

THE LETTER OF ARISTEAS

INTRODUCTION

§ 1. THE CHARACTER OF THE EPISTLE.

THE Epistle claims to be a contemporary record, written with the personal knowledge of an eye-witness, by Aristeas, an officer at the court of Ptolemy Philadelphus (285-247 B.C.), to his brother Philocrates, giving an account of the circumstances which led up to the composition of the LXX version of the Jewish law. The events with which it deals are supposed to take place during the lifetime of Queen Arsinoë (§ 41). As Arsinoë became Queen about 278 B.C. and died in 270 B.C., these dates provide us with the time limits within which the story must be placed. If the allusion to the royal children in § 41 is not an anachronism, but contains a reference to the fact that Arsinoë, finding herself childless, adopted the offspring of her predecessor, the date must be fixed towards the end of this period.¹ The writer strives to give us the impression that the Epistle was composed almost immediately after the occurrence of the events which it records.

This claim, however, cannot be sustained. There are many reasons which make it quite certain that the Epistle could not have been written by a Greek Court-official in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus.

1. On two occasions the writer makes statements which betray the fact that he belongs to a later age. In § 28 he speaks of the manner in which 'the affairs of state *used to be carried out* by these Egyptian kings' and in § 182, after referring to the arrangement which was made for the entertainment of guests at court in the time of Philadelphus, he adds the significant words, 'it is an arrangement which is still maintained to-day'.

2. The writer is guilty of several serious historical anachronisms.

(a) He represents Demetrius of Phalerum as head of the library of Alexandria and ascribes the translation of the law to his influence and initiative (§§ 9-11 *et passim*). The evidence, however, proves quite conclusively that Demetrius was banished by Philadelphus at the commencement of his reign (c. 283 B.C.) for supporting the claim of Keraunos to the throne, and died shortly afterwards (see note on § 9).

(b) In § 180 Aristeas makes Philadelphus allude to a 'naval victory over Antigonos'. If the reference is to the battle of Kos (258 B.C.), he is guilty not only of turning a defeat into a victory, but also of antedating the event by some twenty years or so. If, as many scholars suppose, the reference is to the battle of Andros, the former objection is removed (for Egypt was victorious at Andros) but the latter difficulty is intensified, for the battle was not fought till at any rate the last year of the reign of Philadelphus (247 B.C.) and possibly not till the beginning of the reign of his successor.

(c) In § 201 Menedemus the philosopher is represented as being present at the banquet and taking part in the discussion. Menedemus lived at Eretria and we have no evidence that he ever visited Alexandria. Moreover, he probably died in 277 B.C., a year or two before the time when Aristeas introduces him into the narrative. The references to Theopompus (§ 314) and Theodektes (§ 316) seem to be equally impossible, and the stories which are told about them must be regarded as purely fictitious.

(d) At times the Epistle assumes the existence of the LXX before the translation was made. In §§ 57-8 the specifications of the table which Philadelphus sent as a present to Eleazar are taken from the LXX, which differs very considerably from the Hebrew. In § 228 a phrase from the LXX of Deut. xiii. 6 is put into the mouth of one of the Jewish envoys. In the description of the dress of the High Priest (§§ 96-9) many terms are used from the LXX of Exodus xxviii and xxix.

¹ Epiphanius gives the date as the 7th year of Philadelphus 'more or less'; other ecclesiastical writers give the 2nd, 17th, 19th, or 20th year.

THE LETTER OF ARISTEAS

In § 155 there is a conflate quotation made up of phrases taken from the LXX of two different passages in Deuteronomy. And—most important of all—the law is spoken of as Scripture (§§ 155 and 168).

3. The writer of the Epistle could not have been a Greek courtier, as he claims to be in § 16. To write under a Greek mask was a favourite literary device of Jewish apologists. We have examples of it in the Sibylline books, in pseudo-Hecataeus, and in the forged additions which were made to the Greek poets (Schürer, *ET* ii. 3, p. 294 ff.). The whole tone of the letter from beginning to end proves conclusively that its author was a Jew and that the Greek rôle was assumed to strengthen the force of the argument and commend it to non-Jewish readers.

The Epistle of Aristeas therefore must not, in spite of its author's asseverations, be regarded as a historical document. It is really a piece of apologetic—'a panegyric' as Schürer describes it—'upon Jewish law, Jewish wisdom, and the Jewish name in general'. We may compare it to a modern historical novel written with a purpose. It is only valuable because it indicates the views which were held at the time when it was written with regard to the origin of the LXX.

It may be added that the genuineness and authenticity of the letter were first questioned by Ludovicus de Vives in his commentary on *Aug. de Civ. Dei* xviii. 4 (1522), and subsequently by Scaliger. Ussher and Voss defended the letter, but its claim to belong to the period of Philadelphus was finally destroyed by Humphry Hody (1684-1705), though unsuccessful attempts were made later on by Grinfield in his *Apology for the LXX* (1850) and by Oeconomus in his *περὶ τῶν ὁ ἐρμηνευτῶν* (Athens, 1844-9) to resuscitate its reputation.

§ 2. THE CONTENTS AND PURPOSE OF THE EPISTLE.

The contents of the Epistle may be analysed as follows:—

- I. Introduction, dedicating the book to Philocrates, §§ 1-8.
- II. Preliminary proceedings, §§ 9-51.
 - (a) The proposal of Demetrius, §§ 9-12.
 - (b) The emancipation of the Jewish captives, §§ 13-28.
 - (c) The letter of Philadelphus to Eleazar, §§ 29-40.
 - (d) The reply of Eleazar, §§ 41-6.
 - (e) The names of the translators, §§ 47-50.
- III. The description of the royal presents to Eleazar, §§ 52-82.
 - (a) The sacred table, §§ 52-72.
 - (b) The other presents, §§ 73-82.
- IV. The description of Jerusalem, §§ 83-120.
 - (a) The temple, including the arrangements for the water supply, §§ 83-91.
 - (b) The ministration of the priests and of Eleazar in particular, §§ 92-9.
 - (c) The Akra or citadel, §§ 100-4.
 - (d) A brief description of the city itself, §§ 105-6.
 - (e) A description of the country districts of Palestine, §§ 107-20.
- V. Eleazar's farewell to the translators, §§ 120-7.
- VI. Eleazar's defence of the Jewish law, §§ 128-71.
- VII. The reception of the translators at Alexandria, §§ 172-86.
- VIII. The banquet, and the table-talk of the translators. The 72 questions and answers, §§ 187-300.
- IX. The translation and reception of the law, §§ 301-22.

The apologetic interest of the Epistle reveals itself in the following directions:—

1. The account of the liberation of the Jewish captives by Ptolemy Philadelphus indicates that one of the aims of the author was to vindicate the right of the Jewish people to political liberty. The writer holds up the magnanimity of the king as a mirror to his own age and cites it as an illustration of the attitude which ought to be adopted by rulers towards the Jewish race. The appeal of Aristeas and Sosibius to Philadelphus is really directed to the authorities of the writer's own day.

2. The vindication of the purpose and function of the Jewish law forms the theme of one of the most important sections of the book (§§ 128-71). The writer admits that there were many enact-

INTRODUCTION

ments in the Mosaic code which seemed incomprehensible to the ordinary mind, e.g. the distinction between clean and unclean meats. The method by which he justifies these injunctions is ingenious and interesting. For the first time in the history of Jewish apologetic he resorts to the allegorical method for which Alexandria in later times became so famous. He rejects 'the degrading notion' that the regulations were made in the interests of the animals themselves (§ 144) and insists that they are merely 'symbols', drawn up to teach men lessons of righteousness (§ 151).

3. The long section, which relates the table-talk between Philadelphus and his guests, is introduced to exemplify the wisdom, moral insight, intellectual ability, and philosophical acumen of the leaders of the Jewish people. The high commendation which is given to the answers by the philosophers at the court and especially by Menedemus (§§ 200, 201) serves to exalt the endowments of the Jewish translators at the expense of other teachers. The writer, however, is aware that he has overdone the encomium on Jewish wisdom, for he adds: 'I suppose it will seem incredible to those who will read my narrative', § 296. The writer's argument is in line with the theory commonly adopted by Jewish apologists, that the philosophers of Greece derived their wisdom from the teaching of Moses.

4. There are other signs, too, that the Epistle was intended by its author to advocate the Jewish propaganda:—

(a) In § 16 an attempt is made to show that the God of the Jews is to be identified with the being 'whom all men worship', though they call him by other names.

(b) The idealized picture of Eleazar and the Jewish priests in §§ 92-9 is obviously intended to affect the mind of the reader. 'I am convinced', writes Aristeeas, 'that any man who takes part in the spectacle . . . will be filled with indescribable wonder and be profoundly affected in his mind', § 99.

(c) The stamp of approval which is given to the LXX in § 310 is intended to vindicate it against the attacks of critics and secure appreciation for it in the minds of Greek readers.

It is not too much to say that the writer's one object is to demonstrate the supremacy of the Jewish people—the Jewish priesthood, the Jewish law, the Jewish philosophy, and the Jewish Bible.

§ 3. THE DATE OF THE EPISTLE.

The date of the Epistle constitutes an almost insoluble problem. There are three main theories—(1) Schürer holds that it was written about 200 B.C.; (2) Wendland places it between 96-93 B.C.; (3) Graetz and Willrich assign it to the age of Caligula (later than 33 A.D.).

The arguments upon which Schürer relies are as follows:—(1) The reference to the translation of the LXX in Aristobulus (170-150 B.C.). The words of Aristobulus as reported by Eusebius (*Praep. Evang.* xiii. 12. 2) are as follows:—*ἡ δὲ ὅλη ἐρμηνεία τῶν διὰ τοῦ νόμου πάντων ἐπὶ τοῦ προσαγορευθέντος Φιλαδέλφου βασιλέως. . . . Δημητρίου τοῦ Φαληρέως πραγματευσαμένου τὰ περὶ τούτων.* 'The complete translation of the whole of the Jewish law was made in the time of the king who was surnamed Philadelphus, and was due to the efforts of Demetrius of Phalerum.' Schürer argues that the introduction of the anachronism with regard to Demetrius makes it certain that Aristobulus is dependent upon Aristeeas, and as Aristobulus is dated about 170-150 B.C., Aristeeas must be written some years earlier. The argument of Schürer is corroborated to some extent by the interesting parallel between Aristeeas § 306 and a passage of Aristobulus quoted in Eusebius, *Praep. Evang.* viii. 10. 377 a.

Aristeeas.

πάσα γὰρ ἐνέργεια διὰ τῶν χειρῶν γίνεται.

Aristobulus.

ὥστε . . . τὴν πᾶσαν ἰσχὺν τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ τὰς ἐνεργείας ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν εἶναι.

Unfortunately for Schürer, however, the genuineness of these quotations, and indeed of the whole work attributed to Aristobulus, has been seriously questioned by some modern scholars, e.g. Kuenen, Graetz, Joel, L. Cohn, and Wendland. And even if their authenticity be admitted, there is nothing to prove that Aristeeas must be the earlier of the two writers. It is quite possible that, instead of Aristobulus using Aristeeas as Schürer supposes, it may have been Aristeeas who used Aristobulus.

(2) Schürer lays great stress on the political condition of Palestine as described in the Epistle: 'A period when the Jewish people were leading a peaceful and prosperous existence under the conduct of their high priest and in a relation of very slight dependence upon Egypt, i.e. the period before the conquest of Palestine by the Seleucidae, evidently from the background of the book. There is nowhere any allusion to the complications which begin with the Seleucidian conquest. The

THE LETTER OF ARISTEAS

Jewish people and their high priest appear as almost politically independent. Especially is it worthy of remark that the fortress of Jerusalem is in the possession of the Jews' (*ET* ii. 3. 309 f.). There would be additional force in Schürer's argument if we could rely upon the statement of Josephus that during the Maccabean war the Jews razed the Akra to the ground (see note on § 100). In view of the fact, however, that Josephus is in conflict with 1 Maccabees and the possibility, which G. A. Smith suggests, that Aristeas may not be referring to the original Akra but to the later Baris, the point cannot be pressed.

The argument would possess considerable weight if it could be proved that the section which deals with Palestine was written from the author's own observations. But if, as Wendland has made extremely probable, Aristeas obtained his information second-hand from the writings of Hecataeus, the data cannot be used as Schürer uses them and the ground is cut from underneath his position.

It is extremely difficult to maintain so early a date as 200 B.C. in view of the internal evidence supplied by the Epistle itself. There are a number of points—none of them conclusive in itself, but possessing cumulative effect when they are taken together—which seem to render it extremely probable that the document belongs to the post-Maccabean period:—

1. In the list of the seventy-two translators, which is due to the writer's imagination, there are many names which are particularly associated with the Maccabean age, e.g. Mattathias, Judas (three times), Simon (three times), Jonathan (three times). Moreover, the high priest in Aristeas bears the same name as the famous Eleazar who is the hero of 2 Maccabees. The unusual names Chelchias (among the 72), Sosibius, and Dositheus are found among the courtiers of the later Ptolemies, and possibly the author himself, as Wendland suggests, assumes the name of the later historian Aristeas (see note on § 6).

2. The evidence of the Papyri affords a clear presumption in favour of the later date. Three points seem to have been made out:—

(a) The omission of the pronoun in the formula *ἐὰν φαίνηται* does not occur on the Papyri till 163 B.C. (see note on § 32).

(b) Strack has proved that while the title *ἀρχισωματοφύλαξ* is often found in the singular in the Papyri of the third cent. B.C., the plural form which is used in § 40 of Aristeas does not occur till about 145 B.C.

(c) The use of the word 'friends' as a court title is not found till the Papyri of the period of Ptolemy V (205–182 B.C.), see note on § 45.¹

3. Certain statements of the Epistle seem to bear out the same point. To quote Thackeray: 'The alleged widespread interest in the Jewish law (§ 128) and the false views which were in circulation about it (§ 144), the pointed reference to a difference between the Greek text and the Hebrew in a passage of Exodus (§ 57), and the probable allusion to attempts which had been made to improve on the rendering of the translators—all these appear to indicate a date further removed from the age of Philadelphus than that which Schürer would adopt.

If Schürer's view is too early, the date assigned to the Epistle by² Graetz and Willrich is too late. It is difficult to see how the document could have sufficiently established its reputation to be used by Philo and Josephus, if it had been composed as late as 33 B.C. Moreover, the description of Palestine, even though it is borrowed from Hecataeus, could scarcely have been written in its present form after the Roman occupation of Palestine. The island of Pharos, too, is described as inhabited. The conquest of Egypt by Julius Caesar rendered it desolate (Strabo xvii. 6).

The evidence seems to suggest a date between 130 and 70 B.C. May we go further with Wendland and fix upon a definite point within this period? The grounds upon which Wendland decides for 96–93 B.C. are as follows:—In § 115 the ports of Ascalon, Joppa, Gaza, and Ptolemais are said to be in possession of the Jews. Joppa was conquered about 146 B.C., but Gaza was not captured till 96 B.C., and Ascalon and Ptolemais never became Jewish territory. It is of course the capture of Gaza which is the determining point with Wendland. It is quite conceivable, however, that the author, writing at an earlier time, may have made the same mistake about Gaza as he did about Ptolemais and Ascalon.

There are one or two facts, however, which it seems difficult to reconcile with a date within the period 130–70 B.C. Twice in the Epistle the law is spoken of as Scripture. There seems to be no trace of the application of the term Scripture to the Old Testament before the commencement of the Christian era. We have no other instance either of the application of the allegorical method in the manner in which it is used in Aristeas before that date.

¹ Too much stress should not perhaps be laid on this point as the term may possibly be used in the technical sense in 1 Kings iv. 5.

² For the arguments of Graetz see notes on §§ 28, 167. Drummond, *Philo*, 233 ff.

INTRODUCTION

We seem to have therefore one set of facts, e.g. the Ptolemaic background and the absence of any reference to the Roman occupation of Palestine, which compel us to date the Epistle before 70 B.C., and another set of facts which suggest that it could not have originated till the Christian era.

The solution of the problem will probably be found in some such hypothesis as the following. The Epistle was issued in its present form at the commencement of the Christian era, possibly as late as the date suggested by Graetz and Willrich—but a large part of it—possibly the whole except the law section, §§ 128–71—was in existence before and belongs to the period 130–70 B.C. The law section is quite separate from the rest of the book and might easily have been inserted. It may also be found, when a detailed comparison has been made between Aristeas and 2 and 3 Maccabees, that other sections or at any rate sentences are the work of the later editor. Nothing except some form of the partition theory seems likely to provide the key for the riddle.

§ 4. THE AUTHOR.

Nothing is known with regard to the author of the Epistle. We may, however, draw some inferences from the book with regard to his personality. We may conclude that (1) *he was a Jew*. This is obvious from the tone and purpose of the book; (2) *he belonged to Alexandria*. Lumbroso has proved that the acquaintance which the book shows with the technicalities of the Court life of the later Ptolemies clearly indicates that it was of Alexandrian origin. The employment of the allegorical method of interpreting the law points to the same conclusion. (3) *He was a propagandist*, as is evidenced by the apologetic interest of the book. (4) He belonged to what may be termed 'the common sense school of philosophy'. There are no flights of speculation in the book. No problems trouble the mind of the author, who is simple and conventional in his treatment of the ethical and religious questions which emerge. (5) His attachment and devotion to the Jewish law indicate that the *author had leanings towards Pharisaism*, though it must be admitted that his Pharisaism is not of a pronounced type, except in the section dealing with the Jewish law. (6) He was interested (a) in psychology (§§ 155–6) and especially in the psychology of sleep (§§ 160, 213–16); (b) in political and social problems (*passim*, see Introduction, § 6). (7) Swete has an interesting suggestion that he was a native of Cyprus, based on the fact that his brother came from that island, and that the name Aristeas frequently occurs on the Inscriptions found in the islands of the Aegean (*Introd. to LXX.* 10).

§ 5. SOURCES.

The author claims to write as an eyewitness and consequently gives little indication of the sources from which his information was derived. The only indications which he affords us of having used other authorities are (1) the quotation from Hecataeus in § 31; (2) his reference to the Minutes of Court Proceedings in § 298. We may dismiss the latter at once as an attempt on the part of the author to secure credence for his narrative. The allusion to Hecataeus, however, is more important, and if Wendland is right, reveals the real source which lies behind the Epistle. The quotations which Josephus gives from Hecataeus, though they may be coloured by later tradition or even by Josephus himself, indicate that he covered pretty much the same ground as Aristeas in his description of Palestine. Similar resemblances are pointed out between Diodorus Siculus, who embodied a great deal of Hecataeus in his writings, and our Epistle. Among the points of similarity between the statements of Aristeas and what may be assumed to have been said by Hecataeus, Wendland mentions the following—(a) the account of the Jewish Diaspora in Egypt, §§ 12, 13; (b) the comparison between the God of the Jews and Zeus (§ 16); (c) the high praise which is bestowed upon agriculture (§ 107 ff.); (d) the description of the Temple and the priesthood at Jerusalem (§§ 83 f., 92 f.); (e) the description of the produce and agriculture of Palestine (§§ 107–20).

There are, however, some points of discrepancy between Hecataeus and Aristeas which weaken the force of Wendland's argument; (a) in § 105 Aristeas describes the extent of the city as 40 furlongs, while Hecataeus says 50; (b) in § 95 Aristeas estimates the number of Jewish priests at 700, while Hecataeus puts the figure at 1,500. We may conclude therefore that while it is certain that Aristeas made use of Hecataeus, very possibly Wendland has exaggerated the extent of his indebtedness.

For the table-talk section it is possible that Aristeas made use of a collection of 'Moral Sayings', though whether they were Jewish or Greek cannot be determined. The theological conclusion, which the writer adds, is sometimes forced and fails to fit on to the previous statement.

THE LETTER OF ARISTEAS

§ 6. THEOLOGY AND ETHICAL TEACHING.

The Epistle is not directly interested in theological problems. The most interesting features are its doctrine of God and its view with regard to the significance of the Jewish law.

