both being regarded as holy, used to be placed near each other. When it was afterwards discovered that the sacred books were thereby exposed to danger (damage by mice), the Rabbins decreed that they should henceforth be regarded as *unclean*, in order to prohibit them from coming in contact with those sacred eatables. Hence the decree כל כתבי הקדש מטמאין את הידים ,*all Holy Scripture pollutes the hands*, which exclusively applies to *holy*, i.e. inspired books. Wherever, therefore, it is said that a book is מטמא את הידים ,*polluting the hands*, it affirms that it is canonical; and when it is said אין מטמא את הידים ,*it does not pollute the hands*, it means that the book is not canonical. Thus we are told שיר השירים מטמא את הידים שנאמר ברוח הקדש ,"the Song of Songs *pollutes the hands because it is inspired*." And of the non-canonical ספר בן סירי וכל הספרים שנכתבו מכאן ואליך אינן מטמאין את הידים ,"The book of the Son of Sirach, and all the books written from that time and afterwards, *do not pollute the hands*." ↑

[2] Baba Bathra, 14. ↑

[3] Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. iv. 26. ↑

[4] For a full elucidation of this verse, see Henderson, “Divine Inspiration,” pp. 219–224. ↑

[5] See Gesenius, Lexicon in voce. ↑

[6] Herodotus, i. 196. ↑

[7] Ælian, V. H. iv. 1. Strabo, xvi. 745. ↑

[8] Homer, Odyss. viii. 318, &c.; Pausanias, iii. 12, 2. ↑

[9] Tacitus, Germ. xviii. ↑

[10] Michaelis, the Laws of Moses, § 85; Rosenmüller, Orient. i. p. 132, &c.; Grant’s Nestorians, p. 214; Perkins, Eight Years in Persia, p. 236. ↑

[11] Est. ii. 3, 14, 15; iv. 4; Joseph. Ant. lib. xv. c. 7, 4. ↑

[12] Plutarch’s Lives. Themistocles. ↑

[13] Alexander, History of Women, Introd. p. vii. ↑

[14] Lane, Arabian Nights, Vol. I. pp. 38, 39. ↑

[15] Euripides, Iphi. in Aulis. ↑

[16] Ant. lib. iv. c. 8, 15. ↑

[17] Hilochoth Eduth, c. ix. 1. ↑

[18] This is the date according to Aristobulus, which has, however, been questioned. See Frankel, Vorstudien zu der Septuaginta; De Wette, Einleitung, §§ 40, 41; Herzog, Real-Encyklopädie für protestantische Theologie, art. Alexandrinische Bibelübersetzung; Kitto, Cyclop. Bib. Lit., under Septuagint. ↑

[19] Hävernick’s Einleitung Dritter Theil, p. 475. ↑

[20] Ewald, p. 34. Döpke, philologisch-critischer Commentar zum Hohenliede, p. 34. ↑

[21] Vide Kitto, Cyclop. Bib. Lit., art. Wisdom of Jesus; De Wette, Einleitung, § 316. ↑

[22] Keil, in Hävernick’s Einleitung Dritter Theil, p. 476. ↑

[23] Das Hohelied Salomonis, p. 254. ↑

[24] Vide Kitto, Cyclop. Bib. Lit., under, Wisdom of Solomon; De Wette, Einleitung, § 314. ↑

[25] Rosenmüller, Scholia, p. 270, sqq. Delitzsch, Das Hohelied, p. 66. ↑

[26] Cont. Apion. 1. § 8. ↑

[27] Kleuker, Samlung der Gedichte Salomon's, p. 54. Hengstenberg, p. 255. ↑

[28] Vide Stuart on the Old Testament Canon, sect. 12, p. 245. Davidson's Edit. Henderson, Divine Inspiration, p. 349. ↑

[29] Succa ad fin. ↑

[30] Torath Cohanim. Tosiftha Synhedrin, c. 7. Aboth di R. Nathan, c. 27. Graetz, Geschichte der Juden, Dritter Band, p. 211. ↑

[31] Vide Jost, Allgemeine Geschichte des Israelitischen Volkes (1850), Zweiter Band, pp. 63, 130, sqq. 153, Graetz, Geschichte der Juden, Dritter Band, p. 210. Vierter Band, pp. 243–246, 441–443, 446, 473. Zunz, Vorträge, p. 52. ↑

[32] א"ר יהושע בן לוי מאי דכתיב צרור המור רודי לי בן סרי ילין אמר' כנסת ישראל לפני הקב"ה רב"ש ע"ש אף ע"ס שמיצר ומימר לי דורי גף שרי ילין אשכול הכופר דודי לי בכרמי עפ גדי מי סהכל טלו מכפר לי על עון גדי סכרמתי לי מאי משמע דהאי כרמי לישנא דמכניש הרה אמר בר זוטרא בריה דרב נחמן כדתנן כסא של כינס שכורמי עליו את הכלים: וא"ר יהושע בן לוי מאי דכתיב לחייר כערגת הבושם כל דיבור ודיבור שיצא מפי הקב"ה נתמלא כל העולם כולו בשמים ופיון שמדיביר ראשון נתמלא דיבור שני להכין הלך חוציא הקב"ה חרוח מאוצרותיו והיה מעביר ראשון ראשון שו"א שפתותיו שושנים נוטפות מור עובר אל היקרי שושנים אלא ששונים: וא"ר יהושע בן לוי כל דיבור וריבור שיצא מפי הקב"ה יצתה נשמתן של ישראל שנ"א נפשי יצאה בדברו ומאחר שמדיבור ראשון יצתה נשמתן דיבור שני היאן קיבלו הוריד טל שעתיד להחיות בו מתים והחיה אותם שנא" נשם נרבות חניף אלהים נחלת. ונלאה אתה כוננתה. מסנת שבת פח ↑

[33] Daily Bible Illustrations, the Song of Songs, p. 449. ↑

[34] Einleitung in das Alte Testament, Zweite Auflage, Erster Theil, Erste Abtheilung, § 82, p. 401. ↑

[35] The Hebrew word יין, consisting of two י 20, and ן 50, caused this explanation. This mode of interpretation is called גֵּימַטְרִיָא, *Gematria*, γεωμετρία, each letter of the word being taken according to its numerical value and the text interpreted accordingly. ↑

[36] This interpretation is derived from reducing the word בך to its numerical value, 22. See note on verse 1. ↑

[37] Vide supra, p. 26. ↑

[38] Hieros. Berach. p. 3. b. ↑

[39] Vide supra, p. 26. ↑

[40] *Ibid.* p. 28. ↑

[41] Comp. Wolfii Bibl. Rabbin. Vol. i. pp. 932–936; Ewald und Dukes, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Alten Auslegung und Spracherklärung des Alten Testamentes, Zweites Bändchen, p. 5, seqq. We must confess that Dukes' arguments, here produced against the genuineness of this commentary, appear inconclusive. Such an allegorical exposition is just what might have been expected from Saadias, judging from his predilection for Rabbinisms and allegorising, which appears in his translation of the Pentateuch. Moreover, רבים מההלקים does not necessarily imply *commentaries written before* Saadias, but may refer to the opinions of some of his contemporaries. It is, however, probable that the translator of it into Hebrew has omitted some verbal explanations, deeming them unnecessary for his purpose. ↑

[42]שיר השירים דע אחי כי תמצא רבים מתחלקים בפירוש שיר השירים ובאמת הם מתהלקים שנמשל שיר השירים למנעולים שברחו מפתחותיהן ויש אומרים שהוא נאמר על מלכות בני ישראל ויש אומרים על ימות המשיח ויש אומרים בעבור הגלרת ומשיה ואומרים כי דודי הוא משיח וכלה התורה וזה חטא [37]וטעות גדול וראש כפרנות, אבל האמת כי דודי הק"בה שנאמר אשירה נא לידידי שירת דודי לכרמו ו פרש אותו ישעיה הנביא ואמר כי כרם ה' צבאות בית ישראל וזכר שלמה בזה הספר מיציאת מצרים עד אחר ימות המשיח והמשיל לישראל עם הק"בה לחתן עם כלה שהוא קרוב אליה והיא קרובה אליו וכשבא עמה בראשונה מבית אביה קראה רעיתי וכשהגיע עמה לביתו קראה כלתי וכשמצאה חן בעיניו קרא אותה אחותי ושבח אותה מהראש ועד הרגלים וכשקצף עליה אחר כך שבה היא והללה אותו מהראש ועד הרגלים אחר כך שב הוא והלל אותה פעם שניה ובשלא נכון לבא החתן עם הכלה אלא בשטר ועדים לכך תחלת דבור שלמה אמר ישקני מנשיקות פיהו הטעם הם המצות והחקים שנתן הק"כה לישראל ל ידי מושה ואהרן ומדים הצדיקים והוא תורה שבכתב ותורה שבל פה ד שיבא לישראל שם טוב בערלם בחכמתם שנאמר ויבא לך שם בגוים ביופיך כי כליל הוא עד שרבו אומות העולם להכנס תהת כנפי חשכינה ולהתגייר והם ערב רב ויתרו ואהרים ולכך אמר לריח שמניך טובים והטעם שנסה הק"בה ממצרים

עד בואם בארץ כנען אם הולכים בדרכיו שנאמר לכתך אחרי במדכר כארץ וגו".

משכני הטעם אומר בזה הפסוק הילוך ישראל ביראת קב ’ה וכיון ששמעו עשר דברות בששה כסיון ועשיית העגל בי ’ז בתמוז תמה שלמה ואמר בעבורם

שחורה אני הטעם שחורה ונאוה שחורה בעבודת העגל ונאוה בשומען עשר דברות ואמרו ישראל ששכח עונם בשלשת אלפי איש רשעי ישראל שעבדו ע ’ז שהרגו נגד השמש לכפר חטא גדול שנאמר כ, אתה עשית בסתר ואני אעשה נגד כל ישראל ונגד השמש והאומות שמוני נוטרת עבודת אלהים אחרים שעבדתי עבודה זרה שנאנמר וימירו את כבודם בתכנית שור אוכל עשב ↑

[43] Vide Sachs, Religiöse Poesie der Juden in Spanien, p. 267. Zunz, die Synagogale Poesie des Mittelalters, pp. 63, 64. ↑

[44] This refers to the giving of the Law, and God’s speaking face to face. Compare the Chaldee on the verse. ↑

[45] Through receiving the law Israel was anointed, *i.e.*, became wise, and the fame of their wisdom was diffused abroad. Compare Saadias on the passage. ↑

[46] *i.e.*, Let the guiding Pillar allure us in the path of obedience. ↑

[47] *i.e.*, Swarthy through the sin of the calf, comely through the reception of the Law. Compare the Chaldee. ↑

[48] Zunz, Zeitschrift für die Wissenschaft des Judenthums, 1823, p. 272, seqq. Jost, Allgemeine Geschichte des Israelitischen Volkes, Zweiter Band, p. 374. ↑

[49] Introduction to the Commentary. ↑

[50] Introduction to the Commentary. ↑

[51] Commentar zu Kohelot und dem Hohen Liede von R. Samuel ben Meier herausgegeben von Adolph Jellineck. Leipz. 1855. This Commentary has just been published for the first time, edited by the learned Adolph Jellineck, [43]who constantly enriches the Hebrew literature by bringing before the public some ancient writings. ↑

[52] See Zunz, zur Literatur und Geschichte, i. 70, 71. ↑

[53] Introduction to the Commentary. ↑

[54] See Reland, Analecta Rabbinica, Vitæ celeberrimorum

Rabbinorum, p. 69–80. Fürst, Biblioth. Judaica, i. p. 251–257. Herzog, Realencyklopädie, art. Aben Ezra. ↑

55 Introduction to the Second Gloss. ↑

56 Introduction to the First Gloss. ↑

57 Preface to the Commentary. ↑

58פירוש ן כספי. אמר יוסין כספי אחר שקדם לזו פי׳ קהלת ומשלי שהבר שלמה ע״ה בחכמתו ראוי לנו שנכתוב דברים מה בפי׳ שיר השירים שחבר גם כן שלמה ע ״ה, ואין אני צריך לפרש המלות כי כבר פירשום לפני, לכן לא אדבר רק על כונת הספר הזה בכלל, וארמוז רמזים בפרטים, זגם זאת הכוונה לא מלבי, כי המאור המאיר לאדץ האיר עינינו בזה כשהודיעו זה ובפרט פרק נ״א משלשי, ודי בו באוהו רמז לנו ולדומי לנו, ולכן אומר שאין ספק אצלי שזה הספר הוא מן ממין השוי מן המשלים שזכר המורה ז״ל בתחלת ספרו שאיז כל מלה יש במשל לענין הנמשל כמו שהוא הענין באותה הפרשה שזכר שגם הוא מעניני החשוק והחשוקה כמו שהוא ענין זה הספר, רק שאין הענינים שוים בוה, כי אותו הספור הוא משל לדבוק החמרי והצורה הטבעית, וזה הספר הוא משל לדבוק השכל הפועל עם שכל האדם, שהוא נחלק לד׳ מינים, זהנכבד שבם הוא השכל הנאצל, ולכן כוון שלמה ע״ה לרמזו בכל זה הספר בפרט ואם הענין נאות לכלל, ולכן היותר מדוקדק הוא שקרא היפה בנשים זה הכח היותר יקר, וקרא הרוד הנעים השכל הפעל. אבל ג״כ כוון לרמוז על כלל הנפש המדברת, פי זה צריך במשלנו בכמה מקומות בזה הספר, וידוע כי זה השכל הפועל הוא[48]]המניע המעורר ואת הנפש עד שיבא מן הכח אל הפועל, כמו שירוע ליודע החכמות, וגם תצטרך הנפש שתדרוש אותו שכתו״, אם תדרשו וימצא לך, ואחר שיבארנו וה הענין בכלל, אין לנו צורך מבאר פרטי המאמרים ואין טעם מיוחר במכוון רק במעט מהם להעיר על זה ער שרובו שהוא כללו אינו רק יפויים ותקויים דרך מלאכת השיר וידועת הגיון וזה הודיענו שלמה ע״ה בראש ספרו וא׳ שיר השירים, יודע עוד ענין כולל והוא כי שלמה ע״ה חבר ג, ספרים הנמצאים בידינו, ובעבור שדבור הנביאים ע״ה הוא על ג, מינים שכלו נגלה ופשוטו אין בו תוך כלל, וזה נקרא כלו כסף, והאחד שכלו נסתר אין בו גנלה רק משל ודמיון נמור, וזה כלו זהב, והאחד שיש בו נסתר וגננלה, אשר זה יכונה תפנחי זהב, לכן תבר שלמה ע״ה נ׳ הספרים, והיה קהלת מן המין הראשון, ושיר השירים מן המין הב׳ ומשלי מן המין השלישי, וזכור זה והקש על זה בתורה ובכל כתבי הקדש והנביאים ע״ה אך במאמר ובמאמר בסכנה נדבר בזה נחליף מין במין עד שנחליף חי במות, כי זה יביאנו לא׳ מב׳ טעיות אם הניתם במאמרם מה שהוא כזב ושקר, ומה שלא היה כוונת האומר אותו ולא יהיה א״כ מה שנא׳ אנחנו נקרא פירש אבל הוא חביר ותדוש ספר, ולא אקרא אני פירש אלא א״כ נכא עד תכלית כוונת המחבר הספר, ופני הספר יוכיחו במין מין בחינת

זכי המוח וטובו השכל המתישבים כי לא נוכל לעשות מופתים נמורי על זה, ודיכי האמת עד לעצמו, עוד דע עגין יקר והוא כי בזה כוון למשה ע״ה כמו שכוון ביתר ספריו, וכן כל הנביאים ע״ה לפרש מלות ושמות נפרדות שבאו בתורת משה ובפרט ממה שכתוב בתורה כעגין מעשה בראשית ומעשה מרכבה שזהו עקר התירת, נשמע הפלנת[49]]תחבולת המלאכה שעשו הנביאים ע״ה ואחריהם ר׳ז׳ל בספריהם כאשר רצן להעמיק רמז לא יזכדו שם למלה כמו שהם בתירה אבלל ימירוהו בשם ומלה אחרת שהוה כמו נרדף לראשון ע״ד יין וחמר פ־דס, ומזה המין הפלגת בדבר ר׳ז׳ל כי לא נעלמה מהם חכמה, אבל ׳לא צריכים אנחנו בזה ודי באלו הע־ות זה הספר לפי כוונתינו, ולאל ההודאה יתי שם אמן. ↑

[59]שיר השירים אשר לשלמה אמר עמגואל ב׳כ׳ר שלמה ז׳צ׳ל אחרי הודות ל׳ה יתי על טוב גמולותיו, אומר כי הספר הזה על דעה רבותיי ז׳ל דוא מבתר הספרים שנאמרו ברוח הקודש. ונחלקו המפרשים בבארו, והתחלפו דעותיהם בו כפי התחלפות הכרתם, כי קצתם והם אותם [50]שלא נפרדו מהמורגש, והתכלית אשר אליו עיניהם נשואות וכלות אליו כל היום, הוא יקר העולם הזה ותפארתו, והגמול הגדול אשר אליו ייחלו חלף עבודתם ומשכורתם מאת האלהים, שובם לגדולתם אל ארץ זבת חלב ודבש, ולמלאות כריסם מבשר לויתן, ומורם מן היין המשומר בענביו יפרשו הספר הזה הנכבד, שידבר מספור מעשי האבות, ורדתם למצרים, וצאתם משם ביד חזקה ובזרוע נטויה, וקבולם התורה, ובואם אל ארץ זבת חלב ודבש, ועמידת ישראל בארץ, וגלותם ממנה, ושובם אל הארץ בבנין בית שני, וגלותם משם שנית, והגאולה העתידה, והם יחשבו שיהיה הספר הזה שהוא קודש קדשים, כאחד מן הספרים ההמונים, וכספרי דברי הימים אשר לאחד מן המלכים אשר תועלתם מועט והקריאה בהם אבוד הזמן. וקצת מן החכמים האלהים אשר השיגו מעלת החכמה האמיתית, ונפרדו מהמורגש, ובזו לענינים הזמנים, ונכספה גם כלתה נפשם לחצרות ה׳, וכשתהיינה עומדות רגליהם בירושלם שלמעלה, ולבם ובשרם ירננו אל אל חי, פשטו לבושי הכסילות מעליהם, ולבשו מחלצות השכל, וחקרו בדעתם סודות הספר הזה היקר, וראו דרך נקבי משכיות הכסף, אשר אל תפוחי משל הזהב הטמון בקרבו, ועברו ימיו באני שכלם, והוציאו פשטו מתהומותיו, וגזרו אומר שהספר הזה חובר לבאר ולגלות בו אפשרות שוב השכל הנפרד המעורר צורת הנפש המשכלת והמשפיע עליה שפע טובו, והרעיה משל אל השכל החמרי, המשתוקק אל שפה השכל הפועל, וכוסף להדמות אליו כפי היכולת להדבק בו, ולשוב במדרגתו שהוא התכלית המכוון ממנו. והחכמים האלהים אשר קדם זכרם, זכרו כוונת הספר הזה בכלל, ובארו קצת פסוקיו דרך העברה, ולא בארו הספר הזה על הסדר [51]מראשו לסופו, עד שבא החכם המפורשם ר׳ משה אבן תיבון, ובאר הספר הזה על דרך החכמה, והוא מלא חכמת וכליל יופי, אלא שעבר על קצת פרטיו, ולא הזכיר המכוון בהם. ובראות חכמי דורינו מה שכתב החכם הנזכר, נכספו לבוא אל

חדריו, והפצירו בו בגזירת האהבה, לחבר באור הספר הזה על הדרך אשר דרך החכם הנזכר, ולהעמיק על פרטיו, ולחדש בהם חדושים לא נזכרו בספרו, ולהעמיד פשטי הספר הזה גם כן על מתכונתם, ביד ה' הטובה עלי. ובראתי כי ידם עלי חזקה, ולמלאות בקשתם חובה, אזרתי בעז מתני, וחברתי באור הספר הזה כפי קוצר השגתי, ודרכתי דרך החכמה הנזכר, והזכרתי קצת מדבריו, ושניתי בקצתם, והותרתי וחסרתי כפי מה שהראוני מן השמים, וזה החלי לעשות. וראוי שנזכר בתחלה כונת הספר הזה בכללו וחלוק פרשיותיו. ואומר כי כל החכמים האמתיים, אשר נדבה רוחם אותם לדבר בבאור הספר הזה על דרך החכמה, ראו בעין שכלם שהספר הזה נחלק לשלשה חלקים ראשונים. החלק הראשון הוא מתחלת הספר עד על משכבי בלילות. החלק השני הוא מן על משכבי בלילות עד אני ישנה. החלק השלישי הוא מן אני ישנה ולבי ער עד סוף הספר. והשלוש פרשיות הנזכרות הם רמז לשלשה מיני בני אדם ובאור זה.

הפרשה הראשונה והיא מתחלת הספר עד על משכבי בלילות, הוא המשל על האדם שהיה בגן עדן בכח או בפעל, קודם שחטא, כל זמן שלא הוציא לפועל בחירתו לטוב או לרע, באמרו ויטע האלהים גן בעדן מקדם וישם שם את האדם אשר יצר ויצמח ה' אלהים מן האדמה כל עץ נחמד למראה וטוב למאכל ועץ החיים בתוך הגן ועץ הדעת טוב ורע, והרשהו י"ת וצוהו מכל עץ הגן, ויורהו ה' עץ לבלתי אכול ממנו פן ימות באמרו ומעץ הדעת טוב ורע לא תאכל ממנו [52]כי ביום אכלך ממנו מות תמות ואם היה בבחירת האדם לאכול מעץ החיים ואכל וחי לעולם בלא פצע ובלא פגע רע באמרו ראה נתתי לפניך את החיים ואת הטוב ואת המות ואת הרע ובחרת בחיים למען תחיה וזה משל על מי שישתדל ללמוד החכמה על סדר וירא פן יחרד מהביט אל האלהים בראותו שאין פירותיו מבושלים והוא אמרו בפרשה הזאת הראשונה סוב דמה לך דודי לצבי או לעפר האילים על הרי בתר ואמרו אחזו לנו שועלים קטנים מחבלים כרמים וכרמינו סמדר וזה מורה כי עדיין לא נתבשלו הפירות ולא הזכירה הרעיה הנזכרת בזאת הפרשה הראשונה שאכלה מהפירות כי אמרה בצלו חמדתי וישבתי ופריו מתוקי לחקי הוא ספור חשקה והעד חמדתי וטעם פריך דבריו וחכמתו ומוסרו ובכל זאת הפרשה הראשונה מדברת בענין שכל האדם בעודו נער שלא הוציא לפועל מיציאותו המכוון ממנו וכחות הגוף גוברות עליו ושלא השתדל כי אם בלימודיות ובטבעיות וזאת הפרשה הנזכרת נחלקת לשני חלקים החלק הראשון הוא מתחילת הספר ער קול דודי זה בא והוא משל למי שהוא ירא ה' וסר מרע ויורע השם י"ת דרך קבלה ואין בו שום חכמה ומן קול דודי הנה זה בא עד סוף הפרשה הראשונה משל אל מי שלמד חכמת הלמודים וחכמת הטבע

והפרשה השנית שהיא מן על משכבי בלילות עד אני ישנה הוא משל אל מי שמצא אשת חיל אל אישה תשוקתה מבקשת דודה על משכבה ואשר בטח בה לב בעלה והוציא לפועל מה שהיה בו בכח ושלח ידו ולקח גם מעץ החיים

ואכל וחי לעולם הוא אמרו בזאת הפרשה השנית כמעט שעברתי מהם עד שמצאתי את שאהבה נפשי אחזתיו ולא ארפנו עד שהבאתי אל בית אמי ואל חדר הורתי והזכיר יום חתונתו ויום שמחת לבו שהוא יום הנשואים והדבוק האמתי, ושהיה לו מטה באמרו הנה מטתו שלשלמה, ושעשה לו[53] אפריון, ושהגיע למלוכה, ואמר׳ המלך שלמה ובמלך שלמה מה שלא הזכיר בן בשאר הפרשיות, כי לא הזכיר בהם כי אם שלמה ושולמית בלשון נקבה לפחיתותה והדוד העיד על רעיתו שמצאה גן נעול ושהיו שלחיה פרדס רמונים עם פרי מגדים כלומר אפי׳ מה שהרוב מהם הוא חמוץ הוא מתוק וערב ומבושל, והעיד כי כֻּלָּהּ יפה ומום אין בה, וקראה כלה ששה פעמים מה שלא עשה כן בשאר, כלל כי היא אשתו האמיתית והמיוחדת לו מכל וכל, וחלתה פני דודה שיבוא לגנו ויאכל פרי מגדיו, כלומ׳ הפירות שלו והראוים לו, והוא שהזכיר הוא באמרו שלהיך פרדס רמונים עם פרי מגדים, לא שתתן היא לבעלה ותאכילהו מהפירות הראוים לאשה הנשמעת לדברי הנחש והנסתת לו. והדוד העיד על עצמו שבא לגנו, ואכל ושתה ושהאכיל והשקה רעיו, ושעשה להם משתה, כי במשול צדיקים תעלוז קריה, והוא אמ׳ באתי לגני אחתי כלה אריתי מורי עם בשמי אכלתי יערי עם דבשי שתיתי ייני עם חלבי אכלו רעים שתו ושכרו דודים. וזה שלח ידו ולקח מעץ החיים ואכל וחיי לעולם, בלא פצע ובלא מכה, ועבר שלשתם על הסדר ונכנס בהם בשלום ויצאה בשלום. והענין שעבר כולם והשלימם על סדר בלא הריסה ובלא טעות, וכחותיו החמריות, והם השומרים הסובבים בעיר, וכל שכן השכליות, והם שומרי החומות, כלם כאחד טובים ומישרים אליו הדרך, לא שיעותו דרכה ויבטלו או יאחרו פעלתה, עד כי שאלה משומרי העיר את שאהבה נפשי ראיתם, ולרוב[54] ישרם ושלמות דעתם כאלו הם רואים ומראים, ואמנם לא הושיבו לה דבר, כי אין מטבעם להראותו, אבל כמעט שעברה מהם ורחקה מהם רוחק מועט, מצאה דודה והתחברה עמו, באמרה כמעט שעברתי מהם עד שמצאתי את שאהבה נפשי אחזתיו ולא ארפנו עד שהביאתיו אל בית אמי ואל חדר הורתי. יעשר מטה ואפיריון וחדוה, ושמחה ומשתה כאשר בארנו. וזאת הפרשה השניה גם כן נחלקת לשני חלקים. החלק הראשון הוא מן על משכבי בלילות עד מי זאת עולה מן המדבר והחלק השני הוא מן מי זאת עולה עד אני ישנה והחלק השני הוא באור החלק הראשון.

והפרשה השלישית שהיא מן אני ישנה עד סוף הספר הוא משל אל אדם שיש לו אשה חוטאת, הנסתת לנפש המתאוה, והנשמעה אליו, ואשר אכלה מעץ הדעת טוב ורע, ותתן גם לאישה עמה ויאכל, ואמרו עִמָּהּ, כי האדם לא יוכל לאכול ממנו, כי אם עמה, כי לא גלה הקב״ה אותו לאדם, ולא עתיד לגלותו, ואין לו בו שליחות יד, כי אם על יד האשה כי היא אשר תמצאהו ואש׳ תקחהו, והיא אשר תרדוף ההנאות, ונמשכת אחר התאות, זאת אישה לא בקשה לפני משכבה, ולא המתינה לו, והלכה לישן והפשיטה בגדיה ורגליה רחצה ואצבעותיה מבושמים במור עובר לנצחי וקיים גם התעצלה לפתוח

מהר, וקול דודה דופק, ואמי פתחי לי אחותי רעיתי וגו'. ואמנם אחר כן משל בה אישה, והיתה בעלת תשובה, כי לא נשקעה בשינה, אבל היה לבה ער, ופתחה לדודה בעצלותה הגדול, והנה דודה חמק עבר ובקשותהו ולא מצאתהו וקראתהו ולא ענה אותה, ומצאוה שומרי החומות והשומרים הסובבים בעיר והכוה ופצעוה ונשאו את רדידה מעליה, והענין שכולם עותו דרכה ומנעו אותה [55]מהשיג דודה, כי קשה להם לפרוש אחרי אשר טעמו טעם חטא, עד כי לא נזכר בתורה באדם אחרי שגורש מגן עדן ששלח ידו ולקח מעץ החיים ושב ורפא לו, אי'פ שהיה לו היכולת בזה באמרו ועתה פן ישלח ידו ולקח גם מעץ החיים ואכל וחי לעולם, שירי'ל הלואי ישלח ידו כי צדיק ה' צדקות אהב ולא אל חפץ רשע הוא באמרו חי אני נאום ה' אם אחפוץ במות הרשע כי אם בשוב רשע מדרכו וחי, ועם כל זה לא נזכר בתורה שאכל מעץ החיים אחר כך, ואולי הוא רמז כי קרוב הוא לנמנע, למי שאכל מעץ הדעת טוב ורע לאכול עוד מעץ החיים "כי זוג שני קשה לזוגו בקריעת ים סוף" שהוא שנוי טבע, אי'פ שאינו נמנע לגמרי לפי האמת וכן השאיר שלמה הדבר סָתוּם ואם ספר גורל חשקם אחרי כן, ושבח כל אחד מהם את חבירו כדרך חושקים, לא נמצא בהם שנדבקו עולם, ושעשו חתונה ומטה ואפיריון ומשתה ושמחה כדרך איש ואשתו, ואחרית דבריה שהיה דודה מזהיר אותה, ואומר לה חברים מקשיבים לקולך ואין דרך האשה להשמיע קולה לבחורים "כי קול באשה ערוה" וחלה פניה להשמיע לו קולה ולא לאחר, והיא העזה פניה ותאמר לו, ברח דודי ודמה לך לצבי או לעופר האיילים על הרי בשמים, כאלו היו החברים הבעלים, והדור היה החושק מסתתר ובורח מפניהם פן יפגעו בו. והפרשה הזאת גם כן נחלקת לשני חלקים, החלק האחד הוא מאני ישנה ער מי זאת עולה והחלק השני מן מי זאת עולה עד סוף הספר, והחלק השני באור לחלק הראשון. זאת היא הלוקת הספר לפי מה שהסכימו החכמים אשר דברו בבאור הספר הזה. ↑

[60] De Rossi, pp. 114–117. Fürst, Bibl. Jud., vol. i. pp. 82–84. ↑

[61]ויהי כאשר האליצוני ומתרדת שנתי הקיצוני התבוננתי בפירושים אשר הגיעו לידי ואמתיק סודו והנם חלוקים ואם להתכוין את המשל כולם דבקים, מהם מי שפירש אותו בדקדוק מלותיו ונעם מליצותיו וחשק האהבה הכלולה כי יבעל בחור בתולה והניח המשל מגזר מכל סביביו היין השומר בענבו, מהם מי שפרש אותו בין הגוף והנשמה, אשה אות חכמה המעורות אל הדרך הישרה להיות לו מגן ועורה, וזכר האריך לדבר הוסיף וגרע ודרש וחבר, מהם מי שפירש אותו על דרך המדרש והסתום אספ ודרש ובכל אשר לעשות הפליא כאלי הריק מכלי אל כלי, מהם מי שפירש אותו על דרך ענין הפסוקים לכונתו בצע אמרתו באמרו כי כולו דמיובים ביציאת השכלים מן הכח אל הפועל אשובו על ירמיון הדוד הוא השכל הפועל בחכמה והחשוקה היה הנפש השלימה והנריל גוף הספר במאמריו ונכרים באו שעריו עד אשר הקורא בו בלשונו רכל נלאתי כלכל לא אוכל ואם זה היתה כונת החכם שלמה בשירו מה הועיל שבחו וזמרו יתר מזה ראש הפלוסופים בקצר ענין ובנה עליו

בנין על כל יאמר בעזני בספר מלחמות ה׳ אין זה כונת השיר ותפארתו אשר היתה באמנג אתו.

From a MS. in the possession of the Bodleian. Oppenheim Collection, No. 261. ↑

[62] De Rossi, pp. 294, 295. ↑

[63] Fürst, Bib. Jud. vol. i. p. 187. ↑

[64] This commentary is erroneously called Tamach's, the euphemic expression תמ״ך *i.e.* תְּהִי מְנוּחָתוֹ כָּבוֹד, used for the departed, being mistaken for *a proper name*. Vide Fürst, Bib. Jud. vol. ii. p. 243. ↑

[65] Ibid. vol. i. p. 314. ↑

[66] Ibid. vol. i. pp. 41, 42. ↑

[67] Vide Magnus, Das Hohe Lied Salomo's, p. 26. ↑

[68] De Amore dial., c. iii. Delitzsch im Literaturblatt des Orients, 1840, No. 6, &c. ↑

[69] Melizat Jeshurun. Vienna, 1816. ↑

[70] Gottesdienstliche Vorträge. Berlin, 1832, p. 334. ↑

[71] 1834—Dr. Zunz also wrote a valuable introduction to Rebenstein's Commentary on the Song of Songs (Berlin, 1834), in which he gives a catalogue of Hebrew writers on this book, existing in MS. I am sorry that all my exertions to obtain it have proved abortive. ↑

[72] Vierter Band., p. 367. ↑

[73] Israelitische Bibel, Dritter Theil. 1854, pp. 660, 661. ↑

[74] The following is a list of the names of some of the commentators and their works, selected from a large number of authors who have written upon this book, and which we could not analyse in our historical sketch.

Abi-Simra, מִכְתָּם לְדָוִד (printed, according to de Rossi, at Constantinople). Affendopulo, סֵ׳ עֲשָׂרָה מַאֲמָרוֹת (Dod Mordechai, c. 3, Vienna, 1830). Allemanno, חֶשֶׁק שְׁלֹמֹה .Almosneno, יְדֵי מֹשֶׁה (Venice, 1597). Arepol, שַׁר שָׁלוֹם (Ssafet, 1579). Asulai, נַחַל אֶשְׁכּוֹל , and פְּנֵי חַמָּח (Leghorn, 1800.) Bär. b. Naphtali, מַתְּנוֹת כְּהֻנָּה (Amsterdam, 1725). Baruch b. Isaac, זֶרַע בַּרְכָ (Amsterdam, 1730).