1. The conception of God is in many ways quite modern. The most noteworthy point is the identification of the God of the Hebrews with Zeus (§ 16). Stress is laid upon Monotheism (§§ 132, 139). It is through God that 'all things are endowed with life and come into being' (§ 16). 'His power is manifested throughout the Universe and every place is filled with His sovereignty' (§ 132). He is the source of all the endowments and blessings of life (§ 190). Evil as well as good comes from His hand (§ 197). We are dependent upon him for success (§ 196) and for virtue (§ 226 *et passim*). He is the 'ruler and lord of the Universe' (§§ 16, 201, 210), *ὁ κυριεύων πάντων θεός* (§§ 18, 45), the most High God (*μέγιστος θεός* § 19), the great godhead (*μεγάλη θεϊότης* § 95), the Almighty (*ὁ παντοκράτωρ θεός* § 185). Nothing can be hid from Him. 'None of the things which are wrought in secret by men upon the earth escapes His knowledge' (§ 132). He sways the lives of men (§ 17) and grants answers to their prayers (§ 192). The utmost emphasis is laid upon the benignity, the forbearance, and the forgiveness of God, who is described as *χωρὶς ὀργῆς ἀπάσης* (§ 254). Though there is a general reference to the punishments which He inflicts upon the guilty in § 131, yet it is elsewhere asserted that these punishments are mild and that 'God instils fear into the minds of men by granting reprieves and makes merely a display of the greatness of his power' (§ 194). There is a vigorous attack upon idolatry in §§ 134-7 which is remarkable for its Euhemeristic explanation of the origin of idol-worship.

2. The section on the Jewish law is the outstanding feature of the book. The law is described as 'Scripture' (§ 168, cf. § 155) and as the 'Oracles of God' (§§ 158, 177). Its divine origin is continually emphasized (§§ 31, 240, 313). It is entirely free from blemish (§ 31), and the utmost sanctity attaches to it (§§ 31, 171). It is the peculiar protection of Israel, 'It has fenced us round with impregnable ramparts and walls of iron that we might not mingle with the other nations' (§ 139). It contains the moral ideal. 'The good life consists in keeping the enactments of the law' (§ 127). 'All its ordinances have been drawn up to assist the quest for virtue and the perfecting of character' (§ 144, cf. §§ 168, 169). Some of its regulations may seem trivial but there is a hidden meaning attached to them, and they are all intended to teach a moral lesson (§ 150). By a novel application of the allegorical method, Aristeas endeavours to show the real significance of the law with regard to unclean food, and he is specially ingenious in his interpretation of the 'cloven hoof' and 'chewing the cud' (§§ 150-6).

3. Aristeas has no doctrine of sin. The word only occurs once and then it is used in quite a general sense (§ 192). On more than one occasion, however, he refers to the natural bias toward evil in human nature. 'Every man has a natural tendency towards the pursuit of pleasure' (§ 108, cf. §§ 222-3). 'All men are by nature intemperate and inclined to pleasure. Hence injustice springs up and a flood of avarice' (§ 277).

4. *Ethical Teaching.* A great part of the book is devoted to ethical teaching but it is very largely conventional and possesses very little originality. The utmost emphasis is laid on the connexion between morality and religion. God is 'the starting point' (*καταρχή*) of ethics (§§ 189, 200, 235). The moral ideal is embodied in the law (§ 127), and it is through the power of God that its realization becomes possible. The latter point is brought out clearly in § 236, 'The soul is so constituted that it is able by the divine power alone to receive the good and reject the opposite'; and again, in § 231, 'It is the gift of God to be able to do good actions' (see also §§ 226, 238, 248). Virtue is spoken of as a general principle which is 'the source of good deeds' (§ 272). The Aristotelian virtue of 'the middle course' or moderation comes into prominence on several occasions (§§ 122, 223, 256). A version of 'the Golden Rule' in its negative form appears in § 207. There is no trace of dualism—in fact the divine origin of the body, and the manifestation of the wisdom of God in its various organs and functions are clearly enunciated in §§ 155-6. Stress is sometimes laid on outward observances and etiquette (§ 246). The teaching shows no sign of asceticism though men are constantly warned not to allow themselves to be carried away by passion and impulse and urged to a life of self-discipline and self-control (§§ 209, 216, 221, 238, 248, 256). The other virtues emphasized are justice and righteousness ('injustice is equivalent to the deprivation of life', § 212), sobriety, temperance, kindness, duty to parents and children, truthfulness, forbearance, sympathy, and forgiveness. Among the vices to be avoided are injustice, pride, intemperance, lying, pleasure-seeking, churlishness, anger, and malice. The general teaching of the book may be summed up in the words of § 195: 'The highest good in life is to know that God is the Lord of the Universe and that in our finest achievements it is not we who attain success but God who by his power brings all things to fulfilment and leads us to the goal'.

INTRODUCTION

5. *Political Philosophy.* Aristeeas incidentally draws a picture of the ideal monarch who is portrayed as a benevolent despot and a philosopher-king. No other form of government is discussed at all. The question is indeed raised as to whether a man born to the purple or a private citizen makes the best ruler, but it is left unanswered (§§ 288-90). The absoluteness of the monarchy is taken for granted. He has power of life and death over his subjects (§ 253). But he is urged to remember that only justice and benevolence, and clemency, and a real desire to promote the welfare of his subjects can render his throne secure (§§ 205, 225, and 283). The ideal condition is reached 'when subjects continually dwell in a state of peace and justice is speedily administered' (§ 291). In order to secure this end, the king must study the part he has to play, as actors do (§ 219), and strict rules of etiquette must be maintained at Court (§ 246). He must pay careful attention to the official reports which are sent up from the provinces, with a view to the correction of abuses and the removal of grievances (§ 283). He must take special precautions to see that his subordinates are not guilty of injustice or oppression (§ 271), and he must put down informers with a strong hand (§§ 166, 167). Moreover, he must see to it that his employes are paid a fair wage (§ 258). Above all he must remember that he owes his throne to God and only the power of God can keep it secure (§ 224).

The interest which Aristeeas takes in *social problems* is seen in his views on the following points—(a) He advocates *mild* forms of punishment for offenders. 'If you exhibit clemency, . . . you will turn men from evil and lead them to repentance' (§ 188, see also § 208). (b) He gives an account of the measures which were adopted at Alexandria to prevent the depopulation of the rural districts by influx into the towns (§§ 107-11), and his words seem to suggest that the question was as acute in his day as it is in modern times. (c) He is impressed with the difficulties that arise from the mingling of different races in the big centres, and is opposed to 'residence abroad' whether for rich or poor (§ 249). (d) He is emphatic in demanding fair wages for artisans (§§ 258-9). (e) He holds pronounced views on the inferiority of women, 'Women are by nature headstrong and energetic in the pursuit of their own desires, and subject to sudden changes of opinion through fallacious reasoning, and they are essentially weak' (§ 250).

§ 7. THE MANUSCRIPTS.

The two chief authorities on the textual criticism of Aristeeas are Wendland and Thackeray, both of whom have constructed a modern text of the Epistle. Thackeray's text was published in 1900 as an appendix to Swete's 'Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek', and Wendland's appeared the same year.

The two texts are not made entirely out of the same materials and unfortunately the Editors use a different system of denominating the MSS. in their *apparatus criticus*.

I propose to state first the MSS. which have been used by both Editors, and then those which have been used by one of them, and finally those which do not seem as yet to have been used at all.

I. The MSS. which have been used by both editors. For the purpose of convenience I give both systems of notation.

	Wend.	Thack.
Vaticanus 383	A.	K.
Venice 534	V.	G.
Palat. 203	P.	I.
Flor. Laur. 44	L.	T.
Barberini iv. 56	B.	P.
Vaticanus 747	C.	H.

II. In addition to these Wendland has used

Monacensis 9	M.
------------------------	----

III. The additional MSS. used by Thackeray are

Paris 128	A.
Paris 129	B.
Paris 5	C.
Paris 950	Q.
Zürich (Omont 169)	Z.

We may include also three MSS. which are the descendants of Paris 128 (A.)

Paris 130	D.
Brit. Mus. Burney 34	F.
Vatican 746	L.

THE LETTER OF ARISTEAS

and one MS. which is a transcript of Vaticanus 383 (K.)

Basileensis O. iv. 10 R.

Partial use has also been made of

Vaticanus 1668 S.

Mention is made too in the introduction of a MS. which does not appear to be cited in the *apparatus criticus*.

Ottobonianus 32 M.

IV. Certain other MSS. are known to exist but do not appear to have been collated.

Atheniensis 389.

Scorialensis 2. 1. 6.

Monacensis 82.

V. In addition to the MSS., we have (a) the paraphrase of Josephus which covers the ground of §§ 9-81, &c.; (b) the citations in Eusebius, of §§ 9-11, §§ 28-46, §§ 88-90, §§ 128-71. Eusebius is the more valuable of the two, because Josephus has taken the trouble to rewrite every sentence, and though he still employs the characteristic words and phrases of Aristeas, it is very often impossible to reconstruct the text which he was using. The citations in Eusebius are on the whole accurate and reliable; he sometimes abbreviates a little and sometimes misquotes, but as Freudenthal says, 'it is only in extremely rare cases that he inserts additions of his own, and the cases in which we meet with fundamental alterations of the text are still more uncommon.' (Quoted by Thackeray, Swete, *Introd. to LXX*, p. 576.)

Classification of MSS. With regard to the classification of the MSS. Wendland and Thackeray are on the whole in agreement, though there is some difference as to details. For the sake of comparison I append a table, giving the two classifications, using the notation of Thackeray in order to make the agreements and differences obvious:

	Thackeray.	Wendland.
Group I	{(a) TB (b) CPSZ	TBPSZ
Group II	{(a) GIM (b) HA(DFL)K(R)	{(a) GIMC (b) HKADF
Group III	wanting	Cod. Monacensis 9

It will be seen that the only essential differences are (a) Thackeray puts C (Paris 5) in group I, Wendland in group II; (b) Wendland uses Cod. Monacensis 9 and places it in a group by itself.

But though the two editors are in general agreement with regard to classification, they differ with regard to the comparative value of the groups. Wendland holds that the purest text is found in Cod. Monacensis 9 which Thackeray does not use at all, the next most important MSS. being T, P, and the MSS. of the first group, while the second group is 'minoris pretii'. Thackeray, on the other hand, maintains that the first group 'while presenting a specious text is in reality based upon a recension, though in a few passages it has kept the original readings'. In the second group 'no correction has taken place, and though the text which has been handed down is not altogether free from corruption, yet the true reading is in most cases to be looked for here'.

A full account of the different MSS. will be found in Swete (*Introd. to LXX*, 504-16).

It remains to add the names of scholars who have worked on the emendation of the text.

C. L. Struve, *Opuscula Selecta* II, pp. 195-7, 270, 277, 310, 311, 329. Lipsiae, 1854.

C. G. Cobet, *Δόγμω Ερωτή*, vol. i, pp. 177-81. Leyden, 1866.

Lumbroso, *Dell' uso delle iscrizioni e dei papyri per la critica del libro di Aristeo: Atti della R. Accad. delle Scienze di Torino*, vol. iv, 1868-9, pp. 229-54.

L. Mendelssohn, *Zum Aristeasbriefe*: Rhein. Mus. xxx. 1875, pp. 631, 632.

Aristeae quae fertur ad Philocratem Epistulae initium. Jurievi, 1897.

Kuiper, *De Aristeae ad Philocratem fratrem epistola*. Mnemosyne, xx. 1892, pp. 252-72.

§ 8. EDITIONS.

The earliest edition of Aristeas appeared in the form of a Latin translation by Matthias Palmerius which was published at Rome in 1471 in the famous Roman Bible of Sueynheim and Pannartz, reprinted at Nürnberg 1475, and issued separately at Erfurt 1483. The *Editio princeps* in Greek was issued by Simon Schard at Basle in 1561. Upon what MSS. Schard's edition rested, is

INTRODUCTION

a matter of dispute. We know that Codex Basileensis O. iv. 10 (R) was presented to the library at Basle by Schard, but we may be certain that he did not use it as the basis of his text. R is a transcript of Vaticanus 383 (K), and it is from this MSS. that Schard's *variae lectiones* were taken. Wendland thinks that the text was derived from Codex Monacensis 9.

Up till 1870 all editions were simply reprints of Schard, e.g. the text prefixed by Hody to his *De Bibliorum Textibus* in 1705, or the text in Havercamp's *Josephus*, or in Gallandi's *Bibliotheca Patrum* (ii. 773-804).

The modern study of Aristeas began with the publication of Schmidt's new text, which was published in Merx' *Archiv für wissenschaftl. Erforschung des Alten Testaments*, vol. i (1870), pp. 241-312. Schmidt collated and used the two Paris MSS. known as B and C. In the same year a valuable contribution was made to the subject by Prof. Lumbroso, who examined the text of Aristeas in the light of the Papyri and published his results in his *Recherches sur l'économie politique de l'Égypte sous les Lagides* (Turin, 1870). His critical study and his emendations have already been mentioned (Introduction, § 7). Some twenty-five years later Mendelssohn of Dorpat undertook the task of examining and collating the MSS. with a view to the construction of a scientific text. He only lived, however, to complete the text of §§ 1-51, which was published in 1897 under the title *Aristeae quae fertur ad Philocratem epistulae initium*. The work which he left unfinished was taken up by Wendland in Germany and Thackeray in England, whose texts were published in 1900 (see Introduction, § 7).

Little has been done at present in the way of commentary. The Epistle is still very largely virgin soil. The absence of a proper text, and the difficulty of looking up references, since the text was not broken up into sections till Wendland's edition, together with the general neglect of the study of non-canonical Jewish literature until the recent revival, have left, what is from many points of view a most valuable document, in obscurity.

The only good translations are Wendland's in German (Kautzsch ii. 1-30) and Thackeray's in English (*JQR* xv. 337-91). I regret that I did not discover the latter till my own translation was complete, but I have found it extremely helpful in revision, and I have made very considerable use of the footnotes, which are more extensive than those in Kautzsch.

With regard to the general literature on the Epistle, there is not very much to be said. The best account of the book (apart from the introductions in Kautzsch and Thackeray) is in Schürer, *ET* ii. 3. 306-17, where a full account is given of the older literature, and in Drummond, *Philo*, i. pp. 230-42. The only important monographs are Kurz, *Aristeae epistula ad Philocraten*, Bern, 1872; Graetz, *Die Abfassungszeit des Pseudo-Aristeas* (*Monatsschr. für Gesch. und Wissensch. des Judenthums*, 1876, pp. 289 f., 337 f.); Papageorgios, *Ueber den Aristeasbrief*, München, 1880. References are found in many Jewish Histories and Introductions to the Old Testament, e.g. Nöldeke, Freudenthal, Ewald, Hitzig. Amongst the more recent discussions may be mentioned, the articles by L. Cohn on the relation between Aristeas and Philo in *Neue Jahrbücher für das klass. Alterth.* i (1898), 521 ff., and H. Willrich on the date in *Judaica*, Göttingen, 1900, pp. 111-30, and the references in Nestle's article on the 'Septuagint', *DBH* iv. 438 f., and in Swete's *Introduction to LXX*, pp. 10-20, 500-74, and Nestle's article on Aristeas in *Realencyclopädie*.

§ 9. THE INFLUENCE OF ARISTEAS ON LATER LITERATURE.

A complete *catena* of 'Testimonia' is printed in full in Wendland's edition of the text of Aristeas (pp. 87-166), to which some few addenda have been made by Nestle, *DBH* iv. 439. It will only be possible to mention the more important facts here.

A. Jewish Literature.

The earliest authority generally cited is Aristobulus. The relevant passages have already been quoted in Introduction § 3. See also note on § 30. The grounds for rejecting the genuineness of the fragments ascribed to Aristobulus by Eusebius are given by L. Cohn (*Neue Jahrbücher f. d. klass. Alterthum*, i. 8 (1895)) and Wendland (*Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, vii (1898), 447-9).

The use of Aristeas by Philo (*De Vita Mosis*, ii. 5-7) seems clearer, though this too has been denied by Cohn (ib. 1898, i. 521). Philo states that Philadelphus, 'the greatest of the Ptolemies,' in his anxiety to obtain a translation of the Jewish law, sent ambassadors to the Jewish High Priest, and requested him to select men to carry out his wish. The High Priest, thinking that Ptolemy's desire was due to divine inspiration, sent some of his most distinguished men to Alexandria. Upon their arrival the king feted them, and put questions to them to test their wisdom. Owing to the unhealthiness of the town, they were located on the island of Pharos, where the translation was

THE LETTER OF ARISTEAS

made. The principle which governed it was that the translators regarded themselves as μήτ' ἀφελεῖν τι μήτε προσθεῖναι ἢ μεταθεῖναι δυναμένους, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἰδέαν καὶ τὸν τύπον αὐτῶν διαφυλάττοντας (cf. Aristeas, § 311). There is no specific reference to the Epistle, and many of its salient features are omitted, but on the whole it seems probable that it formed the basis of Philo's statement.

With regard to Josephus there is no possibility of doubt. In *Antiq.* xii. 2 he gives us a running paraphrase of (a) §§ 9-81, (b) §§ 172-87, (c) §§ 201, 293, 294, (d) §§ 301-21. There is a specific reference to the book itself—ὡς τῷ βουλομένῳ τὰ κατὰ μέρος γινώσκει τῶν ἐν τῷ συμποσίῳ ζητηθέντων εἶναι μαθεῖν ἀναγνόντι τὸ Ἀρισταίου βιβλίον, ὃ συνέγραψε διὰ ταῦτα (§ 100 in the edition of Niese). It should be noted that Josephus always spells the name Ἀρισταῖος, instead of Ἀριστεάς. There are further references to the subject matter of the Epistle in *Antiq.* i. 10; *c. Apion.* ii. 44.

B. Christian.

There is no clear proof that Aristeas directly influenced the language of the New Testament, though there are a few interesting parallels.

(1) Aristeas § 177 (cf. § 158).

εὐχαριστῶ . . . τῷ θεῷ οὐκ ἔστι τὰ λόγια ταῦτα.

Romans iii. 2.

ἐπιστεύθησαν τὰ λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ.

Hebrews v. 12.

τὰ στοιχεῖα τῆς ἀρχῆς τῶν λογίων τοῦ θεοῦ.

(2) § 280.

θεοῦ σοὶ στέφανον δικαιοσύνης δέδοκός.

2 Tim. iv. 8.

ὁ τῆς δικαιοσύνης στέφανος.

This phrase also occurs in the Testaments of the Patriarchs (T. Levi viii. 2).

(3) §§ 140-1.

. . . ὁ τοῖς λοιποῖς οὐ πρόσκειται, . . . ἀλλ' εἰσὶν ἄνθρωποι βρωτῶν καὶ ποτῶν καὶ σκέπης. . . τοῖς δὲ παρ' ἡμῶν ἐν οὐδενὶ ταῦτα λελογίσται, περὶ δὲ τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ δυναστείας δι' ὅλον τοῦ ζῆν ἢ σκέψις αὐτοῖς ἐστιν.

Matt. vi. 31-3.

μὴ οὖν μεριμνήσητε λέγοντες τί φάγωμεν; ἢ τί πίωμεν; . . . πάντα γὰρ ταῦτα τὰ ἔθνη ἐπιζητοῦσιν. . . ζητεῖτε δὲ πρῶτον τὴν βασιλείαν . . .

(4) Compare also the argument of

with

§ 144.

You must not fall into the degrading idea that it was for the sake of mice and weasels that Moses drew up his laws. These ordinances were made for the sake of righteousness.

1 Cor. ix. 9.

Is it for the oxen that God careth, or saith he it altogether for our sake? Yea for our sake it was written.

The earliest reference to the translation of the LXX in Patristic literature is found in JUSTIN MARTYR (*Apol.* i. 31), who states that Philadelphus, wishing to obtain a copy of the Hebrew *prophets*, sent to King Herod for the Book. When it arrived, it was found to be unintelligible owing to the language, and Philadelphus sent a second request to the King to send translators.

In the anonymous *Cohortatio ad Graecos* 13 we find what is probably the first attempt to embellish the story. The seventy translators were separated, and placed in cells or huts and not allowed to have any communication with each other. Their translations, when compared, were found to be in complete agreement, without the slightest variation even of language. The writer adds that during a visit to Alexandria, he had been shown the tracks (τὰ ἵχνη) of the cells in which the translators worked.

The same legendary element is repeated in almost the same form by IRENAEUS (iii. 21, 2, quoted by Eusebius, *HE* v. 8. 11) and CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, *Stromateis* i. § 148.

TERTULLIAN (*Apolog.* c. 18) is the first writer to mention Aristaeus, as he calls him, by name, and his version is more sober, but he adds 'hodie apud Serapeum Ptolomaei bibliothecae cum ipsis Hebraicis litteris exhibentur'.

The long quotations from the Epistle in the *Praeparatio Evangelica* of Eusebius have already been mentioned (Introduction, § 7). Aristeas (Ἀρισταῖος) is described as ἀνὴρ λόγιος μὲν ἄλλως, οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ παρατυχὼν τοῖς πραχθεῖσι κατὰ τὸν δεύτερον Πτολεμαῖον (viii. 1. 8), and on one occasion the title of the book is given as Περὶ τῆς Ἑρμηνείας τοῦ τῶν Ἰουδαίων νόμου (ix. 38).