Birs, שִׁירָה לְדָוִד (Grodno, 1797). Chiquitilla, in MS. Cohen, זְקַן אַהֲרֹן (Venice, 1657). Eliezer b. Judah, יֵין הָרֶקַח (Lublin, 1608). Elijah b. Salomon-Abraham, נַסְתְּלִי שְׂבַע ,in MS. Gensburg, בּ אוּר עַל ג׳מְגִלּוֹת (Hamburg, 1708). Jaabez, קְדֵשׁ הִלּוּלִים (in Frankfurter's Bible, Amsterdam, 1724–27). Ibn Jaehaj (in the Amsterdam Rab. Bible, 1724). Ibn Jaish, מָקוֹר בָּרוּךְ עַל שה״ש (Constantinople, 1576). Jacob b. Isaac, צָאֲינָה וּרְאֶינָה (Berlin, 1709). Jacob b. Joel, שְׁאֵרִית יַעֲקֹב (Altona, 1727). Jacob-Lissa, אִמְרֵי יֹשֶׁר (Dyrhenfurt, 1815–19). Joseph-Jossel, פּוּרַת יוֹסֵף (Wandsbeck, 1727). Kara, in MS. Dav. Kimchi, in MS. Landsberger, שׁוֹמֵר אֱמוּנִים (Offenbach, 1724). Lando, נְקֻדּוֹת הַכֶּסֶף (Venice, 1619). Libowitzer, סֵ׳ אַיֶּלֶת אֲהָבִים (Korez, 1791), [61]Loanz, surnamed Baal Shem, רִנַּת דּוֹדִים (Basle, 1606). Löw b. Joshua, לֵב אֲרִיֵה (Wilmersdorf, 1674). Saul Löw, בְּנָיָן אֲרִיאֵל (Amsterdam, 1778). Meyer (Frankfort on the Main, 1679). Solomon Ibn Melech, מִכְלַל יֹפִי (Amsterdam, 1661). Salomon b. Jacob (Prague, 1628). ↑

75 Origenes Selecta in Psalmos 1. Hieronymus Apologia adversus Rufinum. See on this subject Frankel, Monatschrift, 1852, p. 219, and Graetz, Geschichte der Juden, Vierter Band, p. 279. ↑

76 Davidson, Introduction to the Old Testament, &c., p. 790. ↑

77 Comp. Hieronymus ad Pamachium; Prefacio in Paralipomena, in Tobiam, in Job. To his ingratitude and bitter vituperations against the Jews, this people may trace many of their subsequent sufferings from so-called Christians. (Com. Hiero. adversus Rufinum ii., Graetz, Geschichte der Juden, Vierter Band, p. 462.) ↑

78 Bernardi Oper. vol. ii. (Paris, 1719), p. 276, et seqq. ↑

79 "Ecclesia humilis et abjecta inter hostes saeculi, et hoc fuit usque ad tempus Constantini." ↑

80 Comment. in Cant. Canticor. ↑

81 Homil. xxxii. ↑

82 Bib. Sac., book vi. haer. xiii. p. 664. ↑

83 An Exposition upon the Book of Canticles. London, 1624, p. 2. ↑

84 A Commentary on the Canticles. Amsterdam, 1644, p. 2. ↑

85 Annotations upon the Five Books of Moses, the Book of the Psalms, and the Song of Songs (London, 1639), pp. 4, 5. ↑

[86] Est ὀαριστὺς inter Salomonem et filiam regis Aegypti, interloquentibus etiam choris duobus tum juvenum tum virginum, qui in proximis thalamo locis excubabant. Nuptiarum arcana sub honestis verborum involucris hic latent: quae etiam causa est, cur Hebraei veteres hunc librum legi noluerint nisi a jam conjugio proximis. Creditur autem Salomon, quo magis perennaret hoc scriptum, ea arte id composuisse, ut sine multa distorsione ἀλληγορίαι in eo inveniri possent; quae Dei amorem adversus populum Israeliticum exprimerent; quod et sensit et ostendit Chaldaeus hic paraphrastes, nec aliter accepit Maimonides. Ille autem amor typus cum fuerit amoris Christi erga ecclesiam, Christiani ingenia sua ad applicanda ad eam rem hujus carminis verba exercuerunt laudabili studio. Nam et Apostoli Christi cum ecclesia conjunctionem matrimonio comparaverant. Eph. v. 32; 2 Cor. ii. 2; Apoc. vii. 8. Annot. in Vet. Test. ↑

[87] Vide Opera Cocceii, Tom. viii. fol. Amstel. Tom. ii. Synopsis et Medulla prophet. Cantici. ↑

[88] A brief Exposition of the whole book of Canticles (London, 1648), p. 4. ↑

[89] A Commentary upon the Book of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs (London, 1650), pp. 174, 175. ↑

[90] Comm. Apocalypticus in Canticum Canticorum, 1688. ↑

[91] Praef. in Cant. Paris, 1693. ↑

[92] Paraphrase and Annotations on the Song of Songs, *in loco*. ↑

[93] Preface to the Exposition of the Song of Solomon. ↑

[94] Clavis Cantici, or an Exposition of the Song of Solomon (Edinburgh, 1723), pp. 11, 12. ↑

[95] Exposition, pp. 103, 106. ↑

[96] A Supplement to Whiston's late Essay towards restoring the true text of the Old Testament (London, 1723), pp. 5, 7. ↑

[97] An Exposition of the book of Solomon's Song, &c. (London, 1854), p. 10. ↑

[98] See Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews, Lect. xxx.; p. 345, Gregory's Translation, Third Edition. ↑

[99] Preface to the Song of Solomon, newly translated from the original Hebrew, with a Commentary and Annotations, London, 1764. ↑

[100] Explanatory Notes upon the Old Testament, by John Wesley, (Bristol, 1765.) Vol. III. p. 1926. ↑

[101] The Outlines of a new Commentary on Solomon's Song, London, 1768; second edition, 1775, pp. 74, 75, 81. ↑

[102] Notes to Bishop Lowth's Praelectiones. ↑

[103] Das durch eine leichte und ungekünstelte Erklärung von seinen Vorwürfen gerettete Hohelied, 1771. ↑

[104] Vide supra, pp. 46, 56. ↑

[105] Critical Remarks on Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles, 1772. ↑

[106] Umschreibung des Hohenliedes, oder die Gemeine mit Christo und den Engeln im Grabe, nebst andern biblischen Erklärungen. Herausgegeben von D. Conrad Heinrich Runge. Bremen, 1776. ↑

[107] Salomon's Lieder der Liebe, &c. Herder's Sämmtliche Werke in vierzig Bänden, Dritter Band, pp. 82, 83. Stuttgart und Tübingen, 1852. ↑

[108] Sammlung der Gedichte Salomons, &c. Hamm, 1780. ↑

[109] A poetical Translation of the Song of Solomon, London, 1781. ↑

[110] Solomon's Song, translated from the Hebrew, by Bernard Hodgson, LL.D. Principal of Hertford College, Oxford, 1786. ↑

[111] Vide supra, p. 58. ↑

[112] Neueste Uebersetzung des Hohen Liedes, Basel, 1789; see Magnus, Comment, p. 26. ↑

[113] Salomon's verschmähte Liebe, oder die belohnte Treue. Leipzig, 1790. ↑

[114] The Song of Songs, a new translation, with a Commentary and Notes. London, 1801, pp. 54, 55. ↑

[115] Song of Songs, &c., translated from the original Hebrew, with Notes, critical and explanatory. London, 1803, Preface pp. xii. xiii. xiv. ↑

[116] Das Hohelied, in einer noch unversuchten Deutung. Freyburg, 1803. ↑

[117] Lied der Liebe, das älteste und schönste aus dem Morgenlande. Göttingen, 1820, second edition, 1828, pp. 20, 21. ↑

[118] Das Hohelied, ein Collectiv-Gesang auf Serubabel, Ezra und Nehemia, als die Wiederhersteller einer Jüdischen Verfassung in der Provinz Juda. Erlangen, 1825. ↑

[119] Das Hohelied Salomo's übersetzt mit Einleitung, Anmerkungen, &c. Göttingen, 1826. ↑

[120] Philologisch-critischer Commentar zum Hohen Liede Salomo's. Leipzig, 1829. ↑

[121] Rosenmüller, Scholia, ix. 2, p. 270. ↑

[122] Script. Test. to the Messiah, vol. i. book i. chap. ii. note A; and Congregational Magazine for 1837, p. 415. ↑

[123] Congregational Magazine for 1837 and 1838. ↑

[124] For 1838, p. 471, et seq. ↑

[125] Das Lied der Lieder oder Sieg der Treue. Zürich, 1840. ↑

[126] Kritische Bearbeitung und Erklärung des Hohen Liedes Salomo's. Halle, 1842. ↑

[127] Critical History and Defence of the Old Testament Canon, p. 360, ed. Davidson. ↑

[128] A New Translation of the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Canticles. Boston, 1846, p. 119. ↑

[129] Ibid. p. 132. ↑

[130] Article in the Biblical Repository for April, 1847, reprinted in the Journal of Sacred Literature for 1852, p. 338. ↑

[131] Hävernick's Einleitung in das Alte Testament. Dritter Theil, p. 504. ↑

[132] Das Hohelied untersucht und ausgelegt von Franz Delitzsch. Leipzig, 1851, pp. 31, 175. ↑

[133] Das Hohe Lied von Salomo, übersetzt und erklärt von Heinrich Augustus Hahn. Breslau, 1852, p. 7. ↑

[134] Das Hohe Lied Salomonis ausgelegt von W. Hengstenberg. Berlin, 1853, p. 239. ↑

[135] A Commentary on the Song of Solomon, by the Rev. George Burrowes, Professor in Lafayette College, Easton, Pa. Philadelphia, 1853, pp. 87–90. ↑

[136] Das Hohe Lied in deutscher Uebersetzung, Erklärung, und kritischer Textausgabe, von Ernst Meier, Professor der Morgenländischen Sprachen. Tübingen, 1854. ↑

[137] Cantici Canticorum poetica forma; dissertatio Ernesti Fred. Friedrich. Königsberg, 1855. ↑

[138] Das Hohe Lied erklärt von Ferd. Hitzig. 16te Lieferung des Kurzgef. exegetischen Handbuch's zum Alten Testament. Leipzig, 1855. ↑

[139] Monatschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judenthums, herausgegeben vom Oberrabbiner Dr. Frankel. Leipzig, 1856, p. 215, et seq. ↑

[140] Geschichte der poetischen National-Literatur der Hebräer von Dr. Ernst Meier. Leipzig, 1856, p. 215, et seq. ↑

[141] The Text of the Old Testament considered, &c., by Samuel Davidson, D.D. London, 1856, p. 806. ↑

[142] Herzog's Real-Encyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche. Stuttgart, 1856, vol. vi. p. 220. ↑

[143] Stuart, Critical History and Defence of the Old Testament Canon, pp. 342, 343, ed. Davidson. ↑

[144] Song of Songs, &c., Preface, p. 19. ↑

[145] An Article on Solomon's Song, by the Rev. C. E. Stowe, D.D., Professor of Biblical Literature, reprinted in Kitto's Journal of Sacred Literature, 1852, pp. 331, 332. ↑

[146] Reply to Dr. Pye Smith, Congregational Magazine for 1838, pp. 148, 149. ↑

[147] Praef. in Canticum Canticorum, Œuvres, tom. i. p. 467, 4to. edit. ↑

[148] Lecture xxxi. p. 350, third edition. ↑

[149] Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians, vol. ii. p. 215, *et seqq.* ↑

[150] The author of the poem. The singer sometimes puts his own name in the place of this. ↑

[151] Tá-Há is a name of the Arabian prophet. ↑

[152] Crishna continues to this hour the darling god of the Indian women. The sect of Hindoos, who adore him with enthusiastic and almost exclusive devotion, have broached a doctrine which they maintain with eagerness, and which seems general in those provinces, that he was distinct from all the *Avatars*, who had only an *ansa*, or portion of his divinity; while Crishna was the person of Vishnu himself in a human form.—*Sir W. Jones*, *Asiatic Researches*, vol. i. p. 260. ↑

[153] Noyes, A New Translation of the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles, pp. 130–132. ↑

[154] Historia Crit. Vet. Test. l. i. c. iv. p. 28. ↑

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THE SONG OF SONGS,

WHICH IS SOLOMON'S. [129]

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THE SONG OF SONGS, WHICH IS SOLOMON'S.

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SECTION I.

CHAPTERS I.–II. 7.

The scene of this division is in the royal tent of Solomon. The Shulamite, separated from her beloved shepherd, longs to be reunited with him whom she prizes above all things (2, 3). She implores him to come and rescue her; for, though brought by the king into his royal tent, her love continues the same (4). She repels the scornful reflection of the court ladies when they hear her soliloquy (5, 6). She implores her lover to tell her where she may find him (7). The court ladies ironically answer this request (8). Meanwhile the king comes in, and tries to win her affections by flatteries and promises (9–11). This attempt fails, and she opposes to the king's love her unabated attachment to her beloved shepherd (12–ii. 6). In an ecstasy she adjures the court ladies not to

attempt to persuade her to love any one else (7).

THE SHULAMITE.

2 Oh for a kiss of the kisses of his mouth!
For sweet are thy caresses above wine.
[130]
3 Sweet is the odour of thy perfumes,
Which perfume thou art, by thy name diffused abroad, [131]
Therefore do the damsels love thee.
4 Oh draw me after thee! Oh let us flee together! [132]
The king has brought me into his apartments,
But we exult and rejoice in thee,
We praise thy love more than wine,
The upright love thee.
5 I am swarthy, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, [133]
As the tents of Kedar,
But comely as the pavilions of Solomon.
6 Disdain me not because I am dark, [134]
For the sun hath browned me.
My mother's sons were severe with me,
They made me keeper of their vineyards,
Though my own vineyard I never kept.—
[135]
7 Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth,
Where thou feedest thy flock,
Where thou causest it to lie down at noon,
Lest I should be roaming

Among the flocks of thy companions.

[136]

DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM.

8 If thou knowest not, O fairest among
women,
Go in the footsteps of the flocks,
And feed thy kids
By the tents of the shepherds.

SOLOMON.

9 To my steed in the chariot of Pharaoh
Do I compare thee, O my love. [137]
10 Beautiful is thy countenance in the
circlet,
Thy neck in the necklace!
11 A golden circlet will we make thee,
With studs of silver.

[138]

THE SHULAMITE.

12 While the king is at his table
My nard shall diffuse its fragrance.
13 A bag of myrrh resting in my bosom
[139]
Is my beloved unto me.
14 A bunch of cypress-flowers from the
garden of En-gedi
Is my beloved unto me.

THE SHEPHERD.

15 Behold, thou art beautiful, my love; [140]
Behold, thou art beautiful,
Thine eyes are doves.

THE SHULAMITE.

16 Behold, thou art comely, my beloved,
Yea thou art lovely;
Yea, verdant is our couch;
17 Our bower is of cedar arches, [141]
Our retreat of cypress roof:
1 CHAP. II. I am a mere flower of the plain,
A lily of the valley.

THE SHEPHERD.

2 As a lily among the thorns,
So is my loved one among the damsels.

THE SHULAMITE.

3 As an apple-tree among the wild trees,
So is my beloved among the youths. [142]
I delight to sit beneath its shade,
For delicious is its fruit to my taste.
4 He led me into that bower of delight,
And overshaded me with love.
5 Oh, strengthen me with grape-cakes, [143]
Refresh me with apples,
For I am sick with love!
6 Let his left hand be under my head,

And his right hand support me!
7 I adjure you, O ye daughters of
Jerusalem,
By the gazelles, or the hinds of the field,
[144]
Neither to excite nor to incite my affection
Till it wishes another love.

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SECTION II.

CHAPTER II. 8–III. 5.

Here we have a second scene, which is also in the royal tent. The speakers are the Shulamite and the court ladies. The Shulamite, to account for the cause of the severity of her brothers, mentioned in ii. 6, relates that her beloved shepherd came one charming morning in the spring to invite her to the fields (8–14); that her brothers, in order to prevent her from going, gave her employment in the gardens (15); that she consoled herself with the assurance that her beloved, though separated from her at that time, would come again in the evening (16, 17); that seeing he did not come, she, under difficult circumstances, ventured to seek him, and found him (ch. iii. 1–4). Having narrated these events, and reiterated her ardent affection for her beloved, she

concludes as before, by adjuring the court ladies not to persuade her to change her love.

THE SHULAMITE.

8 Hark! my beloved!
Lo, he came
Leaping over the mountains,
Bounding over the hills. [145]
9 My beloved was like a gazelle,
Or the young one of a hind.
Lo! there he stood behind our wall,
He looked through the window,
He glanced through the lattice.
10 My beloved spake, he spake to me,
“Arise, my love, my fair one, and come!
11 For lo, the winter is past,
The rain is over, is gone.
12 The flowers appear upon the fields,
[146]
The time of singing is come,
The cooing of the turtle-dove is heard in our land.
13 The fig-tree sweetens her green figs,
The vines blossom,
They diffuse fragrance;
Arise, my love, my fair one, and come!
[147]
14 My dove in the clefts of the rock,
In the hiding-place of the cliff,
Let me see thy countenance,
Let me hear thy voice,

For sweet is thy voice,
And thy countenance lovely."

THE BROTHERS OF THE SHULAMITE.

15 Catch us the foxes, the little foxes
Which destroy the vineyards,
For our vineyards are in bloom.

[148]

THE SHULAMITE.

16 My beloved is mine, and I am his,
His who feeds his flock among the lilies.
17 When the day cools,
And the shadows flee away,
Return, haste, O my beloved,
Like the gazelle or the young one of the hind,
Over the mountains of separation. [149]
1 CHAP. III. When on my nightly couch,
I still sought him whom my soul loveth;
I sought him, but found him not.
2 I must arise now and go about the city,
In the streets and in the squares;
I must seek him whom my soul loveth:
I sought him, but found him not.
3 The watchmen who patrol the city found me:
"Have you seen him whom my soul loveth?"
4 Scarcely had I passed them,
When I found him whom my soul loveth;

I seized him and would not let him go
Till I brought him to the house of my
mother, [150]
Into the apartment of her who gave me
birth.
5 I adjure you, O ye daughters of
Jerusalem,
By the gazelles or the hinds of the field,
Neither to excite nor to incite my affection
Till it wishes another love.

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SECTION III.

CHAPTERS III. 6.–V. 1.

The royal tent in the country is broken up, and the royal train comes up to Jerusalem. Some of the inhabitants of the capital, as they behold it at a distance, hold a dialogue respecting it (6–11). The shepherd, coming up to rescue his loved one, obtains an interview with her, and expresses his delight in her charms (ch. iv. 1–5). The Shulamite moved, modestly interrupts his description, and tells him that she is ready to escape with him that very evening (6). He immediately proffers his assistance, declaring that her charms had inspired him with courage sufficient for the occasion (7–9); he

describes her charms (10, 11) and her faithfulness (12–16). The Shulamite declares that all she possesses shall be his (16). Some of the court ladies sympathize with them (ch. v. 1).

ONE OF THE INHABITANTS OF JERUSALEM.

6 What is that coming up from the
country,
As in columns of smoke,
Perfumed with myrrh, with frankincense,
And all sorts of aromatics from the
merchants?

[151]

ANOTHER.

7 Lo! it is the palanquin of Solomon,
Around it are threescore valiant men
From the valiant of Israel:
8 All skilled in the sword, expert in war,
Each with his sword girded on his thigh
Against the nightly marauders.

[152]

A THIRD.

9 A palanquin hath king Solomon made
for himself,
Of the wood of Lebanon.
10 Its pillars he hath made of silver,
Its support of gold, its seat of purple, [153]
Its interior tesselated most lovely

By the daughters of Jerusalem.

A FOURTH.

11 Come out, ye daughters of Zion,
And behold King Solomon;
The crown with which his mother
crowned him
On the day of his espousals,
On the day of his gladness of heart.

[154]

THE SHEPHERD, ADVANCING TO THE SHULAMITE.

1 CHAP. IV. Behold, thou art beautiful, my
loved one,
Behold, thou art beautiful!
Thine eyes are doves behind thy veil;
Thy hair is like a flock of goats,
Springing down Mount Gilead. [155]
2 Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep
Which come up from the washing-pool,
All of which are paired,
And not one among them is bereaved.
3 Like a braid of scarlet are thy lips,
And thy mouth is lovely: [156]
Like a part of the pomegranate
Are thy cheeks behind thy veil;
4 Thy neck is like the tower of David,
Reared for the builder's model:
A thousand shields are hung upon it, [157]
All sorts of bucklers of the mighty.

5 Thy bosom like two young fawns,
Twins of a gazelle, feeding among lilies.

THE SHULAMITE.

6 When the day cools
And the shadows flee away,
I will go to the mount of myrrh,
To the hill of frankincense.

THE SHEPHERD.

7 Thou art all beautiful, my loved one, [158]
And there is no blemish in thee.
8 With me, with me, my betrothed,
Thou shalt go from Lebanon;
Thou shalt go from the heights of Amana,
From the summit of Shenir and Hermon,
From the habitations of lions,
From the mountains of panthers.
9 Thou hast emboldened me,
My sister, my betrothed,
Thou hast emboldened me, [159]
With one of thine eyes,
With one of the chains of thy neck.
10 How sweet is thy love, O my sister, my betrothed! [160]
How sweet is thy love above wine!
And the fragrance of thy perfumes above all the spices!
11 Thy lips, O my betrothed, distil honey:
Honey and milk are under thy tongue,

And the odour of thy garments is as the
smell of Lebanon.
12 A closed garden art thou, my sister, my
betrothed,
A closed garden, a sealed fountain. [161]
13 Thy shoots like a garden of
pomegranates,
With precious fruits,
Cypresses and nards,
14 Nard and crocus,
Calamus and cinnamon,
With all sorts of frankincense trees, [162]
Myrrh and aloes;
15 With all kinds of excellent aromatics,
With a garden-fountain,
A well of living waters,
And streams flowing from Lebanon.
16 Arise, O north wind! and come, thou
south!
Blow upon my garden,
That its perfumes may flow out!

[163]

THE SHULAMITE.

Let my beloved come into his garden
And eat its delicious fruits!

THE SHEPHERD.

1 CHAP. V. I am coming into my garden,
my sister, my betrothed:
I am gathering my myrrh with my spices,

I am eating my honeycomb with my
honey,
I am drinking my wine with my milk.

SOME OF THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM.

Eat, O friends!
Drink, and drink abundantly, O beloved!

[164]

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SECTION IV.

CHAPTER V. 2–VIII. 4.

The Shulamite relates to the court ladies a dream which she has had, in which she manifests great attachment for her beloved (2–8). The court ladies, surprised at this extraordinary enthusiasm, ask what there is particular in his person to cause such an attachment (9). The Shulamite then gives a description of him (10–16). Whereupon the court ladies inquire where he is, and offer to seek him (ch. vi. 1). The Shulamite, suspecting their intention, gives an evasive answer to their inquiry (2, 3). The king, having heard the Shulamite's beloved mentioned, immediately comes forward and seeks to win her affections (4–9); in exalting her beauty, he repeats how the court ladies had praised her when

they first saw her (10). The Shulamite, having explained how she came to be seen by the court ladies, withdraws (11, 12.) The king calls her back (ch. vii. 1); and, as she returns, describes her charms, and wishes to enjoy the love of one so beautiful (2–10). The Shulamite refuses the king's desire, stating that her affections were espoused (11); then addressing herself to her beloved, she asks him to go home with her, and descants upon their rural pleasures (12–14). Remembering, however, that circumstances even at home prevented the full manifestation of her love, she longs for those obstacles to be removed (ch. viii. 1, 2). Overcome by her feelings, she wishes that none but her beloved may support her (3), and with the little strength she has left, adjures the court ladies not to persuade her to change her love (4).

THE SHULAMITE.

2 I was sleeping, but my heart kept awake,
Hark! my beloved! he is knocking!
Open to me, my sister, my love!
My dove, my perfect beauty! [165]
For my head is filled with dew,
My locks with the drops of the night.
3 I have put off my tunic,
How shall I put it on?
I have washed my feet,
How shall I soil them?
4 My beloved withdrew his hand from the door hole,

And my heart was disquieted within me.
5 I immediately arose to open to my
beloved,
And my hands dropped with myrrh, [166]
And my fingers with liquid myrrh,
Upon the handles of the bolt.
6 I opened to my beloved,
But my beloved had withdrawn, was gone!
My soul departed when he spoke of it!
I sought him, and found him not;
I called him, and he answered me not.
7 The watchmen who patrol the city found
me:
They beat me, they wounded me; [167]
The keepers of the walls stripped me of
my veiling garment.
8 I adjure you, O ye daughters of
Jerusalem,
If ye shall find my beloved,
What will ye tell him?
Tell him that I am sick of love.

DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM.

9 What is thy beloved more than another
beloved,
O thou fairest among women?
What is thy beloved, more than another
beloved,
That thou thus adjurest us?

THE SHULAMITE.

10 My beloved is white and ruddy,
Distinguished above thousands; [168]
11 His head is as the finest gold,
His flowing locks are black as the raven.
[169]
12 His eyes, like doves in water streams,
Are bathing in milk, sitting on fulness;
13 His cheeks are like beds of balsam,
Elevations of aromatic plants;
His lips are like lilies distilling liquid
myrrh.
14 His hands like golden cylinders, inlaid
with chrysolite, [170]
His body is like polished ivory, covered
with sapphires.
15 His legs are like pillars of marble
Based upon pedestals of gold.
His aspect is like that of Lebanon. [171]
He is distinguished as the cedars.
16 His voice is exquisitely sweet;
Yea, his whole person is exceedingly
lovely.
Such is my beloved, such my friend,
O daughters of Jerusalem.

DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM.

1 CHAP. VI. Whither is thy beloved gone,
O thou fairest among women?
Whither is thy beloved turned away?
Say, that we may seek him with thee.

[172]

THE SHULAMITE.

2 My beloved is gone down into his
garden,
To the beds of aromatics,
To feed in the gardens, and to gather
lilies.
3 I am my beloved's, and my beloved is
mine;
He who feeds his flock among the lilies.

SOLOMON.

4 Graceful art thou, O my love, as Tirzah,
Beautiful as Jerusalem,
Awe-inspiring as bannered hosts!
5 Turn away thine eyes from me, [173]
For they inspire me with awe!
Thy hair is like a flock of goats
Springing down Mount Gilead;
6 Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep,
Which come up from the washing-pool;
All of which are paired,
And not one among them is bereaved.
7 Like a part of the pomegranate
Are thy cheeks behind thy veil.
8 I have threescore queens,
And fourscore concubines,
And maidens without number;
9 But she is my only one, my dove, my
perfect beauty,
She, the delight of her mother,
She, the darling of her parent! [174]

The damsels saw her and praised her;
The queens also, and the concubines, and extolled her thus:
10 "Who is she that looks forth as the morn,
Beautiful as the moon, bright as the sun,
Awe-inspiring as bannered hosts?"

THE SHULAMITE.

11 I went down into the nut-garden,
To look among the green plants by the river,
To see whether the vine was budding,
Whether the pomegranates were in bloom.
[175]
12 Unwittingly had my longing soul brought me
To the chariots of the companions of the prince.

(*She goes away*).

[176]

SOLOMON.

1 CHAP. VII. Return, return, O Shulamite,
Return, return, that we may look at thee.

THE SHULAMITE.

What will you behold in the Shulamite?

SOLOMON.

Like a dance to double choirs. [177]
2 How beautiful are thy feet in sandals, O noble maiden!
The circuits of thy thighs like ornaments,
The work of a master's hands.
3 Thy navel is like a round goblet,
Let not spiced wine be wanted in it; [178]
Thy body is like a heap of wheat,
Hedged round with lilies.
4 Thy bosom is like two young fawns,
Twins of a gazelle. [179]
5 Thy neck is like an ivory tower;
Thine eyes are as the pools in Heshbon,
By the populous gate;
Thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon,
Looking towards Damascus.
6 Thy head upon thee as purple, [180]
And the tresses of thy head as crimson.
The king is captivated by the ringlets:
How beautiful and how charming,
O love, in thy fascinations!
7 This thy growth is like a palm-tree,
And thy bosom like its clusters. [181]
8 I long to climb this palm-tree,
I long to clasp its branches.
May thy bosom be unto me
As the clusters of the vine,
And the odour of thy breath
As that of apples;
9 And thy speech as delicious wine, [182]
Which to my friend flows down with

mellowed sweetness,
And causes slumbering lips to speak.

THE SHULAMITE.

10 I belong to my beloved,
And it is for me to desire him.
11 Come, my beloved, let us go into the country, [183]
Let us abide in the villages.
12 We will go early to the vineyards,
We will see whether the vine flourishes;
Whether the buds open;
Whether the pomegranates blossom;
There will I give thee my love.
13 The mandrakes diffuse fragrance,
And at our door are all sorts of delicious fruit, [184]
Both new and old;
I have reserved them, O my beloved, for thee!
1 CHAP. VIII. Oh that thou wert as my brother,
As one who had been nourished in the bosom of my mother!
If I found thee in the street I would kiss thee,
And should no more be reproached.
2 I would lead thee thence,
I would bring thee into the house of my mother; [185]
Thou shouldst be my teacher,

I would cause thee to drink
Of the aromatic wine,
Of my pomegranate juice.
3 Let his left hand be under my head,
And his right hand support me!
4 I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
Neither to incite nor to excite my affection
Till it desires another love.

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SECTION V.

CHAPTER VIII. 5–14.

The Shulamite, released from the palace, returns to her native place with her beloved (5). On their way home they visit the spot where they had been first pledged to each other; and there they renew their vows (6, 7). On their arrival at the Shulamite's home, her brothers are reminded of the promise they had made to reward their sister's virtue (9, 10). The Shulamite mentions the greatness of her temptations, and her victory over them (11, 12). The shepherds visit her, to whom she declares, according to request, her unabated attachment to her beloved shepherd (13, 14).

THE COMPANIONS OF THE SHEPHERD.

5 Who is it that comes up from the plain,
Leaning upon her beloved?

THE SHULAMITE.

Under this apple-tree I won thy heart, [187]
Here thy mother travailed,
Here labouring she gave thee birth.
6 Oh, place me as a seal upon thy heart,
As a seal upon thine hand! [188]
For love is strong as death,
Affection as inexorable as Hades.
Its flames are flames of fire,
The flames of the Eternal.
7 Floods cannot quench love;
Streams cannot sweep it away.
If one should offer all his wealth for love,
He would be utterly despised.

ONE OF THE BROTHERS OF THE SHULAMITE.

8 Our sister is still young, [189]
And is not yet marriageable.
What shall we do for our sister,
When she shall be demanded in marriage?

ANOTHER BROTHER.

9 If she be like a wall,
We will build upon her a silver turret.
But if she be like a door,
We will enclose her with boards of cedar.

THE SHULAMITE.

10 I am like a wall,
And my bosom is as towers!
Then I was in his eyes [190]
As one that findeth favour.
11 Solomon had a vineyard in Baal-hammon;
He let out the vineyard to tenants;
Each of whom yielded for the fruit of it
A thousand shekels of silver.
12 I will keep my own vineyard: [191]
Be the thousands thine, O Solomon,
And the two hundreds to the keepers of its fruit!

THE SHEPHERD.

13 O thou that dwellest in the gardens,
My companions are listening to thy voice,
Let me hear thy voice!

THE SHULAMITE.

14 Haste, O my beloved,
And be like the gazelle, as the young one of the hind,
Over the mountains of spices.

[Contents]

2. *Oh for a kiss*, &c. That the speaker is a Shulamite shepherdess who had been separated by king Solomon from her beloved, and that she desires to be reunited with him, is evident from verses 4, 7, 8; vii. 1, &c. Excited by the pain of separation, the damsel wishes that her beloved were present, that he could kiss her, for his caresses would cheer her fainting heart more than the best of wines. Wine, either pure or mixed (see infra, vii. 3), is often spoken of by the sacred and profane poets as delighting the hearts of both gods and men, and reviving their drooping spirits. (Judges ix. 13; Ps. civ. 15; Prov. xxxi. 6; Eccl. x. 19.) Hence Helen gave a bowl of mixed wine to her guests oppressed with grief, to raise their spirits. (Hom. Odyss. iv. 220.) Yet the Shulamite declares that she preferred the caresses of her beloved to this highly prized cordial.

The imperfect form יִשַּׁקֵנִי is used optatively or voluntatively, “Oh that he would kiss me!” (Gesen. § 127, 3 b; Ewald, § 224 a); *i.e.* a kiss: the subject, either in the singular (Gen. xxviii. 11, compare v. 18; Exod. vi. [130]25; Ps. cxxxvii. 3), or plural (Gen. xxx. 14; Exod. xvii. 5; 2 Sam. xi. 17), is to be supplied from the plural noun מְנֻשִּׁיקוֹת as indicated by the *partitive* מִן (Compare Gesen. § 154, 3 c; Ewald, § 217, b, i. b.) The singular, however, is preferable, for

the Shulamite does not wish so much for a *number* of kisses as for the presence of her beloved; *one* would be sufficient if he could only come. We thus obtain a phrase נָשָׁק נְשִׁיקָה ,*to kiss a kiss*, i.e. *to give a kiss*; corresponding to יָעַץ עֵצָה ,*to counsel a counsel*, i.e. *to give counsel*, 2 Sam. xvi. 23; חָלָה חֳלִי ,2 Kings xiii. 14. This construction is of frequent occurrence in Hebrew, and is also found in Greek and Latin; (Compare νοσεῖν νόσον, *pugnam pugnare*; Gesen. § 138 i., Rem. 1; Ewald, § 281 a.) The rendering, therefore, of מִן by *with* (Luther, English Version, Good, Williams, &c.) is incorrect. Ewald's and Herxheimer's translation, *Let one of the kisses kiss me*, is both incongruous and ungrammatical; for in the first place, it is not the kiss that kisses, but the individual; and secondly, נְשִׁיקָה is *feminine*, which would require תְּשַׁקֵּנִי ,the third fem. דוֹדִים prop. *love*, the abstract, which, as in Greek and Latin, is in Hebrew frequently expressed by the plural, (comp. חַיִּים ,*life*, מַמְתַּקִּים *sweetness*, מַחְמַדִּים *beauty*; *vide infra*, v. 16; Gesen. § 108, 2 a; Ewald, § 179 a), here metonomically for the expressions of it—*love-tokens*, *caresses*. So Lee, Magnus, Noyes, Fürst, Philippson, &c. This rendering is demanded by the context, for this clause gives the cause of the statement in the preceding one. The change from the *third* person יִשַּׁקֵנִי ,to the *second* דֹּדֶיךָ ,or from the *second* to the *third* person, is an enallage of frequent occurrence in sacred poetry. (Deut. xxxii. 15; Isa. i. 29; Jer. xxii. 24; Gesen. § 137, 3, Rem. 3.) The Sept. and Vulg. have דַּדֶּיךָ ,*thy breasts*, instead of דֹּדֶיךָ ,*thy caresses*.

That this is a gross error is evident from the fact that *a man* and not *a woman* is here addressed. To appeal to the catachresis in Isa. lx. 16, would be preposterous.