EPIPHANIUS (*De Mensuris et Ponderibus*, 3, p. 155) has a long account of the translation of the Hebrew Bible. Though he quotes Aristeas as his authority (ὡς ἐξέδωκεν Ἀρισταῖος ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ συντάγματι) there are many discrepancies. (1) He gives the number of the books in the Alexandrian

INTRODUCTION

library as 54,800 πλείω ἢ ἐλάσσω. (2) He says that the 72 translators were placed in 36 cells, and that their translations were found to be in absolute verbal agreement even in their additions and omissions. (3) He inserts two letters from Philadelphus to the teachers in Jerusalem, neither of which agrees with the letter to Eleazar in Aristeas, §§ 35 ff., and the second of which contains a quotation from Sirach xx. 30 = xli. 14 θησαυροῦ κεκρυμμένου . . . τίς ὠφέλεια ἐν ἀμφοτέροις; (4) He adds the information that it was 'the seventh year of Philadelphus more or less' when the translation was made. Draeseke maintains that Epiphanius drew his information from the lost chronicle of Justus of Tiberias.

JEROME (*Praef. in Pentateuch.* xxxviii, p. 181) takes a more sober view and rejects the story of the separate cells as being incompatible with the accounts of Aristeas and Josephus, 'nescio quis primus auctor septuaginta cellulas Alexandriae mendacio suo extruxerit . . . cum Aristeas . . . et multo post tempore Iosephus nihil tale retulerint, sed in una basilica congregatos contulisse scribant.'

The embellishments, however, appear again in the account which is given by Augustine of the origin of the LXX, *de Civ. Dei*, xviii. 42. For other 'Testimonia' see Wendland.

THE LETTER OF ARISTEAS

- 1 SINCE I have collected *material* for a memorable history of my visit to Eleazar the High priest of the Jews, and because you, Philocrates, as you lose no opportunity of reminding me, have set great store upon receiving an account of the motives and object of my mission, I have attempted to draw up a clear exposition of the matter for you, for I perceive that you possess a natural love of learning, 2 a *quality* which is the highest possession of man—to be constantly attempting ‘to add to his stock of knowledge and acquirements’ whether through the study of history or by actually participating in the events themselves. It is by this means, by taking up into itself the noblest elements, that the soul is established in purity, and having fixed its aim on piety, the noblest goal of all, it uses this as its infallible guide and so acquires a definite purpose.
- 3 It was my devotion to the pursuit of religious knowledge that led me to undertake the embassy to the man I have mentioned, who was held in the highest esteem by his own citizens and by others both for his virtue and his majesty and who had in his possession *documents* of the highest value to the Jews in his own country and in foreign lands for the interpretation of the divine law, for their 4 laws are written on leather parchments in Jewish characters. This *embassy* then I undertook with enthusiasm, having first of all found an opportunity of *pleading* with the king on behalf of the Jewish captives who had been transported from Judea to Egypt by the king’s father, when he first obtained possession of this city and conquered the land of Egypt. It is worth while that I should tell 5 you this story, too, since I am convinced that you, with your disposition towards holiness and your sympathy with men who are living in accordance with the holy law, will all the more readily listen to the account which I purpose to set forth, since you yourself have lately come to us from the 6 island and are anxious to hear everything that tends to build up the soul. On a former occasion,

1. Since I have collected. Ἀξιολόγου διηγήσεως . . . συνεσταμένης. Thackeray renders ‘As the story of our interview . . . is a remarkable one’—but this does not bring out the full force of συνεσταμένης.

as you lose no opportunity, &c. This translation is based on an emendation of Wendland, who reads παρ’ ἑκάστα ὑπομνήσκων for the MSS. παρ’ ἑκάστα ὑπομνήσκων which is untranslatable.

2. to add to his stock of knowledge. As Thackeray points out, ‘these words form an iambic line in Greek and are probably a quotation from a lost tragedy.’ He quotes two fragments from Sophocles which convey a similar idea: ‘And we must ever be daily acquiring knowledge while it is possible to learn better things,’ and ‘Ever desire to add something useful to thy knowledge’. (Frag. 779 and 662 in Dindorf, *Poetae Scenici Graeci*) JQR xv, p. 341.

and so acquires a definite purpose. This rendering follows the text of Thackeray. Wendland connects τὴν προαίρεσιν with the following sentence. The translation in this case would be, ‘Having fixed its aim on piety . . . it directs its course by an infallible rule. It was my determination to make a careful study of things divine that led me,’ &c.

3. Documents of the highest value. There is no word for ‘documents’ in the Greek, which reads κατακεκτημένων μεγίστην ὠφέλειαν. I have adopted the rendering of Wendland and Thackeray though with some hesitation. Possibly we should translate more simply ‘who had acquired the power of rendering the greatest benefits to the Jews by his interpretation of the divine law.’

for the interpretation. Thackeray disagreeing with Wendland connects this phrase with the following clause which he translates ‘the object of our mission was the translation of the law of God’.

4. This embassy then I undertook, ἣν δὲ καὶ ἐποιήσαμεθα ἡμεῖς σπουδῇ. Mendelssohn emends by reading σπουδῇ on the ground that it is difficult to supply πρεσβείαν as an antecedent, owing to the distance which separates it from the relative, and Thackeray following this suggestion translates ‘And the interest which we displayed when an opportunity offered itself, in bringing before the king the case of the men . . . this also is worth while my telling thee’.

transported . . . by the king’s father. Ptolemy I (Lagus) 322–285 B.C. ‘When Ptolemy had succeeded to the throne of Egypt and had beaten off the attack of Perdikkas, he forthwith made an invasion into Palestine and Syria and annexed all the country. When driven out of it by Antigonos, we hear that he carried off to Egypt a large number of the inhabitants either as slaves or as compulsory settlers. And this happened apparently four times. He always retreated in time to carry his booty with him. But in spite of these repeated raids or temporary occupations and this repeated carrying off of plunder from Palestine, we are persistently informed that the house of Ptolemy was most popular with the Jews.’ (Mahaffy, *EP*, p. 87.)

5. from the island. This is generally supposed to refer to Pharos, but it is difficult to see how Philocrates could have been in ignorance of the events recorded in the Epistle if he had been living so near to Alexandria as Pharos, especially as the translation of the LXX was made on the island, § 301. Possibly Cyprus is meant; cf. Swete (*Introd. to LXX*, p. 10, footnote), who draws an inference that Aristeas himself may have been a Cypriote.

too, I sent you a record of the facts which I thought worth relating about the Jewish race,—the record
 7 which I had obtained from the most learned high priests of the † most learned † land of Egypt. As you
 are so eager to acquire the knowledge of those things which can benefit the mind, I feel it incumbent
 upon me to impart to you *all the information in my power*. I should feel the same duty towards all
 who possessed the same disposition but I feel it especially towards you since you have aspirations
 which are so noble, and since you are not only my brother in character no less than in blood
 8 but are one with me as well in the pursuit of goodness. For neither the pleasure derived from gold
 nor any other of the possessions which are prized by shallow minds confers the same benefit as the
 pursuit of culture and the study which we expend in securing it. But that I may not weary you by
 a too lengthy introduction, I will proceed at once to the substance of my narrative.

9 Demetrius of Phalerum, the president of the king's library, received vast sums of money, for the
 purpose of collecting together, as far as he possibly could, all the books in the world. By means of
 purchase and transcription, he carried out, to the best of his ability, the purpose of the king. On
 one occasion when I was present he was asked, How many thousand books are there *in the library*?
 10 and he replied, 'More than two hundred thousand, O king, and I shall make endeavour in the
 immediate future to *gather together* the remainder also, so that the total of five hundred thousand
 may be reached. I am told that the laws of the Jews are worth transcribing and deserve a place in
 11 your library.' 'What is to prevent you from doing this?' replied the king. 'Everything that is
 necessary has been placed at your disposal.' 'They need to be translated,' answered Demetrius,
 'for in the country of the Jews they use a peculiar alphabet (just as the Egyptians, too, have
 a special form of letters) and speak a peculiar dialect. They are supposed to use the Syriac
 tongue, but this is not the case; their language is quite different.' And the king when he under-
 stood all the facts of the case ordered a letter to be written to the Jewish High Priest that his
 purpose (which has already been described) might be accomplished.

12 Thinking that the time had come to press the demand, which I had often laid before Sosibius
 of Tarentum and Andreas, the chief of the bodyguard, for the emancipation of the Jews who had
 been transported from Judea by the king's father—for when by a combination of good fortune and
 courage he had brought his attack on the whole district of Coele-Syria and Phoenicia to a successful

6. *I sent you a record*. This seems to be an attempt on the part of the author to identify himself with the historian
 Aristeas, the writer of a book called *Περὶ Ἰουδαίων* referred to in Eusebius, *Præpar. Evang.* ix. 25. The fragment of
 this Aristeas quoted by Eusebius is taken from the treatise of Alexander Polyhistor, who is dated c. 50 B.C. Aristeas
 himself belongs probably to the second century B.C. If there is any reference to this Aristeas here, this date would
 constitute a *terminus a quo* for our Epistle. It is quite possible, however, that the Author of the Epistle is
 referring to another book written by himself which has been lost.

the most learned land, *λογιωτάτην* probably a textual corruption accidentally introduced from the following
 phrase *λογιωτάτων ἀρχιερέων*.

9. *Demetrius of Phalerum*. The facts known about Demetrius are as follows:—About the year 307 B.C. he was
 driven out of Athens, where he had ruled for ten years as deputy for Cassander, by Demetrius the Besieger. He was
 persuaded by Ptolemy I, who happened to be visiting Greece at the time, to migrate to Alexandria, where he was
 afterwards associated with the Museum. At the end of the reign of Ptolemy I he fell into disfavour because he
 opposed the king's desire to make his youngest son Philadelphus successor to the throne, and advocated the claims
 of the eldest son Keraunos, who possessed the right of primogeniture. As a result Demetrius was sent into exile and
 died soon afterwards from the bite of an asp (c. 283 B.C.). The fact and date of the exile seem to be substantiated by
 the statements of Plutarch (*de Exil.* p. 602), Diogenes Laertius (v. 78), and Cicero (*pro Rabir. Post.* 9), which have
 behind them the authority of Hermippus Callimachus, who lived under the third and fourth Ptolemies. The statements
 of Aristeas must therefore be regarded as an anachronism, since Demetrius could not possibly have exercised any
 influence over Philadelphus. Moreover, we know from the investigations of Busch (*de bibliothecariis Alexandrinis*,
 p. 1 ff.) that the office of librarian under Philadelphus was held first by Zenodotus of Ephesus and then by Erastosthenes.
 It is possible, however, as Swete suggests, that the project of translating the Jewish law may have been mooted by
 Demetrius in the time of Ptolemy I, though it was not carried out till the reign of his successor (see Swete, *Introd. to*
LXX, p. 19; *JQR*, Jan. 1902, p. 338; Ostermann, *de Demetrii Ph. vita* (1857), Susemihl, *Geschichte der griechischen*
Litteratur in der Alexandrinerzeit I, p. 6, 138).

10. *above two hundred thousand*. Epiphanius gives the number of the books as 54,800 *πλείω ἢ ἑλάσσω*.

11. *speak a peculiar dialect*, i.e. Aramaic.

12. *his attack on Coele-Syria*. The reference is probably to Ptolemy I's second campaign against Syria and
 Palestine which culminated in the battle of Gaza (312 B.C.). The fragments of Hecataeus in Josephus (*con. Ap.* i. 186),
 which though disputed are probably genuine, confirm the statements of Aristeas and may have been the source from
 which they were taken. Hecataeus (see Note on § 31) says, 'Ptolemy got possession of many places in Syria after the
 battle of Gaza, and many, when they heard of Ptolemy's moderation and humanity, they went along with him to Egypt
 and were willing to assist him in his affairs.' The impression given by this fragment is that the action of Ptolemy's
 army was much less drastic than is represented in Aristeas. The presence of large settlements of Jews in Egypt at
 this time, though denied by Willrich, seems to be abundantly proved by the Papyri. A village named Samareia
 in the Fayyum is mentioned more than once in the Petrie collection of Papyri. There was a Jewish colony at Psenuris
 (cf. *P.P.* 1. 43 *παρα τῶν Ἰουδαίων καὶ τῶν Ἑλλήνων*, in which mention is also made of Jewish slaves). For further evidence
 see Mahaffy, *The Ptolemaic Dynasty*, p. 93.

issue, in the process of terrorising the country into subjection, he transported some of his foes and others he reduced to captivity. The number of those whom he transported from the country of the Jews to Egypt amounted to no less than a hundred thousand. Of these he armed thirty thousand picked men and settled them in garrisons in the country districts. (And even before this time large numbers of Jews had come into Egypt with the Persian, and in an earlier period still others had been sent to Egypt to help Psammetichus in his campaign against the king of the Ethiopians. But these were nothing like so numerous as the captives whom Ptolemy the son of Lagus transported.)

13 As I have already said Ptolemy picked out the best of these, the men who were in the prime of life and distinguished for their courage, and armed them, but the great mass of the others, those who were too old or too young for this purpose, and the women too, he reduced to slavery, not that he wished to do this of his own free will, but he was compelled by his soldiers who claimed them as a reward for the services which they had rendered in war.

Having, as has already been stated, obtained an opportunity for securing their emancipation, I addressed the king with the following arguments. 'Let us not be so unreasonable as to allow our deeds to give the lie to our words. Since the law which we wish not only to transcribe but also to translate belongs to the whole Jewish race, what justification shall we be able to find for our embassy while such vast numbers of them remain in a state of slavery in your kingdom? In the perfection and wealth of your clemency release those who are held in such miserable bondage, since as I have been at pains to discover, the God who gave them their law is the God who maintains your kingdom. They worship the same God—the Lord and Creator of the Universe, as all other men, as we ourselves, O king, though we call him by different names, such as Zeus or Dis. This name was very appropriately bestowed upon him by our first ancestors, in order to signify that He through whom all things are endowed with life and come into being, is necessarily the ruler and lord of the Universe. Set all mankind an example of magnanimity by releasing those who are held in bondage.'

14 After a brief interval, while I was offering up an earnest prayer to God that He would so dispose the mind of the king that all the captives might be set at liberty—for the human race, being the creation of God, is swayed and influenced by Him. Therefore with many divers prayers I called upon Him who ruleth the heart that the king might be constrained to grant my request. For I had great hopes with regard to the salvation of the men since I was assured that God would grant a fulfilment of my prayer. For when men from pure motives plan some action in the interest of righteousness and the performance of noble deeds, Almighty God brings their efforts and purposes to a successful issue—the king raised his head and looking up at me with a cheerful countenance asked, 'How many thousands do you think they will number?' Andreas, who was standing near, replied, 'A little more than a hundred thousand.' 'It is a small boon indeed,' said the king, 'that Aristeas asks of us!' Then Sosibius and some others who were present said, 'Yes, but it will be a fit tribute to your magnanimity for you to offer the enfranchisement of these men as an act of devotion to the supreme God. You have been greatly honoured by Almighty God and exalted above all your forefathers in glory and it is only fitting that you should render to Him the greatest thankoffering in your power.' Extremely pleased with these arguments he gave orders that an addition should be made to the wages of the soldiers by the amount of the redemption money, that twenty drachmae should be paid to the owners for every slave, that a public order should be issued and that registers of the captives should be attached to it. He showed the greatest enthusiasm in the business, for it was God who had brought our purpose to fulfilment in its entirety and constrained him to redeem not only those who had come into Egypt with the army of his father but any who had come before that time

13. **The Persian.** The reference seems to be to Cambyses who conquered Egypt in 525 B.C. Wendland thinks that this statement is due to a misunderstanding of Hecataeus who says, 'the Persians formerly carried away many ten thousands of our people to Babylon as also not a few ten thousands were removed after Alexander's death into Egypt and Phoenicia'.

Psammetichus. We know from Herodotus (II. 151, fol.) that Psammetichus I (c. 671-617 B.C.) was the first Egyptian king to employ Greek mercenaries and that Psammetichus II, who became king in 595 B.C., carried on a campaign against the Aethiopians (Her. II. 159-61), but we have no evidence to connect the Jewish people with either. Wendland thinks the allusion a pure fiction.

16. **Zeus or Dis.** The two accusative forms of *Zeús*, viz. *Zēna* and *Δία*, are here used, and it is difficult to translate them as the nominative of the second form is obsolete. They are derived by Aristeas, as by the Stoics and Orphic writers, from *ζῆν* (to live) and *διά* (through) respectively. Compare the statement of Aristobulus (quoted by Eusebius, *Praep. Evang.* xiii. 12. 7) *καθὼς δὲ δεῖ σεσημάκαμεν περὶ αὐτῶν τὸν διὰ τῶν ποιημάτων Δία καὶ Ζήνα*. For a similar comparison between Jehovah and Zeus see Diodor. Sic. i. 12. 2, who probably derived the idea from Hecataeus.

18. **I had great hopes, &c.** This rendering follows the suggestion of Mendelssohn who supplies *τῶν* before *ἀνθρώπων*. Otherwise we must translate with Thackeray, 'I had a good hope in bringing forward a proposal concerning the deliverance of men.' The phrase *προτιθέμενος λόγον* may mean either 'bringing forward a proposal' or 'giving a reason to oneself'—'assuring oneself'.

or had been subsequently brought into the kingdom. It was pointed out to him that the ransom money would exceed four hundred talents.

- 21 I think it will be useful to insert a copy of the decree, for in this way the magnanimity of the king, who was empowered by God to save such vast multitudes, will be made clearer and more
22 manifest. The decree of the king ran as follows: 'All who served in the army of our father in the campaign against Syria and Phoenicia and in the attack upon the country of the Jews and became possessed of Jewish captives and brought them back to the city of *Alexandria* and the land of *Egypt* or sold them to others—and in the same way any captives who were in our land before that time or were brought hither afterwards—all who possess such captives are required to set them at liberty at once, receiving twenty drachmae per head as ransom money. The soldiers will receive
23 this money as a gift added to their wages, the others from the king's treasury. We think that it was against our father's will and against all propriety that they should have been made captives and that the devastation of their land and the transportation of the Jews to Egypt was an act of military wantonness. The spoil which fell to the soldiers on the field of *battle* was all the booty which they should have claimed. To reduce the people to slavery in addition was an act of
24 absolute injustice. Wherefore since it is acknowledged that we are accustomed to render justice to all men and especially to those who are unfairly in a condition of servitude, and since we strive to deal fairly with all men according to the demands of justice and piety, we have decreed, in reference to the persons of the Jews who are in any condition of bondage in any part of our dominion, that those who possess them shall receive the stipulated sum of money and set them at liberty and that no man shall show any tardiness in discharging his obligations. Within three days after the publication of this decree, they must make lists of *slaves* for the officers appointed to carry out our will,
25 and immediately produce the persons of *the captives*. For we consider that it will be advantageous to us and to our affairs that the matter should be brought to a conclusion. Any one who likes may give information about any who disobey the decree, on condition that if the man is proved guilty he will become his slave; his property, however, will be handed over to the royal treasury.'
- 26 When the decree was brought to be read over to the king for his approval, it contained all the other provisions except the phrase 'any captives who were in the land before that time or were brought hither afterwards,' and in his magnanimity and the largeness of his heart the king inserted this clause and gave orders that the grant of money required for the redemption should be deposited in full with the paymasters of the forces and the royal bankers, and so the matter was decided and the
27 decree ratified within seven days. The grant for the redemption amounted to more than six hundred and sixty talents; for many infants at the breast were emancipated together with their mothers. When the question was raised whether the sum of twenty talents was to be paid for these, the king ordered that it should be done, and thus he carried out his decision in the most comprehensive way.
- 28 When this had been done, he ordered Demetrius to draw up a memorial with regard to the transcription of the Jewish books. For all affairs of state used to be carried out by means of decrees and with the most painstaking accuracy by these *Egyptian* kings, and nothing was done in a slipshod or haphazard fashion. And so I have inserted copies of the memorial and the letters, the number of the presents sent and the nature of each, since every one of them excelled in
29 magnificence and technical skill. The following is a copy of the memorial. *The Memorial* of Demetrius to the great king. 'Since you have given me instructions, O king, that the books which are needed to complete your library should be collected together, and that those which are defective should be repaired, I have devoted myself with the utmost care to the fulfilment of your wishes,

20. **four hundred talents.** In § 19 the number of captives is given as a 'little more than 100,000'. The redemption money at 20 drachmae a piece comes to 2,000,000 drachmae or 333½ talents. Thus 66½ talents are allowed for the redemption of the captives, whose release was provided for by the additional clause. The number was therefore estimated at 20,000, making a total of 120,000 slaves to be emancipated. This estimate was greatly exceeded, see § 27.

27. **six hundred and sixty talents.** The estimate of 400 talents (§ 20) was found to be considerably below the mark; 660 talents provided ransom for 198,000 captives. It is difficult to account for the additional 78,000. The children could not possibly have reached that number. We must either assume that the mothers had been omitted in the previous estimate or follow Wendland in supposing that Aristeas has grossly exaggerated the total. The estimate of Josephus, i.e. 460 talents, is much more probable. This makes the total number of captives 138,000, and the number of children therefore 18,000, a much more reasonable figure. Possibly, however, the difference between the 460 of Josephus and the 660 of Aristeas is due to a copyist's blunder in the case of the latter.

28. **used to be carried out.** This phrase indicates that the Epistle belongs to a later date than the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus. Cp. also § 182. Graetz thinks that it proves that the Epistle was written after the fall of the Ptolemaic dynasty.

29. **which are defective.** The Greek words *ἵνα . . . τὰ διαπεπρωκτότα τύχη τῆς προσηκούσης ἐπισκευῆς* might mean 'that those which have been lost shall be duly replaced' (Thackeray). The translation given above is supported by Gifford, Eusebius, *Praep. Evang.* viii. 3.

- 30 and I now have the following proposal to lay before you. The books of the law of the Jews (with some few others) are absent *from the library*. They are written in the Hebrew characters and language and have been carelessly interpreted, and do not represent the original text as I am
 31 informed by those who know; for they have never had a king's care to protect them. It is necessary that these should be made accurate for your library since the law which they contain, in as much as it is of divine origin, is full of wisdom and free from all blemish. For this reason literary men and poets and the mass of historical writers have held aloof from referring to these books and the men who have lived †and are living† in accordance with them, because their
 32 conception of life is so sacred and religious, as Hecataeus of Abdera says. If it please you, O king, a letter shall be written to the High Priest in Jerusalem, asking him to send six elders out of every tribe—men who have lived the noblest life and are most skilled in their law—that we may find out the points in which the majority of them are in agreement, and so having obtained an accurate translation may place it in a conspicuous place in a manner worthy of the work itself and your purpose. May continual prosperity be yours!'
 33 When this memorial had been presented, the king ordered a letter to be written to Eleazar on the matter, giving also an account of the emancipation of the *Jewish* captives. And he gave fifty talents weight of gold and seventy talents of silver and a large quantity of precious stones to make bowls and vials and a table and libation cups. He also gave orders to those who had the custody of his coffers to allow the artificers to make a selection of any materials they might require for the purpose, and that a hundred talents in money should be sent to provide sacrifices for the temple and
 34 for other needs. I shall give you a full account of the workmanship after I have set before you copies of the letters. The letter of the king ran as follows:
 35 'King Ptolemy sends greeting and salutation to the High Priest Eleazar. Since there are many Jews settled in our realm who were carried off from Jerusalem by the Persians at the time of their
 36 power and many more who came with my father into Egypt as captives—large numbers of these he placed in the army and paid them higher wages than usual, and when he had proved the loyalty of their leaders he built fortresses and placed them in their charge that the native Egyptians might be

30. **The books of the law.** There is no article before 'books' in the MSS., though most editors insert or supply it. Thackeray omits and translates 'certain books of the Jewish law'.

carelessly interpreted. The exact force of *σείσημανται* is uncertain. If we translate 'interpreted' it involves the supposition that an earlier, though imperfect, translation of the law into Greek was in existence. This hypothesis is supported by the statement of Aristobulus, *διηγήνεται δὲ πρὸς Δημητρίου ὑφ' ἑτέρου [ν. λ. δι' ἑτέρων] πρὸς τῆς Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ Περσῶν ἐπικρατήσεως, τὰ τε κατὰ τὴν ἐξ Αἰγύπτου ἐξαγωγήν τῶν Ἑβραίων τῶν ἡμετέρων πολιτῶν καὶ ἡ τῶν γεγονότων ἀπάντων αὐτοῖς ἐπιφάνεια καὶ κράτησις τῆς χώρας καὶ τῆς ὅλης νομοθεσίας ἐπεξηγήσις.* (Swete, *Introd.* to LXX, 1, 2), cp. also the reference to earlier and unreliable translations in § 314. The term *σείσημανται* need not, however, imply translation. It may simply mean 'copied' or 'committed to writing' (cp. Plutarch, *Moral.* 204 Ε τὰ μὲν πρῶτα τῶν ὀνομάτων γράμμασι *ἰσήμανεν*), or as Diels suggests 'vocalized'.

31. **have lived and †are living†:** *τῶν κατ' αὐτὰ πεπολιτευμένων καὶ πολιτευομένων ἀνδρῶν.* Wendland and Thackeray obelise the words *καὶ πολιτευομένων* as a later addition, since they are omitted in Eusebius and Josephus. The explanation given here of the absence of any reference to the Jewish Scriptures in Greek literature is further elaborated in §§ 312-316.

Hecataeus of Abdera lived in the time of Alexander the Great and Ptolemy I, and wrote a history of Egypt, which probably contained many references to Jewish History. He is credited by Josephus (*c. Apion.* 22) with being the author of a special history of the Jews, which most modern authorities regard as a later forgery, worked up from the material obtained from the History of Egypt (see Schürer, ii, 3, p. 302 *ET*). Wendland holds that Aristeas used not the later Pseudo-Hecataeus but the genuine 'History of Egypt'. His conclusion is based on numerous resemblances which he finds between Aristeas and the statements of Didorus Siculus, who used Hecataeus as his main authority in his first book. Whether the quotations in Josephus (*c. Apion.*) came from the genuine or the pseudo-Hecataeus is more difficult to decide.

32. **If it please you:** *ἐὰν οὖν φαίνηται*, a later formula as Thackeray has shown by an examination of the Papyri (*JQR* xv, 348). In the early Ptolemaic period we find the classical formula *εἰ σοι δοκεῖ* or *ἐὰν σοι δοκῇ* in general use. Between 252 B.C. and 163 B.C. *ἐὰν σοι φαίνηται* is generally substituted for the earlier form. From 163 B.C. to 70 B.C. the pronoun is generally omitted and the phrase is used as in Aristeas. There is no instance, however, of the omission of the pronoun in the Papyri before 163 B.C. These facts seem to indicate that our book must be later than this date.

in a conspicuous place. The meaning of the Greek *θῶμεν εὐσήμεως* is uncertain. The rendering given above is that of Thackeray and Gifford (Eusebius, *Praef. Evang.* viii. 3) and refers of course to the library at Alexandria, though it is difficult to see why the idea is not conveyed in plainer terms. The words might mean 'that we may place it on record in seemly fashion' or 'make the meaning plain'.

continual prosperity, εὐδύχει, the regular salutation used by a subordinate to his superior. The formula for addressing an equal or a subordinate is *ἔρρωσο* (see Mahaffy, *Petrie Papyri*, 1891, 80), which is the word used by Ptolemy and Eleazar in their correspondence with each other, §§ 40, 46.

36. **when he had proved the loyalty, &c.:** *ὁμῶς δὲ καὶ τοὺς προόντας.* This rendering is supported by Gifford, Eusebius, *Praef. Evang.* viii. 3. Thackeray, however, takes *τοὺς προόντας* to mean 'those who were already in the country'—'in like manner from his confidence in those who were already in the country he placed under their charge' [i.e. under the charge of the newly imported Jews], &c.

might be intimidated. The MSS. of Aristeas read *ὅπως τὸ τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ἔθνος φόβου μὴ ἔχῃ*, 'that native Egyptians might be free from fear.' Both Josephus and Eusebius, however, omit *μὴ*, and most modern editors follow them.'

intimidated by them. And I, when I ascended the throne, adopted a kindly attitude towards all
 37 my subjects, and more particularly to those who were citizens of yours—I have set at liberty more
 than a hundred thousand captives, paying their owners the appropriate market price for them, and
 if ever evil has been done to your people through the passions of the mob, I have made them
 reparation. The motive which prompted my action has been the desire to act piously and render
 unto the supreme God a thankoffering for maintaining my kingdom in peace and great glory in all
 the world. Moreover those of your people who were in the prime of life I have drafted into my
 army, and those who were fit to be attached to my person and worthy of the confidence of the
 38 court, I have established in official positions. Now since I am anxious to show my gratitude to
 these men and to the Jews throughout the world and to the generations yet to come, I have
 determined that your law shall be translated from the Hebrew tongue which is in use amongst you
 39 into the Greek language, that these books may be added to the other royal books in my library. It
 will be a kindness on your part and a reward for my zeal if you will select six elders from each of
 your tribes, men of noble life and skilled in your law and able to interpret it, that *in questions of*
dispute we may be able to discover the verdict in which the majority agree, for the investigation is
 of the highest possible importance. I hope to win great renown by the accomplishment of this
 40 work. I have sent Andreas, the chief of my bodyguard, and Aristeas—men whom I hold in high
 esteem—to lay the matter before you and present you with a hundred talents of silver, the firstfruits
 of my offering for the temple and the sacrifices and other religious rites. If you will write to me
 concerning your wishes in these matters, you will confer a great favour upon me and afford me
 a new pledge of friendship, for all your wishes shall be carried out as speedily as possible. Farewell.
 41 To this letter Eleazar replied appropriately as follows: 'Eleazar the High priest sends greetings
 to King Ptolemy his true friend. My highest wishes are for your welfare and the welfare of Queen
 Arsinoe your sister and your children. I also am well. I have received your letter and am greatly
 42 rejoiced by your purpose and your noble counsel. I summoned together the whole people and
 read it to them that they might know of your devotion to our God. I showed them too the cups
 which you sent, twenty of gold and thirty of silver, the five bowls and the table of dedication, and
 the hundred talents of silver for the offering of the sacrifices and providing the things of which the
 43 temple stands in need. These gifts were brought to me by Andreas, one of your most honoured
 servants, and by Aristeas, both good men and true, distinguished by their learning, and worthy in
 every way to be the representatives of your high principles and righteous purposes. These men
 imparted to me your message and received from me an answer in agreement with your letter.
 44 I will consent to everything which is advantageous to you even though your request is very

40. **Andreas chief of the bodyguard.** Ἀνδρέαν τῶν ἀρχισωματοφυλάκων. Strack has proved that the plural form of ἀρχισωματοφύλαξ does not occur in the Papyri till 145 B.C. Jerome describes Aristeas as Ptolemaei ὑπερασπιστής (Praef. in Pent. xxviii, p. 181).

41. **replied appropriately.** There is some question as to the meaning of ἐνδεχομένως which I have rendered 'appropriately' (so too Gifford), cp. αἱ ἐνδεχόμεναι τιμωρίαι, Lycurg. 164. 38. The adverb, however, seems to be generally used as the equivalent of ὅσον ἐνδέχεται, 'as far as possible'. Wendland suggests 'so far as he could write Greek'. Diels would substitute ἐκδεχομένως = straightway. Josephus paraphrases ὡς ἐνῆν μάλιστα φιλοτίμως. Thackeray renders 'Eleazar wrote much as follows'.

Queen Arsinoe your sister. On the famous Mendes stele Arsinoe is described as 'the daughter, sister and great wife of a king who loves him, the divine Arsinoe Philadelphos'. Arsinoe was the daughter of Ptolemy I. She was first married about 301 B.C. to Lysimachus King of Thrace to whom she bore at least three children. After the death of Lysimachus, who was killed at the battle of Korupedion 281 B.C., she married Ptolemy Keraunos her half-brother who was endeavouring to secure the throne of Thrace. No sooner, however, had Keraunos got Arsinoe into his power than he murdered her children whom he regarded as his rivals, and banished her to Samothrace. Arsinoe was not content to remain quietly in exile but made her way to Egypt, where she succeeded in inducing Ptolemy Philadelphus to abandon his wife, her namesake and stepdaughter Arsinoe I, and marry her instead. Arsinoe's third marriage took place about 278 B.C. With regard to this type of Marriage Mahaffy remarks 'It is only in the researches of our own day that the Egyptian dogmas and sentiment in this matter have been duly examined and it is now clear that far from being a licence or an outrage, the marriage of full brother and sister was in the royal family of Egypt, the purest and most excellent of all marriages and the highest security that the sacred blood of kings was not polluted by inferior strains' (The Ptolemaic Dynasty, p. 77). Compare the statement of Maspero. 'The marriage of brother and sister was the marriage *par excellence*, and it contracted an unspeakable sanctity when this brother and sister were born of parents who stood in the same relation' (Annuaire de l'École des Hautes Études for 1896, p. 19, quoted by Mahaffy, p. 77). From the time of her marriage to her death in 270 B.C. Arsinoe held the highest possible place in popular esteem. 'She became a great figure not only in the Egyptian but in the Hellenistic world. Of no other queen do we find so many memorials in various parts of the Greek world.' (Mahaffy, p. 76.)

your children, Ptolemy Philadelphus and Arsinoe II had no children of their own, and this statement is often supposed to be another instance of Aristeas' mistakes. We know, however, that Arsinoe II adopted the children of her predecessor and the reference may be to these. Compare the statement of Theocritus in the scholia on the Encomium of Ptolemy II (Idyll. xviii) καὶ εἰσποιήσατο αὐτῇ τοὺς ἐκ τῆς προτέρας Ἀρσινόης γεννηθέντας παῖδας αὐτῇ γὰρ ἡ Ἀρσινόη ἀτεκνὸς ἀπέθανεν.

unusual. For you have bestowed upon our citizens great and never to be forgotten benefits in many
 45 (ways). Immediately therefore I offered sacrifices on behalf of you, your sister, your children, and
 your friends, and all the people prayed that your plans might prosper continually, and that
 Almighty God might preserve your kingdom in peace with honour, and that the translation of the
 46 holy law might prove advantageous to you and be carried out successfully. In the presence of all
 the people I selected six elders from each tribe, good men and true, and I have sent them to you
 with a copy of our law. It will be a kindness, O righteous king, if you will give instruction that
 as soon as the translation of the law is completed, the men shall be restored again to us in safety.
 Farewell.'

47 The following are the names of the elders: Of the first tribe, Joseph, Ezekiah, Zachariah, John,
 Ezekiah, Elisha. Of the second tribe, Judas, Simon, Samuel, Adaeus, Mattathias, Eschlemias. Of
 48 the third tribe, Nehemiah, Joseph, Theodosius, Baseas, Ornias, Dakis. Of the fourth tribe,
 Jonathan, Abraeus, Elisha, Ananias, Chabrias. . . . Of the fifth tribe, Isaac, Jacob, Jesus, Sab-
 49 bataeus, Simon, Levi. Of the sixth tribe, Judas, Joseph, Simon, Zacharias, Samuel, Selemias. Of
 the seventh tribe, Sabbataeus, Zedekiah, Jacob, Isaac, Jesias, Natthaeus. Of the eighth tribe,
 Theodosius, Jason, Jesus, Theodotus, John, Jonathan. Of the ninth tribe, Theophilus, Abraham,
 50 Arsamos, Jason, Endemias, Daniel. Of the tenth tribe, Jeremiah, Eleazar, Zachariah, Baneas,
 Elisha, Dathaeus. Of the eleventh tribe, Samuel, Joseph, Judas, Jonathes, Chabu, Dositheus. Of
 the twelfth tribe, Isaelus, John, Theodosius, Arsamos, Abietes, Ezekiel. They were seventy-two in
 all. Such was the answer which Eleazar and his friends gave to the king's letter.

51 I will now proceed to redeem my promise and give a description of the works of art. They were
 wrought with exceptional skill, for the king spared no expense and personally superintended the
 workmen individually. They could not therefore scamp any part of the work or finish it off negli-
 52 gently. First of all I will give you a description of the table. The king was anxious that this piece
 of work should be of exceptionally large dimensions, and he caused enquiries to be made of the Jews
 53 in the locality with regard to the size of the table already in the temple at Jerusalem. And when
 they described the measurements, he proceeded to ask whether he might make a larger structure.
 And some of the priests and the other Jews replied that there was nothing to prevent him. And he
 said that he was anxious to make it five times the size, but he hesitated lest it should prove useless
 54 for the temple services. He was desirous that his gift should not merely be stationed in the temple,
 for it would afford him much greater pleasure if the men whose duty it was to offer the fitting
 55 sacrifices were able to do so appropriately on the table which he had made. He did not suppose
 that it was owing to lack of gold that the former table had been made of small size, but there seems
 to have been, he said, some reason why it was made of this dimension. †For had the order been given,
 there would have been no lack of means†. Wherefore we must not transgress or go beyond the proper
 56 measure. At the same time he ordered them to press into service all the manifold forms of art, for
 he was a man of the most lofty conceptions and nature had endowed him with a keen imagination
 which enabled him to picture the appearance which would be presented by the finished work. He
 gave orders too, that where there were no instructions laid down in the Jewish Scriptures, everything
 should be made as beautiful as possible. When such instructions were laid down, they were to be
 carried out to the letter.

57 They made the table two cubits long (one cubit broad) one and a half cubits high, fashioning it of

44. unusual, lit. contrary to nature, *παρὰ φύσιν*. The translation of the Jewish law into a foreign language was regarded as contrary to nature.

in many ways. In the MSS. of Aristeas we read simply *κατὰ πολλούς*. Eusebius, however, adds *τρόπους*, which is the justification for the translation given above.

45. friends, a special court title, which came into prominence in the time of Ptolemy V. (205-182 B.C.). It occurs frequently on the Papyri of this period but is not found at an earlier date, though Strack thinks it may have occurred in some of the *lacunae* of the Papyri of Ptolemy IV (222-205 B.C.). We seem to have here another anachronism (Mahaffy, *Ptolemaic Dynasty*, p. 161), though as the title is apparently used in the O.T. (1 Kings, iv. 5) too much stress must not be laid upon this point.

48. The fifth and sixth names of the fourth tribe are given by Epiphanius, who uses Aristeas in his *De mens. et pond.* as Zacharias and Chelkias. Probably the Chabrias of Aristeas is a corruption.

50. For Chabu (*Χαβὺ*) Epiphanius reads Caleb, which seems obviously to be correct.

55. had the order been given: the text is corrupt at this point. The MSS. read *ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἐπὶ τὰ τῆς οὐσίας, οὐθέν ἂν ἐσπίνε*. This is difficult to translate, though it might perhaps be rendered 'Nothing would have been lacking for the present table'. It is better, however, to accept Mendelssohn's brilliant conjecture and substitute *ἐπιταγῆς* for *ἐπὶ τὰ τῆς*.

56. picture the appearance, *εἰς τὸ συνιδεῖν πραγμάτων ἔμφασιν*. This might also mean 'To design the appearance of objects'. The interest which Philadelphus took in art and architecture is well attested.

in the scriptures: the reference is to the instructions laid down in Exodus, xxv. 23, 24. The technical term for Scripture (*ἡ γραφή*) does not occur here—though it is found in §§ 155, 168. The phrases used here are *ὅσα δ' ἂν ἢ ἡγερέσθαι*, . . . *ὅσα δὲ διὰ γραπτῶν*, see note on § 168.

57. one cubit broad: these words are not in the MSS. of Aristeas but are found in Josephus and in Exodus xxv, 23. Wendland thinks that their omission here is purely accidental.

pure solid gold. What I am describing was not thin gold laid over another foundation, but the whole structure was of massive gold welded together. And they made a border of a hand's breadth round about it. And there was a wreath of wave-work, engraved in relief in the form of ropes marvellously wrought on its three sides. For it was triangular in shape and the style of the work was exactly the same on each of the sides, so that whichever side they were turned, they presented the same appearance. †Of the two sides under the border, the one which sloped down to the table was a very beautiful piece of work, but it was the outer side which attracted the gaze of the spectator†. Now the upper edge of the two sides, being elevated, was sharp since, as we have said, the rim was three-sided, †from whatever point of view one approached it†. And there were layers of precious stones on it in the midst of the embossed cord-work, and they were interwoven with one another by an inimitable artistic device. For the sake of security they were all fixed by golden needles which were inserted in perforations in the stones. At the sides they were clamped together by fastenings to hold them firm. On the part of the border round the table which slanted upwards and met the eyes, there was wrought a pattern of eggs in precious stones, †elaborately engraved† by a continuous piece of fluted relief-work, closely connected together round the whole table. And under the stones which had been arranged to represent eggs the artists made a crown containing all kinds of fruits, having at its top clusters of grapes and ears of corn, dates also and apples, and pomegranates and the like, conspicuously arranged. These fruits were wrought out of precious stones, of the same colour as the fruits themselves and they fastened them edgeways round all the sides of the table with a band of gold. And after the crown of fruit had been put on, underneath there was inserted another pattern of eggs in precious stones, and other fluting and embossed work, that both sides of the table might be used, according to the wishes of the owners and for this reason the wave-work and the border were extended down to the feet of the table. They made and fastened under the whole width of the table a massive plate four fingers thick, that the feet might be inserted into it, and clamped fast with linch-pins which fitted into sockets under the border, so that which ever side of the table people preferred, might be used. Thus it became manifestly clear that the work was intended to be used

massive gold welded together: lit. the plate of beaten metal was attached to it.