3. *Sweet is the odour*, &c. Ointments, like wines, were used by the ancients as cordials (Prov. xxvii. 9), and as restoratives in consequence of their supposed sanative properties. Hence the anointing of the sick. (Isa. i. 6, &c.; Jer. viii. 22.) The fainting Shulamite, therefore, mentions this second cordial. The ל in לְרֵיחַ signifies *in*, *as regards*, *quoad*, and is frequently used for the sake of giving prominence to an idea. Thus "Solomon was greater than all the kings of the earth לְעֹשֶׁר וּלְחָכְמָה ,*in* or *as regards* riches and wisdom." (1 Kings x. 23.) Compare also Exod. xx. 5, 6; Ewald, § 217 a. Fürst, Lexicon, ל 5, f. The Sept. has ו instead of ל ;or it may be, favours the view of Döpke, Heiligstedt, Meier, &c., that the ל introduces the nominative; but this requires another anomaly, viz., to refer טוֹבִים to the *nomen rectum*, instead of *regens*, and does not at all improve the sense. The Syriac, Ibn Ezra, Authorized Version, Percy, Williams, Noyes, &c., take the ל in the sense of לְמַעַן *because*, and connect it with עַל כֵּן ,*therefore*, of the last clause; but these words are never used together for *cause* and *effect*. Besides, this explanation, like the former, interrupts the sense; for the fainting damsel evidently refers here to the second restorative. Luther strangely renders this clause, *dass man deine gute Salbe rieche*. Kleuker, Rosenmüller, Ewald, Delitzsch, Philippson,

&c., translate לְרֵיחַ *to the smell*; but this is contrary to the *usus loquendi*, as רֵיחַ is never used for the organ which *inhales*, but invariably means something *exhaled* or *emitted*. Hodgson renders לְרֵיחַ *like the scent*; but ל never signifies *like*. The instance in Deut. xi. 18, adduced in support of his assertion, is gratuitous, for the ל in לְטוֹטָפוֹת has not that meaning. [131]

Which perfume thou art, by thy name, &c. This clause is explanatory of the preceding one, "Sweet is the odour of thy perfumes, because thou art that perfume." The comparison of an agreeable person to perfumes arose from the great requisition of aromatics in the East. In warm climates perspiration is profuse, and much care is needful to prevent its offensiveness. Hence the use of perfumes particularly at weddings, feasts, on visits to persons of rank (2 Sam. xii. 20; Ps. xlv. 8; Prov. vii. 17; Amos vi. 6), and most of the occasions which bring people together with the intention of being agreeable to one another. Hence the pleasant odours diffused by perfumes soon became a metaphor to express the attractions which an agreeable person throws around him (Eccl. vii. 1), just as an offensive smell is used to express the contrary idea. (Gen. xxxiv. 30; Exod. v. 21.) The word תּוּרַק being taken as *the third person fem.*, has greatly perplexed interpreters. For neither שֶׁמֶן to which the Sept., Ibn Ezra, Rashbam, Immanuel, &c., refer it, nor שֵׁם to which it is referred by Ewald, Gesenius, &c., ever occurs as feminine. Others, to overcome this difficulty, have either taken תּוּרַק as a

proper name (Syria. R. Tobiah) or as an appellative (Bochart, Hieron. ii. 4, 26.) The true solution seems to be that the word in question is not the third person feminine but *the second person masculine*. So Rashi, Michaelis, Hengstenberg, &c. The words literally translated would be, *like oil art thou poured forth, with regard to thy name*. שִׁמְךָ ,is the second accusative, comp. Ps. lxxxiii. 19; Ewald, § 281, 3 c. The words שֶׁמֶן and שֵׁם form *a paranomasia*. This figure, which consists of words ranged together of similar sound, but differing in sense, is frequently used in the Old Testament; and also occurs in the New. (Compare λιμοὶ καὶ λοιμοὶ, Luke xxi. 11, and Acts xvii. 25.)

Therefore do the damsels love thee. How natural for a woman, greatly admiring, and dotingly attached to her beloved, to think that every damsel must be enamoured of him! The most probable derivation of the much-disputed עַלְמָה is from עָלָה = עוּל *to come up*, *to grow up*; hence the Poel עוֹלֵל *a growth*, *a child*, עֶלֶם *one growing up*; with the termination ־ָם, (Compare *Alma*, in Latin, from *alo*, ἄλδω, and Fürst, Lexicon, מ 2 c,) and the feminine עַלְמָה *a growing damsel*, without any reference to the idea of *virginity*, for which בְּתוּלָה is invariably used; Joel i. 8, not excepted. בַּעַל is here used, not to indicate that the marriage was consummated, but because the Jews regarded parties consecrated to each other from the very moment they were betrothed. Hence Mary is called the *wife* of Joseph, and he her *husband*.

(Compare Matt. i. 19, 20, &c.) Other derivations assigned to עַלְמָה such as עָלַם = חָלַם to be *fat*, *full*, *ripe*, *marriageable* (Gesenius, &c.), or *being excited*, hence *youth* as being peculiarly subject to it (Lee); or עָלַם *to hide*, *be concealed*, *unrevealed*, *unknown*; hence עֶלֶם and עַלְמָה persons of a youthful age who were destitute of the knowledge which springs from sexual intercourse (Henderson) are exceedingly forced. Jerome's assertion, as also Wordsworth's, on Matt. i. 23, that עַלְמָה is the designation of a virgin, because it signifies *kept secret*, as a virgin is under the care of her parents, is gratuitous, for עַלְמָה is formed from עֶלֶם *a young man*, of whom this cannot be said.

4. *Oh draw me*, &c. The Shulamite wishes that her beloved should not only come and cheer her fainting heart with the tokens of his love, but take her away altogether. אַחֲרֶיךָ belongs to מָשְׁכֵנִי (Compare Job xxi. 33.) So the Chaldee, Immanuel, Luther, Mendelssohn, Kleuker, Percy, Hodgson, Ewald, Meier, Hitzig, Philippson, &c. The Septuagint renders מָשְׁכֵנִי by εἵλκυσάν σε, mistaking it for מְשָׁכוּךָ ,and adds לְרֵיחַ שְׁמָנֶיךָ after אַחֲרֶיךָ ,evidently [132]an interpolation from the first clause of the third verse, which the Vulgate, Percy, &c., follow.

The king has brought me, &c. It was the king, she tells us, who brought her into his apartments, and thus separated her from her beloved, in whom, however, she still delights. That this is the import of this clause is obvious from the words and connexion. The Shulamite began with invoking her absent beloved in

the *third* person; but no sooner had she expressed her desire to be with him, than he is, as it were, present to her mind, and she forthwith, dropping the third person, addresses him in the *second*, and so continues to speak to him throughout the third verse. She begins the fourth verse in the same way, imploring her beloved, in the *second* person, to take her away, telling him that "*the king*, 'HE,' *has brought her into his apartments*" (mark the change from the *second* to the *third* person); and then continues and finishes her address to her beloved in the second person. Now we ask, do not the words הֱבִיאַנִי הַמֶּלֶךְ חֲדָרָיו ,*the king*, "HE," *has brought me into his apartments*, placed between מָשְׁכֵנִי אַחֲרֶיךָ ,*do* "THOU" *draw me after thee*, and וגו׳ נָגִילָה וְנִשְׂמְחָה בָךְ ,*we exult and rejoice in* "THEE," &c., clearly show that the king here referred to is a *separate* person from the beloved to whom the maiden is addressing herself? We venture to affirm that few readers of the original Hebrew, whose minds are not biassed by a preconceived theory, can carefully peruse these three verses without observing that TWO persons are here introduced—viz. *the beloved to whom*, and *the king of whom*, the damsel speaks. Ibn Ezra, Immanuel, the Anonymous MS. Commentary, &c., could not help seeing this, and explained the passage, "Were even the king to bring me into his apartments, I should rejoice and be glad in thee" (the shepherd). The Septuagint, which is followed by the Vulgate, has again דַּדֶּיךָ ,*thy breast*, instead of דֹּדֶיךָ ,*thy love*; but see supra, ver. 2.

The upright love thee. The word מֵישָׁרִים is explained by Rashi, Rashbam, Döpke, De Wette, Rosenmüller, Gesenius, &c., by *sincerely*, *uprightly*; Ibn Ezra, who is followed by Houbigant, takes it as an adjective for wine, *i.e.* יַיִן הוֹלֵךְ לְמֵישָׁרִים, *wine that glides down smoothly*; and Ewald, Boothroyd, Magnus, Hitzig, &c., render it *deservedly*, *justly*. As for אָהֵבוּךְ, it is either referred to עֲלָמוֹת *the damsels love thee more than wine* (Ibn Ezra); or is taken impersonally, i.e. *thou art sincerely* or *deservedly beloved*. (Ewald, Magnus, &c.) But this is against the structure of these verses. For the second and third verses, consisting of five members, form one stanza, finishing with the words עֲלָמוֹת אָהֵבוּךְ; and it is evident that the fourth verse, also consisting of five members, is of the same structure, and that the concluding words מֵישָׁרִים אָהֵבוּךְ, are intended to correspond to those at the end of the first stanza. מֵישָׁרִים therefore, must be taken as a parallelism with עֲלָמוֹת and means *the upright*. So the Septuagint (εὐθύτης ἠγάπησέ σε, the abstract for concrete), Symmachus, (οἱ εὐθεῖς οἱ αγαπῶντές σε,) the Vulgate (recti diligant te), the Chaldee (צַדִּיקָיָא רְחִימוּ), English Version (margin), Mendelssohn, Philippson, &c. מֵישָׁרִים *the upright*, is designedly chosen in preference to עֲלָמוֹת *damsels*, in order to give an indirect and gentle blow to him who had separated her from her beloved. "THEE, the upright, and not the seduced love."

5. *I am swarthy*, &c. The court ladies, indignant at this statement, looked with affected disdain upon the

[133]discoloured rustic girl. The Shulamite repels these disdainful looks, for she knows that, though swarthy, she is comely, else the king would not have noticed her. A similar idea occurs in Theocritus (Idyl. x. 26–29), where Bambyce, though sun-burnt, is called beautiful.

Βομβύκα χαρίεσσα, Σύραν καλέοντι τὸ πάντες,
Ἰσχνὰν, ἁλιόκαυστον· ἐγὼ δὲ μόνος μελίχλωρον.
Καὶ τὸ ἴον μέλαν ἐντὶ, καὶ ἁ γραπτὰ ὑάκινθος.
Ἀλλ’ ἔμπας ἐν τοῖς στεφάνοις τὰ πρᾶτα λέγονται.

“Charming Bambyce, though some call you thin,
And blame the tawny colour of your skin;
Yet I the lustre of your beauty own,
And deem you like Hyblaean honey-brown.
The letter’d hyacinth’s of darksome hue,
And the sweet violet a sable blue;
Yet these in crowns ambrosial odours shed,
And grace fair garlands that adorn the head.”

Compare also Virgil, Eclog. x. 38. The comparison between the dark complexion and the tents of the Kedareens, and between the comeliness and the pavilions of Solomon, arose from the custom of nomades and travellers in the East of carrying with them moveable tents, which were temporarily pitched for the purpose of the pernoctation or protection against meridian sun. The tents of the Kedareens, a nomadic tribe of North Arabia (Gen. xxv. 13; Isa. xxi. 17), were and still are to this day

made of coarse cloth, obtained from the shaggy hair of their black goats (Rosenmüller, Orient. iv. 939; Saalschütz, Archäologie der Hebräer, Erster Theil, p. 63). Whereas, the curtains of which Solomon's pavilion was constructed were, most probably, very fine and beautiful. From this passage, confirmed by chap. iii. 6, and vi. 12, we see that this scene took place in the royal tent of Solomon, pitched in the open air of some favourite spot to which the king resorted in the summer. It is still the custom of Oriental potentates to go once a-year to some attractive neighbourhood, where they erect their magnificent tents, which serve as their temporary abodes. (Morier, Zweite Reise in Persien, p. 223; Jaubert, Voyage, p. 334). שְׁחוֹרָה *swarthy*, refers to אָהֳלֵי קֵדָר, *the tents of Kedar*, and נָאוָה *comely*, to יְרִיעוֹת שְׁלֹמֹה *the pavilion of Solomon*. נָאוָה a contraction of נָאְוָה from the root נָאָה is formed from the Pilel. The third radical, which this conjugation requires to be doubled, appears in this and in two other words, under the form וה. Compare שָׁחָה *to bow*, Pilel, שָׁחֲוָה hence the reflexive הִשְׁתַּחֲוָה *to bow*, or *prostrate oneself*; מְטַחֲוֵי *archers*, Gen. xxi. 16; Gesen. § 75, Rem. 18; Ewald, § 121 c. יְרִיעָה prop. *a vail*, *a curtain of a tent*, Exod. xxvi. 12, and metonomically for the tent itself, 2 Sam. vii. 2; 1 Chron. xvii. 1, and like here, in parallelism with אֹהֶל Jer. iv. 20; x. 20; xi. 29. The Septuagint, followed by the Vulgate, erroneously renders כְּיִרִיעוֹת שְׁלֹמֹה, ὡς δέῤῥεις Σολομὼν, *as the skins of* Solomon, and Bishop Foliot refers it to the beautiful skin of

Solomon's body, with which the Church compares herself to set forth her comeliness. Hodgson, misunderstanding the figure, absurdly renders כְּאָהֳלֵי קֵדָר ,*like the spices of Kedar*, and makes the Shulamite compare herself to the odoriferous trees and beautiful figures in the (יְרִיעוֹת fine tapestry.

6. *Disdain me not.* In repelling these disdainful looks the Shulamite states first that her dark complexion is adventitious, being merely sun-burnt, and as Rashi remarks, נוח להתלבן כשיעמוד בצל ,will be white again under the protection of the shade: and secondly, how she came to be so much exposed to the sun, and this she ascribes to the anger of her brothers. This anger, however, as it appears from ii. 8–17, was merely a fraternal solicitude for her reputation, which induced them to give her employment in the vineyards, in order to prevent her meeting her beloved in the field. אַל תִּרְאוּנִי (*i.q.* אַל תִּרְאֶינָה אֹתִי ,Ewald, § 248), [134]is well explained by the Chald., Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Rashbam, Immanuel, &c., אל תבזוני ,*do not disdain me*. רָאָה *to see*, is also used for *looking down* upon any one, Job. xli. 26. Instead of תִּרְאֻנִי four of Kennicott's MSS., two of De Rossi's, and two more, originally read תיראונני *fear* me not, which is adopted by Döderlein; but the reading of the received text is both more supported, and suits the connexion better; for it can hardly be possible that the damsel was actually so black as to inspire terror; or that the court ladies were so highly nervous as to be so easily frightened. Hodgson's rendering, *mind me not*, is

incorrect. The ש in שֶׁאֲנִי stands for אֲשֶׁר the א being rejected by aphaeresis, and the ר assimilated; Gesen. § 36. שְׁחַרְחֹר *blackish*; adjectives denoting colour have frequently the last two stem letters repeated to render them diminutives; as אֲדַמְדָּם *reddish*, Lev. xiii. 19; יְרַקְרַק *greenish*, Lev. xiii. 49. So Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Rashbam, Immanuel, Gesen. § 84. 23; Ewald, § 157 c. שְׁזַף *i.q.* שְׁדַף ,*to scorch*, *to burn*, Gen. xxiii. 17; xli. 6. So the Syriac, Aquila, Theodotion, Ewald, Gesenius, Meier, Hitzig, &c. The ז and ד frequently interchange, compare נָזַע and נָדַע *to cut down*; and are even found to do so by the same inspired writer; compare נִזְעֲכוּ Job. vi. 17, with נִדְעֲכוּ xvii. 1. בְּנֵי אִמִּי , not *step-brothers*, (Houbigant, Ewald, Good,) who would not have such power over their sister, but poetically used for אַחַי *my brothers*. Comp. Gen. xxvii. 20; Ps. l. 20; lxix. 9. נִחָרוּ is the Niphal of חָרַר to *burn*, (comp. Ps. cii. 4; Gesen. § 6, 7, 8, Rem. 5; Ewald, § 140 a. § 193 c.), and not from חָרָה (Kimchi, Ibn Ezra, Immanuel, &c.) which would be נֶחֱרוּ Is. xli. 11.

Though my own vineyard, &c. The word כַּרְמִי is either taken to denote the Shulamite's *personal appearance*, or to mean *her beloved*: and the phrase is explained, "Through the constant watch which my brothers made me keep over their vineyard, I could not take care of (כַּרְמִי *my complexion*; or could not attend to (כַּרְמִי *my beloved*." But it is a hazardous mode of interpretation to take an expression in the same verse in an *ordinary* and in an *extraordinary* sense, which

ought never to be done unless required by absolute necessity, which is not the case here. Dr. Good indeed escapes this inconsistency by assigning a spiritual meaning to כֶּרֶם (viz. personal estate, one's own person) in both clauses; and he submits that "the bride asserts that she had been compelled to neglect her own person, through the perpetual attention which was demanded of her by her brothers or sisters in decorating themselves, or in assisting in their concerns." But apart from the unnecessary and unjustifiable deviation from the literal meaning, this interpretation is entirely at variance with the context. For in the words, "They have made me keeper of their vineyards," the Shulamite evidently means to explain how she came to be exposed to the tanning sun. Whereas, the supposition of her perpetual attention to the adornment of her brothers, fails to account for the brown complexion. If however, with Ibn Ezra, we take these words to explain the severity of her brothers, everything will be plain and unforced. The damsel says, "My brothers were so angry—so severe with me that, resolved to carry out their purpose, they made me keep their vineyards, ובתחילה קורם זה אפילו כרמי שלי לא נטרתי, a thing which I had never done before, even to my own vineyard. It is utterly inconceivable how those who maintain that this Song celebrates the marriage of Solomon with [135]the daughter of Pharaoh can reconcile it with the facts that the damsel's dark complexion is here described as *adventitious*; whereas the Egyptians, even of the

highest and most secluded classes, are *naturally* dark, and that she has been made *keeper of the vineyards*, which would ill agree with any prince's daughter. כֶּרֶם is most probably derived from כָּרָה = כּוּר *to dig*, hence a garden cultivated by means of axes and spades in contradistinction to fields worked with ploughs and harrows. (Compare Saalschütz, Archäologie der Hebräer, vol. i. p. 119.) For the term. ם֫ *vide supra*, p. 131. שֶׁלִּי *i.q.* לִי אֲשֶׁר is used emphatically after כְּרָמִי to mark the contrast, and not, as Houbigant erroneously supposes, in the sense of בשלי *tranquillè, mine own vineyard I kept not quietly*.

7. *Tell me, O thou*, &c. Having repelled the disdainful looks of the court ladies, the Shulamite now resumes her address to her beloved; so that this verse is intimately connected with the fourth; and verses five and six are, as it were, parenthetical. Is it not surprising that some can read this verse, and yet believe that the king was the object of the damsel's attachment, when this shows so clearly that it was a shepherd? The violent heat of noonday compels people in the East to desist from labour, and recline in some cool part of the house (2 Sam. iv. 5). Shepherds especially, being more exposed to the burning rays of the sun, lead their flocks under some shady tree near wells and streams. (Gen. xxix. 7; Ps. xxiii.; Isa. xix. 10.) We have beautiful descriptions of the same custom by Greeks and Romans. Thus Virgil, Georg. iii. 331—

Aestibus at mediis umbrosam exquirere vallem,
Sicubi magna Jovis antiquo robore quercus
Ingentis tendat ramos, aut sicubi nigrum
Ilicibus crebris sacra nemus adcubet umbra.

"When noon-tide flames, down cool sequester'd glades,
Lead where some giant oak the dell o'ershades,
Or where the gloom of many an ilex throws
The sacred darkness that invites repose."

Compare also Theocritus, i. 14, 15: vi. 1, 16, 38, 39. אֵיכָה prop. *how*, but also of place, *where*, 2 Kings xvi. 13. Twenty-eight MSS. of Kenn. and De Rossi, read וְאֵיכָה but this weakens the sentence. We must supply צֹאנְךָ after תִּרְעֶה and ם– after תַּרְבִּיץ see Ezek. xxxiv. 15. Immanuel accounts for the dual, צָהֳרַיִם because שזה השם נופל לא על חצות היום בלבד אלא גם על חלק מהיום קרוב לחצות וחלק מהיום מעט אחר חצות, it speaks of that part of the day immediately preceding noon as well as of that part which immediately follows noon. שֶׁלָּמָּה *i.q.* אֲשֶׁר לָמָּה, Dan. i. 10, *ut ne*, well rendered by the Sept. μήποτε, Vulg. *ne*. אֲשֶׁר is used as a conjunction, the ל to express design, or purpose, and מָה for negation, Ewald, § 337, 6. כְּעֹטִיָּה has caused much perplexity to interpreters. It is explained to mean *like one veiled* (ὡς περιβαλλομένη, Sept.), as a sign of *mourning* (Rashi, compare 2 Sam. xv. 30; xix. 5); of *harlotry* (Rosenmüller, comp. xxviii. 5); of *shame* (Umbreit, Hengstenberg, comp. Jer. xiv. 3; Mal. iii. 7); and of

wandering or *roaming* (Philippson, comp. Jer. xliii. 12). But wherever covering is used to signify *mourning* or *shame*, the *part of the body* usually *covered*, in order to indicate the existence of the emotion, is invariably stated. Equally untenable is the rendering of *harlot*; for Tamar covered her face, not as a sign that she was a prostitute, but to *disguise* herself, so that she might not be recognised, and Judah took her to be a harlot because she *sat by the way side*, Comp. Jer. iii. 2. Ewald renders it like *one unknown*; but this, to say the least, is remote from the context; [136]Gesenius, like *one fainting*; but this incurs the same objection. The explanation of Philippson would have been the most plausible, if Rashbam and the anonymous MS. had not shown that עָטָה itself means *to roam, to wander*, by referring to Isa. xxii. 17, where, according to its parallel, עָטַל *to cast down*, it must signify to *roll about*. This meaning bests suits the context here, and is confirmed by Symach., Vulg., Syriac, Chald.

8. *If thou knowest not.* The court ladies, hearing the rustic girl say that she wished to be with her shepherd, tell her ironically to go, and be employed in the low and toilsome occupation of a shepherdess, rather than enjoy the exalted and easy life of a royal favourite. Some have put this answer into the mouth of the beloved; but it is evident from v. 9, and vi. 1, the only two places where the appellation “fairest of women” occurs, that it is the reply of the court ladies, which even Döpke, Good and Noyes, the

defenders of the fragmentary theory, admit. Nothing can be more plain and incontrovertible than the statement in this verse, that the damsel is *a shepherdess*, and the beloved *a shepherd*, whom, she is told, she would find among his fellow-shepherds. It is for those who maintain the theory that this Song celebrates the marriage of Solomon with the daughter of Pharaoh, or some other prince's daughter, to get over this fact. לֹא יָדֵעַ is unnecessarily and incorrectly rendered by Ewald, Meier, Hitzig, &c., *unwise*. The Sept., which is followed by Luther, mistaking the usage of לָךְ translates this clause ἐὰν μὴ γνῷν σεαυτήν, as if the original were אִם לֹא תֵדְעִי אֶת נַפְשֵׁךְ. The prepo. ב in בַּנָּשִׁים gives to הַיָּפָה the force of the superlative. Besides the several modes of expressing the superlative adduced by Gesenius, § 119, 2, this degree is sometimes also expressed by the positive and the prepo. ב prefixed to the noun designating the class to which the person or thing compared belongs: thus אַלְפִּי הַדַּל בִּמְנַשֶּׁה, *my family is the weakest in Manasseh*, Judg. xvi. 5; Prov. xxx. 30, comp. also εὐλογημένη συ ἐν γυναιξίν, *thou art the most blessed of women*, Luke i. 28, Ewald, § 313 c.

9. *To my steed*, &c. The court-ladies having turned from her and told her to go back to her menial employment, her severest trial begins. The king, having watched his opportunity, enters at that moment, and thus begins his flattering address. He first praises her beauty and gracefulness by comparing her to his stately and noble chariot steed.

The anonymous MS. commentary rightly remarks, מוסב למעל שאמרה שחורה אנו והוא אמר לה דמיתיך לסוסתי ברכבי פרעה שהם שחורים וסוס השחור יפה הוא יותר משאר סוסים ,that this simile was suggested by the reference which the damsel has made in the preceding verse to her dark complexion. The king, therefore, compares her to his noble steed, whose dark colour renders it more beautiful than the other horses. Such a comparison must have been very striking and flattering in the East, where this animal was so much celebrated for its preeminent beauty. “A young chestnut mare,” says Layard, Nineveh, [137]i. 91, “belonging to the sheik, was one of the most beautiful creatures I ever beheld. As she struggled to free herself from the spear to which she was tied, she showed the lightness and elegance of the gazelle. Her limbs were in perfect symmetry; her ears long, slender, and transparent; her nostrils high, dilated and deep red, her neck gracefully arched; and her mane and texture of silk.… No one can look at the horses of the early Assyrian sculptures without being convinced that they were drawn from the finest models.” Compare also the exquisite and inimitable description of this noble animal in Job xxxix. 19, &c. and Rosenmüller, Orient. iv. 941. The same comparison is used by the Greek and Roman poets. Thus Theocritus, Idyl. xviii. 30, 31:—

ἢ κάπῳ κυπάρισσος ἢ ἅρματι Θεσσαλὸς ἵππος,
ὥδε καὶ ἁ ῥοδόχρως Ἑλένα Λακεδαίμονι κόσμος.

"As towers the cypress mid the garden's bloom,
As in the chariot proud Thessalian steed,
Thus graceful rose-complexion'd Helen moves."

Compare also Horace, Ode iii. 11. This shows the futility both of those who affirm that the strangeness of the simile is against the literal meaning of this Song, and of those who accuse the writer of uncouthness. Besides, is this comparison more strange or uncouth than that of a man with *a bony ass*? (Gen. xlix. 14.) Mark also the other comparison used in the same chapter, such as of an *ox*, *serpent*, &c. סוּסָה is not *equitatus*, (Vulg. Rashi, Rashbam, English Version,) but as Ibn Ezra and Immanuel rightly remark, נקבת סוס ,*mare*, the regular feminine of סוּס The ־ִי in לְסוּסָתִי is the suffix of the first person, as the ancient versions have it; and refers to a well-known and celebrated mare which Solomon possessed and highly prized, and which he always put into one of Pharaoh's chariots. בְּרִכְבֵי פַרְעֹה ,*one* of Pharaoh's chariots, like בְּעָרֵי גִלְעָד ,*one* of the cities of Gilead. Judg. xii. 7.

10, 11. *Beautiful is thy countenance*, &c. The flattering praises are followed by enticing promises. "Thou art indeed beautiful," says the tempting king, "even in humble ornaments, but thou shalt have more costly adornments, which will show off thy beauty to greater advantage." The mention of the noble steed which was adorned with costly trappings, contributing so much to its stately and elegant

appearance, naturally suggested the reference here made to the damsel's ornaments. The reader will not fail to observe that it is not the shepherd, but the king who is speaking in verses 9–11. The poor shepherd had no prancing steed, no Egyptian chariots; he could not promise the shepherdess such costly ornaments as are here described. תּוֹרִים (from תּוּר *to go round*, hence תּוֹר *something round*, *a circle*, Esth. ii. 12, 15,) *small rings* or *beads* strung upon threads, worn as a head-dress. It is customary in the East for women to wear strings of beads hanging down from the temples over the cheeks. Rosenmüller, Orient. iv. 942. Niebuhr, Reise nach Arab. i. 163. לְחָיַיִם *cheeks* (dual of לֶחִי by a synecdoche for *the whole face*. חֲרוּזִים (from חָרַז *to pierce*, *to perforate*), *little perforated balls*, or *beads* strung upon a thread and worn around the neck; *i.q. a necklace*. תּוֹרִים and חֲרוּזִים are plurals, because the circlet and necklace consisted of many composite parts. Whether the circlet was of gold or brass, or whether the necklace consisted of real pearls, corals, or steel, the etymology of the words does not at all intimate. The context alone must decide this. The fact that the Shulamite was a humble rustic girl, and that Solomon promises to present to her a *golden* circlet with *silver* studs, proves that they were of a common [138]description. This is another proof that the bride was not a prince's daughter; since her ornaments were not even of gold or silver, notwithstanding the impassionate desire of Eastern ladies for costly adornments. The Sept. and Vulg.

have ὡς τρυγόνες, *i.e.* “thy neck is as beautiful as doves, כַּתּוֹרִים they have also כַּחֲרוּזִים *like a necklace*; but they have evidently mistaken the ב for כ ,as well as the meaning of תּוֹר

12. *While the king is at his table.* Here we see how signally the first attempt of Solomon failed to win the affections of the Shulamite. For no sooner did he go to his repast than the damsel indulges in sweet expressions of love with her beloved shepherd. Two distinct persons are here spoken of; *the king* at the table, and *a beloved shepherd*, called “nard.” That by the expression נִרְדִּי *my nard*, the Shulamite means her beloved is evident from the following verse, where, led on by the figure of this odorous plant, she continues to call him by the fragrant names, “bag of myrrh,” “bunch of cypress flowers,” &c. עַד שֶׁ ,*as long as*, *while*, Sept. ἕως, Vulg. *dum*. מֵסַב (from סָבַב *to sit round a table, to recline*. 1 Sam. xvi. 11, comp. Sept., Chald., Syriac, Arabic, Vulg. in loco,) *seats set round*, *couches* set in a circle, for reclining at the repast, according to the Oriental custom, (see Rosenmüller, Orient. iii. 631;) so the Sept. ἀνάκλισις. Vulg. *accubitus*, Rashbam, בהסיבות אכילות המשתה ,*in the couch at the partaking of the repast*; and comp. Ps. cxxviii. 3. The reading of במסבו *in aulaeo, tentorio*, instead of במסבו proposed by Houbigant, is both needless and unauthorized. נֵרְדְּ *spikenard* or *nard*, νάρδος, is the *Valeriana Jatamansi*, a plant peculiar to Hither India. It was obtained from India by way of Arabia and Southern Asia. The perfume extracted

from it was highly prized. Thus we are told (Mark xiv. 31), when the Saviour sat at meat in Bethany, "there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard *very precious*, and she broke the box, and poured it upon his head," (comp. also John xii. 31,) which Judas, the betrayer, estimated at three hundred pence, about eight pounds ten shillings. The Romans considered this perfume so precious that Horace promises Virgil a whole cadus, about nine gallons, of wine for a small onyx-box full of spikenard. See Pliny, Hist. Nat. xiii. 2; Sir W. Jones, Asiatic Researches, vol. ii. p. 416; Rosenmüller, Mineralogy and Botany of the Bible, p. 166; Kitto, Cyclop. Bib. Lit.; Winer, Bib. Dict. s.v.

13. *A bag of myrrh*, &c. This appellation is a continuation of the figurative expression "nard," under which the Shulamite described her beloved in the preceding verse. The Hebrew women were in the habit of wearing little bags or bottles filled with perfumes, especially with myrrh, suspended from the neck, and hanging down between their breasts, under the dress. Comp. Mishna, Sabbath vi. 3; Schroeder de Vestit. Mulier. p. 155; Hartmann, Hebr. ii. 235. The Shulamite says that her beloved is to her what this delightful perfume is to others; having him she did not require any other fragrance. צְרֹר (from צָרַר *to tie up*, *to close*), is *a leather smelling-bag* or *bottle*, i.q. בֵּית נֶפֶשׁ ,tied up, or closed at the top. מֹר σμύρνα, μύῤῥα, *Balsamodendron myrrha*, (from מָרַר *to flow*,) *myrrh*, so called from its flowing down, is a

perfume obtained from a shrub growing in Arabia, and much more profusely in Abyssinia. It formed an article of earliest commerce, was highly prized by the ancients, and is still much esteemed both in the East and in Europe. This aromatic liquid either exudes spontaneously [139]from cracks in the bark, and is called מוֹר עֹבֵר, מוֹר דְּרוֹר, *stilicidious* or *profluent myrrh* (vide infra, v. 5; Exod. xxx. 23), and on that account is esteemed superior; or is elicited artificially by bruises or incisions made with stones, and is therefore regarded as inferior. It was used for incense (Exod. xxx. 23), for perfuming dresses (Ps. xlv. 9), and couches (Prov. vii. 17), for the purification of women (Esth. ii. 12), for embalming dead bodies (John xix. 39), and was worn by women in the bosom. See Pliny, lib. xii. cap. 35; Rosenmüller, Altherth. iv. 1, 159; Winer, Bib. Dict.; Kitto, Cyclop. Bib. Lit. s.v. בֵּין שָׁדַי יָלִין is a relative clause, with אֲשֶׁר implied (See Gesen. § 123, 3; Ewald, § 332), and refers to צְרֹר הַמֹּר .This is evident from בְּכַרְמֵי עֵין גֶּדִי , which refers to אֶשְׁכֹּל הַכֹּפֶר ;comp. also iv. 4. The verb לוּן is not here, "lie all night," but *to abide, to rest*, like Job xix. 4, אִתִּי תָלִין מְשׁוּגָתִי ,where even the Authorized Version has "mine error *remaineth* with myself." Ps. xlix. 13.

14. *A bunch of cypress flowers*, &c. כֹּפֶר is unanimously regarded by the ancient versions and the Rabbins to denote the plant called κύπρος by the Greek, and *Al-henna* by the Arabs. This plant, which grows in many places, both in Palestine and Egypt, (Plin. Hist. Nat.

xii. 24,) is a tall shrub, growing from the height of eight to ten feet; it is exceedingly beautiful and odoriferous. “The dark colour of its bark, the light green of its foliage, the softened mixture of white and yellow, with which the flowers, collected into long clusters like the lilac, are coloured, the red tint of the ramifications which support them,—form a combination the effect of which is highly agreeable. The flowers, whose shades are so delicate, diffuse around the most grateful odours, and embalm with their strong fragrance the gardens in which they grow, and the apartments which they beautify.… The women take pleasure in adorning their persons and apartments with those delightful blossoms.” See Pliny, lib. xii. c. 14; Rosenmüller, Bib. Miner. and Bot.; Winer, Bib. Dict.; Kitto, Cyclop. Bib. Lit. s.v. The flowers grow in dense clusters, whence אֶשְׁכֹּל הַכֹּפֶר, *cluster of cypress flowers*. En-gedi, more anciently called Hazezon-Tamar, which modern explorers identify with the present Ain-Jidy, abounded with the best of those delightful shrubs, (Winer, Bib. Dict.; Kitto, Cyclop. Bib. Lit. s.v.; Robinson, Palest, ii. 209–216.) Hence this beautiful appellation, “a bunch of cypress flowers,” than which nothing could be more expressive of sweetness and beauty to an Oriental. The word אֶשְׁכֹּל is most probably derived from אָשַׁךְ, *to bind, to twine together*; hence אֶשֶׁךְ, *a bundle, a string*, with the addition of כְּ like חַרְגֹּל גִּבְעֹל Gesen. § 30, 3; Ewald, § 163 f. This is confirmed by the Talm. אַשְׁכּוֹלָת *disciples*, (Sota 47, a), *i.e.* a combination of youths; comp. חֶבֶר and

Fürst, Lexicon, s.v. כֶּרֶם here is *a field cultivated as a garden*; comp. כֶּרֶם זָיִת ,*an olive-yard*. Judg. xv. 5; Job xxiv. 18, and supra, ver. 6.