58. They made a border. The description of the table is an elaboration of the data in Exod. xxv. 23: 'Thou shalt make a table of acacia wood: two cubits shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold and make thereto a crown of gold round about. And thou shalt make a border of an handbreadth round about and thou shalt make a golden crown to the border thereof round about'. In the LXX as in Aristeas there is no mention of the foundation of acacia wood. The whole table is to be made χρυσήν χρυσίου καθαροῦ. The use of the LXX phrase στρεπτά κυμάτια is also significant. Either we have an anachronism. The table is supposed to be made according to the specifications of the LXX text which did not as yet exist. Or else the LXX translation was influenced by the table of Philadelphus, and the differences between it and the Hebrew were introduced to bring the new table more into accord with Scripture.

There is considerable difficulty with regard to the exact significance of the word translated border (ἡ, στεφάνη, κυμάτια στρεπτά). AV and RV render by 'crown', RV m. by 'rim or moulding'. The phrase κυμάτια στρεπτά suggests a cable moulding—and this is the interpretation which Aristeas puts upon it; (so also Josephus, τὸ ἑδαφος ἑλικος, a spiral). On the other hand 'the same phrase is used in architecture to denote an ogee moulding, and this is certainly the nature of the ornament on the table of the Arch of Titus. In any case both the sides and the ends of the massive top were separately decorated by a solid gold moulding which gave them the appearance of four panels sunk into the table', DBH iv. 663.

wreath of wavework: the meaning of this phrase, and indeed of the whole sentence, is very dubious. Thackeray translates 'They made . . . its ledges of twisted work' but suggests that the phrase may mean 'its mouldings (or rims) were made so as to revolve'.

59. It was triangular, ἦν γὰρ τρίγωνία. This cannot refer to the table, which had four legs and must have been oblong in shape. If the text is correct, it must refer to the border. Thackeray suggests that we ought to follow Josephus in reading τρίγωνα and translate 'the ledges were triangular in shape'.

whichever side they were turned: the meaning is very obscure. The words might be translated 'to which ever side a man turned himself, the same appearance met his eyes' (Wendland).

Of the two sides, &c. The text of this sentence is so corrupt that its meaning cannot be made out. I have followed the conjecture which substitutes κειμένω, for the κειμένον or κειμένης of the MSS. at the commencement of the sentence. Thackeray translates 'and while the ledge rested on the border that side of it which sloped towards the table was beautifully worked although the side which sloped outwards [alone] met the eye of the spectator'. Wendland renders 'Während aber die nach dem Tische gerichtete Seite der auf dem Rand aufliegenden [Leiste] ihre schöne Arbeit dem Anblick entzog, bot sich die äussere Seite den Blicken des Beschauers dar'.

62. elaborately engraved: the text ἐκτίπασιν ἔχουσα προσοχῆς is corrupt and we can only conjecture its meaning.

63. These fruits were wrought, lit. 'They worked the stones which had the colour of each species of the aforesaid fruits to resemble those fruits'.

with a band of gold, or 'they attached them to the gold all round the table' (Thackeray).

64. according to the wishes. We must follow Wendland and read αἰδῶνται for αἰσῶνται here and in the following section.

the wave work, &c. Thackeray translates this sentence 'with such symmetry that the ledges and the border reappeared on the side nearest the feet'.

65. Thus it became, &c. The meaning of the Greek is obscure. Thackeray renders 'This metal plate was visible on the surface as the work was constructed so as to be reversible'.

- 66 either way. On the table itself they engraved a 'maeander', having precious stones standing out in the middle of it, rubies and emeralds and an onyx too and many other kinds of stones which excel in beauty. And next to the 'maeander' there was placed a wonderful piece of network, which made the centre of the table appear like a rhomboid in shape, and on it a crystal and amber, as it is called, had been wrought, which produced an incomparable impression on the beholders. They made the feet of the table with heads like lilies, so that they seemed to be like lilies bending down beneath the table, and the parts which were visible represented leaves which stood upright. The basis of the foot on the ground consisted of a ruby and measured a hand's breadth *high* all round. It had the appearance of a shoe and was eight fingers broad. Upon it the whole expanse of the foot rested.
- 70 And they made *the foot appear like ivy* growing out of the stone, interwoven with *akanthus* and surrounded with a vine which encircled it with clusters of grapes, which were worked in stones, up to the top of the foot. All the four feet were made in the same style, and everything was wrought and fitted so skilfully, and such remarkable skill and knowledge were expended upon making it true to nature, that when the air was stirred by a breath of wind, movement was imparted to the leaves, and everything was fashioned to correspond with the actual reality *which it represented*. And they made the top of the table in three parts like a triptychon, and they were so fitted and dovetailed together with spigots along the whole breadth of the work, that the meeting of the joints could not be seen or even discovered. The thickness of the table was not less than half a cubit, so that the whole work must have cost many talents. For since the king did not wish to add to its size he expended on the details the same sum of money which would have been required if the table could have been of larger dimensions. And everything was completed in accordance with his plan, in a most wonderful and remarkable way, with inimitable art and incomparable beauty.
- 73 Of the mixing bowls, two were wrought (in gold), and from the base to the middle were engraved with relief work in the pattern of scales, and between the scales precious stones were inserted with great artistic skill. Then there was a 'maeander' a cubit in height, with its surface wrought out of precious stones of many colours, displaying great artistic effort and beauty. Upon this there was a mosaic, worked in the form of a rhombus, having a net-like appearance and reaching right up to the brim. In the middle, small shields which were made of different precious stones, placed alternately, and varying in kind, not less than four fingers broad, enhanced the beauty of their appearance. On the top of the brim there was an ornament of lilies in bloom, and intertwining clusters of grapes were engraved all round. Such then was the construction of the golden bowls, and they held more than two firkins each. The silver bowls had a smooth surface, and were wonderfully made as if they were intended for looking-glasses, so that everything which was brought near to them was reflected even more clearly than in mirrors. But it is impossible to describe the real impression which these works of art produced upon the mind when they were finished. For, when these vessels had been completed and placed side by side, first a silver bowl and then a golden, then another silver, and then another golden, the appearance they presented is altogether indescribable, and those who came to see them were not able to tear themselves from the brilliant sight and entrancing spectacle. The impressions produced by the spectacle were various in kind. When men looked at the golden vessels, and their minds made a complete survey of each detail of workmanship, their souls were thrilled with wonder. Again when a man wished to direct his gaze to the silver vessels, as they stood before him, everything seemed to flash with light round about the place where he was standing, and afforded a still greater delight to the onlookers. So that it is really impossible to describe the artistic beauty of the works.
- 79 The golden vials they engraved in the centre with vine wreaths. And about the rims they wove a wreath of ivy and myrtle and olive in relief work and inserted precious stones in it. The other parts of the relief work they wrought in different patterns, since they made it a point of honour to complete everything in a way worthy of the majesty of the king. In a word it may be said that neither in the king's treasury nor in any other, were there any works which equalled these in costliness or in artistic skill. For the king spent no little thought upon them, for he loved to gain glory for the excellence of his *designs*. For oftentimes he would neglect his official business, and spend his time with the artists in his anxiety that they should complete everything in a manner worthy of the place to which the gifts were to be sent. So everything was carried out on a grand scale, in a manner worthy of the king who sent the gifts and of the high priest who was the ruler of the land. There was no stint of precious stones, for not less than five thousand were used and they were all of large size.

69. *the whole expanse of the foot*, lit. 'the whole plate of the foot'. Thackeray renders 'upon this rested the whole plate into which the leg was inserted'.

71. *fitted and dovetailed*, lit. 'being fitted together by dove-tailing which was secured by pegs in the thickness of the structure' (Thackeray).

74. *with its surface*: we must read here with Wendland *ἐν ὑπεροχῇ* for *ἐνυπὸρχε*.

The most exceptional artistic skill was employed, so that the cost of the stones and the workmanship was five times as much as that of the gold.

- 83 I have given you this description of the presents because I thought it was necessary. The next point in the narrative is an account of our journey to Eleazar, but I will first of all give you a description of the whole country. When we arrived in the land of the Jews we saw the city situated in the middle of the whole of Judea on the top of a mountain of considerable altitude. On the summit the temple had been built in all its splendour. It was surrounded by three walls more than seventy cubits high and in length and breadth corresponding to the structure of the edifice. All the buildings were characterised by a magnificence and costliness quite unprecedented. It was obvious that no expense had been spared on the door and the fastenings, which connected it with the door-posts, and the stability of the lintel. The style of the curtain too was thoroughly in proportion to that of the entrance. Its fabric owing to the draught of wind was in perpetual motion, and as this motion was communicated from the bottom and the curtain bulged out to its highest extent, it afforded a pleasant spectacle from which a man could scarcely tear himself away. The construction of the altar was in keeping with the place itself and with the burnt offerings which were consumed by fire upon it, and the approach to it was on a similar scale. There was a *gradual* slope up to it, conveniently arranged for the purpose of decency, and the ministering priests were robed in linen garments, down to their ankles. The Temple faces the east and its back is toward the west. The whole of the floor is paved with stones and slopes down to the appointed places, that water may be conveyed to wash away the blood from the sacrifices, for many thousand beasts are sacrificed there on the feast days. And there is an inexhaustible supply of water, because an abundant natural spring gushes up from within the temple area. There are moreover wonderful and indescribable cisterns underground, as they pointed out to me, at a distance of five furlongs all round the site of the temple, and each of them has countless pipes so that the different streams converge together. And all these were fastened with lead at the bottom and at the sidewalls, and over them a great quantity of plaster had been spread, and every part of the work had been most carefully carried out. There are many openings for water at the base of the altar which are invisible to all except to those who are engaged in the ministration, so that all the blood of the sacrifices which is collected in great quantities is washed away in the twinkling of an eye. Such is my opinion with regard to the character of the reservoirs and I will now show you how it was confirmed. They led me more than four furlongs outside the city and bade me peer down towards a certain spot and listen to the noise that was made by the meeting of the waters, so that the great size of the reservoirs became manifest to me, as has already been pointed out.
- 92 The ministration of the priests is in every way unsurpassed both for its physical endurance and for its orderly and silent service. For they all work spontaneously, though it entails much painful exertion, and each one has a special task allotted to him. The service is carried on without interruption—some provide the wood, others the oil, others the fine wheat flour, others the spices; others again bring the pieces of flesh for the burnt offering, exhibiting a wonderful degree of strength. For they take up with both hands the limbs of a calf, each of them weighing more than two talents, and throw them with each hand in a wonderful way on to the high place of the altar and never miss placing them on the proper spot. In the same way the pieces of the sheep and also of the goats are wonderful both for their weight and their fatness. For those, whose business it is, always select the beasts which are without blemish and specially fat, and thus the sacrifice which I have described,

83. In the land of the Jews. Text corrupt.

86. in proportion to that of the entrance. Reading *θυρώσει*. Thackeray prefers the reading *θυρώσει* and translates 'The fashion of the curtain bore a very close resemblance to a door'.

the curtain bulged out. The text is uncertain and the meaning obscure. The MSS. read *κατὰ τὴν κόλπῳσιν μέχρι τῆς ἡνω διαστάσεως*. Schmidt conjectures *κατατείνειν* for *κατὰ*. Thackeray renders 'the swell extended to the upper and tauter part of the curtain'.

87. was in keeping. Following the conjecture of Mendelssohn *συμμέτρως ἔχουσιν*.

in linen garments. *βυσσίνους χιτῶσιν*, quoted from LXX of Ex. xxxvi. 35. See note § 228.

89. an abundant natural spring. This statement is supported by Tacitus, who speaks of a 'fons perennis aquae' (*Hist.* v. 12). There are objections, however, to the statement; (a) No trace of such a well has been discovered, (b) the system of aqueducts which brought water from a distance would have been unnecessary if such a spring had existed. These 'two facts or rather our present evidence for them are sufficient to make very doubtful the existence of a fountain within the Temple enclosure', G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem*, i. 85, 86.

wonderful . . . cisterns. Some thirty-six or thirty-seven of these remarkable reservoirs have been discovered and surveyed. Full lists and descriptions are given in *Recovery of Jerus.* 204 ff.; P. E. F. *Mém.* 'Jerus.' 217 ff.; P. E. F. 2. 1880; Schick, *Stiftshütte u. Tempel*, 292 ff. Speaking of their general characteristics, G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem*, i. 120, says: 'They may be distinguished into the smaller surface pits arched over, and probably not all originally cisterns; and the great deep basins hollowed out of the low-lying *meleki* rock, 30, 40, 50, and 60 feet deep (one of them 'the Great Sea' with a capacity of two million gallons) carefully cemented; their roofs of the harder upper *miszei* rock, occasionally supported by heavy piers of masonry; with channels of communication, passages for inspection and conduits for draining the water at different levels.'

90. fastened with lead, or 'had their bases and sides of lead'.

94 is carried out. There is a special place set apart for them to rest in, where those who are relieved from duty sit. When this takes place, those who have already rested and are ready to resume their duties rise up *spontaneously* since there is no one to give orders with regard to the arrangement of
95 the sacrifices. The most complete silence reigns so that one might imagine that there was not a single person present, though there are actually seven hundred men engaged in the work, besides the vast number of those who are occupied in bringing up the sacrifices. Everything is carried out with
96 reverence and in a way worthy of the great God.

We were greatly astonished, when we saw Eleazar engaged in the ministration, at the mode of his dress, and the majesty of his appearance, which was revealed in the robe which he wore and the precious stones upon his person. There were golden bells upon the garment which reached down to his feet, giving forth a peculiar kind of melody, and on both sides of them there were pomegranates
97 with variegated flowers of a wonderful hue. He was girded with a girdle of conspicuous beauty, woven in the most beautiful colours. On his breast he wore the oracle of God, as it is called, on which twelve stones, of different kinds, were inset, fastened together with gold, containing the names of the leaders of the tribes, according to their original order, each one flashing forth in an indescribable way
98 its own particular colour. On his head he wore a tiara, as it is called, and upon this in the middle of his forehead an inimitable turban, the royal diadem full of glory with the name of God inscribed in sacred letters on a plate of gold . . . having been judged worthy to wear these emblems in the
99 ministrations. Their appearance created such awe and confusion of mind as to make one feel that one had come into the presence of a man who belonged to a different world. I am convinced that any one who takes part in the spectacle which I have described will be filled with astonishment and indescribable wonder and be profoundly affected in his mind at the thought of the sanctity which is attached to each detail of the service.

100 But in order that we might gain complete information, we ascended to the summit of the neighbouring citadel and looked around us. It is situated in a very lofty spot, and is fortified with many towers, which have been built up to the very top of immense stones, with the object, as we were informed, of
101 guarding the temple precincts, so that if there were an attack, or an insurrection or an onslaught of the enemy, no one would be able to force an entrance within the walls that surround the temple. On the towers of the citadel engines of war were placed and different kinds of machines, and the position was
102 much higher than the circle of walls which I have mentioned. The towers were guarded too by most

95. *seven hundred*. This number is at variance with the estimate given in the passage from Hecataeus which is quoted by Josephus *c. Apion*, i. 22: 'All the Jewish priests who are in receipt of the tithe of the produce [of the soil] and administer the public moneys [or affairs] are at the most fifteen hundred'. Josephus states that there were four tribes of priests, each containing more than five thousand (*c. Apion*, ii. 8) but probably he includes the Levites and the servants.

96-9. The description of the dress of the High-priest is based upon Exodus xxviii and xxix. For other accounts of this dress see Charles' *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, ET, p. 42. Many phrases are taken from the LXX, showing that the writer must have been perfectly familiar with the version. For further illustrations of the use of the LXX see §§ 56, 57, 87, 228.

97. *the oracle of God*. Exod. xxviii. 30 reads: 'Thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim'—which the LXX renders *καὶ ἐπιθήσεις ἐπὶ τὸ λόγιον τῆς κρίσεως τὴν δὴλωσιν καὶ τὴν ἀληθειαν*. This mistaken rendering (which is followed by Aristeas) is mainly responsible for the view that the Urim and Thummim are to be identified with the jewels in the breastplate, see DBH, iv. 839. We have here another proof that the LXX translation had superseded, in the mind of Aristeas, the Hebrew original before our Epistle was written.

98. *sacred letters*—i.e. the older Hebrew characters such as are found on old Hebrew seals, the Moabite Stone, and in Phoenician inscriptions before they had changed into the later square characters. Driver, *Exodus* (Cam. Bib., p. 309).

99. *Their appearance*. Following an emendation of Wendland, who reads *ἐμφάνεια* for *συμφάνεια*.

100. *the summit of the neighbouring citadel*. There are many problems connected with the site and the history of the *ἄκρα*. 'Theories of the position of the Akra are almost as numerous as the writers who have devoted attention to the subject' (for a discussion of the various views see G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem*, ii. 444 ff.). The earliest reference to the *ἄκρα* is found in Josephus, who says that it was occupied by an Egyptian garrison when in 198 B.C. the Jews welcomed Antiochus the Great to Jerusalem. In 168 B.C. the forces of Antiochus Epiphanes 'fortified the City of David with a great and strong wall, with strong towers, and it became unto them an *ἄκρα* or citadel' (1 Mac. i. 33-6). 'It became a great trap, an ambush against the Sanctuary and throughout an evil adversary to Israel' (1 Mac. iv. 40). For further references in the Maccabean period see G. Adam Smith, *Jerusalem*, i. 157 f. Josephus, however, tells us that during the Maccabean war the Jews razed the *ἄκρα* to the ground. (*BJ*, ii. 2, iv. 1, *Ant.* xiii. 6. 7). In the passages in the *Antiquities* he states that Simon, anxious 'that the Akra should no more be a base from which the foe might storm or harass Jerusalem, thought it the best way to cut down also the hill on which the Akra stood, so that the temple should be higher. Having called the people to an assembly, he persuaded them to set themselves to the work, which cost them three whole years, night and day, before they reduced the hill to its base and made it a perfect level. Thereafter the temple overtopped everything, both the Akra and the hill on which it stood being demolished.' This statement, however, is difficult to reconcile with the assertion of 1 Mac. xiv. 37 that 'Simon garrisoned and fortified the Akra.' If the assertion of Josephus could be relied upon, it would suggest a point which would have to be considered in discussing the date of Aristeas. There is a further difficulty, however. Possibly, as G. Adam Smith suggests (*ib.* ii. 447) Aristeas is referring not to the Akra but to the later Baris. Graetz thinks that the description of the Castle points to the tower of Antonia built by Herod the Great (*op. cit.* 295-6).

trustworthy men who had given the utmost proof of their loyalty to their country. These men were never allowed to leave the citadel, except on feast days and then only in detachments, nor did they permit any stranger to enter it. They were also very careful when any command came from the chief officer to admit any visitors to inspect the place, as our own experience taught us. They were very reluctant to admit us,—though we were but two unarmed men—to view the offering of the sacrifices. And they asserted that they were bound by an oath when the trust was committed to them, for they had all sworn and were bound to carry out the oath sacredly to the letter, that though they were five hundred in number they would not permit more than five men to enter at one time. The citadel was the special protection of the temple and its founder had fortified it so strongly that it might efficiently protect it.

The size of the city is of moderate dimensions. It is about forty furlongs in circumference, as far as one could conjecture. It has its towers arranged in the shape of a theatre, with thoroughfares leading between them; now the cross roads of the lower towers are visible but those of the upper towers are more frequented. For the ground ascends, since the city is built upon a mountain. There are steps too which lead up to the cross roads, and some people are always going up, and others down and they keep as far apart from each other as possible on the road because of those who are bound by the rules of purity, lest they should touch anything which is unlawful. It was not without reason that the original founders of the city built it in due proportions, for they possessed clear insight with regard to what was required. For the country is extensive and beautiful. Some parts of it are level, especially the districts which belong to Samaria, as it is called, and which border on the land of the Idumeans, other parts are mountainous, especially (those which are contiguous to the land of Judea). The people therefore are bound to devote themselves to agriculture and the cultivation of the soil that by this means they may have a plentiful supply of crops. In this way cultivation of every kind is carried on and an abundant harvest reaped in the whole of the aforesaid land. The cities which are large and enjoy a corresponding prosperity are well-populated, but they neglect the country districts, since all men are inclined to a life of enjoyment, for every one has a natural tendency towards the pursuit of pleasure. The same thing happened in Alexandria, which excels all cities in size and prosperity. Country people by migrating from the rural districts and settling in the city brought agriculture into disrepute: and so to prevent them from settling in the city, the king issued orders that they should not stay in it for more than twenty days. And in the same way he gave the judges written instructions, that if it was necessary to issue a summons against any one who lived in the country, the case must be settled within five days. And since he considered the matter one of great importance, he appointed also legal officers for every district with their assistants, that the farmers and their advocates might not in the interests of business empty the granaries of the city, I mean, of the produce of husbandry. I have permitted this digression because it was Eleazar who pointed out with great clearness the points which have been mentioned. For great is the energy

104. And were . . . to carry out. So Thackeray emends.

105. forty furlongs. This estimate agrees with the statement of Timochares (quoted by Euseb. *Praep. Evang.* ix. 34), but Hecataeus states that the circuit was about 'fifty furlongs' (quoted by Josephus, *c. Apion.* i. 197).

in the shape of a theatre, 'with the comparison to a theatre,' cf. *Ency. Bib.* ii. 2412. 'There is, however, a second affluent or head of the central Tyropoeon valley on the west side of its main course—a kind of dell or theatre-shaped depression extending westwards, a depression which would face a spectator looking westwards from the temple-mount, where the writer of our letter professes to be standing' (Thackeray, *JQR*, xv. 360).

now the cross roads. The text is uncertain and the meaning obscure. The MSS. read καὶ φανομένων διόδων τῶν ὑποκειμένων, τῶν δ' ἐπάνωθεν ἡθισμένων, but it seems impossible to extract any relevant meaning from the words as they stand. In the phrase τῶν δ' ἐπάνωθεν εἰθισμένων Thackeray reads εἰθισμένως and translates 'the resemblance extending to the cross streets, which are seen some below, some above, in the usual manner [of a theatre]'. Wendland following a conjecture of Diels substitutes μή for καὶ at the commencement of the sentence, and εἰσχισμένων for ἡθισμένων and renders 'und man sieht zwar nicht die Durchgänge der unteren [Türme], wohl aber die der oberen, die bei den Durchgängen durchbrochen sind.'

106. the ground ascends, ἀνάκλασιν γὰρ τὰ τῶν τόπων. Thackeray translates 'the ground is irregular' and takes ἀνάκλασιν to mean 'a bending back'. He quotes in illustration a statement from Smith's *DB* i, ii, 1587: 'the northern and southern outliers of the Mount of Olives bend round slightly towards the city.'

some . . . are . . . going up. The meaning is obscure. Thackeray translates: 'Some persons take their way along the higher level, and others underneath, the distinction in the means of journeying being chiefly made for the sake of those who are undergoing the usual purifications'. Wendland substitutes διεσθηκίας for διεσθηκότες. 'They ascend by the one, they descend by the other, especially if they have a long journey to make, with a view to observing', &c.

107. contiguous to the land of Judea. These words are supplied by conjecture to fill a lacuna in the MSS. Wendland's reading, 'namely those which are in the centre', is possibly more correct.

108. a natural tendency. For a further explanation of this inherent bias in human nature, see §§ 222-3, and especially 277.

111. farmers and their advocates. The meaning of the latter term (προστάται) is uncertain. Thackeray translates 'directors or agents', but suggests that we might render 'the agricultural class who are also the protectors (backbone) of the country.' Legislation in the interests of agriculture is illustrated in the Papyri (cf. Paris Papyri, no. 63, *Notices et Extraits*, tom. xviii, Letronne and Brunet, and Thackeray's Note, *JQR*, p. 361).

which they expend on the tillage of the soil. For the land is thickly planted with multitudes of olive trees, with crops of corn and pulse, with vines too, and there is abundance of honey. Other kinds of fruit trees and dates do not count compared with these. There are cattle of all kinds in
 113 great quantities and a rich pasturage for them. Wherefore they rightly recognise that the country districts need a large population, and the relations between the city and the villages are properly
 114 regulated. A great quantity of spices and precious stones and gold is brought into the country by the Arabs. For the country is well adapted not only for agriculture but also for commerce, and the
 115 city is rich in the arts and lacks none of the merchandise which is brought across the sea. It possesses too suitable and commodious harbours at Askalon, Joppa, and Gaza, as well as at Ptolemais which was founded by the King and holds a central position compared with the other places named, being not far distant from any of them. The country produces everything in abundance,
 116 since it is well watered in all directions and well protected *from storms*. The river Jordan, as it is called, which never runs dry, flows through the land. Originally (the country) contained not less than 60 million acres—though afterwards the neighbouring peoples made incursions against it—and 600,000 men were settled upon it in farms of a hundred acres each. The river like the Nile rises in harvest-time and irrigates a large portion of the land. Near the district belonging to the people of
 117 Ptolemais it issues into another river and this flows out into the sea. Other mountain torrents, as they are called, flow down into the plain and encompass the parts about Gaza and the district of
 118 Ashdod. The country is encircled by a natural fence and is very difficult to attack and cannot be assailed by large forces, owing to the narrow passes, with their overhanging precipices and deep
 119 ravines, and the rugged character of the mountainous regions which surround all the land.

We were told that from the neighbouring mountains of Arabia copper and iron were formerly obtained. This was stopped, however, at the time of the Persian rule, since the authorities of the time spread
 120 abroad a false report that the working of the mines was useless and expensive, in order to prevent their country from being destroyed by the mining in these districts and possibly taken away from them owing to the *Persian* rule, †since by the assistance of this false report they found an excuse for entering the district†.

I have now, my dear brother Philocrates, given you all the essential information upon this subject
 121 in brief form. I shall describe the work of translation in the sequel. The High priest selected men of the finest character and the highest culture, such as one would expect from their noble parentage. They were men who had not only acquired proficiency in Jewish literature, but had studied most
 122 carefully that of the Greeks as well. They were specially qualified therefore for serving on embassies and they undertook this duty whenever it was necessary. They possessed a great facility for conferences and the discussion of problems connected with the law. They espoused the middle course—and this is always the best course to pursue. They abjured the rough and uncouth manner, but they were altogether above pride and never assumed an air of superiority over others, and in conversation they were ready to listen and give an appropriate answer to every question. And all of them carefully observed this rule and were anxious above everything else to excel each other in
 123 its observance and they were all of them worthy of their leader and of his virtue. And one could observe how they loved Eleazar by their unwillingness to be torn away from him and how he loved them. For besides the letter which he wrote to the king concerning their safe return, he also earnestly
 124 besought Andreas to work *for the same end* and urged me, too, to assist to the best of my ability. And

114. *rich in the arts*, πολύτεχνος. The description of Jerusalem as 'a city of many crafts' is an exaggeration even when we admit that the phrase need not necessarily imply technical originality. Apollonius of Rhodes goes to the opposite extremes when he says 'the Jews are the most inept of the Barbarians and the only ones who have not contributed any invention useful to life', Josephus, *c. Apion*, ii. 15. Cf. G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem*, i. 373.

115. *Ptolemais founded by the King*. The reference is to Philadelphus II, who gave his name to the town which was previously called Acco or Akka, though some authorities regard it as the foundation of Ptolemy I (cf. Mahaffy, *Ptolemaic Dynasty*, 60). The place figures very largely in the relations between Egypt and Palestine, see *Ency. Bib.*, art. 'Ptolemais'. Wendland attaches considerable importance to the data afforded by the mention of these harbours for fixing the date of Aristeas. Joppa did not belong to the Jews till after 146 B.C. (1 Mac. x. 76, xiv. 5, 34) Gaza was not Jewish territory till it was captured by Alexander Jannaeus about 96 B.C. The fact, however, that Ascalon and Ptolemais were never Jewish towns makes it impossible to attach too much importance to this evidence. The writer might obviously have made the same mistake about Joppa and Gaza as about Ascalon and Ptolemais.

116. *made incursions*. Two MSS. read ἐπίβησαν ('retired') for ἐπίβησαν. It is difficult, however, to make this reading fit in with the general sense of the passage.

a hundred acres. The writer may possibly be transferring the land system of the Fayûm to Palestine. We know from the Papyri that cleruchies of 100 arourae were common in this district of Egypt. Cf. Mahaffy, *Ptolemaic Dynasty*, p. 90.

122. *They espoused the middle course*. An illustration of the influence of the Aristotelian doctrine of the mean on Jewish thought, cp. § 223 πλὴν ἐν πᾶσι μετρίότης καλόν, and also § 256.

although we promised to give our best attention to the matter, he said that he was still greatly distressed, for he knew that the king out of the goodness of his nature considered it his highest privilege, whenever he heard of a man who was superior to his fellows in culture and wisdom, to
 125 summon him to his court. For I have heard of a fine saying of his to the effect that by securing just and prudent men about his person he would secure the greatest protection for his kingdom, since such friends would unreservedly give him the most beneficial advice. And the men who were
 126 now being sent to him by Eleazar undoubtedly possessed these qualities. And he frequently asserted upon oath that he would never let the men go if it were merely some private interest of his own that constituted the impelling motive—but it was for the common advantage of
 127 all the citizens that he was sending them. For, *he explained*, the good life consists in the keeping of the enactments of the law, and this end is achieved much more by hearing than by reading. From this and other similar statements it was clear what his feelings towards them were.
 128 It is worth while to mention briefly the information which he gave in reply to our questions. For I suppose that most people feel a curiosity with regard to some of the enactments in the law,
 129 especially those about meats and drinks and animals recognised as unclean. When we asked why, since there is but one form of creation, some animals are regarded as unclean for eating, and others unclean even to the touch (for though the law is scrupulous on most points, it is specially scrupulous on such
 130 matters as these) he began his reply as follows: 'You observe,' he said, 'what an effect our modes of life and our associations produce upon us; by associating with the bad, men catch their depravities and become miserable throughout their life; but if they live with the wise and prudent, they find
 131 the means of escaping from ignorance and amending their lives. Our Lawgiver first of all laid down the principles of piety and righteousness and inculcated them point by point, not merely by prohibitions but by the use of examples as well, demonstrating the injurious effects of *sin* and the
 132 punishments inflicted by God upon the guilty. For he proved first of all that there is only one God and that his power is manifested throughout the universe, since every place is filled with his sovereignty and none of the things which are wrought in secret by men upon the earth escapes His knowledge. For all that a man does and all that is to come to pass in the future are manifest to
 133 Him. Working out these truths carefully and having made them plain, he showed that even if a man should think of doing evil—to say nothing of actually effecting it,—he would not escape
 134 detection, for he made it clear that the power of God pervaded the whole of the law. Beginning from this starting point he went on to show that all mankind except ourselves believe in the existence of many gods, though they themselves are much more powerful than the beings whom
 135 they vainly worship. For when they have made statues of stone and wood, they say that they are the images of those who have invented something useful for life and they worship them, though
 136 they have clear proof that they possess no feeling. For it would be utterly foolish to suppose that any one became a god in virtue of his inventions. For the inventors simply took certain objects already created and by combining them together, showed that they possessed a fresh utility: they
 137 did not themselves create the substance of the thing, and so it is a vain and foolish thing for people to make gods of men like themselves. For in our times there are many who are much more inventive and much more learned than the men of former days *who have been deified*, and yet they would never come to worship them. The makers and authors of these myths think that they are
 138 the wisest of the Greeks. Why need we speak of other infatuated people, Egyptians and the like, who place their reliance upon wild beasts and most kinds of creeping things and cattle, and worship them, and offer sacrifices to them both while living and when dead?
 139 'Now our Lawgiver being a wise man and specially endowed by God to understand all things, took

124. to give our best attention. The MSS. read ἀφροντίσειν which is obviously a corruption. Wendland suggests εὖ φροντίσειν, which gives the sense required.

127. The good life consists: a good statement of the Pharisaic position which is advocated in this section of the Epistle. For the ethical function of the law cp. §§ 144, 168, 169.

128. I suppose people. So Euseb.

129. specially scrupulous. The reading is uncertain. Some MSS. read πάνι δεισιδαιμόνως. Eusebius has πάλιν for πάνι. Other MSS. of Aristeas combine the two. Schmidt suggests παντάπασι and Wendland reads παντελώς. The meaning however is clear.

133. the power of God pervaded, or 'throughout the whole of the law, he displayed the power of God' (Thackeray).

135. who have invented something useful. Aristeas' explanation of the origin of idolatry is Euhemeristic. Euhemerus, who lived at the Court of Cassander in Macedonia about 316 B.C., maintained that the gods were originally men who had distinguished themselves either as warriors or benefactors of mankind, and who after their death received divine worship from the grateful people. Contrast the explanation of the origin of idolatry in the *Book of Wisdom*, where it is derived from Nature-worship (ch. xiii), 'Vain are all men by nature who are ignorant of God . . . and deem either fire or wind or the swift air, or the circle of the stars, or the turbulent water, or the lights of heaven to be the gods which govern the world.'

136. it would be . . . foolish, reading ἀνόητον (Eusebius) for the MSS. ἀνόητοι.

became a god. So Wendland emends.

a comprehensive view of each particular detail, and fenced us round with impregnable ramparts and walls of iron, that we might not mingle at all with any of the other nations, but remain pure in body and soul, free from all vain imaginations, worshipping the one Almighty God above the whole
 140 creation. Hence the leading Egyptian priests having looked carefully into many matters, and being cognizant with (our) affairs, call us "men of God". This is a title which does not belong to the rest of mankind but only to those who worship the true God. The rest are men *not of God* but of meats and drinks and clothing. For their whole disposition leads them to find solace in these things.
 141 Among our people such things are reckoned of no account, but throughout their whole life their
 142 main consideration is the sovereignty of God. Therefore lest we should be corrupted by any abomination, or our lives be perverted by evil communications, he hedged us round on all sides by
 143 rules of purity, affecting alike what we eat, or drink, or touch, or hear, or see. For though, speaking generally, all things are alike in their natural constitution, since they are all governed by one and the same power, yet there is a deep reason in each individual case why we abstain from the use of certain things and enjoy the common use of others. For the sake of illustration I will run over one or two
 144 points and explain them to you. For you must not fall into the degrading idea that it was out of regard to mice and weasels and other such things that Moses drew up his laws with such exceeding care. All these ordinances were made for the sake of righteousness to aid the quest for virtue and
 145 the perfecting of character. For all the birds that we use are tame and distinguished by their cleanliness, feeding on various kinds of grain and pulse, such as for instance pigeons, turtle-doves,
 146 locusts, partridges, geese also, and all other birds of this class. But the birds which are forbidden you will find to be wild and carnivorous, tyrannising over the others by the strength which they possess, and cruelly obtaining food by preying on the tame birds enumerated above. And not only so, but
 147 they seize lambs and kids, and injure human beings too, whether dead or alive, and so by naming them unclean, he gave a sign by means of them that those, for whom the legislation was ordained, must practise righteousness in their hearts and not tyrannise over any one in reliance upon their own strength nor rob them of anything, but steer their course of life in accordance with justice, just as the tame birds, already mentioned, consume the different kinds of pulse that grow upon the earth
 148 and do not tyrannise to the destruction of their own kindred. Our legislator taught us therefore that it is by such methods as these that indications are given to the wise, that they must be just and effect nothing by violence, and refrain from tyrannising over others in reliance upon their own
 149 strength. For since it is *considered* unseemly even to touch such *unclean* animals, as have been mentioned, on account of their particular habits, ought we not to take every precaution lest our own
 150 characters should be destroyed to the same extent? Wherefore all the rules which he has laid down with regard to what is permitted in the case of these *birds* and other animals, he has enacted with the object of teaching us a moral lesson. For the division of the hoof and the separation of the claws are intended to teach us that we must discriminate between our individual actions with a view
 151 to the practice of virtue. For the strength of our whole body and its activity depend upon our shoulders and limbs. Therefore he compels us to recognise that we must perform all our actions

140. cognizant with (our) affairs, *μετασχηκότες πραγμάτων*, 'conversant with the world' (Thackeray). Diels suggests *γραμματίων*, for *πραγμάτων*, 'conversant with literature.'

men of meats and drinks, &c. Cp. Matt. vi. 31-2 'After all these things do the Gentiles seek.' The word translated 'clothing' (*σκεπή*) also means 'shelter' or 'protection' and this may possibly be the meaning here.

144. the degrading idea, *εἰς τὸν καταπεπτωκότα λόγον*, or 'Thou must not be led to follow the rejected view' (Thackeray).

mice. In Eusebius the best attested reading seems to be *μυῖων*, 'flies'. For the Mosaic prohibition see Lev. xi. 29. For the argument cp. 1 Cor. ix. 9, 'Doth God care for the oxen?'

145. locusts, Lev. xi. 22. In both RV and AV the word *ἀρράκνης* is translated 'bald locust'. In Eusebius the best attested reading is *ἀτταγαί* a species of moor-fowl. There is a full description of this bird in Athen. ix. 387, where it is said to be 'rather bigger than a partridge, striped all over the back and of the colour of clay but rather redder, corresponding perhaps to the "attagen Ionicus" of Hor. *Epod.* ii. 54.' Cp. Gifford's note on Eusebius, *Praef. Evang.* 372 c.

147. destruction of their own kindred. Eusebius (whom Wendland follows here) inserts *οὔτε τῶν ὑποβεβηκότων οὔτε, before τῶν συγγενικῶν* 'for the destruction either of those beneath them or of their own kind'.

150. teaching us a moral lesson. The allegorical method seems to have been first employed on a large scale by the Stoics, though there are traces of it in Plato and Aristotle. Philo is of course the great exponent of the method, though the fact that he speaks of it as a well-established system and warns men that the allegorical interpretation does not destroy the literal force of the enactments of the law, proves that it had already found its way into Jewish circles—a fact which is further substantiated by the New Testament (Drummond, *Philo*, i. 20). There is a sign of it, too, in the Book of Wisdom (x. 17, xviii. 24). But we have no trace of so elaborate an employment of the method, as we find in Aristeas, amongst the Jews before Philo. It is curious, too, that it is only used in the law section. Aristeas does not take the opportunity of introducing it into his explanation of the High Priest's dress, which was a favourite subject with later allegorists (cf. Philo, *Vit. Mos.* iii. 11-14, *De Monarchia*, ii. 225. 7 and Josephus, *Antiq.* iii. 7. 7). The best illustration of the method of Aristeas is found in the Epistle of Barnabas.

division of the hoof, cp. Lev. xi. 3 ff., Deut. xiv. 6 ff.

151. compels us to recognise. The text is uncertain. There are two readings (1) *ἀναγκάζει τὸ σημειοῦσθαι*, 108

with discrimination according to the standard of righteousness—more especially because we have
 152 been distinctly separated from the rest of mankind. For most other men defile themselves by
 promiscuous intercourse, thereby working great iniquity, and whole countries and cities pride them-
 153 selves upon such vices. For they not only have intercourse with men but they defile their own
 mothers and even their daughters. But we have been kept separate from such sins. And the
 people who have been separated in the aforementioned way are also characterised by the *Lawgiver*
 as possessing the *gift* of memory. For all animals “which are cloven-footed and chew the cud”
 154 represent to the initiated the *symbol* of memory. For the act of chewing the cud is nothing else
 than the reminiscence of life and existence. For life is wont to be sustained by means of food,
 155 wherefore he exhorts us in the Scripture also in these words: “Thou shalt surely remember the Lord
 that wrought in thee those great and wonderful things”. For when they are properly conceived,
 they are manifestly great and glorious; first the construction of the body and the disposition of the
 156 food and the separation of each individual limb and, far more, the organisation of the senses, the operation
 and invisible movement of the mind, the rapidity of its particular actions and its discovery of the
 157 arts, display an infinite *resourcefulness*. Wherefore he exhorts us to remember that the aforesaid
 parts are kept together by the divine power with consummate skill. For he has marked out every
 158 time and place that we may continually remember the God who rules and preserves (us). For in the
 matter of meats and drinks he bids us first of all offer part as a sacrifice and then forthwith *enjoy*
our meal. Moreover, upon our garments he has given us a symbol of remembrance, and in like
 manner he has ordered us to put the *divine* oracles upon our gates and doors as a remembrance of
 159 God. And upon our hands, too, he expressly orders the symbol to be fastened, clearly showing that
 we ought to perform every act in righteousness, remembering (our own creation), and above all the
 160 fear of God. He bids men also, when lying down to sleep and rising up again, to meditate upon the
 works of God, not only in word, but by observing distinctly the change and impression produced
 upon them, when they are going to sleep, and also their waking, how divine and incomprehensible
 161 the change from one of these states to the other is. The excellency of the analogy in regard to
 discrimination and memory has now been pointed out to you, according to our interpretation of “the
 cloven hoof and the chewing of the cud”. For our laws have not been drawn up at random or in
 accordance with the first *casual* thought that occurred to the mind, but with a view to truth and the
 162 indication of right reason. For by means of the directions which he gives with regard to meats and
 drinks and particular cases of touching, he bids us neither to do nor listen to anything thoughtlessly
 163 nor to resort to injustice by the abuse of the power of reason. In the case of the wild animals, too,
 the same principle may be discovered. For the character of the weasel and of mice and such
 164 animals as these, which are expressly mentioned, is destructive. Mice defile and damage everything,
 not only for their own food but even to the extent of rendering absolutely useless to man whatever
 165 it falls in their way to damage. The weasel class, too, is peculiar: for besides what has been said, it

(2) . . . τῷ σημειοῦσθαι. Thackeray conjectures ὁ σημειοῦται, and translates ‘He constrains us to do everything . . . as he signifies by these symbols’. Gifford in Eusebius rendering (2) translates ‘by the signification herein given’.