15. *Behold, thou art beautiful.* That is, "It is not I who possess such attraction, it is thou who art beautiful, yea superlatively beautiful!" The repetition of הִנָּךְ יָפָה enhances the idea. "*Thine eyes are doves*," i.e. "Thine eyes, in which 'the rapt soul is sitting,' beams forth the purity and constancy of the dove." As the eye is the inlet of ideas to the mind, so it is also the outlet of inward feelings. Thus it expresses many of the passions, such as pity, mildness, humility, anger, envy, pride, &c.; hence the phrases עַיִן טוֹב (which we also have), to look with an eye of compassion, Prov. xxii. [140]9; עַיִן רַע ,ὀφθαλμὸς πονηρὸς, *an evil eye*, Deut. xv. 9, Mark vii. 22. The dove is the emblem of purity and constancy. Ps. lvi. 1; Matt. x. 16. עֵינַיִךְ יוֹנִים are taken by the Syriac, Vulg., Ibn Ezra, Rashbam, Immanuel, Luther, Authorized Version, Kleuker, Percy, Gesenius, Döpke, Rosenmüller, Meier, &c. as an ellipsis for עֵינֶיךְ עֵינֵי יוֹנִים ,*thine eyes are doves' eyes*. Gesen. § 144, Rem. Ewald, § 296, b. But such an ellipsis can be tolerated only in extreme emergencies, whereas here the natural construction yields an excellent sense. Besides, v. 2 proves that the doves themselves, and not the eyes, are the point of comparison, just as the hair and the teeth are (iv. 1, 2) compared to the goats and sheep themselves, and not merely to their hair and teeth. And עֵינַיִךְ בְּרֵכוֹת (vii. 4), which does not mean, *thou hast fish-*

ponds eyes, but, *thine eyes are like the fish-ponds themselves*. Hence the Sept., Chald., Rashi, Mendelssohn, Hodgson, Ewald, Umbreit, Magnus, Williams, Hengstenberg, Philippson, Hitzig, rightly reject this elliptical construction.

16. *Behold, thou art comely.* The Shulamite, refusing to receive all the praise, responds: "It is *thou* who art lovely and attractive;" and referring to their meeting-spot, she adds, "Lovely is our flowery couch; the arches of our bowers are formed of the spreading and interweaving branches of the majestic and odoriferous cedars and cypresses." נָעִים is to be mentally supplied before עַרְשֵׂנוּ רַעֲנָנָה ;comp. Prov. iii. 11, i.e. *Yea, lovely is our verdant couch*. The adj. רַעֲנָנָה is formed from the Pilel of the verb רָעַן This conjugation, which is formed by doubling the third radical (see supra, 5), is used to describe permanent states or conditions, or some striking property; comp. Job xii. 5; Gesen. § 55, 2; Ewald, § 120 a. קוֹרָה *beam, roof* (Gen. xix. 8), here *arch, vault*. רָהִיט *i.q.* רָחִיט in the כְּתִיב (the ה is sometimes pronounced harshly like the ח ,comp. רָהִיט Exod. ii. 16, where the Samaritan has רָחִיט and Gesen. § 7, 4), is rendered by the Sept., Vulg., Ewald, Gesenius, &c. *fretted ceilings*; by Kimchi *galleries*; and the anonymous manuscript explains it *bolt*, and adds, והנה נקרא רהיט לפי שרץ הנה והנה ,"*it is called bolt because it runs backward and forward*." But this is not in keeping with the structure of the verse. רָהִיטֵנוּ stands evidently in parallelism with בָּתֵּינוּ and accordingly is of a similar import.

Rashbam has therefore rightly rendered it אחד מבניני הבית ,*one of the apartments of the house*. As however the house here described is *a bower*, רָהִיט would be an *arbour*. The etymology of the word is in keeping with this sense. רָהַט *i.q.* רָהַט = רוּץ *to run*, *to flow*, hence רַהַט 1. a *gutter*, from the water running down, Gen. xxx. 38; 2. *a curl*, from its flowing down (vide infra, vii. 6), and 3. רְהִיט *a place upon which one runs*, *a charming spot much frequented*; just like שְׁעוּק *a place where people run*, *a street*, from שָׁעַק *to run*. It is now pretty generally agreed that בְּהוֹת the Aram. for בְּרוֹשׁ is not *the fir*, but *the cypress*. It is quite natural that this lofty tree, which grows to a height of from fifty to sixty feet, of so hard and durable a nature, and so highly esteemed among the ancients, (Virg. Georg. ii. 443,) should be placed together with the majestic cedar. Comp. Sirach, xxiv. 13; Virg. Georg. ii. 44; Winer, Bib. Dict.; Rosenmüller, Bib. Miner. and Bot. p. 260; Kitto, Cyclop. Bib. Lit. s.v. [141]

1. *I am a mere flower of the plain.* "As for me," the Shulamite modestly insinuates, "my beauty is not peculiar, but is of an ordinary character, like these flowers which are found in great profusion in the plain and in the valley. The word חֲבַצֶּלֶת which occurs only once more (Isa. xxxv. 1), is variously explained. The ancient versions vary in their rendering of it. Thus the Sept. and Vulg. have here ἄνθος, flos, *flower*; the Chald., נַרְקוֹם *narcissus*; so Saadias: whereas in Isa. the Sept., Vulg., Chald., render it *lily*. Modern critics are no less divided.

Kimchi, Ibn Ezra, &c., explain it *rose*; Michaelis, Ewald, Gesenius, Döpke, Henderson, Meier, &c., take it to be *autumn crocus, colchicum autumnale*; De Wette, Rosenmüller, Royle, Winer, &c., *narcissus*; Professor Lee, *lily*. The etymology of the word is likewise disputed. Some derive it from בָּצַל *a bulb*, with ח prefixed, as ח like א is sometimes put before triliterals, in order to form a quadriliteral, (Gesenius, Lehrg. p. 863, Rosenmüller, Henderson, Hengstenberg, &c.,) and others take it as a compound of חָבַץ and בָּצַל *acrid bulb*. (Ewald, Heiligstedt, &c.) The most probable derivation, however, seems to be חָבַץ = חָמַץ *to be bright, to shine*; hence חֲבַצֶּלֶת (with the termination ־ֶלֶת like כַּרְמֶל עֲנָפֶל *a flower*; as most verbs which signify shining are used also to denote verdure and bloom. Compare נִצָּן *a flower*, from נָצַץ *to shine*; and Simonis Arcanum Formarum, p. 352. The word שָׁרוֹן (for יְשָׁהוֹן like סוֹר for יְסוֹר from יָשַׁר *to be straight, plain*, with the termination ־וֹן, comp. Gesen. § 84, 15), is here best translated *a plain, or field*; so the Sept., Vulg., Percy, &c. render חֲבַצֶּלֶת הַשָּׁרוֹן *a flower of the field*; and this admirably suits שׁוֹשַׁנַּת הָעֲמָקִים *lily of the valley*—a flower common in the valley.

2. *As a lily among the thorns.* Beautifully and ingeniously does the shepherd take up this humble figure of the Shulamite, and, by a happy turn, make it symbolical of her surpassing beauty. “It is true, that thou art a lily, but as a lily surrounded by a multitude of brambles; so thou appearest among all

the damsels." The expressions בֵּן and בַּת are not merely used for *son* and *daughter*, but also, idiomatically, denote *lad* and *lass*, *youth* and *damsel*. Gen. xxx. 13; Judg. xii. 9; Prov. vii. 7.

3. *As an apple-tree*, &c. The Shulamite returns the compliment: "As the charming apple-tree, covered with beautifully tinged and sweetly smelling fruit, appears amidst the wild and barren trees, so doest thou, my beloved, look among the youths. I delight," continues the Shulamite, "to repose beneath the shady tree, because of its charming fruit." The comparison between the delight which she had in the company of her beloved, and the agreeable enjoyment which a shady tree affords, will especially be appreciated by those who have travelled in the East, and had the opportunity of exchanging, in the heat of the day, their close [142]tents for an airy and fragrant bower. Comp. Gen. xviii. 4, 8; 1 Sam. xxii. 6; Rosenm. Morgenl. i. 49; iii. 528. תַּפּוּחַ is taken by the Chald. for אָתְרוֹגָא *citron*; by Rosenmüller and others, for *quince*. The expression occurs only six times in the Scriptures; four times in this book (besides the present instance, see also ii. 5; vii. 9; viii. 5); once in Prov. xxv. 11; and once in Joel i. 12. It is used in three passages out of the six for the tree itself, and in the other three for its fruit. But in all these places the common apple-tree or apple is quite in keeping with the context, and the etymology of the word, viz., נָפַח *to breathe*, *to breathe sweetly*; hence תַּפּוּחַ from its fragrant breath, is an

appropriate description of the common apple in Syria (Ovid. Met. viii. 675), and, indeed, in all other countries. It is evident from proper names (Josh. xii. 17; xvi. 8), that this tree was much cultivated in Palestine at a very early period. In the Talmud we frequently meet תַּפּוּחַ used to denote the common apple. It is worthy of notice that the shepherd calls his beloved שׁוֹשַׁנָּה *fem.*, whilst she calls him תַּפּוּחַ *mas*. The second verb וְיָשַׁבְתִּי is subordinated to the חָמַדְתִּי by means of the ו and the two words are well rendered by the Chald. רְגִינַת לְמֵיתַב ,*I delight to sit*; comp. אֵיכְכָה אוּכַל וְרָאִיתִי ,*how shall I endure and witness*, for *how shall I endure to witness*, Esth. viii. 6. This subordination also occurs without the ו; comp. infra, vii. 8; viii. 2; Job x. 16; xix. 3; Gesen. § 142, 3 a, b; Ewald, § 285.

4. *He led me*, &c. Having represented her beloved, in the preceding verse, as a tree, forming with its widely-spread branches and rich foliage a shady bower, in which she delighted to repose and enjoy its delicious fruit, the Shulamite here narrates, in the same metaphorical language, how he took her into that bower of delight, that arbour of love. The words בֵּית הַיָּיִן mean *bower of delight*, wine being frequently used in this book for delight; and are but a designation of the manifestations of love denoted in the preceding verse by תַּפּוּחַ *delicious apple-tree*. So also the word דֶּגֶל from דָּגַל *to cover*, retaining here its primary meaning, *cover*, *shade*, corresponds to צֵל *shade*, in the last verse. The Sept., Sym., Syriac,

Arab., which are followed by many moderns, read הֲבִיאֵנִי and דְּגְלוּ *bring me*, and *cover me*, imper., arising most likely from a wish to produce uniformity in this and the following verses.

5. *Oh, strengthen me*, &c. The rehearsal of their past union and enjoyment kindled the Shulamite's affections, and made her wish again for that delicious fruit, *i.e.* the tokens of his love. The cakes here mentioned were held in high estimation in the East; here, however, both the cakes and the apples are to be taken figuratively as expressions of love. This is obvious from the preceding verse, and from the words, "for I am sick with love," for no real cake or apple could cure a heart suffering from this complaint. אֲשִׁישָׁה (from אָשַׁשׁ *to burn*, *to fire*; hence אֵשׁ *fire*, like אֵם *mother*, from אָמַם *to join*, *to unite*), *something made by fire*, *a sort of sweet cake* prepared with fire, and is most probably the same which in Hos. iii. 1 is written more fully אֲשִׁישֵׁי עֲנָבִים, *grape-cakes*. The meaning, *cake*, is retained in the Sept. in all the passages (except Isa. xvi. 7, where the Sept. reads אֲנָשַׁי instead of אֲשִׁישַׁי see the parallel place, Jer. xlviii. 31), where this word occurs. Thus λάγανον ἀπὸ τηγάνου, *a cake* from the frying-pan, 2 Sam. vi. 19; and in [143]the parallel passage, 1 Chron. xvi. 3, ἀμορίτης, a sweet *cake*; in Hos. iii. 1, πέμμα, a *baked cake*; and ἀμόραις, *sweet cakes*, in the passage before us. This meaning is supported by the Chald. on Exod. xvi. 31, where אֲשִׁישְׁיָן is used for the Hebrew צַפִּיחִית and Mishna Nedarim, vi. 10.

Gesenius, Hitzig, Henderson, Fürst, &c., derive it from אָשַׁשׁ *to press*, *to compress*, whence, they say, אֲשִׁישָׁה *a cake* made of dried grapes *pressed* together, and אֲשִׁישׁ *a foundation* (Isa. xvi. 7), which is *pressed* down by treading on it. But as the transition from cake to foundation is not so easily conceived, and especially as the meaning *to press*, attached to אָשַׁשׁ is nowhere to be found in Hebrew (the word in Isa. xvi. 7 is to be translated *cake*, see Hengstenberg, Christ. i. p. 315), it is far better to derive this word as above from אָשַׁשׁ *to burn*. The Rabbinical explanation, נִרְבָּא דְחַמְרָא ,*flagons of wine*, which the Authorized Version follows, is not borne out by the etymology, nor does it suit the passages in which this word occurs, and is therefore rightly abandoned by modern lexicographers. The rendering of Hodgson, "Support me with cups, around me strew apples;" and that of Michaelis, "Support me with verdant herbs, spread fragrant fruits under me," are contrary to the meaning of the words.

6. *Let his right hand*, &c. The pressure of the attempts to alienate her affections from him whom her soul loveth, and the burning desire to be re-united with him, though well sustained by her noble mind, yet overcame her body; and whilst momentarily sinking beneath the weight, the Shulamite desires that no other hand should raise her drooping head, no other arm support her exhausted frame than that of her beloved. This verse is to be taken in the optative mood. Comp. Ps. vii. 9; xlv. 2; Ewald, § 329 a.

7. *I adjure you*, &c. Having evinced her warm and undiminished attachment to her beloved shepherd, the Shulamite adjures the court ladies, who, as we have seen, tried to gain her affections for the king, by everything dear and lovely, not to excite her love for anyone else till her own (אהבה) *affections* wish (דוד אחר) *for another object*. The gazelle, צְבִי so called from the beauty of its form, is an animal of the antelope kind, of very graceful and elegant figure, has very slender limbs, large and soft eyes. The great admiration in which this animal was held in the East, made the Hebrews use it as an emblem of everything beautiful (Prov. v. 19); and from its being charming and lovely, it also became an object by which to swear. Such adjurations are frequently used in the East. Comp. Reland, de Religio Mah. ii. p. 164: Rosenmüller, Orient. i. 146; v. 22. Dio, in the Æneid, lib. iv. 314; Bochart, Hieroz. i. p. 899. אֶתְכֶם *mas.*, for אֶתְכֶן *fem.* Both masculine pronouns and verbs are sometimes used in reference to objects which are feminine. See Gesenius, § 121, Rem. i. § 137, 1; Ewald, § 184 c. אִם after formulæ of swearing, has the effect of a negative particle (Isa. xxii. 14; Prov. xxvii. 14). This is owing to a part of the oath being omitted. Comp. 2 Sam. iii. 35; Gesen. § 155, 2 f.; Ewald, § 356 a. עוֹר here, is not *to arouse, to wake from sleep* (Gesen.), but *to rouse, to excite the passions, affections*; thus הֵעִיר קִנְאָה *,he will arouse his zeal*, Isa. xlii. 13; Prov. x. 12. The repetition of the same verb in the Hiphil and Piel expresses *intensity*, [144]Isa. xxix. 9; Zeph. ii. 1. אַהֲבָה is the abstract, *love*,

affection, iii. 10; vii. 7. After שֶׁתֶּחְפָּץ supply דּוֹד אֶחָר . Similarly, Rashbam. The Sept. strangely renders בִּצְבָאוֹת אוֹ בְּאֵילוֹת הַשָּׂדֶה ,ἐν δυνάμεσι καὶ ἰσχύσεσι τοῦ ἀγροῦ, *by the powers and virtues of the field*. Thus in this scene, the first attempts, both on the part of the king and the court ladies, to win the Shulamite's affections, signally failed. The same formula re-occurs iii. 5, and viii. 4, to mark, at the end of the trials, her successful resistance.

8. *Hark! my beloved!* Having alluded in the preceding Section (i. 6) to the ill-treatment which she had received from her brothers, the Shulamite now relates the cause of that treatment. Thus whilst this narrative forms the connecting link between this and the preceding Section, it also gradually acquaints us with her history. The description given of the arrival and conduct of her beloved is very graphic and beautiful. She first sees him at a distance, bounding over the hills with the speed of the swift-footed gazelle, and presently he is found behind the wall, peeping through the window, and imploring her in the sweetest language imaginable to go with him into the fields and enjoy the beauties and charms of nature. קוֹל is not קוֹל רַגְלָיו ,*the sound of his feet* (Ibn Ezra, Hitzig), which could not be heard at such a distance from the mountains; nor *the voice of his song* (Döpke, Philippson), for he could not very well sing when running at such a speed as here described; but simply means *hark!* (Ewald, Magnus, Meier), [145]and is used in animated descriptions to arrest attention,

Ewald, § 286 f.

9 *My beloved is like*, &c. To describe the speed of his approach the Shulamite compares him to the swift-footed gazelle, and nimble fawn. This comparison is also used in other parts of Scripture. Thus Asahel is called light-footed as a gazelle. 2 Sam. ii. 18; Prov. vi. 5; Hab. iii. 19. "The Eastern buildings generally surround a square inner court; the beloved is described as gradually making his approach, first to the wall, then looking through the window." Here is another incontestable proof that the object of the damsel's affection, whom she describes as coming to her, is not the king, but a shepherd, for the king could not consistently be represented as bounding over the hills. Though אַיָּל has a feminine, אַיָּלָה , which is used in ver. 7, yet instead of its being here לְעֹפֶר אֲיָלוֹת ,we have הָאַיָּלִים :see also Ps. xlii. 2. This is owing to the neglect on the part of the writer to avail himself of the forms established by usage, Gesen. § 107, 1. Or it may be that such names were still of a common gender, and the feminines were only in the process of formation, but not as yet fixedly established, Ewald, § 175 b. כֹּתֶל occurs only here, but it is evident from Dan. v. 5, and the Targum, Josh. ii. 15, where it stands for the Hebrew קִיר that it means *a wall* forming a part of the house. The Sept. has here עַל הָרֵי בָתָר ,from ii. 17.

10, 11. *Arise, my love*, &c. The Shulamite introduces here her beloved as speaking. He urges her to go, since the rain is over, and everything without is

charming. עָנָה is idiomatically used in reference even to the person speaking first, without any antecedent interrogation. (Deut. xxvi. 5; Isa. xiv. 10; xxi. 9.) The meaning of the word seems to be simply *to impart information*, either asked for or not. In the former case עָנָה obtains the additional idea of *a reply*, whereas in the latter it merely means *to inform*, *to tell*, like ἀποκρίνομαι in the New Testament. Comp. ἀποκριθεῖς εἶπε, Matt. xvii. 4; Mark ix. 5. On the use of the dative לְךָ ,see Gesen. § 154, 3 e. Ewald, § 315 a. The ἅπα. λέγ. סְתָו properly denotes *the winter* = *the rainy season*, at the end of which, viz. February or March, the spring advances with surpassing quickness; it excludes the autumn, and thus differs from חֹרֶף The form סְתָו (from סָתָה *to winter*), is, according to the analogy of קְצָו מְדָו חֶגָו see Fürst, Lexicon, under חֶגָו The Sept. has mistaken the dative לְךָ for the imp. לְכִי and adds יוֹנָתִי *my dove*, after יָפָתִי *my beauty*.

12. *The flowers appear*, &c. The gradual development is exceedingly beautiful; the description unfolds with the season. After the graphic delineation of the meadows strewed with a profusion of variegated flowers; of the men in the fields, and the birds hovering over them, joining to pour forth a volume of various sounds; of the delicious odour of the embalmed fig, and fragrant vine, the beloved [146]exclaims: “Nature has prepared a rich banquet; come, let us go and enjoy it!” The Sept., Aquila, Sym., Vulg., Chald., Rashbam, render עֵת הַזָּמִיר ,by

the season for the pruning of vines: Gesenius defends this rendering, but against the usage of the word זְמִיר and the connexion. Wherever זְמִיר occurs, either in the singular (Isa. xxv. 5), or plural (2 Sam. xxiii. 1; Isa. xxiv. 16), it invariably means *song* or *singing*. Moreover, the parallelism, and the whole of the description, demand that it should be rendered so here. All the pleasures and charms here depicted are gratifications for the senses, and are adduced by the beloved as the invitation of nature to *enjoy* her banquet; whereas the pruning of the vines would be a summons to *engage in toil*. Besides, the vine is mentioned afterwards in its rotation (v. 13), and it would mar the gradual progression of this minute description to suppose that it has been uselessly repeated. Hence it has been rightly rendered *singing* by Rashi, Kimchi, Ibn Ezra, Anonymous Oxford Manuscript, Mendelssohn, Kleuker, Ewald, Döpke, Rosenmüller, De Wette, Magnus, Hengstenberg, Philippson, Fürst, Meier, Hitzig, &c. The objection that זְמִיר *singing*, means the *song of men*, is obviated by referring it here to the season when *both* man and bird begin to sing. זְמִיר like other words of the form קָטִיל expresses the *time* of the action; comp. אָסִיף *harvest*; properly the time when the fruit is gathered. חָרִישׁ *the time of ploughing*. Gesen. § 84, 5; Ewald, § 149 e.

The cooing of the turtle, &c. The turtle-dove is a migratory bird (Jer. viii. 7; Arist. Hist. Anim. viii. 3, 12, 16; Pliny, Hist. Nat. x. 36; Winer, Bib. Dict.;

Kitto, Cyclop. Bib. Lit. s.v.); it resides in the winter farther south than Palestine, and returns in the spring, when its cooing voice in the woods announces the return of that season.

13. *The fig-tree sweetens her green figs.* The word חָנַט is now rendered by many commentators, according to the example of Ibn Ezra, *to sweeten*, *to embalm*, *to spice*; *i.e.* the fig-tree sweetens her fruit by filling it with aromatic juice. This rendering is confirmed by the use of חָנֻט *to embalm* (Gen. l. 2, 26), which was done with spices and aromatic plants (2 Chron. xvi. 14; John xix. 40). The Sept., Aquila., and Vulg. render חָנַט *puts forth*, but this signification cannot be deduced from the root. Ewald, Magnus, Hitzig, have "the fig-tree *reddens*," &c., but the verb is not used in this sense in Hebrew. פֶּג (from פָּגַג *immature*), *an unripe fig*, Sept. ὄλυνθος, Vulg. *grossus*; so in the Talmud and Ibn Ezra, פרי טרם שיתבשל, *the fruit before it is ripe*.

The vines blossom, &c. It is well known that the blossoming vine smells sweetly; comp. Pliny, Hist. Nat. xiv. 2. וְהַגְּפָנִים סְמָדַר, lit. *the vines are in blossom*, i.e. *the vines blossom*; so Sym. οἰνάνθη, Vulg. *florentes*. Substantives are frequently used in Hebrew instead of adjectives to express properties; thus וְהַפִּשְׁתָּה גִבְעֹל, *the flax was bolled*. Exod. ix. 31; Ezra. x. 13. This peculiarity is to be accounted for by supposing either that the adjectives were not as yet formed, or if formed were still not currently used. Gesen. § 106, 1; Ewald, § 296 b. לְכִי stands for לֵךְ;

comp. ver. 10; the י has been occasioned by the preceding form קוּמִי and succeeding words רַעְיָתִי יָפָתִי ,which terminate in י .This is not unfrequently [147]the case, see Job xix. 29; Eccl. viii. 17; Prov. viii. 35; Mich. i. 8. The Sept. has here again לְכִי for לֵךְ , and יוֹנָתִי after יָפָתִי

14. *My dove in the clefts*, &c. Having described the charming aspect of nature, he repeated his invitation to her to go with him into the fields. Impatient at her apparent delay, the beloved, whilst calling her by the endearing epithet "dove," delicately ascribed to her the timorous character of that bird. Doves in the East make their nests in the clefts of elevated rocks and cliffs (Jer. xxviii. 28), which they are exceedingly afraid to leave when once frightened. Thus Homer, Iliad, xxi. 493:

Δακρυόεσσα δ' ὔπαιθα θεὰ φύγεν, ὥστε πέλεια,
Ἣ ῥά θ' ὑπ' ἴρηκος κοίλην εἰσέπτατο πέτρην,
Χηραμὸν, οὐ δ' ἄρα τῇ γε ἁλώμεναι αἴσιμον ἦεν.

"As when the falcon wings her way above,
To the cleft cavern speeds the frighten'd dove,
Straight to her shelter thus the goddess flew."

See also Virg. Æn. v. 213. חַגְוֵי is the plural construct. of חֶגְוָ (from the root חָגָה *to make incisions in, to split or perforate rocks*); according to the analogy of קַצְוֵי plural const. of קְצָו and מַדְוֵי from מְדָו vide sup. ii. 11. מַדְרֵגָה (from דָּרַג cognate with דָּרַךְ ,*to ascend*,) a

place reached by climbing or ascending, *a steep*, *a precipice*. The Mazora marks the י in מַרְאֵיךְ as superfluous, evidently to avoid the apparent incongruity between the adjective נָאֲוָה which is in the *singular*, and the noun מַרְאֵיךְ ,apparently plural. But the י here may be retained, and the word may still be singular. For many nouns from roots ל"ה preserve in the singular before a suffix the original י of the root, and thus have the appearance of the plural: *e.g.* מִקְנֶיךָ ,*thy castle* (Isa. xxx. 23), from מִקְנֶה מַרְאָיו the same expression, Job xli. 1; Gesen. § 93, 9; Ewald, § 256 b.

15. *Catch us the foxes*, &c. The Shulamite here quotes the words of her brothers, who had overheard the invitation. To prevent the meeting of the lovers, the brothers gave the damsel employment in the vineyard, to catch and keep out the foxes. To this she refers in i. 6, when, repelling the disdainful looks of the court ladies, and accounting for her brown complexion, she mentions the severe treatment of her brothers. שׁוּעָלִים *foxes*, as well as jackals, were very numerous in Palestine (Judg. xv. 4; Lam. v. 18; Ps. lxiii. 11; Neh. iv. 3). There was a district actually called אֶרֶץ שׁוּעָל ,from the abundance of these creatures, 1 Sam. xiii. 17. These animals are gregarious, found in packs of two or three hundred (Boch. Hieroz. lib. iii. 12), and are described, both by sacred and profane writers, as destructive to vineyards, Sam. i. 17, 18; and Theocritus, Idyl. v. 112:

Μισέω τὰς δασυκέρκος ἀλώπεκας, αἳ τὰ Μίκωνος
Αἰεὶ φοιτῶσαι τὰ ποθέσπερα ῥαγίζοντι.

“I hate those brush-tail’d foxes, that each night
Spoil Micon’s vineyards with their deadly bite:”

also Idyl. i. 47–50. The young foxes are especially injurious to the vineyards, because they burrow in holes in the ground, Neh. iv. 3. The brothers, in the last clause, assign a reason for their proposal; the ו in וּכְרָמֵינוּ[148] is therefore to be rendered *for*, Gesen. § 155, 1 c. The Sept. inadvertently omits the word שׁוֹעֲלִים

16. *My beloved is mine*, &c. The Shulamite tells the court ladies how she had consoled herself under these circumstances of separation: “Though my brothers succeeded in separating us bodily by assigning to me this post of keeping the vineyards, yet our affections are inseparable; and though still separated from me, my beloved is mine and I am his; his who tends his flock in the meadows abounding with flowers.” It seems as if the words, “he who feeds his flock among the lilies,” were designedly added, whenever the damsel speaks of her beloved, to show unmistakably that he was a shepherd. How such passages can be reconciled with the supposition that the king is the object of the maiden’s attachment, or, according to others, that the maiden is the daughter of Pharaoh, is difficult to divine.

17. *When the day cools*, &c. She also relates how she

had comforted her beloved, telling him that this state of separation would not last long; that he must come in the evening, when unobserved, with the same swift-footed speed as he came in the morning. עַד שֶׁיָּפוּחַ הַיּוֹם ,*i.q.* עַד שֶׁיָּפוּחַ רוּחַ הַיּוֹם ,*when the day breeze blows*, *i.e.* in the evening, shortly before sunset, when a gentle and cooling breeze blows in the East (see Pliny, Hist. Nat. ii. 47); hence רוּחַ הַיּוֹם ,Gen. iii. 8, opposed to חוֹם הַיּוֹם ,xviii. 1. That this is the sense of שֶׁיָּפוּחַ הַיּוֹם ,and not *day-break* (English Ver.), or *morning-breath* (Good), is evident from the immediately following וְנָסוּ הַצְּלָלִים ,which expresses the same idea in other words, *i.q. evening*; comp. Job xiv. 2. The shadows are said to flee away when at sunset they become elongated and stretched out; thus as it were run away from us, further and further, till they eventually vanish in the dark of night. Hence David, speaking of the approaching sunset of his life, says, יָמַי כְּצֵל נָטוּי ,*My days are like an elongated shadow*, Ps. cii. 12; cix. 23. Comp. also Virg. Eclog. i. 84, and ii. 66. So Herder, Kleuker, Ewald, Gesen., Döpke, Rosenmüller, Magnus, Heiligstedt, Fürst, Philippson, Meier, Hengstenberg, Hitzig. The rendering of Hodgson, Good, &c., "*till the day-breath*," and their reference to the passage of Milton, "Sweet is the breath of morn" (Par. Lost, iv. 641), is gratuitous. The words הֶרֵי בָתֶר are rendered by the Sept. ὄρη τῶν κοιλωμάτων, *mountains of cavities*, *i.e.* decussated mountains, from בָּתַר *to divide, to cut*, which Gesenius and Heiligstedt explain, *a region divided by mountains and valleys*, but very

unsatisfactorily. The Syriac and Theodo. have θυμιαμάτων, taking בָּתֶר for בְּשָׂמִים which is adopted by Meier; but this emendation is unsupported by MSS., and has evidently arisen from viii. 14. The Vulg. and Rashbam take בָּתֶר as a proper name, *montes Bether*; but neither place nor mountain is known by such name. The Chald., Ibn Ezra, Rashi explain הָרֵי בָתֶר by *mountains of separation*, *i.e.* mountains which separate thee from me: this is followed by Luther, Ewald, De Wette, Hengstenberg, Philippson, Hitzig, and is most [149]consonant with the context. We have seen (ver. 9), that there were mountains separating the houses of the lovers, which the shepherd had to cross to reach the Shulamite; and as she told him to go back and return in the evening, it was evident that he had to cross again those separating mountains.

1. *When on my nightly couch*, &c. Through some means or other her beloved did not come in the evening according to request, and, unable to wait any longer, she retired. Her thoughts, however, kept her awake, and her confidence in him made her look for him even when on her couch. The words עַל מִשְׁכָּבִי וְגוֹ" do not mean, "I sought him *in my bed*," at which unnecessary umbrage has been taken, but "Even when I reclined upon my nocturnal couch, I could not give him up; I still sought to find him." מִשְׁכָּבִי בַּלֵּילוֹת means *my couch used at nights*, *i.q.* מִשְׁכַּב הַלֵּילוֹת, in contradistinction to מִשְׁכַּב הַצָּהֳרַיִם, *a couch used at noonday*, 2 Sam. iv. 5. This is evident

from the plural בַּלֵּילוֹת *in the nights*, and from ver. 8, where the same plural is used to describe nocturnal marauders. The affirmation of Harmer, therefore, that no reasonable doubt can be made that these are the words of one to whose bed the beloved was no stranger, falls to the ground. The Sept. adds, ἐκάλεσα αὐτὸν καὶ οὐχ ὑπηκούσεν ἐμὲ, from chap. v. 6.

2. *I must arise now*, &c. Seeing, however, that her beloved did not come, and apprehending that some disaster might have befallen him on his way, the Shulamite determined to go and find him. The ה in אָקוּמָה is expressive of self-summons and determination: "I said to myself, Come! I must arise now!" Comp. Ps. ii. 3; lv. 3; Gesen. § 128, 1; Ewald, § 228 a.

3. *The watchmen*, &c., found her whilst engaged in seeking her beloved, and she at once inquired of them whether they had seen him. The interrogative particle is here omitted. This is sometimes the case when the whole sentence, as here, is interrogative, in which case it is distinguished by the prominence given to the word upon which the force or weight of the interrogation more especially falls; as by the tone in which it is uttered, *e.g.* זֶה חַסְדְּךָ אֶת־רֵעֶךָ, "*This* thy kindness to thy friend!" 2 Sam. xvi. 17; xviii. 29; Gesen. § 153, 1; Ewald, § 324 a.

4. *Scarcely had I passed them*, &c. The abruptness of the description here is very characteristic. She

informs us that she had put a question to the watchmen, but, in her hurry to find her beloved, does not tell us the answer which she received. The construction [150]עַד—שֶׁ כִּמְעַט ,*scarcely when*, is nowhere else to be found in the Old Testament; it may be resolved to זמן אשר עברתי מהם כמעט ,*the time that I passed them amounted to a little while*.

5. *I adjure you*, &c. Having expressed her deep attachment to her beloved shepherd, she again adjures the court ladies not to persuade her to love any one else. Comp. ii. 7. The Sept. has again צְבָאוֹת *powers*, and אֵילוֹת *virtues*; vide supra, ii. 7.

6. *What is that, &c.* The situation changes. The state tents have been broken up in the neighbourhood of the Shulamite's home, and the royal train travels towards Jerusalem. Some of the inhabitants, as they see at a distance the procession almost enveloped in the fragrant cloud of smoke arising from the incense profusely burned, exclaim, "What is that coming up from the country?" "The burning of perfumes in the East, in the preceding part of processions, is both very ancient and very general. Deities (images) were probably the first honoured with this ceremony, and afterwards their supposed vicegerents, human divinities. We have a relic of the same custom still existing among ourselves, in the flowers strewed or borne in public processions, at coronations, &c., and before our great officers of state: as the Lord Chancellor, the Speaker of the House of Commons; and in [151]some corporations, *the mace*, as an ensign

of office, has the same origin, though now reduced to a gilded ornament only." See Calmet, Dictionary, and Rosenmüller, Orient. iv. 948. מִי is properly used of *persons*, but also of *things*, especially when the notion of person or persons is in them, *e.g.* מִי לְךָ כָּל הַמַּחֲנֶה הַזֶּה, "*What is all this company with thee?*" Gen. xxxiii. 8; Mich. i. 5. That this is here the meaning of מִי is evident from the answer, הִנֵּה מִטָּתוֹ, *Behold, it is the palanquin*. מִדְבָּר (from דָּבַר *to range in order, to guide, to drive flocks*), here is not *desert*, but, as frequently, *an uninhabited plain* or *country*, where flocks are tended, in contradistinction to town, where people dwell. Comp. Isa. xlii. 11; Jer. xxiii. 10; Joel ii. 22. תִּימְרוֹת the plur. of תִּמָּרָה like צְדָקוֹת from צְדָקָה *columns* or *clouds*, only occurs once more, Joel iii. 3, and is most probably derived from תָּמַר *to ascend*, to rise up like a column or cloud. The י has merely been inserted to help the pronunciation (comp. Exod. xxv. 31; Ps. xix. 4.), and, indeed, nineteen MSS. and originally another omit the י, which is undoubtedly the correct reading. The כ in כְּתִימְרוֹת signifies *as in*. Comp. Isa. v. 17; xxix. 7; Gesen. Gram. § 118, 3, Rem. כֹּל is used for a plurality comprising, or consisting of, *divers single things* or *objects*, and is to be rendered *all kinds*. Comp. Lev. xix. 23; Neh. xiii. 16; Fürst, Lexicon, under כֹּל 5; Gesen. § 108, 4, § 111, 1. לְבֹנָה (λίβανος, λιβανωτὸς, *arbor thuris, thus*), frankincense, so called from its white colour, was early known and extensively used by the Jews (Exod. xxx. 34; Lev. ii. 1, 2; Isa. lxiii. 23) and other nations (Tibull. Lib. Eleg. ii.; Ovid. Trist. Lib. V. Eleg.

v. 11) in sacrifices for fumigation. It is represented as a shrub, growing on mountains, and thorny, both in Arabia (Isa. lx. 6; Jer. vi. 20) and in Palestine, according to the passage here; reaches a height of about five feet, and resembles in its leaves and fruit the myrtle. The frankincense is obtained by incisions which are made twice a year; the first in the beginning of autumn, which is white and pure (לְבֹנָה זָכָה ,Exod. xxx. 34), and is regarded as superior; and the second incision is made in the winter, when the resin thus obtained is reddish, and considered much inferior. Comp. Winer, Bibl. Dict. p. 681, *et seq.*; Pliny, Hist. Nat. xxxii. 14.