152. **we have been kept separate**, δισταλμεθα or ‘we have received express injunctions’, see Lev. xviii. 6 ff. It is significant as Wendland says that there is no reference to the Egyptian practice of marrying a sister.

154. **life is wont to be sustained**, or ‘He considers that life exists by taking food’ (Thackeray).

155. **in the scripture**. For this remarkable introduction to the quotation, see note on § 168.

Thou shalt remember. A loose quotation of phrases conflated from Deut. vii. 18, 19, and x. 21. ‘The great and wonderful things’ of Deut. refer to the Divine deliverances of Israel, but here the phrase is applied to the human anatomy. Gifford thinks there is a reminiscence of Job xlii. 3.

156. **display an infinite**, &c., lit. ‘contain an infinite manner,’ ἀπέραστον περιέχει τρόπον. Thackeray renders ‘bear the marks of an infinite wisdom’. Gifford, reading ἐπέραστον, renders ‘have a delightful character’.

157. **kept together . . . with consummate skill**. Thackeray renders ‘are both created and preserved’.

158. **enjoy**. So Euseb.

upon our garments, ἐκ τῶν περιβολαίων. There seems to be an allusion to Num. xv. 38, and Deut. xxii. 12 ἐπὶ τῶν τεσσάρων κρασπέδων τῶν περιβολαίων σου. The reference is to the *zizith* or *gedilim* fringes or twisted threads at the four corners of the garment, see DBH art. ‘Fringes’. Schürer, ET ii. 2. 112.

the divine oracles, see note on § 177.

upon our gates, cp. Deut. vi. 7 ff., a reference to the *Mesusa*, an oblong box fixed to house and room doors above the right-hand door-post on which was written in twenty-two lines the two paragraphs, Deut. vi. 4-9, xi. 13-21. Schürer, ET. ii. 2. 112.

159. **upon our hands**, cp. Deut. vi. 8, a reference to the *Tephilla*, a small dice-shaped hollow parchment case on which were written the passages Ex. xiii. 1-10, xiii. 11-16; Deut. vi. 4-9, xi. 13-21. It was fastened by means of a strap drawn through it to the upper part of the left arm, Schürer ET, ii. 2. 113.

our own creation. Restored from Euseb.

160. **going to sleep**. Aristeas seems to have been interested in the psychology of sleep. See §§ 213-16, and cp. the discussion in 3 Mac. v. 11.

162. **by the abuse of the power**, &c., or ‘and not by availing ourselves of the overbearing power of speech have recourse to unrighteousness’ (Thackeray), or ‘nor to resort to injustice by employing the mastery of language’.

- has a characteristic which is defiling: It conceives through the ears and brings forth through the mouth. And it is for this reason that a like practice is declared unclean in men. For by embodying in speech all that they receive through the ears, they involve others in evils and work no ordinary impurity, being themselves altogether defiled by the pollution of impiety. And your king, as we are informed, does quite right in destroying such men.'
- 167 Then I said 'I suppose you mean the informers, for he constantly exposes them to tortures and to painful forms of death'. 'Yes,' he replied, 'these are the men I mean; for to watch for men's destruction is an unholy thing. And our law forbids us to injure any one either by word or deed. My brief account of these matters ought to have convinced you, that all our regulations have been drawn up with a view to righteousness, and that nothing has been enacted in the Scripture thoughtlessly or without due reason, but its purpose is to enable us throughout our whole life and in all our actions to practise righteousness before all men, being mindful of Almighty God. And so concerning meats and things unclean, creeping things, and wild beasts, the whole system aims at righteousness and righteous relationships between man and man.'
- 170 He seemed to me to have made a good defence on all the points; for in reference also to the calves and rams and goats which are offered, he said that it was necessary to take them from the herds and flocks, and sacrifice tame animals and offer nothing wild, that the offerers of the sacrifices might understand the symbolic meaning of the lawgiver and not be under the influence of an arrogant self-consciousness. For he, who offers a sacrifice, makes an offering also of his own soul in all its moods. I think that these particulars with regard to our discussion are worth narrating, and on account of the sanctity and natural meaning of the law, I have been induced to explain them to you clearly, Philocrates, because of your own devotion to learning.
- 172 And Eleazar, after offering the sacrifice, and selecting the envoys, and preparing many gifts for the king, despatched us on our journey in great security. And when we reached Alexandria, the king was at once informed of our arrival. On our admission to the palace, Andreas and I warmly greeted the king and handed over to him the letter written by Eleazar. The king was very anxious to meet the envoys, and gave orders that all the other officials should be dismissed and the envoys summoned to his presence *at once*. Now this excited general surprise, for it is customary for those who come to seek an audience with the king on matters of importance to be admitted to his presence on the fifth day, while envoys from kings or very important cities with difficulty secure admission to the Court in thirty days—but these men he counted worthy of greater honour, since he held their master in such high esteem, and so he immediately dismissed those whose presence he regarded as superfluous and continued walking about until they came in and he was able to welcome them.
- 176 When they entered with the gifts which had been sent with them and the valuable parchments, on which the law was inscribed in gold in Jewish characters, for the parchment was wonderfully prepared and the connexion *between the pages* had been so effected as to be invisible, the king as soon as he saw them began to ask them about the books. And when they had taken the rolls out of their coverings and unfolded the pages, the king stood still for a long time and then making obeisance about seven times, he said: 'I thank you, my friends, and I thank him that sent you still more, and

165. *through the mouth*, cf. *Eph. Barn.* x. 8. Aristotle, *De Generatione Animalium*, iii. 6. 5, refutes this common belief and explains its origin. 'The weasel has just the same kind of womb as all other quadrupeds. How then can the embryo pass from it into the mouth? But because the weasel, like all other cloven-footed animals . . . brings forth extremely small young and often carries them from place to place in her mouth, she has given rise to this opinion' (quoted by Gifford, *Euseb.* 374 d).

167. *informer*, *ἐμφανισταί*—*delatores*. Graetz cites this passage as an argument for the late date of the Epistle—and thinks that it refers incontestably to the punishment inflicted on two Roman knights at the instigation of the Emperor for bringing false charges against the Praetor Magius Caecilianus in A.D. 21: cp. the concluding words of § 166, 'Your king as we are informed does quite right in putting such men to death'.

168. *has been enacted in the Scripture*, *οὐδὲν εἰκὴ κατατίναται διὰ τῆς γραφῆς*. Compare § 155. This is probably the first instance where the law is spoken of as Scripture. It is quite a question whether *ἡ γραφή* is used in this sense even in the New Testament (see Lightfoot's note on Gal. iii. 22). We find the phrase *ἐν γραφῇ νόμου Μωυσέως* used in the *Testaments of the Patriarchs* (T. Zab. iii. 4), but there appears to be no instance of *ἡ γραφή* used alone in the pre-Christian era. Deissmann has shown that the phrase *[κατὰ τὴν] γραφήν* is found on a Fayūm Papyrus of 5-6 A.D.—and argues that in the first instance it was used as the equivalent of *τὸ γεγραμμένον* in legal documents (*Biblical Studies*, p. 250). Compare the use of *ἀγραφα* and *διὰ γραπτῶν* in § 56. Possibly the usage may go back to earlier times.

168. *without due reason*, lit. 'of a legendary character', or 'in a fabulous way', reading *μυθῶδως* (as in Eusebius) for *θυμῶδως* as in the MSS.

170. *He seemed to me*. There is some doubt as to whether this rendering of *ἐνόμισε* is possible. Gifford thinks this usage of the word is peculiar to Aristeas and compares the phrases *νομίζειν γὰρ τοῖς πολλοῖς* in § 128. Wendland and Thackeray conjecture *ἐνομίζετο*. Otherwise we must translate 'He thought that he had given me a good defence on all the points'.

171. *sanctity and natural meaning*, *διὰ τὴν σεμνότητα καὶ φυσικὴν διάνοιαν τοῦ νόμου*. The meaning of the latter phrase is uncertain. Schürer thinks it refers to the 'naturalness' or 'reasonableness' of the law. Thackeray translates 'the solemnity and inner meaning of the law'.

- 178 most of all God, whose oracles these are.' And when all, the envoys and the others who were present as well, shouted out at one time and with one voice: 'God save the King!' he burst into tears of joy. For his exaltation of soul and the *sense of the* overwhelming honour which had been
- 179 paid him compelled him to weep over his good fortune. He commanded them to put the rolls back in their places and then after saluting the men, said: 'It was right, men of God, that I should first of all pay my reverence to the books for the sake of which I summoned you here and then, when I had done that, to extend the right-hand of *friendship* to you. It was for this reason that I
- 180 did this first. I have enacted that this day, on which you arrived, shall be kept as a great day and it will be celebrated annually throughout my life time. It happens also that it is the anniversary of
- 181 my naval victory over Antigonos. Therefore I shall be glad to feast with you to-day.' 'Everything that you may have occasion to use', he said, 'shall be prepared (for you) in a befitting manner and for me also with you.' After they had expressed their delight, he gave orders that the best quarters near the citadel should be assigned to them, and that preparations should be made for the banquet.
- 182 And Nicanor summoned the lord high steward, Dorotheus, who was the special officer appointed to look after the *Jews*, and commanded him to make the necessary preparation for each one. For this arrangement had been made by the king and it is an arrangement which you see maintained to-day. For as many cities (as) have (special) customs in the matter of drinking, eating, and reclining, have special officers appointed to look after their requirements. And whenever they come to visit the kings, preparations are made in accordance with their own customs, in order that there may be no discomfort to disturb the enjoyment of their visit. The same precaution was taken in the case of the Jewish envoys. Now Dorotheus who was the patron appointed to look after *Jewish* guests was
- 183 a very conscientious man. All the stores which were under his control and set apart for the reception of such guests, he brought out for the feast. He arranged the seats in two rows in accordance with the king's instructions. For he had ordered him to make half the men sit at his right hand and the rest behind him, in order that he might not withhold from them the highest possible honour. When they had taken their seats he instructed Dorotheus to carry out everything in
- 184 accordance with the customs which were in use amongst his Jewish guests. Therefore he dispensed with the services of the sacred heralds and the sacrificing priests and the others who were accustomed to offer the prayers, and called upon one of our number, Eleazar, the oldest of the Jewish priests, to offer prayer instead. And he rose up and made a remarkable prayer. 'May Almighty
- 185 God enrich you, O king, with all the good things which He has made and may He grant you and your wife and your children and your comrades the continual possession of them as long as you live!' At these words a loud and joyous applause broke out which lasted for a considerable time, and then
- 186 they turned to the enjoyment of the banquet which had been prepared. All the arrangements for service at table were carried out in accordance with the injunction of Dorotheus. Among the attendants were the royal pages and others who held places of honour at the king's court.
- 187 Taking an opportunity afforded by a pause in the banquet the king asked the envoy who sat in

177. whose oracles these are. Cp. § 158. This is probably the earliest instance of the application of the term τὰ λόγια to the law as a whole, though it is used in Sirach xxxvi. 14 of divine utterances in general. This use of the word is found several times in the New Testament: Acts vii. 38; Rom. iii. 2; Heb. v. 12.

180. celebrated annually. Philo asserts that an annual festival was held at Pharos in his day to celebrate the translation of the LXX (*de vita Moysis*, ii. 7. 140 M).

naval victory over Antigonos. Philadelphus was decisively defeated by Antigonos Gonatas at the battle of Kos (c. 258). As a result of this battle Egypt lost its supremacy for some years, though it regained its power in the battle of Andros. Wendland thinks that Aristeas has purposely turned a defeat into a victory. Thackeray holds that the reference may be to the victory at Andros. This latter suggestion seems very improbable. According to Droysen the battle of Andros did not take place till 245 B.C.—two years after the death of Philadelphus. And even if with Mahaffy we date it 247 B.C.—in the last year of the reign of Philadelphus—it would be impossible to reconcile the statement here with other historical data in Aristeas. A victory in 247 B.C. could not have been made the subject of an annual celebration before the death of Arsinoe (in 270 B.C.), who is assumed to be alive throughout the Epistle.

181. that you may have occasion to use. I adopt the conjecture of Wendland, who reads οἷς συγχρησθε for the συγχρησσεθε or συγχρησθηθε of the MSS. One important MS. reads συγχρησθαι, which seems to justify the emendation.

near the citadel. See note on § 41.

182. the lord high steward. The MSS. read ἀρχίτρος, the chief physician. This does not seem satisfactory, and Josephus paraphrases ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν ξένων ἀποδοχῆς τεταγμένος . . . Letronne conjectures ἀρχιδέατρος (which is accepted by Wendland). This word is found only on an Inscription (C.I.G. 4678). The term ἐδέατρος originally meant the official who tasted dishes before the king, and was borrowed from Persia by Alexandria. Ἀρχιδέατρος may be translated 'the lord high steward', cp. Thackeray, *JQR*, xv, p. 371. Lumbroso, *Recherches sur l'économie polit. de l'Égypte*, 205.

183. all the stores, &c. Thackeray translates 'He laid out all the coverings for the couches which were in his keeping and were set apart for receptions of this kind'.

184. Eleazar. According to Josephus the man's name was Elisha, and Wendland suggests that this ought to be regarded as the true reading here.

185. your wife and your children. See notes on § 41.

your comrades: ὁμόνοοι, lit. 'Those who are in harmony with you.' Wendland suggests ὁμογενεῖς 'relatives'.

186. among the attendants, or 'among the guests were royal children', &c.

- the seat of honour (for they were arranged according to seniority). How he could keep his kingdom
 188 unimpaired to the end? After pondering for a moment he replied, 'You could best establish its
 security if you were to imitate the unceasing benignity of God. For if you exhibit clemency and
 inflict mild punishments upon those who deserve them in accordance with their deserts, you will
 189 turn them from evil and lead them to repentance.' The king praised the answer and then asked
 the next man, How he could do everything for the best in all his actions? And he replied, 'If
 a man maintains a just bearing towards all, he will always act rightly on every occasion, remembering
 that every thought is known to God. If you take the fear of God as your starting-point, you
 will never miss the goal.'
- 190 The king complimented this man, too, upon his answer and asked another, How he could have
 friends like-minded with himself? He replied, 'If they see you studying the interests of the
 multitudes over whom you rule; you will do well to observe how God bestows his benefits on the
 191 human race, providing for them health and food and all other things in due season.' After expressing
 his agreement with the reply, the king asked the next guest, How in giving audiences and passing
 judgments he could gain the praise even of those who failed to win their suit? And he said,
 'If you are fair in speech to all alike and never act insolently nor tyrannically in your treatment of
 192 offenders. And you will do this if you watch the method by which God acts. The petitions of the
 worthy are always fulfilled, while those who fail to obtain an answer to their prayers are informed by
 means of dreams or events of what was harmful *in their requests* and that God does not smite them
 according to their sins or the greatness of His strength, but acts with forbearance towards them.'
- 193 The king praised the man warmly for his answer and asked the next in order, How he could be
 invincible in military affairs? And he replied, 'If he did not trust entirely to his multitudes or his
 warlike forces, but called upon God continually to bring his enterprises to a successful issue, while
 194 he himself discharged all his duties in the spirit of justice.' Welcoming this answer, he asked another
 how he might become an object of dread to his enemies. And he replied, 'If while maintaining
 a vast supply of arms and forces he remembered that these things were powerless to achieve
 a permanent and conclusive result. For even God instils fear into the minds of men by granting
 reprieves and making merely a display of the greatness of his power.'
- 195 This man the king praised and then said to the next, What is the highest good in life? And he
 answered 'To know that God is Lord of the Universe, and that in our finest achievements it is not
 we who attain success but God who by his power brings all things to fulfilment and leads us
 to the goal.'
- 196 The king exclaimed that the man had answered well and then asked the next How he could keep
 all his possessions intact and finally hand them down to his successors in the same condition? And
 he answered 'By praying constantly to God that you may be inspired with high motives in all your
 undertakings and by warning your descendants not to be dazzled by fame or wealth, for it is God
 who bestows all these gifts and men never by themselves win the supremacy.'
- 197 The king expressed his agreement with the answer and enquired of the next guest, How he could
 bear with equanimity whatever befell him? And he said, 'If you have a firm grasp of the thought
 that all men are appointed by God to share the greatest evil as well as the greatest good, since it is
 impossible for one who is a man to be exempt from these. But God, to whom we ought *always*
 to pray, inspires us with courage to endure.'
- 198 Delighted with the man's reply, the king said that all their answers had been good. 'I will put
 a question to one other', he added, 'and then I will stop for the present: that we may turn our attention
 199 to the enjoyment of the feast and spend a pleasant time.' Thereupon he asked the man, What is the
 true aim of courage? And he answered, 'If a right plan is carried out in the hour of danger in
 accordance with the original intention. For all things are accomplished by God to your advantage,
 O king, since your purpose is good.'

188. **inflict mild punishments**, βλιμάζων τοὺς ἀέλους ἐπεικέστερον καθὼς εἰσιν ἄξιαι. Thackeray, following Schmidt, inserts ἡ before καθὼς, 'punish with greater forbearance than is due to them.' Cp. also § 208.

189. **do everything for the best**, following the emendation of Wendland πῶς ἂν ἕκαστα (κάλλιστα) πράττοι. If a man . . . act rightly. I follow the text of Wendland here: δίκαιον εἰ πρὸς πάντας διατηροῖ ἑαυτὸν, καλῶς τὰ ἕκαστα πράξει. Thackeray reads ἑαυτῷ and connects with the following clause ἑαυτῷ καλῶς τὰ ἕκαστα πράξει. This is very difficult to translate because we cannot render 'he will act rightly by Himself.' Dr. Charles has suggested to me that we might possibly read ἑαυτὸν (which is found in some MSS.) and translate 'He will do everything best as regards himself so long as he observes what is just towards all'; or else we might suppose that a καὶ has dropped out before ἑαυτῷ, and then changing πράξει to πράσσει or πράσσει we might translate 'If a man maintains righteousness towards all and always acts rightly in himself,' &c.

starting-point. The emphasis on the connexion between morality and religion is one of the characteristics of the Epistle. For the conception of God as the *καταρχή* of Ethics see §§ 200, 235.

194. **Even God instils**. It will be observed that there is no logical parallel here between the human and divine action. Wendland suggests that Aristes makes use of an older collection of sayings, appending to each of them a not always appropriate theological conclusion.