7, 8. *Lo! it is the palanquin*, &c. Another bystander, recognizing it at a distance, exclaims that it is the cortége of Solomon, consisting of his palanquin and guard. מִטָּתוֹ שֶׁלִּשְׁלֹמֹה ,*i.q.* מִטַּת שְׁלֹמֹה ;comp. Gesen. § 121, 5, note; Ewald, § 309 c. This construction, however, has no real analogy in the Scriptures; it frequently occurs in latter Hebrew writings. Comp. תהתיתו של ההר ,*the bottom of the mountain*, in Rashbam on the Song of Songs, iv. 1. The גִּבֹּרִים here mentioned, were a separate class of the body-guard formed by David; and, as co-religionists (גִּבֹּרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל), seem to have been chosen to protect the monarch on his excursion against any attack of nocturnal marauders, so frequent and so much dreaded in the East. Comp. Job i. 15, with Gen. xvi. 12. The מ in מִגִּבֹּרֵי is used *partitively*, vide supra, i. 2. אָחוּזֵי חֶרֶב , *skilled in the sword*. אָחַז *to take hold*, also *to handle*

artfully, like תָּפַשׂ *to take hold, to handle skilfully*. The participle אָחוּז though [152]of *a passive* form, has an *active signification*; this is not unfrequently the case, especially when it belongs to an intransitive verb. Comp. בטוּחַ בַּיהוָה ,*he trusted in Jehovah*, Ps. cxii. 7; Gesen. § 50, 3, Rem. 2; Ewald, § 149 d. This removes the apparent contradiction caused by the Authorized Version, "They all hold swords;" when in the next clause, as Hodgson and Good remarked, we are told that each had his sword on *his thigh*. אִישׁ *a man* is used as *a distributive* for *each, every*. Comp. Gen. xv. 18; xlii. 25; Gesen. § 124, 2, Rem. 1; Ewald, § 278, b. We must supply חָגוּר after אִישׁ Comp. Exod. xxii. 27; Ps. xlv. 4. פַּחַד *fear*, metonymically for *the object* of fear (Gen. xxxi. 42, 53), here *marauders*. This is evident from Ps. xci. 5; Prov. iii. 24. בַּלֵּילוֹת *in* or *during the nights*, i.e. *nocturnal marauders*. Vide supra, iii. 1.

9. *A palanquin*, &c. As the train draws nearer, a third person recognizes it as the newly-made palanquin, of which he gives a circumstantial description. Palanquins were and are still used in the East by great personages. They are like a couch, sufficiently long for the rider to recline, covered with a canopy resting on pillars at the four corners, hung round with curtains to exclude the sun; they have a door, sometimes of lattice-work, on each side. They are borne by four or more men, by means of strong poles, like those of our sedan-chairs; and in travelling great distances, there are always several

sets of men to relieve each other. The materials of which these palanquins are made, and the style of their construction, depend upon the rank and wealth of the owners. The word אַפִּרְיוֹן is most probably derived from פָּרָה *to run, to be borne quickly*. Comp. τρόχος, from τρέχειν, φορεῖον, from φέρω, *currus* from *currendo*, *ferculum* from *fero*. The form אַפִּרְיוֹן is, according to the analogy of דִּמְיוֹן *likeness* (Ps. xvii. 12), and פִּדְיוֹן *ransom* (Exod. xxi. 30); comp. Gesen. § 84, 15; Ewald, § 163 c. with a prosthetic א (Gesen. § 19, 4; Ewald, § 162 c,) followed by *a Dagesh forte* like אַפֶּדֶן *a palace*, Dan. xi. 45; see Fürst, Lexicon. Ewald, however, derives it from פרה = ברה *to work out, to build, to form*, hence אֲפִרְיוֹן *ein Prachtstück*. Kimchi derives it from פָּרָה *to be fruitful*, and says it is called אַפִּרְיוֹן because שפרין ורבין עליה *,people increase and multiply therein*. But this is contrary to the description here given of the procession. Besides, a *bridal bed* has no (מֶרְכָּבָה *seat*. עָשָׂה *to make*, means also *to have made, to order to be made*. A person is frequently described in Scripture idiom as doing that which he orders to be done. 2 Sam. xv. 1; Gal. ii. 5, 6. The מִן in מֵעֲצֵי denotes the material of which the frame-work was made. Ps. xlv. 4. *The wood of Lebanon*, i.e. cedars and cypresses, Zech. xi. 1, 2; 1 Chron. ii. 8.

10. *Its pillars he hath made*, &c. The description here given of the costly construction of this magnificent palanquin is by no means a mere poetic embellishment. A similar litter was presented by the British government in 1766 to the Nabob of the

Carnatic, of which the following account is given by Williams *in loco*, from the public prints of the time: "The beams are solid gold, the inside beautifully decorated with silver lining and fringe throughout; the panels are painted in the highest style of finishing, and represent various groups and heads of animals, after the manner of Asia, beaded with gold richly raised above the surface, and engraved. The stays and different other ornaments are of embossed silver." Curtius (viii. 9, 23) [153]gives us a description of the procession of an Indian potentate, which strikingly resembles the one here depicted. "When the king shows himself in public, his servants go before him with silver censers, which fill the air, throughout the way along which he is borne in the palanquin, with delicious odour. He himself is reclining upon a golden couch, covered with pearls and veiled with purple curtains, embroidered with gold; the life-guard bring up the rear." רְפִידָה (from רָפַד *to support*, ii. 5), *that which supports the back when sitting*; so the Sept. ἀνάκλινον; Vulg. *reclinatorium*; Döpke, Rosenmüller, Hitzig, &c. מֶרְכָּב *a seat*, comp. Lev. xv. 9. The words תּוֹכוֹ רָצוּף אַהֲבָה מִבְּנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלָ͏ִם, are either to be translated: *its centre is tesselated most lovely, by the daughters of Jerusalem*;—the noun אַהֲבָה may be used adverbially for *lovely*, *charmingly*, comp. אֹהֲבֵם נְדָבָה, "I will love them *freely*," Hos. xiv. 4; Ewald, § 279 c, § 204; so Luther, Kleuker, Herder, De Wette, Rosenmüller, Philippson, &c.; and the מִן in מִבְּנוֹת may denote the *author* or *instrument*, see Isa. xxii. 3; xxviii. 7; Eccl. xii. 11;

Gesen. Gram. § 143, 2;—or they may be rendered, *the middle thereof is wrought, as expressive of their love, by the daughters of Jerusalem*; taking אַהֲבָה *love*, for *the effect*, or *proof* of it; comp. דוֹדִים i. 2, and ἀγάπη in Greek; so Le Clerc, Bp. Percy, Drs. Good and Clark. The interior of these couches is generally painted with baskets of flowers and nosegays, intermixed with short sentences or mottoes, expressing the power of love.

11. *Come out, O ye daughters*, &c. As the royal train begins to enter the city, a fourth bystander calls the daughters of Zion to come out and see the monarch in his joyful attire. Thus the inspired writer beautifully puts into the mouth of several spectators the description he desires to give. The crown here mentioned is not the symbol of *royalty*, but the emblem of *happiness* (Job xix. 9). Crowns or chaplets of flowers were worn in ancient times on occasions of festivity and rejoicing; comp. Apocryp. Wisdom, ii. 7, 8. Conjugal life being regarded as the most happy, it became a custom among the Jews, as well as among other nations, to put crowns on the heads of the newly-married people. Rosenmüller, Orient. iv. 196. “In the Greek Church in Egypt,” says Maillet, “the parties are placed before a reading-desk on which is the book of the Gospels, having two crowns upon it of flowers, cloth, or tinsel. The priest, after benedictions and prayers, places one on the bridegroom’s, the other on the bride’s head, covering both with a veil.” (See also Talmud, Sotha, ix. 14;

Selden, Uxor. Hebr. II. xv. 139; I. F. Hirt, de Coronis apud Hebraeos nuptialibus sposi sposaeque). The Jews still call the bridegroom מֶלֶךְ ,and the bride מַלְכָּה The design of Solomon in putting on this crown is evidently to dazzle the rustic girl. The arrival and entrance of the royal train in the capital, recorded in verses 6–11, evidently show that the circumstances narrated in the preceding sections took place out of Jerusalem, and that the apartments into which the king brought the damsel, as stated in ch. i. 4, were not in the capital, but, [154]as we see from ch. vi. 11, 12, in the neighbourhood of the Shulamite's home. The abnormal צְאֶינָה is here intentionally used instead of the normal צֵאנָה to correspond in form with רְאֶינָה just as מוֹבָא *entrance* (Ezek. xliii. 11), is employed instead of מָבוֹא to correspond with מוֹצָא see also Jer. l. 20; Ezek. xvi. 50; infra, viii. 5; Gesen. § 59, Rem. 3; Ewald, § 118 d. The female inhabitants of the town are designedly called בְּנוֹת צִיּוֹן ,to distinguish them from the בְּנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַיִם ,which is the appellation of the court ladies.

1. *Behold, thou art*, &c. The shepherd, who had followed afar off the royal train in which his beloved was conveyed to the capital, obtains an interview with her, and is now addressing her. *Thine eyes are doves*; see supra, i. 15. *Thy hair is like a flock of goats*, i.e. the tresses, dangling from the crown of her head, are as beautiful as Mount Gilead covered with the shaggy herd. The hair of Oriental goats is exceedingly delicate, soft (Gen. xxvii. 16), long, and

black (1 Sam. xix. 13); and when the sun shines upon it, reflects such a glare that the eye can hardly bear the lustre (see Boch. Hieroz. i. 2, 51. Rosenmüller, Orient. i. 85). הַר גִּלְעָד is the name of a chain of limestone mountains beyond Jordan, intersected by numerous valleys (Gen. xxxi. 21; Jer. l. 19). This ridge extends over the regions inhabited by the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the northern part of Manasseh (Numb. xxxii. 40; Deut. iii. 13; Josh. xvii. 1–6). It was famous for its luxuriant verdure, aromatic simples, and rich pastures; and hence attracted the flocks (Numb. xxxii. 1); and animals from this region were regarded as of a superior quality, like gold from Ophir. Nothing, therefore, could more beautifully express the curly hair of a woman, dangling down from the crown of her head, than the sight, at a distance, of a flock of goats running down from the summit of this verdant hill on a beautiful day. צַמָּה (from צָמַם *i.q.* Chald. צַמְצַם צָמַם *to bind*, *to twine*, *to veil*), is well explained by Rashbam, ענין עילוף ומעטה היא, *a kind of cover*, or *veil*; so Sym., Sept., Isa. xlvii. 2, Michaelis, Döpke, Gesenius, De Wette, Lee, Percy, Williams, Hitzig, &c. The rendering of the Sept. here, ἐκτὸς τῆς σιωπήσεώς σου, *behind thy silence*, which is followed by the Syriac and Arabic, is both contrary to the etymology of the word, and meaningless. The other translations, viz. *locks* (Auth. Vers., Ewald), *a plait of hair* (Hengstenberg), cannot be substantiated. The word גָּלַשׁ which occurs only here and vi. 5, is of difficult interpretation, and has produced a variety of renderings. The Sept. has here ἀπεκαλύφθησαν, and

vi. 5, ἀνεφάνησαν, the Syriac ܐܬܠܝ ,the Vulg. here *ascenderunt*, and vi. 5, *apparuerunt*. The Rabbins also differ in their interpretations. Rashi explains it שנקרחו *that make bare*, i.e. *quit* or *descend* the mountain. Ibn Ezra, שנשקפו *which look down*; Rashbam, שנראו *which are seen*, i.e. while coming down from the mount. Modern commentators are not less at variance. Luther translates it *shorn*; Houbigant, *which hang down*; Kleuker, Ewald, *which shows itself*; Döpke, Gesenius, Hitzig, Philippson, *which lie down*; Magnus, *which climb up*; Percy, Hengstenberg, *which come up*, *i.e.* from Jerusalem. Amidst these conflicting opinions, it appears best to take גָּלַשׁ like its kindred פָּלַשׁ in the sense of *rolling down*, *running down*; see Fürst. Lexicon, s.v. This meaning [155]accords best with the comparison here used, and leaves to the preposition מִן its natural signification. The omission of הַר in the Sept., Arabic, and a few MSS., is evidently owing to the carelessness of a transcriber.

2. *Thy teeth*, &c. The compliment passed upon the black hair is followed by another on the white teeth: "Thy teeth resemble in whiteness woolly sheep just washed." This comparison will appear more striking when we remember that the wool of Scripture is proverbial for its whiteness, and is placed in juxtaposition with the colour of snow, Isa. i. 18; Dan. vii. 9; Rev. i. 14; Book of Enoch xlvi. 1. The Sept., which is followed by many modern commentators, takes the comparison to be between the *shorn* skin of

the sheep and the teeth; but this is untenable. For, 1. The skin of shorn sheep can never have the whiteness which the context here demands; 2. Shorn sheep would yield a very incongruous figure, if teeth were compared with them; 3. Sheep, as now, were generally washed *before* and not *after* they were shorn; 4. The passage in vi. 6, shows that קְצוּבוֹת is merely a poetical epithet for רְחֵלִים not because they were *then* shorn, but because they are *periodically* shorn. The explanation of קְצוּבוֹת by well *numbered* (Rashi), or by יש להן מדה אחת כאילו נחצבת כל אחת כמו חברתה ,*same size* (Kimchi, Ibn Ezra), are against vi. 6.

All of which are paired. That is, each upper tooth has its corresponding lower one; thus they, as it were, appear in pairs, like this flock of white sheep, each of which keeps to its mate, as they come up from the washing-pool. *And no one of them is deprived of its fellow*, i.e. no tooth is deprived of its corresponding one, just as none of the sheep is bereaved of its companion. The Hiphil of תְּאַם *to be double, to be pairs* (Exod. xxvi. 24; xxxvi. 29), *is to make double, to make pairs, to appear paired.* שַׁכֻּלָה is *deprived, bereaved*, Jer. xviii. 21. On the masculine suffixes in כֻּלָּם and בָּהֶם referring to קְצוּבוֹת *fem.*, see supra, ii. 7. The words שְׁכֻלִּם and שַׁכֻּלָה form a paranomasia; see i. 2. The rendering of מַתְאִימוֹת by כלם יולדות תאומים ,*all bearing twins* (Kimchi, &c.), which some try to justify by submitting that sheep as well as goats in the East frequently bear twins (Arist. Hist. Anim. i. 6, 19; Theocret. i. 25; iii. 34), is

incompatible with the figure. The teeth surely, which are here compared to the flock, cannot be said to bear twins like the sheep. Those who attempt to get over this difficulty by referring it to the *rows* of the teeth, are, to say the least, guilty of introducing a *new* subject.

3. *Thy mouth is lovely.* מִדְבָּר is translated by the Sept., Syriac, Vulg., Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Rashbam, *speech, language*; but this is incompatible with the description here given, which depicts *the members* of the body, and not their *actions*. It is therefore more consonant with the context to take מִדְבָּר as a poetical expression for *the instrument of speech*; not the *tongue* (Schultens, Kleuker, Döpke), which is kept within the mouth, and not when put out (נָאֲוָה *beautiful*; but *the mouth itself*, (Ewald, Gesenius, De Wette, Umbreit, Rosenmüller, Meier, Philippson, &c.) The objection of Magnus (who translates it *voice*), and of Hitzig (who translates it *palate*), that the rendering of *mouth* would produce tautology, inasmuch as the mouth consists of the lips, and these have already been described, is [156]gratuitous: for an individual may have lips like scarlet, and yet not have a *lovely mouth*. The מ in מִדְבָּר added to the root דָּבַר *to speak*, in order to form the noun, denotes *the instrument* with which one speaks: compare מַזְלֵג *an instrument* with which to draw out = *a fork*, from זָלַג *to draw out*; מַפְתֵּחַ *an instrument* for opening = *a key*, from פָּתַח *to open*, Gesen. § 84, 14; Ewald, § 160, 6. This corroborates the rendering we defended.

Like a part of, &c. That is, the rosy cheeks visible beneath the veil resemble the vermilioned part of the pomegranate. Eastern poets frequently compare the colour of the cheeks with pomegranates and apples. Thus in a Persian ode quoted by Sir William Jones: "The pomegranate brings to my mind the blushes of my beloved, when her cheeks are covered with a modest resentment:" and Ibn Challecan, as adduced by Magnus *in loco*: "Believest thou that the apple can divert my looks from thee, when I behold thy cheeks?" Ibn Ezra, who is followed by some modern commentators, explains פֶּלַח by ציץ הרמון האדום, *the red flower of the pomegranate*; but this is contrary to 2 Kings iv. 39, where the root פלח is used for dissecting fruit, and 1 Sam. xxx. 12. Others again take the simile to be between the interior of the pomegranate, when cut or burst open, and the cheeks; but this being *flat* would by no means represent the *round* form of the coloured cheek here referred to. The comparison appears natural, striking, and beautiful, according to Rashi's explanation of פֶּלַח viz. חצי רמון שבחוץ שהוא אדום, *that external half of the pomegranate which is red*, one half of the pomegranate being brown, and the other beautifully vermilioned, intermixed with yellow and white; and it is to the latter part to which reference is here made. So the Sept. λέπυρον, *the peel*, or *the external*. Rashbam, Döpke, Hitzig.

4. *Thy neck is like*, &c. That is, "The erect and bold carriage of thy neck, decked with ornaments,

resembles that high, commanding tower, adorned with trophies." Though the text supplies us with no clue for finding out what tower this was, yet the comparison implies that it must have been one well known and celebrated for its imposing aspect and symmetrical proportions. Sandys (iii. 137), who is followed by others, identifies this tower with some ruins still found in the uttermost angle of Mount Zion, which bears that name. תַּלְפִּיוֹת is rendered by the Sept. Θαλφιώθ, as a proper name; but there is no place known by such a name. Aquila has εἰς ἐπάλξεις: so Vulg. *cum propugnaculis*, battlements, Sym. ὕψη, *heights*; but it is difficult to divine how these renderings are to be made out from the form and meaning of the word. The Talmud Jerushalmi, Berachoth, section 4, and Saadias explain it תל שהכול פונים לו, *an elevation towards which all look*, i.e. by which they are guided. Ibn Ezra seems to favour the view that לְתַלְפִּיוֹת is a compound of לְתַלּוֹת פִּיוֹת, *for the suspension of arms*. But the Talmudic explanation rests upon the favourite whim of making a word of every letter. Ibn Ezra's explanation incurs the objection that פִּיּוֹת by itself, never means *swords* or *arms*. Besides, it is evident that this interpretation owes its origin to the immediately following clause, אֶלֶף הַמָּגֵן תָּלוּי עָלָיו. Gesenius derives it from the Arabic תָּלַף *to destroy*; hence תַּלְפִּי *destructive*, *deadly*; poetically, for *arms*. But, apart from the difficulty of making תַּלְפִּיוֹת, even according to this derivation, to mean *weapons*, according to this rendering there is no connexion between this clause and the figure.

[157]It is therefore better, with Rashi and Rashbam, to take תַּלְפִּיּוֹת as a contraction for תְּאַלְפִּיּוֹת from the root אָלַף *to teach*. The radical א in the feeble verbs פ"א does not unfrequently fall away: thus וַתַּזְרֵנִי 2 Sam. xxii. 40, for וְתַאַזְרֵנִי and in the same verb, מַלְפֵּנוּ for מְאַלְפֵּנוּ ,Job xxxv. 11; Gesen. § 68, 2; Ewald, § 54. תַּלְפִּיּוֹת (plur. of תַּלְפִּית according to the analogy of תַּבְנִיּוֹת from תַּבְנִית תַּרְמִיּוֹת from תַּרְמִית would therefore signify *instruction*; the plural being here used for the abstract, see supra, i. 2. This derivation is confirmed by the Chald., which periphrases תַּלְפִּיּוֹת by אוּלְפַן דְּאוֹרַיְתָא ,*instruction of the law*, and bears out the figure, and yields a beautiful sense. The Shulamite's neck is not compared to some common turret, but to that splendid tower which was built for a model, that, as Rashbam rightly remarks, כל אומנין בנאים מתלמדים ממנו ,*all architects might learn their designs from it*.

A thousand shields, &c. It was customary to adorn the walls of towers and castles with all sorts of splendid arms, Ezek. xxvii. 11. The castles of the maritime people, whose conquest is recorded by the Kouyunjik bas-reliefs, and distinguished by the shields hung round the walls. Layard's Nineveh, ii. 296. אֶלֶף *thousand* stands for *a round, large member*, Isa. xxx. 17; lx. 22; Ps. cv. 8; Eccl. vi. 6. כֹּל *all kinds, all sorts*, see supra, iii. 6.

5. *Thy bosom*, &c. The point of comparison is the lovely sight which these objects present. The gazelles, as we have seen (ii. 7), are the symbol of

beauty. To add however to their native charms, they are represented here as browzing in pasture-ground abounding with lilies. To this lovely spectacle, than which nothing could be more beautiful to an Oriental, her breasts are compared. The explanation which Bochart, Patrick, Henley, Percy, Good, give of this comparison, viz. “The two *paps* rise upon the breast like lilies from the ground; among which, if we conceive two red kids feeding, that were twins and perfectly alike, they appeared like the *nipples* or *teats* upon the paps, to those that behold them afar off,” is extravagant.

6. *When the day cools*, &c. Transported with joy at the sight of her beloved shepherd, the Shulamite interrupts the praises of her personal charms, which, on seeing her again, he began to pour forth, by exclaiming: *When the day cools*, that is, “this very evening, as soon as it gets dark, I will quit the royal abode, and go to our beautiful and open country, to the flowery meads, where are found aromatic plants growing in abundance.” For an explanation of the first part of this verse, see ii. 17, also spoken by the Shulamite. That such mountains of myrrh and hills of frankincense actually existed, is evident from Florus, Epitome Rerum Rom., lib. iii. c. 6., where Pompey the Great is said to have passed over Lebanon, and by Damascus, “per nemora illa odorata, per thuris et balsami sylvas.”

7, 8. *Thou art all beautiful*, &c. Gladdened [158]with her declaration, the shepherd, crowning and closing

his description in the words, “Thou art a perfect beauty,” responds, “Thou shalt go with me, I will help thee to quit these lofty heights, the abode of lions and panthers—the royal residence; and safely conduct thee to the place whither thou wouldst go.” Lebanon is the name of a long range of mountains on the north of Palestine (Deut. ii. 24; Josh. i. 4), consisting of two parallel chains, which run from south-west to north-east. Though the Scriptures have only one name, viz. Lebanon, for both these chains, yet the present inhabitants of that country, as well as modern Travellers, have found it convenient to call the westermost chain, facing the Mediterranean,—Lebanon; and the eastern one, facing the plain of Damascus,—Anti-Libanus, from its being at Tyre, parallel with and opposite to the Syrian Lebanon. *Amana*, אֲמָנָה is the name of the southern part of Anti-Libanus, at the root of which, it is supposed, issues the river of the same name; see 2 Kings v. 12. *Hermon*, חֶרְמֹון is the name of the highest summit of a chain at the northernmost boundary of Palestine, and belongs also to Anti-Libanus (Josh. xi. 17; xiii. 5), and is now identified with Jebel-el-Sheikh. It consists of several mountains, viz. *Sirion*, שִׂרְיֹון *Shenir*, שְׂנִיר and *Sion*, שִׂיאֹן whence its plural name חֶרְבוֹנִים see Fürst, Lexicon, s.v. Lebanon, Amana, Shenir and Hermon are here not intended to denote various parts of the range of mountains, but are merely different names of the royal residence. The word תַּשׁוּרִי is well rendered by the Sept., Syriac, &c., *thou shalt go*; comp. Isa. lvii. 9. The Common Version

look is incompatible with the context and parallelism. Surely no one would invite his beloved to go with him to dangerous mountain-tops, to take a view of the country! Persons are generally anxious to avoid perilous places. The lions and panthers denote the king and his courtiers, Ezek. xix. 7; xxii. 25; Nahum ii. 12. כָּלָּה rendered *spouse* in the Authorized Version, is taken by some to denote *a newly-married woman*. The word however only means *betrothed* = a female under *an engagement* to marry. This is the sense in which the Jews still use the expression. The Sept., which is followed by the Vulg. and Luther, translates אִתִּי δεῦρο, mistaking it for אֲתִי the imp. of אָתָה *to come*. The Vulg. rendering of תְּשׁוּרִי by *coronaberis*, evidently savours of allegorism. For the Septuagint's rendering of אֱמֻנָה by πίστις, see Introduction, p. 21.

9. *Thou hast put heart into me*, &c. This extraordinary amount of strength and courage which he feels, to enable him to rescue her from the abode of the lion, and to lead her safely home, has been infused into his heart, he says, by the sight of his beloved one. So the Anonymous Oxford Manuscript, שבשביל אהבתך נתגברתי ונבוא לי לב חדש שיש לי כח ללחם עם האריות והנמרים. As the Piel has sometimes an *intensive*, and sometimes a *privative* meaning (see Gesen. § 52, 2; Ewald, § 120), a difference [159]of opinion exists as to the signification of לִבַּב here. The Sept. has ἐκκαρδίωσας ἡμᾶς, *thou hast unhearted us*; the Vulg. *Vulnerasti cor meum*; Ibn Ezra, לקחת לבי ,*thou hast*

taken away my heart; Gesenius, De Wette, &c. adopt this rendering. Against this however it is urged, that it is incompatible with the context. The beloved here accounts for his extraordinary strength and courage, which would enable him to rescue his beloved one from her critical position; and to say, "Thou hast deprived me of all heart," would be a positive contradiction. To be in such an unusually courageous frame, the individual must have been *full of heart*, and not *disheartened*. Hence Herder, Ewald, Döpke, Lee, Meier, &c., translate לִבַּבְתִּנִי *thou hast put heart into me*; *thou hast made me bold*. This is confirmed by Sym., Syriac, Arabic, and Chald. אֲחוֹתִי *my sister*, does not imply that the betrothed was related to her beloved, but is used as an expression of endearment, Prov. vii. 14; Tobit vii. 12; the Apoc. Esth. xv. 8, and *soror* in Latin. Good's rendering of אֲחֹתִי כַלָּה by *my sister-spouse*, and his remark that the pronoun "my" between the two substantives, being a useless interpretation of the versions, are gratuitous. כַּלָּה has no suffix here, not because it is to be joined with אֲחֹתִי but because this word, like אָב in Chald., never takes the suffix 1 pers.; and versions therefore made in languages whose idioms allow of the suffix are right in so expressing it.

With one of thine eyes, &c. It is customary with Eastern women to unveil one of their eyes in conversation, in which case a part of their neck ornaments becomes also visible. Niebuhr, Travels in Arabia, i. 262; see Kitto, Cyclop. Bib. Lit. Art. Veil,

figure 536, and infra, viii. 9. The Anonymous MS., however, explains בְּאֶחַד מֵעֵינַיִךְ by בהבטה אחת שאת מבטת בי באחד מעיניך, *one look of thine eyes*. The rendering *at once* (Hodgson, Good) is incongruous. The attempt of the Masorites to substitute בַּאַחַת *fem.*, for בְּאֶחָד *mas.*, having evidently arisen from their anxiety to avoid the apparent incongruity of coupling a masculine numeral with a feminine noun, is unnecessary. The true solution lies in the fact, that members of the human body, although usually feminine, are most of them employed occasionally as masculine. Job xxi. 20; Zech. iv. 10; and infra, vi. 5; Gesen. § 107, 4 b; Ewald, § 174 d. עָנָק is not *look* (Vulg.), nor *turn* (Percy, Good), nor *stone* (Ewald, Magnus), but *chain*. This is evident from Judg. viii. 26, and Prov. i. 9, the only two passages where this word occurs again (except as a proper name), and is translated by the Sept. (Judg. and Prov.) κλοιός, *necklace*, Aquila, περιτραχήλιος, πλόκαμος, *neckband*, *neck-work*; Sym. κλοιός, ὁρμίσκος, *necklace*; Vulg. (Judg. and Prov.) *torques*. So Ibn Ezra, מני חלי קשורים על הצואר, *a kind of ornamental band, tied round the neck*, Rashi, Rashbam, Gesenius, De Wette, Döpke, Lee, Philippson, Meier, Hengstenberg, &c. The objection urged by Hitzig, that an inanimate ornament could not effect such great things, is obviated by a reference to the Book of Judith, xvi. 9, where we are informed that the fair one succeeded in captivating even the savage Holofernes with her sandals: τὸ σανδάλιον αὐτῆς ἥρπασεν ὀφθαλμὸν αὐτοῦ. Besides, the meaning here is, that the

slightest view of her is sufficient to inspire him with vigour and courage. The termination וֹן– in צַוָּארוֹן ,like וּן, in Syriac, forms the *diminutive*; and, like diminutives in other languages, is expressive of affection; Gesen. § 86, 2, 4; Ewald, 5, 167 a. The plur. termination ־ִיךָ in מְצֻוָּרֹנָיִךְ ,is to be accounted for on the score that the Hebrews sometimes use plural forms for certain members of the body. Comp. פָּנִים *face*, Gesen. § 108, 2 a; Ewald, § 178 a.

10. *How sweet is thy love*, &c. Here [160]the lover tells his loved one why the sight of her is so animating and emboldening. For the comparison of love with wine, see i. 2, 3. The Sept., which is followed by the Syriac, Vulg., Arabic, and Luther, has here again דַּדַּיִךְ ,*thy breasts*; but see i. 2. The Sept. has also ὀσμὴ ἱματίων σου, וְרֵיחַ שִׂמְלֹתַיִךְ ,for וְרֵיחַ שְׁמָנַיִךְ ,evidently taken from the following verse.

11. *Thy lips, O my betrothed*, &c. Every word which falls from her lips is like a drop from the honeycomb. This comparison is used in other parts of Scripture, and by the Greeks and Romans. Thus Prov. v. 3:—

"The harlot's lips distil honey,
And her palate is smoother than oil."

Theocrit. Idyl. xx. 26:—

τὸ στόμα καὶ πακτᾶς γλυκερώτερον· ἐκ στομάτων δὲ
ἔῤῥεέ μοι φωνὰ γλυκερωτέρα ἢ μέλι κήρω.

"More sweet my lips than milk in luscious rills,
Lips, whence pure honey, as I speak, distils."

Also Idyl. i. 146, 8, 82; Homer, Iliad, i. 249; Hor. Epist. i. 19, 44. That we are to understand by distilling honey, "lovely words," and not *saliva oris osculantis*, is evident from Prov. xvi. 24, where pleasant words are compared to a honeycomb, and the passage already quoted, just as slanderous words are represented as poisons, Ps. cxl. 3.

And the odour of thy garments, &c. The Orientals were in the habit of perfuming their clothes with aromatics. Thus we are told that the garments of Jacob emitted a pleasant smell, Gen. xxviii. 27; Ps. xlv. 9; Rosenmüller, Orient. i. 122. In consequence of the odoriferous trees which abounded on it, Lebanon became proverbial for fragrance. Hence the prophet Hosea (xiv. 7), describing the prosperous state of

repenting Israel, says וְרֵיחַ לוֹ כַּלְּבָנוֹן ,*and his odour shall be as that of Lebanon*. This passage is sufficient to show the error of the Vulg. in rendering כְּרֵיחַ לְבָנוֹן by *sicut odor thuris*, as if it were כְּרֵיחַ לְבוֹנָה .The perfumed attire which the Shulamite had on, and which the shepherd here praises, is evidently not the humble clothes which she had brought with her, but some splendid apparel recently given to her by the king.

12. *A closed garden*, &c. The trees of Lebanon, referred to at the end of the last verse, suggested this beautiful metaphor of a garden, under which the shepherd describes the unsullied purity and chastity of the Shulamite. Gardens in the East were generally hedged or walled in, to prevent the intrusion of strangers (Isa. v. 5; Joseph. De Bell. Jud. vii.). From this arose the epithet, “closed garden,” for a virtuous woman, shut up against every attempt to alienate her affections. The contrary figure is used in viii. 9; there accessibility is described as “a door,” *i.e.* open to seduction.

A sealed fountain, &c. Another metaphor to express the same idea. The scarcity of water in arid countries renders fountains very valuable. To secure them against the encroachment of strangers, the proprietors formerly fastened their fountains with some ligament, and the impression of a seal upon clay, which would quickly harden in the sun, that would soon dissolve wax. This mode of rendering pits safe is found in Dan. vi. 18; Matt. xxvii. 66. A

fountain sealed in this manner indicated that it was private property. Hence its metaphorical use, to represent chastity as an inaccessible [161]fountain. It is better, with the Sept., Syriac, Arabic, Chald., Vulg., upwards of fifty of Kennicott's MSS., and many modern commentators, to read גַּן instead of גַּל. This is confirmed by the intensive phraseology of the shepherd, used in his addresses, which is produced by a repetition of the same words. Comp. supra, vv. 8, 9.

13. *Thy shoots*, &c. Having compared his loved one to a garden, the shepherd is anxious to show that the one she resembled is not of an ordinary character. It is an orchard full of the most costly trees, and producing the most delicious fruit. שְׁלָחַיִךְ ,well rendered by the Sept. ἀποστολαί σου: and Kimchi, התפשטות *thy shoots*, *branches* (Gen. xlix. 21; Ps. lxxx. 12) is figuratively used for the members of the body, and not for "the children who shall spring from her," as Hodgson supposes. פַּרְדֵּס found elsewhere only Eccl. ii. 5; Neh. ii. 8, has been derived by some from the Persian, and by others from the Sanscrit. There is no necessity, however, for seeking its etymology in other languages. The Hebrews, who had gardens at so early a period, would surely not borrow names for them from other nations. פַּרְדֵּס according to the analogy of the quadriliteral פַּרְשֶׁז is a compound of פָּרַד *to divide*, and פָּרַס *to separate, to enclose*; hence *a protected, an enclosed place, a garden*. This is corroborated by the fact that גַּן *a garden*, is also

derived from a root (נָנַן, which means *to separate, to enclose*. Compare also the German and English, *Gärten, garden*, and Saalschütz, Archäologie der Hebräer, vol. i. p. 117. And like many other Hebrew expressions, this word was adopted in other languages. רִמּוֹנִים *pomegranate-trees*: the Hebrews frequently use the same expression to denote the tree and its fruit, see supra, ii. 3. פְּרִי מְגָדִים, *i.q.* פְּרִיֵי מֶגֶד, *precious fruits*: when a compound idea is to be expressed in the plural, the governed noun only is often put in the plural form; *e.g.* בֵּית אָבוֹת, *ancestral houses*, Numb. i. 2; Gesen. § 108, 3. The precious fruits are those of the pomegranate-tree. The words כְּפָרִים עִם נְרָדִים, are still genitives to פַּרְדֵּס For כֹּפֶר and נֵרְדְּ see supra, i. 12, 13.

14. *Nard and crocus*, &c. Both the ancient versions and modern commentators generally agree that by the word כַּרְכֹּם which occurs only here, the well-known *saffron plant* is meant. Calamus (קָנֶה *reed*, also written קְנֵה בֹשֶׂם and קָנֶה הַטּוֹב, *sweet calamus*, Exod. xxx. 23; Jer. vi. 20, κάλαμος ἀρωματικός, Calamus odoratus), was well known and highly prized among the ancients, and was imported to Palestine from India (Jer. vi. 20; xxvii. 19); it was, however, also found in the valley of Mount Lebanon, (Polyb. v. 46; Strabo, xvi. 4). It has a reed-like stem, of a tawny colour, much jointed, breaking into splinters, and its hollow reed filled with pitch, like the web of a spider. The best, which, according to Pliny (Hist. Nat. xii. 12 or 48), grows in Arabia,

diffuses around a very agreeable odour, and is soft to the touch (see Rosenmüller, Bib. Bot.; Winer, Bib. Dict.; Kitto, Cyclop. Bib. Lit. s.v.) Cinnamon (קִנָּמוֹן κίναμον, *Laurus cinnamomum*), indigenous to Ceylon in the East Indies, and is called by the natives *Karonda-gouhah*; it is now, however, also cultivated on the Malabar coast, in the islands of Sumatra and Borneo, in China and Cochin-China. The cinnamon-tree, which grows on the coast, is generally about twenty or thirty feet high, and reaches a still greater height in groves: it is adorned with numerous boughs, bearing oval and laurel-like leaves, of a scarlet [162]colour when young, but changing to bright green, and growing to the length of from four to six inches when matured, and putting forth whitish blossoms, which ripen into fruit, resembling those of the juniper-tree in June: the fruit, though possessing neither the smell nor the taste of the cinnamon, when boiled secretes an oil, which, after cooling, becomes hard, white, and fragrant. The wood itself, which is white, inodorous, and soft as fir, is used for a variety of purposes. It is the rind which, when peeled off and dried in the sun, yields the much-valued cinnamon. (See Rosenmüller, Bibl. Bot.; Winer, Bib. Dict.; Kitto, Cyclop. Bib. Lit. s.v.) *Aloe* (אֲהָלוֹת Ἀλοή. John xix. 39. ἀγάλλοχον, ξυλαλοή, *arbor alois*), a tree which grows in India and the Moluccas, the wood of which is highly aromatic. The stem of this tree is as thick as a man's thigh; the top is adorned with a bunch of thick and indented leaves, broad below, and narrowing

gradually towards the point, and are about four feet long: its blossoms—which are red, intermixed with yellow, and double like a pink—yield the pod, producing a red and white fruit, about the size of a pea. This tree, in consequence of its singularly beautiful appearance and odoriferous wood, which is used as a perfume, is very gratifying both to the sight and smell, and is held by the Indians in sacred veneration. (See Rosenmüller, Bib. Bot.; Winer, Bib. Dict. s.v.) רֹאשׁ *head* metaph., *chief*, *most excellent*. Exod. xxx. 23; Ps. cxxxvii. 6; Ezek. xxvii. 22.

15. *With a garden-fountain*, &c. To finish the picture of this charming garden, the shepherd introduces into it fountains, streams, rills, and cooling breezes, to rouse and waft the balmy fragrance through its delightful retreats. The fact that the Shulamite has been called a *sealed* fountain proves that this verse is not descriptive of her. For it would be contradictory to call her in one verse a *sealed* fountain, and in the other a stream *flowing* from Lebanon, i.e. an *open stream*. מַעְיַן גַּנִּים a fountain of gardens, i.e. a fountain belonging to gardens, usually found in gardens to irrigate them. נֹזְלִים a part. noun plur., denoting flowing streams. The מִן indicates *the place* whence these streams issue. מַיִם חַיִּים *living water*, i.e. perennial; waters, gushing forth from fountains, or moving along, appear as if they were *living*; whilst those in a stagnant condition seem *dead*. Gen. xxvi. 19; Jer. ii. 13; Zech. xiv. 8; see also ὕδωρ ζῶν, Rev. vii. 17, and *flumen vivum*, Virg. Æn. ii. 719.

16. *Arise, O north wind!* These are still the words of the shepherd, who, to complete the picture, invokes the gentle breezes to perflate this paradise. Rashbam, Ibn Ezra, Williams, Good, Ewald, Delitzsch, Philippson, &c., take this clause to begin her reply; but this is incompatible with the figure. She *herself*, and not anything *separate*, has been described as this charming garden. She could, therefore, not say "blow through MY garden" (גַּנִּי, which would imply that this garden of hers was something *apart* from her person. Moreover, the expression גַּנּוֹ *his garden*, which she uses, shows that גַּנִּי *my garden*, is spoken by him. So Rashi, Döpke, Magnus, Hitzig, &c. That the south and north winds are merely poetical [163]designations for a gale generally, without any particular reference to the peculiarities of the wind when blowing from these respective regions is evident from a comparison of Numb. xi. 31 with Ps. lxxviii. 26. This does away with the conflicting conjectures which have been hazarded, to account for the invocation of the wind from these opposite quarters of the earth. צָפוֹן and תֵּימָן prop. the north and southern *quarters*, are poetically used, רוּחַ צָפוֹן, and רוּחַ תֵּימָן ,the north and south *wind*. Ps. lxviii. 26. בְּשָׂמִים *spices*, here *their odours*.

Let my beloved come, &c. The Shulamite, continuing this beautiful apostrophe, responds: "If my person really resembles such a paradise, this garden is yours; yours are all its productions." פְּרִי מְגָדָיו, literally *the fruit of his deliciousness*, i.e. his *delicious*

fruit. When a compound idea is expressed by one noun followed by another in the genitive, a suffix which refers to this whole idea is sometimes appended to the second of the two nouns. Comp. אֱלִילֵי כַסְפּוֹ ,*his silver idols*, Isa. ii. 20; Gesen. § 129, b; Ewald, § 291, b; גַּן being of a common gender, the suffix in מְגָדָיו may either refer to *garden*, or to *beloved*; it is more in keeping with the construction to refer it to the beloved, just as the suffix in גַּנּוֹ refers to him. The fruit is the beloved's because the garden is his, and therefore he may enjoy it.

1. *I am coming into my garden*, &c. The shepherd, as he embraces his beloved, expresses his unbounded delight in her charms. The perfect forms, בָּאתִי שָׂתִיתִי , אָרִתִי אָכַלְתִּי are used for the *present*, Gesen. § 126.

Eat, O friends, &c. Some sympathizing court ladies, at a distance, seeing the mutual happiness of the lovers, urge them to take their fill of delight. The explanation of Rashbam and others, that this address is to the companions of the beloved to partake of a friendly meal; or, as others will have it, that it is an invitation to the marriage feast, is against the context. The expression אִכְלוּ *eat ye*, must be taken in the same sense as אָכַלְתִּי *I eat*; and it would be most incongruous to suppose that the beloved, who enjoys the charms of his loved one, would call on his friends to do the same. Dr. Geddes, who is followed by Dr. Good, alters the text into אכל רעי שת ושכיר דודי ,*Eat, O my friend! drink, yea, drink abundantly, O my beloved!* and puts it into the mouth of the Shulamite;

thus making it an answer to what the beloved said in the preceding clause. But such conjectural emendations ought to be repudiated. It is most in accordance with the context to take these words as an epiphonema of some sympathizing court ladies. The parallelism and the accents require us to take דּוֹדִים as a *concrete*, synonymous with רֵעִים *friends*; so the Sept., Vulg., Syr., Rashbam, Ibn Ezra, Rashi, Mendelssohn, &c. [164]

2. *I was sleeping*, &c. The sympathies manifested by some of the court ladies for the Shulamite, at the close of the last section, encourage her to relate to them a dream which she recently had. The purpose of this narration is the description of the shepherd to which it leads, and which is necessary to the completion of the whole drama. יְשֵׁנָה like the participle form generally, may be used to express *all* the relations of time. Comp. כִּי כֻלָּם יְשֵׁנִים *,for all were sleeping*, 1 Sam. xxvi. 12; 1 Kings iii. 20. Gesen. § 134, 1; Ewald, § 306 d. לֵב *heart*, here the *seat of thought*. The Hebrews regarded the heart, not only as the seat of the passions, but also of the intellectual faculties of the mind. The whole clause is merely another way of saying בַּחֲלֹמִי Gen. xli. 17. The circumlocution is chosen in preference to בַּחֲלֹמִי to indicate that the powers under which the exhausted frame succumbed, could not keep her mind from dwelling upon the object of her affections. קוֹל *hark*; vide supra, ii. 8. דּוֹפֵק is best taken with the Sept., Syriac, Vulg., and many modern commentators, as a

separate clause, *he is knocking*. The Sept. adds ἐπὶ τὴν θύραν, *at the door*, *after* דֹּפֵק he is knocking.

Open to me, &c. She introduces him speaking. To make his request the more urgent, he pleads that he had [165]been drenched with dew. The dew falls so copiously in the East, during certain months, that it saturates the clothes like rain. See Judges vi. 38; Rosenmüller, Orient. i. 122; Winer, Bib. Dict. s.v. A similar passage occurs in Anacreon, iii. 10, where love is represented as standing at night behind the door, begging for admittance, and pleading the same excuses.

Ἄνοιγε, φησί
Βρέφος εἰμί, μὴ φόβησαι
Βρέχομαι δέ, κἀσέληνον
Κατὰ νύκτα πεπλάνημαι.

"'Fear not,' said he, with piteous din,
'Pray ope the door and let me in:
A poor unshelter'd boy am I,
For help who knows not where to fly:
Lost in the dark, and with the dews,
All cold and wet, that midnight brews.'"

Comp. also Propert. i. 16, 23; Ovid Amor. ii. 19, 21. תַּמָּתִי *my perfect one*, is well explained by Rosenmüller by מוּם אֵין בָּךְ ,*there is no fault in thee*, iv. 7; 2 Sam. xiv. 25.

3. *I have put off my tunic*; was the answer she gave in

her dream. כֻּתֹּנֶת χιτών, *tunic*, is an inner garment, commonly of linen, descending to the ankles, which is taken off when one retires. On the costume of the Hebrews, see Rosenmüller, Orient. ii. 19; Winer, Bib. Dict.; Kitto, Cyclop. Bib. Lit. s.v.; Saalschütz, Archäologie der Hebräer, vol. i. c. 2.

I have washed my feet, &c. In the East, where people wear sandals, which protect the soles only, or go barefoot, as in the passage before us, the feet soon get dirty and parched; it is therefore essential and refreshing to wash the feet after much walking (Gen. xviii. 4; xix. 2), or before retiring to rest: remembering this, we can appreciate the hospitality shown to travellers in providing for the washing of their feet, Judges xix. 21. On the masculine suffix in אֶטַנְּפֵם referring to the feminine רַגְלַי see iv. 9.

4. *My beloved withdrew his hand*, &c. Hearing her excuses for not getting up, he at last grew weary and ceased knocking, which immediately caused her uneasiness. The words שָׁלַח יָדוֹ מִן הַחוֹר are better translated, *he sent away his hand from the hole* = withdrew; so the Sept. and Rashbam, ההזירה לעצמו מן החור בדלת ,*he took his hand back from the hole in the door*. The expression מֵעַי like רַחֲמִים has not the *modern* sense of bowels, which is restricted to the *lower viscera*, but denotes, like τὰ σπλάγχνα in Greek, the *upper viscera*, comprising the heart, lungs, liver, &c. Hence it is used for the heart alone as the seat of passion, Isa. lxiii. 15; Jer. xxxi. 20; and for נֶפֶשׁ *soul*, Job xxx. 27; Ps. xl. 9. הָמָה *to hum, to make*

a noise, which is frequently used for the roaring produced by the waves of the troubled sea (Isa. li. 15; Ps. xlvi. 4; Jer. v. 22), is employed to denote the motion of an *agitated heart*. With upwards of fifty MSS. and several editions we read עָלַי *in me*, instead of עָלָיו *to him*; the phrase thus exactly corresponds to תֶּהֱמִי נַפְשִׁי עָלָי ,Ps. xlii. 6, 12.

5. *My hands dropped with myrrh*, &c. Alarmed at his ceasing to knock, she flew at once to open the door, and in trying to unfasten it, her hands came [166]in contact with the liquid myrrh which her beloved had poured upon the bolts, and which dropped from her fingers. So Immanuel, כי שרצתי לפתח לדודי ונגעתי בידי במקום אשר נגע בו דודי כששלח ידו מן החור נתבשמו ידי וקבלו מן הריח שהיה בידי דודי עד שעבור Lovers, in ancient times, whilst suing for admission, used to ornament the door with wreaths, and perfume it with aromatics. Thus Lucretius, iv. 1171,

At lacrimans exclusus amator limina sæpe
Floribus, et sertis operit, posteisque superbos
Unguit amaracino, et foribus miser oscula figit.

"Then, too, the wretched lover oft abroad
Bars she, who at her gate loud weeping stands,
Kissing the walls that clasp her; with perfumes
Bathing the splendid portals, and around
Scattering rich wreaths and odoriferous flowers."

Comp. also Tibul. i. 2, 14. So Herder, Kleuker,

Ewald, Döpke, Rosenmüller, Philippson, &c.; Rashbam however is of opinion that the liquid myrrh which distilled from the Shulamite's hand, was the perfume with which she had anointed herself after washing. Whilst Percy supposes that "she got up in such haste, that she spilt upon her hand the vessel of liquid myrrh, which she had brought to anoint and refresh his head, after having been exposed to the inclemencies of the night." מוֹר עֹבֵר ,*liquid myrrh*, see i. 2; and not, as Le Clerc erroneously supposes, *current myrrh*, that kind of myrrh which is most passable in traffic. The Vulg. has, *Et digiti mei pleni myrrha probatissima*, evidently mistaking the prep. עַל for מָלְאוּ and takes the words כַּפּוֹת הַמַּנְעוּל over to the following verse, *Pessulum ostii mei aperui dilecto meo.*

6. *My beloved had withdrawn*, &c. To her great grief she found, when opening, that her beloved had gone. The asyndeton חָמַק עָבַר is very expressive, and the use of the two synonymous terms strengthens the sense. This figure, which is effected by the omission of the *conjunctive* particle, is used in animated descriptions, both by sacred and profane writers. Comp. Σιώπα, πεφίμωσο, Mark iv, 39. Winer, New Testament Gram. § 66, 4. The phrase יָצְאָ נַפְשׁ , properly denoting the departure of the soul from the body, (Gesen. xxxv. 18; Ps. cxlvi. 4,) like יָצְאָ לִבּ ,is used to express *the momentary loss of the senses*, i.e. *to faint*. בְּדַבְּרוֹ *in his speaking*, i.e. when he had spoken of it, (Judg. viii. 3; 1 Sam. xvii. 28), *i.e.* of his going away: so Rashi, שאמר לא אבא אל ביתך כי מתחילה לא

אבית לפתוח ,"Because he said I will not now enter thy house, for thou didst at first refuse to open me," and Immanuel, נפשי יצאה בדברו אלי הנני הולך לדרכי אחרי שלא תפתחתי הדלת. "My soul departed when he told me, Now I am going away, because thou wouldst not open me the door." We must employ a finite verb with a conjunction to express in English the Hebrew construction of the infinitive with a preposition, and the relation of time must be gathered from the connection, Gesen. § 132, 2, 3.

7. *The watchmen who patrol the city*, &c. That the seeking and calling mentioned in the last verse were not confined to the door, is evident from this verse. הִכּוּנִי פְצָעוּנִי are again an asyndeton. רְדִיד which occurs only once more, Is. iii. 23, is a kind of *veil-garment*, which Oriental ladies still wear, and denotes more properly an out-door [167]cloak. See Schroeder, Vestit. Mul. p. 368; Gesen. on Isa. iii. 23; Winer, Bib. Dict. s.v.; Saalschütz, Archäologie der Hebräer, vol. i. p. 28.

8. *I adjure you*, &c. Having mentioned the indifference with which she had treated her beloved, the Shulamite is anxious to impress upon the court-ladies that this was in a dream, and that in reality, so far from her affections being abated, she was as dotingly attached to him as ever; and begs of them, if they should see him, to tell him so. For the masculine termination in תִּמְצְאוּ אֶתְכֶם and תַּגִּידוּ see ii. 7. We must supply הַגִּידוּ לוֹ ,*tell him*, after מַה תַּגִּידוּ לוֹ ,*what will you tell him?* The omission is designedly made, to

give animation to the request. The emendation proposed by Houbigant, to read הגידנו instead of חגידו is gratuitous, like all his emendations. The Sept. adds ἐν ταῖς δυνάμεσιν καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἰσχύσεσιν τοῦ ἀγροῦ, "by the powers, and by the virtues of the field," the false rendering of בִּצְבָאוֹת אוֹ בְאַיְלוֹת הַשָּׂדֶה, from the preceding formula of adjuration.

9. *What is thy beloved*, &c. The great solicitude manifested by the Shulamite for her beloved, induces the court ladies to ask what peculiar attractions there were in him more than in an ordinary lover, to cause such an unusual manifestation of feeling, and thus an opportunity is afforded her to give a description of him. It is evident from this question of the court ladies that Solomon is not the beloved of whom the Shulamite has been speaking in the preceding verses. For surely these court ladies knew the aspect and character of Solomon better than the Shulamite. This is, moreover, established beyond doubt from ch. vi. 2, 3, where the damsel, at the end of the description, designedly states that the object of her delineation and attachment, is the shepherd. The particle מִן prefixed to דּוֹד with which the comparison is made, expresses the comparative, Gesen. § 191, 1. For הַיְפָה בַּנָּשִׁים see i. 8, and for the form הִשְׁבַּעְתָּנוּ Ewald, § 249, d.

10. *My beloved is white*, &c. The Shulamite answers this question by giving a very graphic description of her beloved. The colour of his countenance and body is such a beautiful mingling of white and red as is

seldom seen, and by which he is distinguished above thousands. A similar description is found in Virg. Æn. xii. 65, seq.

Flagrantes perfusa genas: cui plurimus ignem
Subjecit rubor, et calefacta per ora cucurrit.
Indum sanguineo veluti violaverit ostro,
Si quis ebur, aut mixta rubent ubi lilia multâ
Alba rosâ; tales virgo dabat ore colores.

“At this a flood of tears Lavinia shed;
A crimson blush her beauteous face o’erspread.
Varying her cheeks by turns with white and red.
The driving colours, never at a stay,
Run here and there, and flush and fade away.
Delightful change! thus Indian ivory shows,
Which, with the bordering paint of purple glows;
Or lilies damask by the neighbouring rose.”

Comp. also Ovid. Am. ii.; Eleg. v. 39; [168]Hor. Od. i. 13, v. 2; iv. 10; v. 4; Tibul. Eleg. III, 4; vv. 29, 30. צַח *bright*, *white*; compare Lam. iv. 7, where it stands in parallelism with זָךְ ,*clear*; from the same passage we also see that the predicates צַח *white*, and אָדֹם *red*, are not restricted to the countenance, but refer to all the parts of the body which the Oriental costume left exposed, to the carnation as it were of the picture. דְּגוּל denom. from דֶּגֶל *banner*; prop. *to be furnished with a banner*, i.e. his singular beauty renders him as distinguished above multitudes, just as a standard-bearer is marked above all other

soldiers. מִן *more, above*, vide supra, ver. 9, רְבָבָה indefinitely for a large number, see Gesen. xxiv. 60.

11. *His head is as pure gold.* That is of consummate excellency. Having characterized his whole person as charming, the Shulamite describes the beauty of the individual parts of his body, and begins with his head. Gold is frequently used, both in Scripture and in profane writers, to denote *consummate excellency* and *beauty*. Thus the illustrious personages are called gold and fine gold in Lam. iv. 1; and Theocritus (Idyl. iii. 28.) calls the beautiful Helen *golden*. The words כֶּתֶם פָּז are variously rendered. The Sept. has χρυσίου καιφάζ, *gold of* Cephaz, Aquila and Sym. λίθεα τοῦ χρυσίου, so the Syriac ܕܕܗܒ ܟܦܐ ,*a precious stone of gold*. The Chald. has דְּהַב טָב ;so the Vulg. *aurum optimum*. The Rabbins too vary in their explanations of these words. Ibn Ezra takes כֶּתֶם to be *a diadem*, and פָּז *precious stones*. Rashi indefinitely סגולת מלכים ,*choice things, which kings treasure up*. Rashbam explains כֶּתֶם by *a heap of gold*, and פָּז by זהב מופז ,and says it is called פָּז "because its colour is like pearl." The majority of modern commentators, after the Sept., Vulg., Chald., take כֶּתֶם as a poetical expression for *gold*, and derive it from כָּתַם *to hide, to conceal*; like סְגוֹר *gold* (Job. xxviii. 15), from סָגַר *to shut up, to conceal*, because precious metals are generally kept shut up or concealed. This meaning and derivation of the word are supported by the fact that treasures and precious things are generally expressed in Hebrew by words whose roots signify to

conceal; comp. אוֹצָר *a treasure* (1 Kings vii. 51; xiv. 26), from אָצַר *to shut up*; מַטְמוֹן *a treasure, gold* (Isa. liv. 2; Prov. ii. 4), from טָמַן *to hide*; צָפוּן *riches* (Job xx. 26), from צָפַן *to conceal*. As for פָּז it is translated by some *purified, pure*, from פָּזַז *to separate, to purify* (Gesenius, &c.); and by others *solid, massy*, from פָּזַז *to be strong, solid* (Rosenmüller, &c.). But פָּז never occurs as an adjective to כֶּתֶם or to זָהָב (זָהָב מוּפָז, 1 Kings x. 18, is a contraction of זָהָב מְאוּפָז, comp. Jer. x. 9); the word itself invariably means *gold* (see Job xxvii. 17; Ps. xix. 11; xxi. 4; cxix. 27; Prov. viii. 19; Cant. v. 15; Isa. xiii. 12; Lam. iv. 2.); and accordingly ought to be rendered so here: "thy head is as gold, gold." As this, however, would produce tautology, it is therefore best to take פָּז as a contraction of אוּפָז (a variation of אוֹפִיר see Gesenius, s.v.; Henderson on Jer. x. 9, and Stuart on Dan. x. 5), with which this word goes together, 1 Kings x. 18; Jer. x. 9; Dan. x. 5. As אוּפָז = כֶּתֶם אוֹפִיר, is regarded as the best gold; hence the rendering of the Vulg. *aurum optimum*, and Chald. דְּהַב טָב.

Black as the raven, i.e. of the purest and most jet black, so highly esteemed by the Orientals as well as by the classical writers. Thus Hafiz, as quoted by Dr. Good:—

"Thy face is brighter than the cheek of day.
Blacker thy locks than midnight's deepest sway."

And Ossian, Fingal, 2: "Her hair was the wing of the raven." Comp. also Anac. xxix.; Ovid. Am. El. xiv. 9.

תַּלְהֻלִּים ,is rendered by the Sept. ἐλαταί, *the young leaves of the palm*; so the Vulg. *sicut elatæ palmarum*; similarly [169]Gesenius, De Wette, &c., *pendulous branches of the palm*; but this signification does not lie in the root תָּלַל which simply means *waving*, *hanging*, or *flowing down*; hence תַּלְתַּלִּים (according to the analogy of זַלְזַלִּים and סַלְסַלִּים ,comp. Ewald, § 158, b) *flowing curls*, *locks*.

12. *His eyes, like doves*, &c. The vivid and black pupils of his eyes, sparkling forth from the encircling lactean white, in which they are, as it were, bathing and sitting on the fountain of tears, resemble doves bathing gaily in pellucid streams. The doves themselves, and not their eyes, are the point of comparison (vide supra, i. 15, and iv. 1.) Doves are very fond of bathing, and hence choose for their abode regions abounding with streams (Boch. Hieroz. ii. 1, c. 2.) The deep blue or grey dove, reflecting the lustrous dark hue about its neck when bathing in the limpid brook, suggested this beautiful simile. A similar figure occurs in the Gitagovinda: “The glances of her eyes played like *a pair of water-birds of azure plumage*, that sport near a full-blown lotos in a pool in the season of dew.” The words רֹחֲצוֹת בֶּחָלָב , *bathing in milk*, referring to the eyes, are descriptive of the milky white in which the black pupils of the eyes are, as it were, bathing. עַל מְלֵאת ,*on the fulness*, also referring to the eyes, correspond to the עַל אֲפִיקֵי מַיִם ,*by the brooks of water*, which are predicated of the doves. Hodgson’s rendering of יֹשְׁבוֹת עַל מְלֵאת ,by

"*and dwell among the ripe corn*," is absurd.

13. *His cheeks are like beds of balsam*, &c. His round cheeks with the pullulating beard, resemble beds growing aromatic plants. The Sept., Arabic, Æth., Chald., read מְגַדְּלוֹת the part. Piel, instead of מִגְדְּלוֹת which many modern commentators follow, but without MS. authority. The lily here referred to is most probably the *crown imperial*, of a deep red colour, whose leaves contain an aqueous humidity, which gathers itself in the form of pearls, especially at noon, and distils clear and pellucid drops; see Rosenmüller, Alther, iv. 138; Winer, Bib. Dict. s.v. There is, however, no necessity for referring the words "distilling liquid myrrh," to the lilies. Indeed, it seems to be more consonant with the context, to take them as predicated of the lips, expressing the sweetness of his conversation. Comp. iv. 11.

14. *His hands are like*, &c. His rounded arms and fingers tipped with well-shaped nails, as if inlaid with precious stones, resemble golden cylinders: and his white and smooth body, covered with a delicate blue vest, resembles polished ivory. גְּלִיל (from גָּלַל *to roll*), *a roller*, *a cylinder*. Kleuker, Gesenius, Döpke, &c., translate יָדָיו גְּלִילֵי זָהָב וגו" ,*his hands are like golden rings, adorned with gems of Tarshish*, comparing the hand when closed or bent to a golden ring, and the dyed nails to the gems in the rings. But גְּלִיל never occurs in the sense of a ring worn on the finger; the word so used is טַבַּעַת which would have been used here had the figure meant what Kleuker,

&c. understood by it. תַּרְשִׁישׁ according to the Sept., Aquila, Josephus, and modern writers, is the chrysolite, and owes its Hebrew name to the circumstance that it was first found in Tartessus, that ancient city in Spain, between the two mouths of the river Baetis (Guadalquiver). The chrysolite, as its name imports [170](χρυσός, *gold*, and λίθος, *a stone*), is of a yellow or gold colour, and pellucid. Being of a glass lustre, the chrysolite is beautifully chosen to represent the nails. The words מְמֻלָּאִים בַּתַּרְשִׁישׁ refer to יָדָיו׃ The expression מֵעִים prop. *the internal parts* of the human frame (v. 4), is here used for the *external* = the body; so Dan. ii. 32. עֶשֶׁת is taken by most modern commentators to denote *something fabricated*, or *wrought*; an *artificial work*; thus deducing this sense from the secondary meaning of עָשַׂת which the Syriac (ܥܒܺܕܳܐ ,*work*,) seems to favour; but this is incompatible with the description here given of the beloved. The Shulamite, throughout the whole of this delineation, depicts the splendour and colour of the body as they dazzle *the eye*, but makes no reference to the wondrous construction of the frame, which could have been discerned only by the exercise of the *intellect*. It is therefore better, with Ibn Ezra, Kimchi, Rashi, Rashbam, Luther, Auth. Version, Mendelssohn, Kleuker, Williams, Good, Hengstenberg, &c. to take עֶשֶׁת from עָשַׂת in its primary meaning, *to shine*, *to be bright*, in the sense of *brightness*, *polish*; comp. Jer. v. 28.

Covered with sapphires. These words refer to his body,

and describe the purple tunic covering the snowy white skin. Good, Meier, &c. take it to describe the blue veins which were seen through his clear snowy skin, like a sapphire stone through a thin transparent plate of ivory. But this is against the meaning of מְעֻלֶּפֶת ,which signifies *covered*, and not *inlaid*; the external covering, and not the internal seen through the outer cover. Commentators are not agreed whether that which we call the genuine sapphire, a transparent stone of a beautiful sky-blue colour, in hardness and value next to the diamond, is meant by סַפִּיר or the sapphire of the ancients, which, according to Pliny, (Hist. Nat. xxxvii. 39; Theophrast. De Lapid. 231,) is a stone of a pure blue colour, and has frequently pebble spots of a golden yellow hue, which were formerly thought to be really gold, and is evidently our lapis lazuli, lazure-stone. As the latter does neither suit Job xxviii. 6, for the lazure-stone is not very precious; nor Exod. xxviii. 18, since it is too soft to bear engraving, it is more probable that the real sapphire is meant by סַפִּיר in the Scriptures. This stone is often found in collections of ancient gems; see Rosenmüller, Bib. Bot. and Miner.; Kitto, Cyclop. Bib. Lit. s.v. The Syriac, which translates מְעֻלֶּפֶת סַפִּירִים by ܥܠ ܟܘܣ ܕܦܝܪ ,*upon the sapphire breathing*, must have had another reading.

15. *His legs are like pillars of marble*, &c. His white legs, standing upon beautiful feet, resemble the purest marble columns based upon golden pedestals. שׁוֹק as Kimchi well explains it, מה שהוא על הרגל חליל

וּיגִיע עַד הַבְּרכַיִם ,is that part of the limb from the knee to the foot. That אֲדֹנָי פָּז refers to his feet (Ibn Ezra, Rashbam, Kleuker, Meier, Hitzig, &c.), and not to his sandals (Good, Williams, &c.), is evident from ver. 11 and 14, where the head and the hands, the visible parts of the body, are described as golden; and it is but natural that the feet, the only remaining exposed parts, should also be described as golden.

His aspect is like that of Lebanon. Having depicted the single parts of his body, the Shulamite now joins them together, and presents them in one whole, the appearance of which impresses the mind with a sense of beauty and majesty, like that of Lebanon. "That goodly mountain, [171]even Lebanon" (Deut. iii. 25), being so luxuriant in its vegetation and rich in scenery, appeared very beautiful and majestic at a distance. "Lebanon is a noble range of mountains, well worthy of the fame it has so long maintained. It is cultivated in a wonderful manner, by the help of terraces, and is still very fertile. We saw on some of its eminences, more than 2,000 feet high, villages and luxuriant vegetation; and on some of its peaks, 6,000 feet high, we could discern tall pines against the clear sky beyond. At first the clouds were on the lofty summit of the range, but they cleared away, and we saw Tannin, which is generally regarded as the highest peak of Lebanon. There is a deep ravine that seems to run up the whole way, and Tannin rises to the height of 10,000 feet. The rays of the setting sun gave a splendid tint to the lofty brow of

the mountain."—Mission of Inquiry to the Jews, p. 240, &c.; comp. also Isa. xxxv. 2; Rosenmüller, Alterth. i. 2. p. 239; Volney, Travels, i. 293.

He is distinguished as the cedars, *i.e.*, in his stature. The lofty cedar, towering above all other trees, is easily distinguished from the rest (Ezek. xxxi. 3–16; Amos ii. 9). A similar comparison occurs in Theocritus, xviii. 30, as quoted above, i. 9. The Chald., Ewald, Magnus, Philippson, &c., take בָּחוּר for *young man*, *youth*; comp. Ruth iii. 10; Isa. lxii. 5, "A young man like the cedars;" but the point of comparison is lost in this case. Besides, we should then expect the sing. אֶרֶז and not the plur. אֲרָזִים Moreover, 2 Kings xix. 23, and Jer. xxii. 7, where the same phrase מִבְחַר אֲרָזִים is used, is against it.

16. *His voice is exquisitely sweet*, &c. The members, after being analysed separately, have been viewed as a whole; but the beautiful person thus described is inanimate, like the splendid marble columns or the lofty cedars, to which she had compared him. In this verse the Shulamite represents the charms of his speech; and thus affirms his whole person, bodily and mentally, as most lovely. "Such," she triumphantly exclaims, "is my friend; and now, ye daughters of Jerusalem, judge for yourselves wherein my beloved is more than another beloved." חֵךְ ,prop. *palate*, is used for *the organ of speech*, and *speech* itself, Job vi. 30; xxxi. 10; Prov. v. 3. That חֵךְ here does not mean any part of the body, is evident from the context; for it would be preposterous to recur to

the *palate* or *mouth* after the whole person had been described. מַמְתַּקִּים and מַחֲמַדִּים are *abstracts* (see i. 2), *adjectively* used (Gesen. § 106, 1, Rem. 1), to give intensity to the idea; comp. Gen. i. 2. כֻּלּוֹ ,*his whole person*, bodily and mentally.

1. *Whither is thy beloved gone*, &c.? The court ladies, moved by this charming description, inquire of the Shulamite what direction he took, and offer to seek him. The word הַגִּדִי is omitted after דּוֹדֵךְ ,for the sake of brevity and pathos. For the superlative force of הַיָּפָה בַּנָּשִׁים ,vide supra, i. 8. [172]

2, 3. *My beloved is gone down into his garden*, &c. The Shulamite, knowing that the court ladies are anxious to induce her to transfer her affections to the king, replies in a vague manner, that he is gone to his garden, he is not lost, nor has her affection to him abated, though they are now separated, nor does she fear that his love for her is diminished. This incontestably proves that the object of the damsel's affection, of whom she gave a description in the preceding, is not the king, but, as she herself tells us here most unequivocally, a shepherd. For ver. 3, comp. chap. ii. 16.

4. *Graceful art thou, O my love*, &c. Just as before (i. 9), Solomon made his appearance as soon as the Shulamite inquired after her beloved, so here he comes forward again when she speaks of her absent lover; thus endeavouring to show his own attachment to her. He addresses her, as before, in the

most flattering terms: “Thou art as graceful as the delectable Tirzah, as charming as the delightful Jerusalem, as striking and conquering as an imposing army in full battle array.” Tirzah was the royal residence of the kings of Israel after the revolt of Rehoboam, and retained that distinction till the time of Omri, who built Samaria (1 Kings x. 15–21; xvi. 14; 2 Kings xv. 4). It was a city of fascinating appearance, as its name, תִּרְצָה *delightful*, indicates; and hence yielded a very flattering comparison. The Sept. takes תִּרְצָה as an appellative, ὡς εὐδοκία; so Aquila, κατ᾽ εὐδοκίαν, Sym. εὐδοκήτη, Syriac, ܟܪܨ ܟܘܢ The Chald. paraphrases it בִּזְמַן דִּצְבוּתֵךְ ,*in the time of thy willingness*, and Rashi inclines to it; the Vulg. has *suavis et decora*. But there can be no doubt, as Ibn Ezra, Rashbam, and all modern commentators take it, that it is a proper name, Tirzah, the capital of Jeroboam’s kingdom. It may be that the ancient versions resorted to the expediency of taking תִּרְצָה as an appellative, because they wished to avoid the contrast of the two capitals, since this would speak against Solomon being the author of this book. Jerusalem, “the perfection of beauty” (Lam. ii. 15), afforded another excellent figure.

Awe-inspiring as bannered hosts! The fascinating power of a woman is frequently compared to the prowess of an armed host. Comp. Prov. vii. 26. אֲיֻמִּים which occurs once more in connexion with נוֹרָא Hab. i. 7, means *awful*, *awe-inspiring*, *imposing*. נִדְגָּלוֹת Niph. part. prop. *bannered*, *people furnished*, or

arrayed with banners, hence *armies*, *hosts*. The feminine is here used to express a collective idea; comp. אֹרְחוֹת *caravans*, Isa. xxi. 13; Gesen. § 107, 3 d; Ewald, § 179 c.

5. *Turn away thine eyes from me*, &c. These awe-inspiring hosts are described as concentrated in her eyes, which [173]Solomon implores the Shulamite to remove from him. “The artillery of the eyes,” says Dr. Good, *in loco*, “is an idea common to poets of every nation.” Thus Anacreon, xvi.

Σὺ μὲν λέγεις τὰ Θήβης,
Ὁ δ’ αὖ Φρυγῶν ἀϋτάς·
Ἐγὼ δ’ ἐμὰς ἀλώσεις.
Οὐχ ἵππος ὤλεσέν με,
Οὐ πεζὸς, οὐχὶ νῆες·
Στρατὸς δὲ καινὸς ἄλλος,
Ἀπ’ ὀμμάτων με βάλων.

“Sing thou of Thebes—let others tell
How Troy’s foundations rose and fell;
My numbers shall alone repeat
My own rencounters and defeat.
Me fleets and armies ne’er appal—
’Tis to a different host I fall:
A host within thine eyes, my fair,
That lurk and ply their arrows there.”

Comp. also Ode ii. רָגַב in Kal, *to tremble* (Isa. lx. 5), and Hiphil, *to cause to tremble* or *fear*, *to frighten*, *to*

awe. Similarly the Sept. ἀνεπτέρωσάν με. Vulg. *me avolare fecerunt*, "they make me flee for fear;" and the Syriac ܚܰܪܕ̈ܘܼܢܝ ,*they make me fear*. The explanation of Ibn Ezra, חזקו ממני ,which is followed by the Authorized Version, cannot be deduced from the root; nor does it suit the context. Equally untenable is the explanation הגיסו לבי ,Rashi and Rashbam. For הֵם *mas*, with עֵינַיִךְ ,*fem.* see supra, iv. 9.

6, 7. *Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep*, &c. For the interpretation of the second half of ver. 5 and vers. 6, 7, see iv. 1–3, where the same description is given, with the exception that there קְצוּבוֹת is used for sheep, and here רְחֵלִים and that the first half of ver. 3 is here omitted in the Hebrew, which is here given by the Sept. We cannot refrain from quoting the beautiful explanation of these figures from the manuscript commentary of Immanuel: תלתלי שערך ושורותיו נופלים זה על זה לדמיון עדר העזים שהם נתלים זה על זה בהרים ושניך הם לבנים ושוים לדמיון עדר הרחלים, שצמדם לבן והם עולים מן הרחצה שכלם מתאימות שב אל שניה שהם שוות, ושכולה אין בהם שאין שן משניה נגרע ונחסר או הם תואר הרחלים שהם שוות ואין בהם שכילה וכן שניה דומות אליהם. The Septuagint adds after וְשַׁכֻּלָה אֵין בָּהֶם ,*and not one among them is bereaved*, in ver. 6; ὡς σπαρτίον τὸ κόκκινον χείλη σου, καὶ λαλιά σου ὡραία, *like a braid of scarlet are thy lips, and thy mouth is lovely*, from chap iv. 3.

8, 9. *I have threescore queens*, &c. The flattery and praise here exceed all that have been previously

offered. Solomon protests that, though he is surrounded by a numerous retinue of women of all ranks, the Shulamite is the sole possessor of his heart: she who is the [174]best beloved of her mother, and whose consummate beauty has elicited the highest praises from the queens, concubines and maidens. The discrepancy between the number of Solomon's wives and concubines here stated, and that described in 1 Kings xi. 3, maybe reconciled by taking שִׁשִּׁים שְׁמֹנִים and אֵין מִסְפָּר for indefinite and large numbers: *many*, *very many*, *without number*: so Kleuker, Rosenmüller, Magnus, &c. "We must supply לִי *to me*, after הֵמָּה *there*. For הֵמָּה *mas*, instead of הֵנָּה *fem.*, see ii. 7. The pronoun הִיא *she*, is the subject in all the three clauses, and אַחַת in the first and second clause, and בָּרָה in the third are predicates. We must supply לִי after אַחַת הִיא ,*she is my only one*; just as אַחַת הִיא לְאִמָּהּ .The word אֶחָד is used for *the only one* of its kind (Job xxiii. 13; Ezek. ii. 64; vii. 5), *favourite*; comp. גּוֹי אֶחָד בָּאָרֶץ ,2 Sam. vii. 23.

10. *Who is she that looks forth*, &c. That Solomon quotes here the eulogy mentioned in the preceding verse, which the court ladies pronounced upon the superlative beauty of the Shulamite when they first beheld her, has long been recognised by the Rabbins, and is now admitted by most interpreters. This is, moreover, confirmed by Prov. xxxi. 28, where the same words, אִשָּׁה and הַלַּל ,are used, and the following verse contains the eulogy which the

husband utters. The rising morning, with its red light looking down from heaven over the mountains (Joel ii. 2); the beautiful and placid complexion of the moon, and the refulgent and resplendent appearance of the sun, have often afforded, both to the Oriental and to the Greek and Latin writers, exquisite similes for beauty and grandeur. Thus Sirach (l. 5, 6), describing the High Priest, says:—

"How splendid he was in his interview with the people.
In his coming out from the house of the veil!
As the morning star amid the clouds,
As the moon when full in her days,
As the sun when beaming upon the temple of the Most High."

Comp. also Rev. i. 16; Theocritus' description of Helen, xviii. 26–28; Lane's Arabian Nights, i. 29. חַמָּה and לְבָנָה are poetical epithets for the *sun* and *moon*, Isa. xxiv. 23.

11, 12. *I went down into the nut-garden*, &c. As Solomon had referred, in uttering his encomium, to her first coming within sight of the court ladies, the Shulamite here instantly interrupts the king, in order to explain how that came to pass. "I did not go to meet the king, to exhibit myself and be admired by him or his royal retinue; I merely went into the garden with the intention of seeing whether there were any herbs to take home for use, and whether the fruit promised well; and this (נַפְשִׁי *intention* of

mine brought me unawares near the monarch and his cortége." Though אֱגוֹז *nut-tree*, (so Sept., Vulg., Chald.,) *nut* occurs nowhere else in the Old Testament, yet its meaning is established from the cognate languages, and its frequent usage in the Talmud and latter Hebrew writers, רָאָה ב, *to look among* (Gen. xxxiv.), with the intention of *choosing* [175]that which pleases, Gen. vi. 2. אִבֵּי הַנָּחַל, *the green* or *vegetables growing by the river side*; so the Sept. γενήματι τοῦ χειμάῤῥου, and Rashbam, על שפת הנחל .The Sept. has here שָׁם אֶתֵּן אֶת דּוֹדַי לָךְ, from chap. vii. 14, which the Arabic, Æthiopic, and several modern commentators wrongly follow, as it has no MS. authority, and has evidently arisen from a misunderstanding of this passage.

12. *Unwittingly*, &c. This verse has caused much perplexity to interpreters. The ancient versions, finding the sense obscure, have altered almost every word, and hence increased the difficulty. Thus the Sept. has οὐκ ἔγνω ἡ ψυχή μου· ἔθετό με ἅρματα Ἀμιναδάβ, which Luther follows: "*Meine Seele wusste es nicht, dass er mich zum Wagen Aminadib gezetzt hatte*:" They take נֶפֶשׁ as the subject, alter לֹא יָדַעְתִּי, the first person com., into לֹא יָדְעָה, the third fem., to agree with נֶפֶשׁ a fem. noun, שָׂמַתְנִי the third fem., into שָׂמָנִי the third masc. referring it to Solomon, and regard עַמִּי נָדִיב as a proper name. The Vulg. has *Nescivi, anima mea conturbavit me propter quadrigas Aminadab*; altering שָׂמַתְנִי the Kal of שׂוּם *to put, to place*, into the Hiphil of שָׁמַם *to be astonished*, מַרְכְּבוֹת

into מֵרְכְּבוֹת the plural of רֶכֶב with the preposition מ ,and taking עַמִּי נָדִיב as a proper name. Passing over these textual alterations, and the emendations proposed by modern commentators, as unauthorized, we shall first examine the words as they are in the text, and then the most plausible interpretations deducible therefrom. לֹא יָדַעְתִּי are rightly taken by most, though differing in their opinion as to the rendering of the remainder of the verse, as *adverbial*, in the sense of *suddenly*, *unwittingly*, and as subordinate to נַפְשִׁי שָׂמַתְנִי ,*my soul has unwittingly put me*, or *placed me*; comp. Job v. 9; Isa. xlvii. 11; Jer. l. 24. The verb שׂוּם *to put*, *to place*, may be construed with two accusatives, one of the person, and the other of the thing; and מַרְכְּבוֹת may be taken as the *second accusative* (comp. Ps. xxxix. 9; 1 Sam. viii. 1; Mich. i. 7), or מַרְכְּבוֹת may be taken as a *designation of place* after שׂוּם a verb of motion; comp. Isa. xl. 26. מֶרְכָּבָה *a chariot*, used for warlike purposes, or for state or pleasure, Gen. xlvi. 29; Exod. xv. 4; 2 Sam. xv. 1. The expression עַמִּי may either mean *populares mei*—(the Hebrews having no separate word for "countryman," use this expression to denote one of their own people (Gesen. xxiii. 11; Lam. ii. 11), and נָדִיב may be an adjective for הַנָּדִיב as the article is sometimes omitted through following a noun with suffix)—or עַמִּי may here be used, like עִישׁ for *companions*, *attendants*, *followers*, (Eccl. iv. 16,) the י in עַמִּי not being a suffix, but *paragogic*, and a mark of the const. state (Deut. xxxiii. 16; Lam. i. 1), and נָדִיב a noun in the genitive of the king or prince. As to

how much stress there is to be laid on the Sept., which takes עַמִּי נָדִיב as *a proper name*, and is followed by the Arabic, Æthiop., Vulg., and which also produced some variations in the orthography of these words, we need only refer to vii. 2, where the same version renders בַּת נָדִיב by θυγάτηρ Ἀμιναδὰβ. The verse, therefore, may either be translated: "*My soul has unwittingly made me the chariots of my noble countrymen*," or, "*My soul has unwittingly placed at, or brought me to the chariots of my noble people*, or *to the chariots of the companions of the prince*." Now against the first rendering we urge, in the first place, that if the chariots be taken in the accusative, and hence in a figurative sense, we are unavoidably led into a bewildering maze of conjectural and fanciful opinions. The following may serve as a specimen. Rashi takes the chariots to be a sign of *ignominy*. נפשי שמתני להיות מרכבות להרכיב עלי נדיבות שאר אומות, "*My soul has made me to be chariots for foreign princes to ride upon*"; i.e. *I have willingly brought upon me a foreign yoke.* Ibn [176]Ezra takes the chariots as a figure for *swiftness*, לא ידעתי שהייתי הולכת במרוצה אליך כמו מרכבות עמי נדיב הגדול שיש בעמי, "*I did not know that I was hurrying on to thee with the rapidity of the chariots of the great prince who is among my people*;" which the Syriac, ܥܡ ܢܦܫܝ ܣܡܬܢ ܪܟܒ ܕܡܗܝܡܢ ,though sharing somewhat in the errors of the Sept. and Vulg., seems to favour. Herder takes the chariots as a symbol of *martial power, guard, and protection* (Ps. xx. 8; 2 Kings ii. 11, 12). Hengstenberg affirms that the chariots signify *champion, guard,*

defence. And secondly, this translation interrupts the connexion of this verse with the preceding one. Now the second rendering avoids all this. Solomon has repeated in verse 10 the praise which the court ladies had pronounced on the Shulamite when they first saw her; the Shulamite (in ver. 11, 12), in reply, explains how she came to the carriages of the court ladies.

1. *Return, return*, &c. Here we see how little all the persuasions, promises, and eulogies of the king and courtiers affected the sincere and deeply rooted affections of the Shulamite for her beloved shepherd. No sooner had she explained (as she incidentally informs us) how she came to be noticed and taken up by the king, than she actually started off. But the king entreated her to return, that he might look at her once more. The Shulamite, pausing a little, turns round and modestly asks:

What will you behold in the Shulamite? That is, what can ye see in a humble rustic girl? הַשּׁוּלַמִּית ,as is evident from the article, is a gentile noun, according to the analogy of הַשּׁוּנַמִּית ,(1 Kings i. 3; 2 Kings iv. 12, 25.) Ewald, § 156 c: and a female inhabitant of Shulem, *i.q.* Shunem. Shulem still exists as a village, now called Sôlam, about three miles and a half north of Zerîn, (Jezreel), and lies on the declivity, at the western end of the mountain of Duhy, the so-called Little Hermon. “There is little room for doubt that it is the ancient Shunem of the tribe of Issachar, where the Philistines encamped before Saul’s last battle,

(Josh. xix. 18; 1 Sam. xxviii. 4.) From the same place, apparently, Abishag the Shunammite was brought to the aged David; and here it was probably that Elisha often lodged in the house of the Shunammite woman, and afterwards raised her son from the dead (1 Kings i. 3; 2 Kings iv. 8–37; viii. 1–6). Eusebius and Jerome describe it in their day as a village lying five Roman miles from Mount Tabor, towards the southern quarter, and they write the name already *Sulem*." Robinson, Palestine, iii. 169, &c. The transition of ל into נ is of frequent occurrence; comp. לָחַץ and נָחַץ *to burn*. (Gesen. Lexicon, ל *a*; Ewald, § 156, c.) שׁוּלַמִּית is not the feminine of the name שְׁלֹמֹה which would be שְׁלֻמִּית comp. Lev. xxiv. 11; 1 Chron. iii. 19; Ewald, § 274, f.

Like a dance to double choirs, replies the king, *i.e.* "to see thee is like gazing at the charming view of a festive choir expressing their merriment in a sacred dance. The Hebrews, in common with other nations (Strabo, 10), used sacred dancing, accompanied by vocal and instrumental music, as expressive of joy and rejoicing (Exod. xv. 20; 2 Sam. vi. 15; Ps. cxlix. 3). [177]A sight of such an assemblage of various beauties, all swelling their voices into one song of joy, and blending their several forms in one choral dance of joy, must have afforded a delightful picture. No wonder that such a scene is described by Homer (Iliad, xviii. 590,) as portrayed on the famous shield of Achilles, and that

"On either side spectators numerous stood,

Delighted."

To this charming scene, therefore, does the captivated monarch compare the view of the Shulamite. מְחוֹלָה from חוּל *to turn round, a dance*, the joyous dancing on a festive occasion. מַחֲנֶה prop. *a camp*, also *a multitude, a band of people*, Gen. l. 9. מַחֲנַיִם is the regular dual, and not the plural (Sept., Vulg., Gesenius, Döpke, &c.), and is here used because this dance consisted of a band arranged in a double line, something like our country dance. On the different kinds of Oriental dances, see Rosenmüller, Orient. ii. 19–22; Wilkinson, Manners, &c., ii. 328–340. Saalschütz, Archäologie der Hebräer, vol. i. 302. The words כִּמְחֹלַת הַמַּחֲנַיִם have elicited a variety of interpretations. Some take מַחֲנַיִם as a *proper name*, and say that reference is here made to some particular mode of worship practised in that place in consequence of Jacob's sojourn there; but this is purely imaginary. Others again suppose that an allusion is made to Gen. xxxii. 2, 3, and hence render מַחֲנַיִם by מַחֲנֵי אֱלֹהִים or צְבָאוֹת but this is unfounded, since we have not the slightest intimation in that passage that the angels were engaged in dancing.

2. *How beautiful are thy feet in sandals!* The Shulamite, in obedience to the king's request, returns, and as she advances, Solomon is arrested by her beautiful feet, with which he begins his last highly flattering delineation of her beauty, and his last attempt to win her affections. נְעָלִים Chald.

סַנְדָלִין *sandals*, formed an important part of an Oriental costume (Ezek. xvi. 10; Judith xvi. 9). The ladies bestowed great pains upon, and evinced much taste in ornamenting this article of dress, which attracted the notice of the opposite sex. בַּת נָדִיב does not mean *a descendant of a titled family*, but, according to a common Hebrew idiom, which applies בַּת בֵּן ,and other terms of human kindred to relations of every kind, expresses that *she herself was of a noble character*. Comp. 1 Sam. i. 16; Gesen. § 106, 2 a; Ewald, § 287 f.

The circuits of thy thighs like ornaments, &c. To describe the beautiful appearance of an object, the Orientals frequently compared it to some precious metal or gem; see supra, v. 11; Prov. xxv. 12. The simple metal or gem, however, seems not to suffice here to express the exquisite symmetry of these parts of the body; they are, therefore, compared with some beautifully-wrought and highly-finished ornaments, formed of such materials. The rendering of פְּעָמִים by *steps* (Sept., Vulg., Ewald, Döpke, Hengstenberg, &c.), and חַמּוּקֵי by *Schwingungen*, *movements* (Hengstenberg), is contrary to the scope of the description, which obviously depicts the *several members* of the body (beginning with the feet and gradually ascending to the head), and not their actions. חֲלָאִים is not the *dual* (Luther), but the *plural*; according to the analogy of פְּתָאִים פְּתִי צְבָאִים צְבִי The א in the plural is preferred to the י in consequence of the preceding A sound. Gesen. § 93,

66; Ewald, § 186 e.

3. *Thy navel is like a round goblet,* &c. The reference and the import of the figure are obvious. מֶזֶג *i.q.* מֶסֶךְ ,*mixture, mixed wine*. The ancients were in the habit of mixing wine with spices, to make it more stimulating and exciting. Wine thus mixed was called יַיִן הַרֶקַח ,viii. [178]2, the *vinum aromatites* of the Greeks and Romans. (Comp. Ps. lxxv. 9; Prov. ix. 5; Isa. v. 22; Mishna, Maaser sheni, ii. 1; Baba Mez. v. 2; Pliny, Hist. Nat. xiv. 15; Gesen. Thesaurus, p. 808; Winer, Bib. Dict. s.v.) שָׁרְרֵךְ is one of the few instances in which "עע are resolved before suffixes, owing to the broadness of the vowels when preceding ל ,or ר .Comp. גַּל with suffix צְבֻלּוֹ גַּלְלֹתֹ : הַרֶרֶם הַר ,Ewald, § 265; Fürst, Lexicon, s.v. גַּל– .The particle אַל expresses a subjective wish, Gesen. Lexicon, אַל ii. 6, Ewald, § 320.

Thy body is like a heap of wheat, &c. The point of analogy seems to subsist between the appearance of the body and that of a quantity of corn heaped up, עֲרֵמָה which Ibn Ezra well explains עבה מלמטה ודקה מלמעלה ;so also Rashbam. Remembering that corpulency was deemed essential to an Eastern beauty, this comparison will appear obvious. Selden, who is followed by others, takes this passage as a prediction of the bride's fertility: as:—"Wheat and barley were among the ancient Hebrews emblems of fertility; and it was usual for standers-by to scatter these grains upon the married couple, with a wish that they might increase and multiply." Uxor

Hebraica, lib. ii. cap. 15. “A custom,” adds Williams, “which might probably originate from this passage, or *vice versâ*.”

But though it is true that it was a common practice among the Jews at marriages to distribute among the company dried seeds (Talm. Chethuboth, ii. 1), probably to indicate a wish that the newly-married couple might be fruitful, it does not follow that it was the practice at so early an age, or that it is the meaning here. Were this the sense here, we should expect that the Jewish commentators, who well knew and practised the manners and customs of their own people, would have recognised it. Whereas, Rashi, Rashbam, Ibn Ezra, &c., explain this figure as referring to the appearance.

Hedged round with, &c. The threshing-floors in ancient times were in the open air; and when the wheat had been threshed out, fanned and heaped up, each heap was stuck round with thorns, in order to keep off the cattle. (Hos. ii. 5, 6.) To render the figure more beautiful, and the compliment more flattering, the enamoured king changes the hedge of thorns into a fence of *lilies*. Others, however, refer these words to a robe embroidered with lilies, covering her body; and others, again, to some ancient custom of surrounding or covering the newly-threshed heap of wheat with a sort of garland of flowers, indicating the joy of the husbandman at the return of the harvest.

4, 5. *Thy bosom is like*, &c. These verses, with a little variation arising from the fact that a different person is the speaker here, contain the same figures as iv. 4, 5. The comparison between the beautiful symmetry, erect bearing, and ivory colour of the neck, and between the elegant structure, lofty altitude, and white colour of a tower, appears more striking and apposite from the description given by Josephus of the towers of Jerusalem: “They were so very tall, they appeared much taller by the place on which they stood; for that very old wall, wherein they were, was built on a high hill, and was itself a kind of elevation that was still thirty cubits taller, over which were the towers situated, and thereby were made much higher to appearance. The largeness also of the stones was wonderful; for they were not made of common small stones, nor of such large ones only as men could carry, but they were of white marble, cut out of the rocks: each stone was twenty cubits in length, and ten cubits in breadth, and five in depth. They were so exactly united [179]to one another, that each tower looked like one entire block of stone, so growing naturally, and afterwards cut by the hand of the artificer into the present shape and corners; so little, or not at all, did their joints or connexion appear.” (Jewish War, book v. chap. iv. 4.—Whiston’s translation.) The comparison of the neck with ivory is also used by Anacreon (Ode xxix. 28, 29), in his description of Bathyllus:—

Τὸν Ἀδώνιδος παρελθὼν

ἐλεφάντινος τράχηλος.

"But never can thy pencil trace
His ivory neck of Paphian grace."

Thine eyes, &c. That is, are as bright and serene as the celebrated translucent pools of this city. Heshbon, a town in the southern parts of the Hebrew territory, about twenty miles east of the point where the Jordan enters the Dead Sea, originally belonged to the Moabites (Numb. xxi. 25), and afterwards came into possession of the Amorite king Sihon (ibid.; Deut. ii. 24; Josh. iii. 10). It was conquered by Moses shortly before his death (Numb. xxi. 25), and was first assigned to the tribe of Reuben (Numb. xxxii. 37; Josh. xiii. 17), and afterwards to the tribe of Gad, and became a Levitical city (Josh. xxi. 39; 1 Chron. vi. 81). It was retaken by the Moabites when the ten tribes were carried into exile (Isa. xv. 4; xvi. 9; Jer. xlviii. 2), but the Jews conquered it again afterwards (Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii.) The ruins of Heshbon, the name by which the place is still known, have been visited and described by modern travellers. (Burckhardt, Travels, p. 365; Biblical Repos. for 1833, p. 650; Robinson, Palestine, ii. 278.) Heshbon was the pride of Moab, was famous for its fertility, verdure of plantation, and beautiful reservoirs. Hence the simile here. A similar comparison is used by Ovid, De Arte Ama. ii. 722:—

"Adspicies oculos tremulo fulgare meiantes,

Ut sol a liquida saepe refulget aqua."

בַּת רַבִּים is well explained by Rashbam, *the populous*, "because, through it a multitude of the inhabitants of the town walk in and out;" שרוב בני העיר יוצאין ונכנסין בה, "because it is the chief place of concourse." בַּת *daughter*, like בֶּן *son*, is idiomatically used in Hebrew to express quality. Compare בֶּן־שֶׁמֶן *a son of fatness*, i.e. fat; Isa. v. 1, and supra, vii. 2. The Septuagint, which is followed by the Vulgate, not understanding this idiom, renders it literally ἐν πύλαις θυγατρὸς πολλῶν, *by the gates of the daughter of many*.

Thy nose, &c. This tower must have contained a projection or an overhanging part, celebrated for its great symmetry and elegance. Hence the comparison between the beautifully projecting tower and the well-proportioned nose.

6. *Thy head upon thee*, &c. כַּרְמֶל stands here for כַּרְמִיל *purpura*; so Ibn Gamach, Ibn Ezra, Fürst, &c. This shell-fish is of a spiral form, and "the exquisite juice which is so greatly sought after for the purpose of dyeing cloth is situate in the middle of the throat. This secretion consists of a tiny drop contained in a white vein, from which the precious liquid used for dyeing is distilled, being of the tint of a rose, somewhat *inclined to black*." Pliny, Hist. Nat. ix. 60, 61; Arist. Hist. Anim. lib. v. c. 14. The simile here subsists between *the spiral form* of this shell-fish and *the pyramidal shape* in which the hair was anciently

tied up on the top of the head. The Chinese and other Eastern women still wear their hair rolled up into a knot or bunch at the top of the head; and [180]even in this country ladies used to dress their hair in a somewhat similar manner. The rendering of the ancient versions of כַּרְמֶל by *Mount Carmel*, which the majority of modern interpreters follow: they take the simile to be between the beautiful appearance of the bride's head and the charming, luxuriant, and picturesque summit of this celebrated mountain; but this is against the parallelism and 2 Chron. ii. 16, 13; iii. 14. כַּרְמֶל = כַּרְמִיל is derived from כָּרַם *to be shiningly red*, with יל appended, according to the analogy of פְּתִיגִיל vide Fürst, Lexicon *in voce*; or it may be that this shell-fish was so called because it was found on the shore near Carmel. At all events, there is no need to look for the etymology of this word out of the Shemitic family.

And the tresses, &c. Fine hair is frequently compared by the Greeks and Romans with purple. Thus Anacreon, xxviii. 11, 13.

γράφε δ' ἐξ ὅλης παρειῆς
ὑπὸ πορφύραισι χαίσταις
ἐλεφάντινον μέτωπον.

Then paint, from her full cheeks,
Beneath her *purple hair*,
Her ivory forehead.

Compare also Virgil, Georg. i. 405; Tibul. i. 4, 63. The purple here referred to is that kind which Pliny describes as "*nigrans adspectu idemque suspectu refulgens*." אַרְגָּמָן *the costly colour* extracted from the shell-fish, is from רָגַם *to colour*, with the prostetic א and termination ן; vide supra, chap. iii. 9.

The king is captivated, &c. The ringlets, like the lashes of the eyelids, are frequently represented as the net of love. Prov. vi. 25; Sirach ix. 3, 4. Thus Jami, in his Joseph and Zuleikha, chap. i., as quoted by Dr. Good, says:—

"When Love in graceful ringlets plants his toils,
The fool he catches, and the wise man foils;
But, thence released, the sage his snare discerns,
And Reason's lamp with wonted lustre burns."

מֶלֶךְ stands for הַמֶּלֶךְ; the article is not unfrequently omitted in poetry; comp. Ps. ii. 2; xxi. 2; Gesen. § 109; Ewald, § 277, b. רְהִיט *a ringlet*, so called from its flowing down over the shoulders; vide supra, chap. i. 16. The construction of מֶלֶךְ with אַרְגָּמָן i.e. *royal purple* (one of the Greek translators in the Hexapla, Vulgate, Syriac, Luther, Houbigant, &c.), is against the punctuation and the evenness of the metre, interferes with the interpretation of the remaining words, and has evidently arisen from a misunderstanding of the passage. Besides, no people is known by such a name. It was owing to a feeling of being consistent that the editor of Calmet felt

himself constrained to take אַרְגָּמָן as a proper name, *Argamen*, to correspond with the parallel כַּרְמֶל and to explain this clause as alluding to a particular mode of plaiting the hair, like the weaving of *Arech*, a city in Babylonia, supposed to be famous for its weaving manufactories.

How beautiful, &c. The captivated king, having described the beauty of the several parts of the body, now combines the separate members into one lovely form, and endows it with life and fascination, which none of the inanimate beauties to which he had compared her, however admirable, possessed. אַהֲבָה *love*, abstract for concrete, *loved one*, vide supra, chap. v. 1. תַּעֲנוּג *charm*, *attraction*, such as living beings possess. Aquila and the Syriac, separating the word בְּתַעֲנֻגִּים render it θυγάτηρ τρυφῶν, בַּת עֲנֻגִּים .

7. *This thy growth*, &c. The beautiful growth of the palm-tree, like that of the cedar and cypress, supplied a forcible image to the ancients. [181]Thus the Son of Sirach, xxiv. 13, 14:—

“I grew up as a cedar of Lebanon,
And as a cypress upon Mount Hermon;
I grew up as a palm-tree in En-gedi,
And as a rose-tree in Jericho.”

Comp. also Homer, Odyss. vi. 162, and supra, chap. v. 15. אֶשְׁכֹּל *bunch*, *cluster*, of grapes, dates, or flowers; the context must decide which. Here, from its close proximity to תָּמָר *palm-tree*, dates are most

probably intended. For the etymology of אֶשְׁכֹּל see supra, chap. i. 14; and for its form, both here and in ver. 9, Ewald, § 212 d.

8. *I long to climb*, &c. After this flattering description Solomon tells the Shulamite how greatly he desires, and how happy he should be to enjoy, the affections of one so lovely and charming. We earnestly request those who maintain the allegorical interpretation of the Song seriously to reflect whether this verse, and indeed the whole of this address, can be put into the mouth of Christ as speaking to the Church. Would not our minds recoil with horror were we to hear a Christian using it publicly, or even privately, to illustrate the love of Christ for his Church?—אָמַר *to speak*, also *to wish*, *to desire*, Gen. xliv. 28; Exod. ii. 14; 1 Sam. xx. 4. אָמַרְתִּי does not express *the past*, but *the present*; comp. דָּמְתָה in the preceding verse; Gesen. § 126, 3; Ewald, § 135 b. The second verb אֶעֱלֶה is subordinate to the first, vide supra, chap. ii. 3. גֶּפֶן is added to אֶשְׁכֹּל to distinguish it from *the dates* in ver. 7.

And the odour of thy breath, &c. That is, be as sweet and as quickening as that of apples. אַף is used in preference to פֶּה because the nostril, or the breathing (which אַף literally means) is regarded by the Hebrews as that which in distension betokens pleasure, anger, &c. The appropriateness of this expression will be more manifest when we remember that hitherto all that the Shulamite showed towards Solomon were resistance and independence. There is

also a play of words here, אַף being derived from אָנַף *to breathe*, and תַּפּוּחַ from נָפַח *to breathe*. Hodgson strangely renders וְרֵיחַ אַפֵּךְ ,"the fragrance of *thy face*," because several MSS. read אפיך with a *yod*.

9. *And thy speech*, &c. That is, Let thy language to me be as the sweetness of delicious wine. Rosenmüller, Döpke, De Wette, Noyes, Delitzsch, Hengstenberg, &c., put these words into the mouth of the maiden. But it is incredible that this modest woman would approve of these expressions with regard to her own person, and that she would continue the words דּוֹבֵב שִׂפְתֵי יְשֵׁנִים. חֵךְ ,*palate*, metonymically for speech; vide supra, chap. v. 16. טוֹב is used as a *substantive*, and placed in the genitive after יַיִן comp. Ps. xxi. 4; Prov. xxiv. 25; Ewald, § 287 b. The phrase הוֹלֵךְ לְמֵישָׁרִים describes the smooth or mellow wine, which is of a very superior quality, and highly prized, Prov. xxiii. 31. The expression לְדוֹדִי is added in order to describe still more forcibly the nature of the wine, and affords a more striking illustration of the pleasantness of the damsel's speech. Her voice is not merely compared to wine, valued because it is sweet to everybody; but to such wine as would be sweet to a friend, and on that account is more valuable and pleasant. Ammon, Ewald, Heiligstedt, Hitzig, &c. regard לְדוֹדִי as having erroneously crept in here [182]from ver. 11, whilst Velthusen, Meier, &c. point it לְדוֹדַי in the plural; but this is unsupported by MSS. Hodgson, taking לְדוֹדִי for לְדוֹדִים translates it *ad amores*, *delightfully*, corresponding to לְמֵישָׁרִים in the

next clause. But this rendering, to say the least, is contrary to the general meaning of this word. The rendering of Williams, “which I sent to those whom I love for their integrity,” is preposterous.

And causes slumbering lips, &c. The wine is of such an animating nature, that it even causes silent lips to speak. Thus Horace, Epist. lib. i. Ep. v. 19:—

Fecundi calices quem non fecere disertum?

“Whom have not soul-inspiring cups made eloquent?”

Others, however, with less probability, explain these words to mean wine of so excellent a flavour, as to induce those who have indulged in it to dream of it, and converse about it; or wine so delicious and tempting that it leads to excess, in consequence of which the drinkers fall asleep, and then either disclose the subject of their dream, or mutter unintelligible words. דּוֹבֵב is not *gently flowing, suffusing* (Ewald, Döpke, Gesenius, De Wette, Lee, Magnus, Noyes, Meier, Philippson, Hitzig, &c.), but *causing to speak* (Vulg., Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Rashbam, Mendelssohn, Kleuker, Hengstenberg, Fürst, Delitzsch, &c.) This is corroborated by the derivative דִּבָּה which primarily means *something spoken, a report*, either good or bad, as is evident from Gen. xxvii. 2; Numb. xiv. 37, where the adjective רָעָה *evil*, is joined to it; and from Ezek. xxxvi. 3, where it

stands in parallelism with שִׂפַת לָשׁוֹן ,and by the frequent usage in the Talmud and other Hebrew writers of the word דָּבַב for *speaking*. דּוֹבֵב is the Poel of דָּבַב a form frequently used in verbs ע"ע (comp. הוֹלֵל Eccl. vii. 7; סוֹבֵב Ps. lix. 7; Gesen. § 67, 8), and, like the Piel, is often the *causative* of Kal, Gesen. § 55, 1. The Sept., Vulg., Sym., Syr., read שִׂפְתַיִם וְשִׁנַּיִם ,*the lips and the teeth*, instead of שִׂפְתֵי יְשֵׁנִים ; but this is neither supported by MSS., nor yields a better sense.

10. *I belong to my beloved*, &c. The Shulamite gently but decidedly refuses the wishes of the king, declaring that her affections are fixed on one whom she ardently loves, and on whom alone it is her sacred duty to look. Even Ibn Ezra and Rashbam, though explaining it differently, admit that the maiden here refuses the petitioner of the last verse on the plea that she belonged to her beloved. עָלַי lit. *on me*, i.e. *it is upon me as a duty*. עַל is frequently used to denote *duty* or *obligation*, which rests upon one like a burden, and must be discharged. Thus עָלַי לְתֵת ,"it was my duty to give," 2 Sam. xviii. 11; זִבְחֵי שְׁלָמִים עָלַי ,"peace-offerings are due from me," Prov. vii. 14; Gesen. Lexicon, עַל A. 1, α γ. Ewald, § 217, 4 γ. The suffix in תְּשׁוּקָתוֹ expresses the object, i.e. *the desire for him*. This is often the case; comp. יִרְאָתוֹ *his fear*, i.e. *the fear for him*, Exod. xx. 20; Gesen. § 121, 5; Ewald, § 286 b. We thus obtain the same sense of this clause which Hodgson gives it, without changing the words into תשוקתי זעליו ,upon the slender

authority of one MS. to support the first, and three MSS. to support the second alteration.

11. *Come, my beloved*, &c. Having distinctly and finally refused the king, who forthwith quitted her, the Shulamite now addresses her beloved shepherd, who approached her, urging their departure from the royal palace for their festive bowers in Nature's [183]hall. The want of separate names, or initial letters of names, generally used in profane composition to indicate the speaker or the person spoken to, is amply supplied here by the skill of the inspired poet in putting into the mouth of the Shulamite such rural language as shows most plainly that she was a rustic maiden, and that her beloved, whom she here addresses, is a shepherd. Comp. also chap. i. 7; ii. 8; v. 2, 4, &c. To ascribe these words to a princess addressing king Solomon is preposterous. Döderlein, Ewald, Meier, &c., take כְּפָרִים as the plural of כֹּפֶר *cypress*, vide supra, i. 14; iv. 13; but 1 Chron. xxvii. 25, where כְּפָרִים like here, coupled with שָׂדֶה *field*, forms a contrast to עִיר *city*, is against it. הַשָּׂדֶה is the accusative of place, 1 Sam. xx. 11; Gesen. § 118, 1.

12. *We will go early*, &c. Transported with the thought of her speedy arrival at her mother's house, the Shulamite vividly depicts to her beloved the scenes of home, where they will again together enjoy rural life. It may be that Milton thought of this passage when he wrote the words:—

"To-morrow, ere fresh morning streak the east
With first approach of light, we must be risen,
And at our pleasant labour, to reform
Yon flowery arbours, yonder alleys green,
Our walks at noon with branches overgrown."

Paradise Lost, iv. 623, &c.

נַשְׁכִּימָה לַכְּרָמִים is *constructio praegnans*, and is well explained by Rashbam, נשכימה לטייל בכרמים, "we will rise early to stroll in the vineyards." Comp. Gen. xliv. 33; Numb. xiv. 24; Gesen. § 141.

There will I give, &c. The shepherd, gladdened with the fact that his loved one is restored to him, is desirous of expressing his joy and affection, but the Shulamite, anxious to get off as quickly as possible, tells him that at home, amidst the charms of nature, they may indulge in sweet effusions of love. The Sept. and Vulg. have here again דַּדַּיִם *breasts*, instead of דֹּדִים *love*. But in addition to what has already been remarked, we would state that whenever breasts are mentioned in this Song, שָׁדַיִם is invariably used.

13. *The mandrakes diffuse*, &c. Another reason for hastening away from the royal prison into the rural home. There nothing will be wanting; they have there the highly prized apples, they have all sorts of precious fruit, which she left on the trees for him. A similar passage occurs in Virgil, Ecl. i. 37, where the loved one kept fruit on the tree for her lover:—

Mirabar, quid moesta deos, Amarylli, vocares;
Cui pendere suâ patereris in arbore poma:
Tityrus hinc aberat.

“We stood amazed to see your mistress mourn;
Unknowing that she pined for your return:
We wonder’d why she kept her fruit so long,
For whom so late th’ ungather’d apples hung:
But no, the wonder ceases, since I see
She kept them only, Tityrus, for thee.”

דּוּדָאִים which occurs only once more, (Gen. xxx. 14), is, according to the testimony of the ancient versions, the mass of commentators and modern travellers, *the mandrake-plant, Atropa mandragora*, called *yabrochack* by the Arabs, the fruit of which is highly valued by the Orientals for its supposed exhilarating, aphrodisiac, and procreative properties. “It grows low, like lettuce, to which its leaves have a strong resemblance, except that they have a dark green colour. The flowers are purple, and the root is for the [184]most part forked. The fruit, when ripe, in the beginning of May, is of the size and colour of a small apple, exceedingly ruddy, and of a most agreeable flavour.” See Kitto, Cyclop. Bib. Lit.; Winer, Bib. Dict. s.v. Here, however, this plant is mentioned merely to fill out the picture of charming and highly prized plants, without reference to any supposed internal properties, and has evidently been suggested by the preceding דּוֹדִי *beloved*. דּוּדָאִים lit. *love-apples*, is the plural of דּוּדִי from the root הָוַד *to love*, with the

termination ־ִי, like לוּלְאוֹת the plural of לוּלִי from the root לוּל Gesen. § 93, 6, 6; Ewald, § 189 g. וְעַל פְּתַחֵינוּ is well explained by Rashbam, אצל פתח פרדס שלנו, "in our garden, *close* to our door," &c. עַל has not unfrequently the sense of *neighbourhood* and *contiguity*. Gesen. Lexicon, עַל 3. Others however render עַל *over*, i.e. "and over our doors grow," &c.; others again translate *in*, i.e. "*in* our house are," &c., taking פֶּתַח in the sense of *house*; comp. Prov. xiv. 19, but with less probability. Houbigant's transposition of letters, viz. עַל תִּפְחֵינוּ, *in nostris malis aureis*, instead of עַל פִּתְחֵינוּ, is an idle conjecture.

1. *Oh that thou wert as my brother*, &c. The charming description which the Shulamite gave of their happiness when at home, recalled to her mind the obstacles which they met with, even there; and hence she is led to wish that he had sustained to her the relation of a brother, that, whether in the street or the house, none might misinterpret or interrupt the manifestation of their attachment. מִי יִתֵּן is used to express the *optative*. Comp. Deut. v. 29; xxviii. 67; Ps. xiv. 7; Job vi. 8; Gesen. § 136, 1; Ewald, § 329 c. כְּאָח is the *accusative*. The rendering of the Septuag., Τὶς δώῃ σε, ἀδελφιδέ μου, θηλάζοντα μαστοὺς μητρός μου; and Luther, "O dass ich dich, mein Bruder, der du meiner Mutter Brüste saugest, draussen fände," are wrong. יוֹנֵק שְׁדֵי אִמִּי, does not mean "an infant *still* sucking the breasts." (Grotius, Gill, Good, Williams, &c.), but "one who *had* sucked and is now a youth;" it is the second accusative to מִי

יִתֶּנְךָ ,and stands in parallelism with אָח *brother*; like the participle יוֹלֶדֶת (which does not mean one who just gave birth), and אִם vide supra, chap. vi. 9. אֶמְצָאֲךָ is *conditional*, with the particle אִם implied, Judg. xi. 36; Prov. xxiv. 10; Ewald, § 367 b. גַּם is used poetically for וְ, *and*, Judg. v. 4; Joel i. 12. יְבֻזּוּ the third person is used to express the indeterminate third person, *the passive* in English. Gen. xli. 14; Gesen. § 157, 3. For לִי *me*, five MSS. and two editions read לְךָ ,*thee*, which Ewald adopts. But this is against the majority of MSS. and all the versions, and does not at all improve the sense.

2. *I would lead thee*, &c. As a brother, she could unreservedly bring him from the spot, where she met him in the street, to her mother's house. We must supply מִשָּׁם ,*thence*, before אֲנַהֲגֶךָּ ;so Rashbam. Simple as the word תְּלַמְּדֵנִי seems to be, it has nevertheless produced a variety of renderings. The Septuagint and Syriac, followed by Percy, entirely omit it, and interpolate here וְאֶל חֶדֶר הוֹרָתִי ,*and into the apartment of her who gave me birth*, from chap. iii. 4; after בֵּית אִמִּי ,[185]*the house of my mother*. Ibn Ezra, the Authorized Version, Kleuker, Döderlein, Hitzig, &c., supply אֲשֶׁר *who*, before תְּלַמְּדֵנִי and refer it to אִמִּי *my mother*. But this interrupts the construction, and, against the scope of the description, introduces the mother as an actress. Hodgson and the editor of Calmet, strangely enough, render it *Talmudni*, as a *proper name* of the maiden's mother. The most natural way seems to be to take it with the Vulgate,

Chaldee, Rashbam, Luther, Ewald, Döpke, De Wette, Delitzsch, Hengstenberg, Philippson, &c., as the second person masculine.

I would cause thee to drink, &c. On the aromatic wine, see supra, chap. vii. 3. The pomegranate-juice was and still is a favourite beverage in the East. “The Orientals,” says Dr. Kitto, “indulge largely in beverages made with fresh juice of various kinds of fruits. Among these, sherbet made with pomegranate-juice is particularly esteemed, and, from its agreeable and cooling acidity, the present writer was himself accustomed to prefer it to any other drink of this description.” יַיִן is either an anomalous *construct* (Gesenius; Fürst, Lex. s.v.), or the *absolute*, and הַרֶּקַח apposition in the accusative. Compare מַיִם לַחַץ ,1 Kings xx. 27; Gesen. § 116, 6, Rem. b; Ewald, § 287 h. אֶשְׁקְךָ and אַשְׁקְךָ are a paranomasia, vide supra, chap. i. 3. עַסִיס רִמֹּנִי ,*my pomegranate-juice*, i.e. which I myself have prepared. The noun in the genitive, expressing the quality of the nominative, has the suffix; compare הַר קָדְשִׁי ,*my holy mountain*, Ps. ii. 6; Gesen. § 121 b; Ewald, § 291 b. From an oversight of this most probably arose the readings of רמנים or רמונים (several MSS.), רִמֹּנַי (Vulgate, Syriac), the supposition that רִמֹּנִי is an adjective (Schultens), and the opinion that it is an abbreviated plural from רִמֹּנָיִם like מִנִּי for מֵנָיִם (Ps. xlv. 9, Meier, Fürst, Lexicon, מ ,3 b.)

3. *Let his left hand*, &c. Exhausted with the attempt to describe her unfailing attachment for her beloved

shepherd, an attachment far deeper than external circumstances permit her to manifest, the Shulamite desires that no other hand should raise her drooping head, no other arm support her enfeebled frame, than those of her beloved; compare chap. ii. 6.

4. *I adjure you*, &c. This last affecting scene, having brought the Shulamite's struggle to a successful termination, is closed by her adjuring the court ladies as before (ii. 7, and v. 3), to make no more attempt to draw her affections away from her beloved to any one else, since they were unalterably fixed. The Septuagint, which is followed by Good, &c., supplies here בִּצְבָאוֹת אוֹ בְּאַיְלוֹת הַשָּׂדֶה ,from ii. 7, and v. 3. It is obvious, from the change of אִם into the *more urgent* negative particle מָה (comp. Job xxxi.; Ewald, § 325 b), that the variation is designedly made; and indeed the haste in which the Shulamite is to depart with her beloved does not permit her to use the lengthy adjuration. [186]

5. *Who is it that comes up*, &c. The last successful resistance secured for the Shulamite her liberty. Convinced that even the blandishments of a king cannot overcome the power of virtuous love in the heart of a rustic damsel; satisfied that "all the wealth of his house" could not buy it, Solomon dismisses her. Then, reunited to her beloved shepherd, the happy pair immediately depart for home. As they approach their native place the inhabitants, beholding them at a distance, exclaim, "Who is it that comes up from the plain, leaning upon her

beloved?" הַמִּדְבָּר *the plain* (vide supra, iii. 6), most probably the plain of Esdraelon, at present known by the name of Merij Ibn 'Amir, lying between Jezreel and Sulem (Robinson, Palestine, iii. 169), which the lovers had to cross on their way home. מִתְרַפֶּקֶת (from רָפַק *to lean*; hence מַרְפֵּק *an arm*, on which one leans, Talm. Sabbath, 92), *supporting herself*, being weary with so long a journey. So the Sept. ἐπιστηριζομένη; the Vulg. *innixa*, &c. As for the additional λελευκανθισμένη in the Sept., and *deliciis affluens* in the Vulg., the one most probably arose from the word בָּרָה ,used in chap. vi. 10, where a similar question occurs, and the other from a marginal gloss, מתנענעת or מתפנקת

Under this apple-tree, &c. As they drew nearer home they beheld the endeared spot—the memorable shady tree under which the shepherd was born, and where their mutual love was first kindled. These sweet musings are at length terminated by the Shulamite, who joyfully recounts the pleasing reminiscences of that place. The frequent meetings of shepherds and shepherdesses under shady trees, (vide supra, chap. i. 7), often resulted in the formation of a sacred tie. The solemn vow of love was then engraven on the bark of the tree, as a witness of their union. Thus Theocritus, Idyl. xviii. 47, 48:—

γράμματα δ' ἐν φλοιῷ γεγράψεται, ὡς παριών τις
ἀννείμῃ, Δωριστὶ, σέβου μ'· Ἑλένας φυτὸν εἰμί.

"——and on the bark,
In Doric, shall be engraven for all to mark,
'To me pay honour—I am Helen's tree.'"

Compare also Idyl. xxiii. 46; Propert. I. xviii. 22; Virg. Ecl. x. 53; and Pope, Past. iii. 66, 67. [187]

Here thy mother, &c. Confinements in the open air are of frequent occurrence in the East (Gen. xv. 16). "There are in Asia," says Dr. Chardin in his manuscript notes, "large districts in which no midwives are to be found, and even if some live there they are little known, for mothers assist their daughters, and often female relatives or neighbours fill the place of the former. In Kurman, I saw a woman who was delivered without any assistance in *the open fields*, three hours from a village, and to my great surprise, she arrived not much later in town where I was. The people there smiled at my astonishment, remarking that similar cases were very frequent in their country." (See Rosenmüller, Orient. i. 188; Paxton, Illustrations of Scripture, i. 462; Kalisch on Exod. p. 18.) עוֹרָר *to excite, to move to love*, vide supra, ii. 7; iii. 5; viii. 4. חִבְּלָתְךְ does not mean *conceived thee* (Aquila, Schultens, Hitzig, &c.), which the Shulamite could not know, nor *plighted*, or *engaged thee*, (Houbigant, Michaelis, Percy, Kleuker, Good, Williams, Boothroyd, Magnus, Meier, &c.), which is contrary to the Piel signification of this verb, but signifies *laboured with thee*, (Sept., Syriac, Chaldee, Rashi, Rashbam, Ibn Ezra, Luther, Ewald,

De Wette, Gesenius, Philippson, &c.); compare Ps. vii. 15, and Hupheld *in loco*. To put these words into the mouth of the bridegroom as addressing his bride, (Percy, Good, Williams, Boothroyd, Delitzsch, Hitzig, &c.), is contrary to the words in the text, which have masculine suffixes. The form חִבְּלָתְךָ is used instead of חִבְּלַתְךָ ,to correspond in sound with יָלְדָתְךָ in pause, vide supra, iii. 11. יָלְרָתְךָ ,*i.q.* יָלְדָה אוֹתְךָ .The Vulgate, which seems here to savour of allegorism, translates שָׁמָּה חִבְּלָתְךָ אִמֶּךָ שָׁמָּה חִבְּלָה יְלָדָתְךָ ,*ibi corrupta est mater tua, ibi violata est genitrix tua*. "The tree," the Roman Catholics explain of *the cross*; "the individual" excited to love under it, *the Gentiles* redeemed by Christ at the foot of the cross; and "the deflowered and corrupted mother" means, *the synagogue of the Jews* (the mother of the Church), which was corrupted by denying and crucifying the Saviour.

6. *Oh, place me as a seal*, &c. That is, "Let me be near and dear to thee." The Shulamite, having shown her faithfulness during a period of extraordinary trials, could now look up to the witnessing tree with an inward satisfaction. It is therefore very natural that she should remind her beloved, in the presence of this witness, of his vows. In ancient times, when the art of writing was confined to a very few, and writing materials were not so easily procurable, rings or signets, with names engraven upon them, were generally used as manual signs. This contrivance for a signature soon became used as an ornament. People who could afford it had these seals or signets

made of silver or gold, inlaid with precious stones. Being indispensable articles of use, and highly prized as decorations, they were carried in the bosom, suspended from the neck by a string (Gen. xxxviii. 15), or were worn on the right hand (Jer. xxii. 24; Sirach xlix. 11), and thus became a symbol of what is dear and indispensable. Jehovah himself uses this metaphor, Jer. xxii. 24:—

"Though Coniah, the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah,
Were as a seal on my right hand,
Yet I would pluck thee thence."

Comp. also Hag. ii. 23; Sirach xvii. 22; Rosenmüller, Orient. vi. 252; i. 183; iv. 190; Winer, Bib. Dict.; Kitto, Cyclop. Bib. Lit. s.v. [188]

For love is strong as death, &c. True love seizes with a tenacious grasp. Like death, it rules with resistless sway; like Hades, it is never moved to give up its object: neither power nor prayer can overcome it. קָשָׁה *hard, firm, inexorable*. קִנְאָה is not *jealousy* (Sept., Vulg., Authorized Version, Percy, Kleuker, Good, Williams, &c.), but *devout affection, ardent love* (Ewald, Gesenius, De Wette, Noyes, Meier, Hitzig, Philippson &c.); it is here used as an intensitive term for *love*, as is evident from the parallelism and the connexion.

The flames of the Eternal. These words are exegetical of "flames of fire;" *i.e.* the flames of love, though

having the same energy as those of fire, are not of the same origin; they emanate from the Eternal, the source of all love. Whether, with Ben Asher, we read שַׁלְהָבָתְיָהּ *conjointly*, like מַאֲפֵלְיָהּ Jer. ii. 31; or with Ben Naphtali, שַׁלְהֶבֶת יָהּ ,*separately*, which is followed by most editions, Rashi, Ibn Ezra, and the majority of modern critics, and which is required by the parallelism; this predicate does not state that the flames of love are "most vehement," but affirms that they emanate from the Eternal. יָהּ, an abbreviation of יַהֲוֶה (see Kalisch on Exod. iii. 14; xi. 2; Fürst, Lexicon, s.v.), like אֵל Isa. xiv. 13, is the genitive of cause or origin. Comp. ἡ ἀγάπη ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἔστι, 1 John iv. 7. שַׁלְהֶבֶת *flame*, may either be a quadriliteral, formed from שָׁהַב Arabic, *to burn*, with the insertion of the ל after the first radical, according to the analogy of זִלְעָף *violent heat*, (Ps. ii. 6), from the root זָעַף *to be hot*; or, which is more probable, is the Shaphel conjugation of לָהַב *to burn*. Fürst, Lexicon, s.v.; Gesen. § 55, 6; Ewald, § 122 a. The Sept. has φλόγες αὐτῆς, שַׁלְהֲבֹתֶיהָ That the original reading of the text was שַׁלְהֲבוֹת יָהּ שַׁלְהֲבֹתֶיהָ (Ewald, Döpke, Hitzig, &c.) is purely conjectural.

7. *Floods cannot quench love.* Being a flame of celestial origin no terrestrial influence, however great, can destroy or wash it away; it is not subjected to means resorted to for the extinction of ordinary fires. מַיִם רַבִּים ,prop. *much water*, i.e. a great quantity of it (Numb. xx. 11), *floods*. שָׁטַף *to wash*, or *sweep away*, Job xiv. 19; Isa. xxviii. 17.

If one should offer all, &c. Such divine love spontaneously flows from the heart, and cannot be purchased with money; though one offered all his riches for it, they would be utterly despised. This affirmation, whilst true in itself, is levelled against the king, who attempted to gain love by flatteries and praises (vide supra, i. 11; vi. 8), but was utterly rejected (vii. 11). אִישׁ *any one*, *one*, Gen. xiii. 16; Exod. xvi. 29; Gesen. § 122, Rem. 2. בָּזוֹ the infinitive absolute, is employed before the finite verb יָבוּזוּ to express *intensity*, Gen. xliii. 3; 1 Sam. xx. 6; Gesen. § 131, 3 a; Ewald, § 280 b. יָבוּזוּ the third person plural, is used for the passive, see supra, chap. viii. 1.

8. *Our sister is still young*, &c. The [189]brothers are here introduced, on the arrival of the Shulamite, as repeating the promise which they had once given to their sister if she kept virtuous, and, when espoused, remained true to her vows. One of the brothers inquires of the others what they should do for the Shulamite when she reached womanhood, and is demanded in marriage. אֲחוֹת לָנוּ, *i.q.* אֲחוֹתֵינוּ *our sister*, and is well rendered by the Sept. ἀδελφὴ ἡμῶν, the Vulg. *soror nostra*, Luther, *unsere Schwester*. The adjective קָטָן like גָּדוֹל prop. denoting *size*, is also used with reference to *age*. Gen. ix. 24; xxvii. 15; Judg. xv. 2. שְׁדַיִם אֵין לָהּ, i.e. *she has not yet reached puberty*. בְּיוֹם *when*, Gen. ii. 4. דִּבֶּר בְּ, *to speak for*, *to demand in marriage*, 1 Sam. xiii. 9; xxv. 39.

9. *If she be like a wall*, &c. To this inquiry the second

brother replied, that if, having reached that age, she should firmly resist every allurement as a battlement resists the attack of an enemy, they would decorate her as an impregnable wall; *i.e.* highly reward her. The expression "wall" is figuratively used for *impregnability*, Jer. ii. 18; so Immanuel, שעמדה הזקה כהומה .The silver turret here mentioned most probably refers to the *silver horn*, a highly prized ornament which women wear on their heads. "One of the most extraordinary parts of the attire of their females" (Druses of Lebanon), says Dr. Macmichael, "is a silver horn, sometimes studded with jewels, worn on the head in various positions, *distinguishing different conditions*. A married woman has it affixed to the right side of the head, a widow to the left, and a virgin is pointed out by its being placed on the very crown. Over this silver projection the long veil is thrown, with which they so completely conceal their faces as to rarely have more than *one eye* (vide supra, chap. iv. 9), visible." Comp. also Bowring, Report on Syria, p. 8.

But if she be like a door, &c. That is, accessible (vide supra, chap. iv. 12), she shall be barricaded with cedar planks—be punished by being locked up. The word "door" is metaphorically used for *open to seduction*. The cedar wood is mentioned because it is exceedingly strong, and increases the idea of strict vigilance. Similarly Immanuel, ואם דלת שכבר נפתח נצור עליה לרח ארז כלמ' נביאה במצור ונסגור בעדה שלא תראה, וכלוה אדז שהוה הזק ותקיף .

10. *I am a wall*, &c. The Shulamite now triumphantly responds, that she had proved impregnable as a wall, and had now reached womanhood, and therefore the promised reward was due to her. שָׁדַי כַּמִּגְדָּלוֹת ,*i.q.* שָׁדַי נָכֹנוּ ,Ezek. xvi. 7, is well explained by Rashbam, הגיע זמני להינשא ,*my time for marriage has arrived*, and is an answer to שָׁדַיִם אֵין לָהּ ,in the preceding verse.

Then I was in his eyes, &c. That [190]is, in her brother's eyes. He now, being convinced of his sister's chastity, gave her the reward of virtue. The suffix in בְּעֵינָיו *his eyes*, does not refer to Solomon (Ewald, Hitzig, Philippson, &c.), whose name has not been mentioned, but to the brother (Ibn Ezra, &c.), who last spoke. שָׁלוֹם *peace*, has no reference to the name שְׁלֹמֹה but is used in the sense of חֵן *favour*, and refers to chap. i. 6; comp. Gen. xxxiv. 7 with ver. 11.

11. *Solomon had a vineyard*, &c. Having been obliged, when demanding her promised reward, to describe her virtue as an impregnable wall, the Shulamite now relates more circumstantially how she had resisted the attempt to gain her affections. Solomon had a large vineyard in Baal-hammon, which he offered to consign to her if she granted his request; but the Shulamite refused his offer, telling him he might keep his large estate to himself, for she was quite satisfied with her humble possession. Many are the conjectures hazarded as to the locality of Baal-hammon, which occurs nowhere else, and no place is known by this name. It is taken for Baal-Gad, or

Heliopolis (Rosenmüller, Bib. Geog. ii. p. 253), for חַמּוֹן *Hammon*, a place in the tribe of Asher, Josh. xix. 28 (Ewald), and for Βελαμὼν or Βαλαμὼν, *Belamon* or *Balamon*, a place mentioned in the book of Judith, viii. 3, not far from the plain of Esdraelon, Judith iii. 9 (Meier, Hitzig). It is, however, more probable, according to Rashi, that Baal-hammon was in or near Jerusalem, and was called בַּעַל הֲמוֹן ,*place of the multitude*, because its beauties and charms attracted a multitude of people, thus presenting a greater temptation for the Shulamite. The Vulgate strangely renders כֶּרֶם הָיָה לִשְׁלֹמֹה בְּבַעַל הֲמוֹן ,*vinea fuit pacifico in ea, quae habet populos*.

He let out the vineyard, &c. This is intended to show the value of the vineyard. It was so extensive that it was leased out to a number of tenants, and every one of them paid a thousand shekels annually, and yet had two hundred shekels left for himself. נֹטְרִים an *indefinite* number of keepers or farmers. אִישׁ *each*, vide supra, ver. 7. The suffix in בְּפִרְיוֹ *his fruit*, refers to כֶּרֶם *vineyard*, which is masculine. כֶּסֶף *silver*, stands for שֶׁקֶל כֶּסֶף ,*silver shekel*: substantives denoting *weight*, *measure*, or *time*, are frequently omitted. Gen. xx. 16; xxxvii. 28; Acts xix. 9; Gesen. § 120, 4, Rem. 2; Ewald, § 287 i. The amount of a shekel is supposed to be about two shillings and sevenpence. The shekel of the sanctuary, however, like all the weights and measures of the Temple, was computed at double the ordinary. See Ezek. xlv. 12; 1 Kings x. 17; comp. with 2 Chron. ix. 16; Mishna,

Shekalim, Maaser Sheni; Winer, Bib. Dict. s.v. A thousand shekels, therefore, would be about one hundred and thirty pounds. Remembering that each of these farmers had to pay this sum annually, and that money in those days had fifteen or twenty, nay, according to Michaelis (Mos. Rech. § 243), fifty times its present value, we shall be able to judge of the allurement which this ample estate offered.

12. *I will keep my own vineyard*, &c. And yet, notwithstanding all this, the Shulamite prefers to keep her little vineyard, and be with her beloved shepherd, rather than unfaithfully give him up for riches and honours. כַּרְמִי שֶׁלִּי ,*my own vineyard*, the vineyard which belongs to me; vide supra, chap. i. 6. לְפָנָי lit. *is before me*; *it is* [191]*mine, and I will keep it*: this is obvious from the immediately following לְךָ , *thine*, *keep thou it*. The words "וגו הָאֶלֶף לְךָ are to be taken as an exclamatory phrase, Ewald, § 329 a. אֶלֶף is here used *collectively* for all the thousands put together, which come in annually from the farmers; so מָאתַיִם *the two hundreds*. The Vulgate translates here again the proper שְׁלֹמֹה *mille tui pacifici*.

13. *O thou that dwellest in the gardens*, &c. The companions of the shepherd, who had manifested their joy at the successful arrival of the happy pair (vide supra, ver. 5), and rejoice that one of their humble occupation has brought such honour upon the whole class, visit the Shulamite, to hear from her own mouth her avowed attachment to her beloved. The shepherd, therefore, requests her to gratify this

desire. She is no more הַיּוֹשֶׁבֶת בְּחַדְרֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ, *sitting in the apartments of the king*, vide supra, chap. i. 4, but has the honourable appellation of הַיּוֹשֶׁבֶת בַּגַּנִּים, *dwelling in the gardens*. חֲבֵרִים *companions*, i.e. my companions, fellow-shepherds, i. 8.

14. *Haste, O my beloved*, &c. The Shulamite complies with the request. In the presence of all, she calls *the shepherd* her beloved, and tells him always to hasten to her with the speed of the swift-footed gazelle; vide supra ii. 9, 17. He has no more to cross "the mountains of separation" (see ii. 17), for they are united. These rugged mountains have now given place to the much-wished-for *aromatic hills*, iv. 6.

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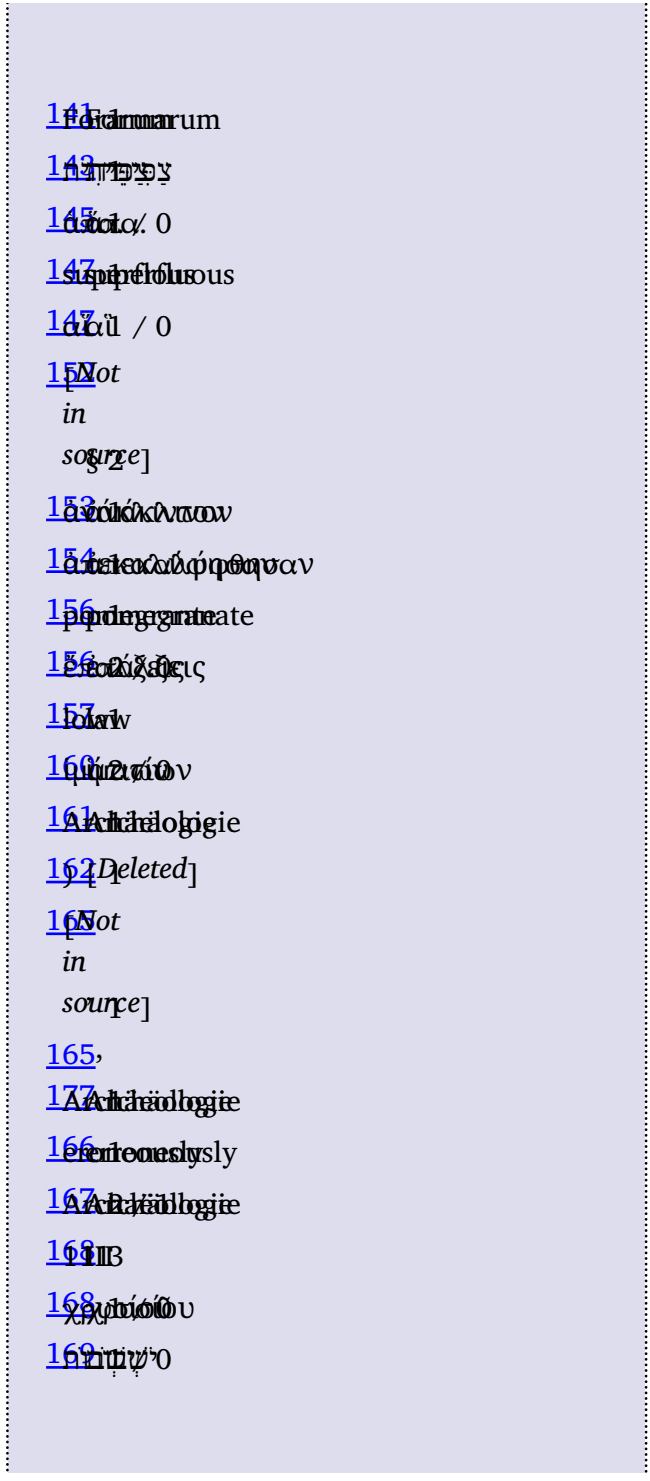
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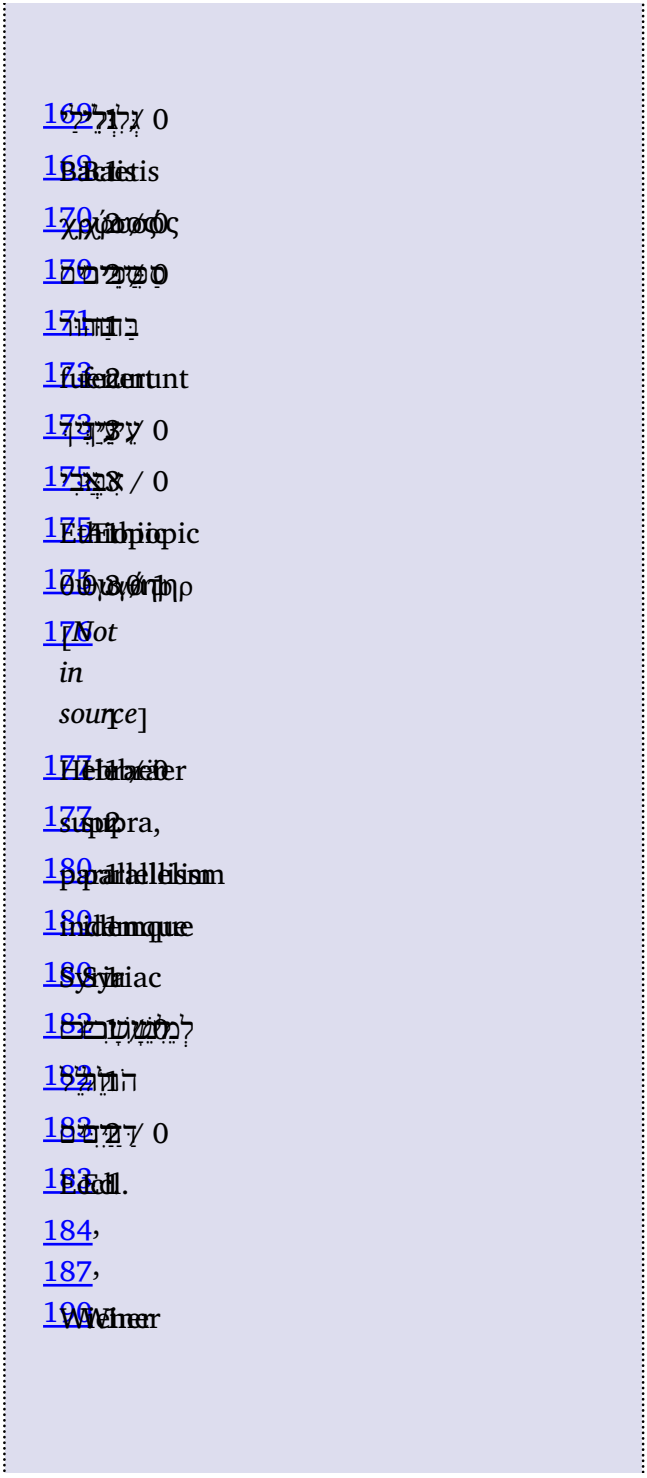
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61, [*Not*
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166, *source*]
44, Real,
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160, 1
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Bernburg, Anhalt-Bernburg
60, וְעֵינֶיךָ / 0
60, אַשְׁכְּרוּ
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61, Vitellius
64, Paradisum
69, templus
69, Constantini
71, ;, 1
71, Apollinarius
72,
173, [*Deleted*]
72, Ockham
74, Ockham
75,
104, [*Deleted*]
76, exsudabant
76, invidens
76, Israelitarum
76, eum
82,
89,
101,
138,
143,
157, [*Not*
182,
189, *source*]
89, Pfeffelhorst
89, him









184 [illegible]

184 [illegible]

184 [illegible]

188 kakalisch

Abbreviations

Overview of abbreviations used.

Abbreviation	Expansion
D.D.	Doctor Divinitatis
hapa. leg.	hapax legomenon
i.q.	idem quod
Kurzg.	Kurzgefaßtes
LL.D.	Legum Doctor
s.v.	sub voce
”וגו	וְגוֹמֵר
ἅπα. λέγ.	ἅπαξ λεγόμενον

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