- 200 When all had signified by their applause their agreement with the answer, the king said to the philosophers (for not a few of them were present), 'It is my opinion that these men excel in virtue and possess extraordinary knowledge, since on the spur of the moment they have given fitting answers to these questions which I have put to them, and have all made God the starting-point of their words.'
- 201 And Menedemus, the philosopher of Eretria, said, 'True, O King—for since the universe is managed by providence and since we rightly perceive that man is the creation of God, it follows that all power and beauty of speech proceed from God.' When the king had nodded his assent to this sentiment, the speaking ceased and they proceeded to enjoy themselves. When evening came on, the banquet ended.
- 203 On the following day they sat down to table again and continued the banquet according to the same arrangements. When the king thought that a fitting opportunity had arrived to put inquiries to his guests, he proceeded to ask further questions of the men who sat next in order to those who had given answers on the previous day. He began to open the conversation with the eleventh man, for there were ten who had been asked questions on the former occasion. When silence was established, he asked How he could continue to be rich? After a brief reflection, the man who had been asked the question replied—'If he did nothing unworthy of his position, never acted licentiously, never lavished expense on empty and vain pursuits, but by acts of benevolence made all his subjects well disposed towards himself. For it is God who is the author of all good things and Him man must needs obey.' The king bestowed praise upon him and then asked another How he could maintain the truth? In reply to the question he said, 'By recognizing that a lie brings great disgrace upon all men, and more especially upon kings. For since they have the power to do whatever they wish, why should they resort to lies? In addition to this you must always remember, O King, that God is a lover of the truth.'
- 207 The king received the answer with great delight and looking at another said, 'What is the teaching of wisdom?' And the other replied, 'As you wish that no evil should befall you, but to be a partaker of all good things, so you should act on the same principle towards your subjects and offenders, and you should mildly admonish the noble and good. For God draws all men to Himself by his benignity.'
- 208 The king praised him and asked the next in order How he could be the friend of men? And he replied, 'By observing that the human race increases and is born with much trouble and great suffering: wherefore you must not lightly punish or inflict torments upon them, since you know that the life of men is made up of pains and penalties. For if you understood everything you would be filled with pity, for God also is pitiful.'
- 209 The king received the answer with approbation and inquired of the next 'What is the most essential qualification for ruling?' 'To keep oneself', he answered, 'free from bribery and to practise sobriety during the greater part of one's life, to honour righteousness above all things, and to make friends of men of this type. For God, too, is a lover of justice.'
- 210 Having signified his approval, the king said to another 'What is the true mark of piety?' And he replied, 'To perceive that God constantly works in the Universe and knows all things, and no man who acts unjustly and works wickedness can escape His notice. As God is the benefactor of the whole world, so you, too, must imitate Him and be void of offence.'
- 211 The king signified his agreement and said to another 'What is the essence of kingship?' And he replied, 'To rule oneself well and not to be led astray by wealth or fame to immoderate or unseemly desires, this is the true way of ruling if you reason the matter well out. For all that you really need is yours, and God is free from need and benignant withal. Let your thoughts be such as become a man, and desire not many things but only such as are necessary for ruling.'

201. Menedemus, a Greek philosopher who lived at Eretria in Euboea, where he founded a school of thought. Born about 350 and died between 278 and 275 B.C. He was the disciple of Stilpo and the friend of Antigonos Gonatas. Our knowledge of his philosophy is limited and indefinite; it is derived from statements in Athenaeus, Diogenes Laertius, and Plutarch. We have no knowledge that he ever visited Alexandria, and his death had in all probability occurred before he is introduced into the narrative here. See Gomperz, *Greek Thinkers*, ii. 205 ff.; H. Mallett, *Histoire de l'école de Mégare et des écoles d'Élis et d'Eretrie* (1845).

206. in addition to this, reading προσλαμβάνειν. Wendland prefers προλαμβάνειν, which would be translated 'you must always set before your mind'.

207. As you wish that no evil. A similar statement of 'the golden rule' in its negative form is found in Tob. iv. 15 καὶ ὁ μισοῖς, μηδὲν ποιήσης. Cp. Hillel, 'What is hateful to thyself, do not to thy fellow man.' cf. *Shema* 61/2

208. with much trouble, following an emendation of Wendland, who conjectures πόνος for χρόνος. If we take the MSS. reading we must translate with Thackeray, 'By considering after how long a time and through what great sufferings the human race comes to maturity, aye and to the birth!'

211. This is the true way. The text is corrupt and some such words must be supplied to make sense.

All that you really need, following a conjecture of Wendland, who suggests ὅσα δέον, for ὡς οὐδέν. With the

- 212 The king praised him and asked another man How his deliberations might be for the best? and he replied, 'If he constantly set justice before him in everything and thought that injustice was equivalent to deprivation of life. For God always promises the highest blessings to the just.'
- 213 Having praised him, the king asked the next How he could be free from disturbing thoughts in his sleep? And he replied, 'You have asked me a question which is very difficult to answer, for we cannot bring our true selves into play during the hours of sleep, but are held fast in these
- 214 by imaginations that cannot be controlled by reason. For our souls possess the feeling that they actually see the things that enter into our consciousness *during sleep*. But we make a mistake if we suppose that we are actually sailing on the sea in boats or flying through the air or travelling to other regions or anything else of the kind. And yet we actually do imagine such
- 215 things to be taking place. So far as it is possible for me to decide, I have reached the following conclusion. You must in every possible way, O King, govern your words and actions by the rule of piety that you may have the consciousness that you are maintaining virtue and that you never choose to gratify yourself at the expense of reason and never by abusing your power do
- 216 despite to righteousness. For the mind mostly busies itself in sleep with the same things with which it occupies itself when awake. And he who has all his thoughts and actions set towards the noblest ends establishes himself in *righteousness* both when he is awake and when he is asleep. Wherefore you must be steadfast in the constant discipline of self.'
- 217 The king bestowed praise on the man and said to another—'Since you are the tenth to answer, when you have spoken, we will devote ourselves to the banquet.' And then he put the question,
- 218 How can I avoid doing anything unworthy of myself? And he replied, 'Look always to your own fame and your own supreme position, that you may speak and think only such things as are
- 219 consistent therewith, knowing that all your subjects think and talk about you. For you must not appear to be worse than the actors, who study carefully the rôle, which it is necessary for them to play, and shape all their actions in accordance with it. You are not acting a part, but are really a king, since God has bestowed upon you a royal authority in keeping with your character.'
- 220 When the king had applauded loud and long in the most gracious way, the guests were urged to seek repose. So when the conversation ceased, they devoted themselves to the next course of the feast.
- 221 On the following day, the same arrangement was observed, and when the king found an opportunity of putting questions to the men, he questioned the first of those who had been left over
- 222 for the next interrogation, What is the highest form of government? And he replied, 'To rule oneself and not to be carried away by impulses. For all men possess a certain natural bent of mind.
- 223 It is probable that most men have an inclination towards food and drink and pleasure, and kings a bent towards the acquisition of territory and great renown. But it is good that there should be moderation in all things. What God gives, that you must take and keep, but never yearn for things that are beyond your reach.'
- 224 Pleased with these words, the king asked the next How he could be free from envy? And he after a brief pause replied, 'If you consider first of all that it is God who bestows on all kings glory and great wealth and no one is king by his own power. All men wish to share this glory but cannot, since it is the gift of God.'
- 225 The king praised the man in a long speech and then asked another How he could despise his enemies? And he replied, 'If you show kindness to all men and win their friendship, you need fear no one. To be popular with all men is the best of good gifts to receive from God.'

reading of the MSS. we must translate, 'Everything is at your command, and it is as nothing.' Mendelssohn conjectures *ὡς οὐδενί* 'you, as no one else, possess everything you need.'

214. And yet we actually, following the conjecture of Schmidt, *καὶ τοιαῦθ' ἕτερα ὑπολαμβάνομεν καθιστάται*. Thackeray connects with the previous sentence and reads *ἀ κατὰ ταῦθ' ὑπολαμβάνομεν*. . . . 'Other such things which we then suppose to be taking place.' Mendelssohn would substitute *σφάλλεται* for *καθιστάται*, reading *καὶ ὁ ταῦθ' ὑπολαμβάνων σφάλλεται*, 'He who makes this supposition is under a delusion.'

216. he who has all his thoughts. Reading with Wendland *ὅς δὲ πάντα διαλογισμὸν* for the MSS. *ὡς δέ*. Thackeray suggests *θεὸς δέ* (on the ground that the divine name is always used in the concluding sentence of each response), and further *ἐγγρηγορότος* for *ἐγγρηγρός*. The translation then runs 'but God directs every thought and action which aims at the highest both in waking hours and in sleep.'

219. worse than the actors, lit. 'the least of the actors.'

220. the guests were urged, 'they urged the guests to sleep.' The text appears to have suffered dislocation.

when the conversation ceased, *καὶ τὰ μὲν πρὸς τοὺτους ὡς ἐληξεν*, lit. 'when the turn of these men was ended' (Thackeray), but probably the text is corrupt.

222. natural bent. For a further account of this inherent bias in human nature see § 108 and especially 277.

223. and great renown, following the emendation of Wendland *καὶ* (for *κατὰ*) *τὸ τῆς δόξης μέγεθος*. If we follow the MSS., the meaning is 'in proportion to the greatness of their renown.'

moderation in all things. See note on § 122, and compare § 156.

224. by his own power, following the reading of Wendland, *παρ' ἑαυτὸν* for *ἐαυτοῦ*, 'king of himself.'

225. best of good gifts. The text is corrupt. For the MSS. *καὶ καλὸν δῶρον εἰληφέναι παρὰ θεοῦ τοῦτ' ἐστὶ κράτιστον*.—

- 226 Having praised this answer the king ordered the next man to reply to the question, How he could maintain his great renown? and he replied that 'If you are generous and large-hearted in bestowing kindness and acts of grace upon others, you will never lose your renown, but if you wish the aforesaid graces to continue yours, you must call upon God continually.'
- 227 The king expressed his approval and asked the next, To whom ought a man to show liberality? And he replied, 'All men acknowledge that we ought to show liberality to those who are well disposed towards us, but I think that we ought to show the same keen spirit of generosity to those who are opposed to us that by this means we may win them over to the right and to what is advantageous to ourselves. But we must pray to God that this may be accomplished, for he rules the minds of all men.'
- 228 Having expressed his agreement with the answer, the king asked the sixth to reply to the question, To whom ought we to exhibit gratitude? And he replied, 'To our parents continually, for God has given us a most important commandment with regard to the honour due to parents. In the next place He reckons the attitude of friend towards friend for He speaks of "a friend which is as thine own soul". You do well in trying to bring all men into friendship with yourself.'
- 229 The king spoke kindly to him and then asked the next, What is it that resembles beauty in value? And he said, 'Piety, for it is the pre-eminent form of beauty, and its power lies in love, which is the gift of God. This you have already acquired and with it all the blessings of life.'
- 230 The king in the most gracious way applauded the answer and asked another How, if he were to fail, he could regain his reputation again in the same degree? And he said, 'It is not possible for you to fail, for you have sown in all men the seeds of gratitude which produce a harvest of goodwill, and this is mightier than the strongest weapons and guarantees the greatest security. But if any man does fail, he must never again do those things which caused his failure, but he must form friendships and act justly. For it is the gift of God to be able to do good actions and not the contrary.'
- 232 Delighted with these words, the king asked another How he could be free from grief? And he replied, 'If he never injured any one, but did good to everybody and followed the pathway of righteousness, for its fruits bring freedom from grief. But we must pray to God that unexpected evils such as death or disease or pain or anything of this kind may not come upon us and injure us. But since you are devoted to piety, no such misfortune will ever come upon you.'
- 234 The king bestowed great praise upon him and asked the tenth, What is the highest form of glory? And he said, 'To honour God, and this is done not with gifts and sacrifices but with purity of soul and holy conviction, since all things are fashioned and governed by God in accordance with His will. Of this purpose you are in constant possession as all men can see from your achievements in the past and in the present.'
- 235 With loud voice the king greeted them all and spoke kindly to them, and all those who were present expressed their approval, especially the philosophers. For they were far superior to them [i.e. the philosophers] both in conduct and in argument, since they always made God their starting-point. After this the king to show his good feeling proceeded to drink the health of his guests.
- 236 On the following day the same arrangements were made for the banquet, and the king, as soon as an opportunity occurred, began to put questions to the men who sat next to those who had already responded, and he said to the first 'Is wisdom capable of being taught?' And he said, 'The soul is so constituted that it is able by the divine power to receive all the good and reject the contrary.'
- 237 The king expressed approval and asked the next man, What is it that is most beneficial to health? And he said, 'Temperance, and it is not possible to acquire this unless God create a disposition towards it.'
- 238 The king spoke kindly to the man and said to another, 'How can a man worthily pay the debt of gratitude to his parents?' And he said, 'By never causing them pain, and this is not possible unless God dispose the mind to the pursuit of the noblest ends.'
- 239 The king expressed agreement and asked the next How he could become an eager listener? And he said, 'By remembering that all knowledge is useful, because it enables you by the help of God in

Thackeray suggests *καὶ καλῶν δώρων* (as above). Wendland conjectures *καὶ καλὴν δόξαν εἰληφέναι δῶρον*—'To win a fair reputation is the highest gift of God.'

227. To whom ought a man, reading with Wendland *πρὸς τίνα* for the MSS. *πῶς τινα*.

228. most important commandment. Exod. xx. 12.

a friend . . . as thine own soul, *ἵσον τῇ ψυχῇ τὸν φίλον*, quoted from the LXX of Deut. xiii. 6 *φίλος ἵσος τῆς ψυχῆς σου* (A τῇ ψυχῇ). For the use of the LXX see §§ 56-7, 87, 96-9.

236. The soul is so constituted, &c., or 'The soul is through God's power so adapted as to accept all that is good and to reject what is contrary thereto' (Thackeray). For the conception that Divine assistance is needed for the attainment of virtue see §§ 226, 238, 248.

- a time of emergency to select some of the things which you have learned and apply them to the crisis which confronts you. And so the efforts of men are fulfilled by the assistance of God.'
- 240 The king praised him and asked the next How he could avoid doing anything contrary to law? And he said, 'If you recognize that it is God who has put the thoughts into the hearts of the lawgivers that the lives of men might be preserved, you will follow them.'
- 241 The king acknowledged the man's answer and said to another, 'What is the advantage of kinship?' And he replied, 'If we consider that we ourselves are afflicted by the misfortunes which fall upon our relatives and if their sufferings become our own—then the strength of kinship is apparent at once, for it is only when such feeling is shown that we shall win honour and esteem in their eyes. For help, when it is linked with kindness, is of itself a bond which is altogether indissoluble. And in the day of their prosperity we must not crave their possessions, but must pray God to bestow all manner of good upon them.'
- 243 And having accorded to him the same praise as to the rest, the king asked another How he could attain freedom from fear? And he said, 'When the mind is conscious that it has wrought no evil, and when God directs it to all noble counsels.'
- 244 The king expressed his approval and asked another How he could always maintain a right judgement? And he replied, 'If he constantly set before his eyes the misfortunes which befall men and recognized that it is God who takes away prosperity *from some* and brings others to great honour and glory.'
- 245 The king gave a kindly reception to the man and asked the next to answer the question How he could avoid a life of ease and pleasure? And he replied, 'If he continually remembered that he was the ruler of a great empire and the lord of vast multitudes, and that his mind ought not to be occupied with other things, but he ought always to be considering how he could best promote their welfare. He must pray, too, to God that no duty might be neglected.'
- 246 Having bestowed praise upon him, the king asked the tenth How he could recognize those who were dealing treacherously with him? And he replied to the question, 'If he observed whether the bearing of those about him was natural and whether they maintained the proper rule of precedence at receptions and councils, and in their general intercourse, never going beyond the bounds of propriety in congratulations or in other matters of deportment. But God will incline your mind, O King, to all that is noble.' When the king had expressed his loud approval and praised them all individually (amid the plaudits of all who were present), they turned to the enjoyment of the feast.
- 248 And on the next day, when the opportunity offered, the king asked the next man, What is the grossest form of neglect? And he replied, 'If a man does not care for his children and devote every effort to their education. For we always pray to God not so much for ourselves as for our children that every blessing may be theirs. Our desire that our children may possess self-control is only realized by the power of God.'
- 249 The king said that he had spoken well and then asked another How he could be patriotic? 'By keeping before your mind,' he replied, 'the thought that it is good to live and die in one's own country. Residence abroad brings contempt upon the poor and shame upon the rich as though they had been banished for a crime. If you bestow benefits upon all, as you continually do, God will give you favour with all and you will be accounted patriotic.'
- 250 After listening to this man, the king asked the next in order How he could live amicably with his wife? And he answered, 'By recognizing that womankind are by nature headstrong and energetic in the pursuit of their own desires, and subject to sudden changes of opinion through fallacious reasoning, and their nature is essentially weak. It is necessary to deal wisely with them and not to provoke strife. For the successful conduct of life the steersman must know the goal toward which he ought to direct his course. It is only by calling upon the help of God that men can steer a true course of life at all times.'
- 252 The king expressed his agreement and asked the next How he could be free from error? And

239. **apply them to the crisis.** The text is uncertain. The MSS. read ἀνθυποτίθης πρὸς τὰ τῶν καιρῶν ἀντιπράσσειν, which is obviously corrupt. Thackeray renders 'that . . . bringing it to bear upon an emergency thou mayest counteract the events of critical times'.

242. **help, when it is linked,** τὸ γὰρ συνεργὲς ἐνδὼς γινόμενον. Some editors prefer τὸ γὰρ συγγενές, 'kinship.'

246. **natural, lit. 'free',** ἐλευθέριον.

If he observed whether. It is doubtful whether the sentence refers to the conduct of the king or the courtiers. If we read μηδὲν ὑπερβαίνοντα τοῦ δέοντος, we must adopt the latter alternative. If we read ὑπερβαίνειν, the former is just possible and we may translate, 'If he maintained a free bearing and constantly observed the proper rule of precedence at receptions, councils, and in his general intercourse with those about him and took care to avoid exceeding the bounds of propriety in his congratulations,' &c. The other reading and rendering, however, provides the best answer to the question.

248. **Our desire,** τὸ δὲ ἐπιδεῖσθαι παῖδια for the MSS. παιδείαν. Wendland also suggests that we should read ἐπιδεῖσθαι, 'But to live to see our children endowed with self-control is a gift,' &c.

- he replied, 'If you always act with deliberation and never give credence to slanders, but prove for yourself the things that are said to you and decide by your own judgement the requests which are made to you and carry out everything in the light of your judgement, you will be free from error, O King. But the knowledge and practice of these things is the work of the Divine power.'
- 253 Delighted with these words, the king asked another How he could be free from wrath? And he said in reply to the question, 'If he recognized that he had power over all even to inflict death upon them, if he gave way to wrath, and that it would be useless and pitiful if he, just because he was lord, 254 deprived many of life. What need was there for wrath, when all men were in subjection and no one was hostile to him? It is necessary to recognize that God rules the whole world in the spirit of kindness and without wrath at all, and you,' said he, 'O King, must of necessity copy His example.'
- 255 The king said that he had answered well and then inquired of the next man, What is good counsel? 'To act well at all times and with due reflection,' he explained, 'comparing *what is advantageous* to our own policy with the injurious effects that would result from the adoption of the opposite view, in order that by weighing every point we may be well advised and our purpose may be accomplished. And most important of all, by the power of God every plan of yours will find fulfilment because you practise piety.'
- 256 The king said that this man had answered well, and asked another What is philosophy? And he explained, 'To deliberate well in reference to any question that emerges and never to be carried away by impulses, but to ponder over the injuries that result from the passions, and to act rightly as the circumstances demand, practising moderation. But we must pray to God to instil into our mind a regard for these things.'
- 257 The king signified his consent and asked another How he could meet with recognition when travelling abroad? 'By being fair to all men,' he replied, 'and by appearing to be inferior rather than superior to those amongst whom he was travelling. For it is a recognized principle that God by His very nature accepts the humble. And the human race loves those who are willing to be in subjection to them.'
- 258 Having expressed his approval at this reply, the king asked another How he could build in such a way that his structures would endure after him? And he replied to the question, 'If his creations were on a great and noble scale, so that the beholders would spare them for their beauty, and if he never dismissed any of those who wrought such works and never compelled others to minister to his 259 needs without wages. For observing how God provides for the human race, granting them health and mental capacity and all other gifts, he himself should follow His example by rendering to men a recompense for their arduous toil. For it is the deeds that are wrought in righteousness that abide continually.'
- 260 The king said that this man, too, had answered well and asked the tenth, What is the fruit of wisdom? And he replied, 'That a man should be conscious in himself that he has wrought no evil 261 and that he should live his life in the truth. Since it is from these, O mighty King, that the greatest joy and steadfastness of soul and strong faith in God accrue to you if you rule your realm in piety.' And when they heard the answer they all shouted with loud acclaim, and afterwards the king in the fullness of his joy began to drink their healths.
- 262 And on the next day the banquet followed the same course as on previous occasions, and when the opportunity presented itself the king proceeded to put questions to the remaining guests, and 263 he said to the first, 'How can a man keep himself from pride?' And he replied, 'If he maintains equality and remembers on all occasions that he is a man ruling over men. And God brings the proud to nought, and exalts the meek and humble.'
- 264 The king spoke kindly to him and asked the next, Whom ought a man to select as his counsellors? and he replied, 'Those who have been tested in many affairs and maintain unmingled goodwill towards him and partake of his own disposition. And God manifests Himself to those who are worthy that these ends may be attained.'
- 265 The king praised him and asked another, What is the most necessary possession for a king? 'The friendship and love of his subjects,' he replied, 'for it is through this that the bond of goodwill is rendered indissoluble. And it is God who ensures that this may come to pass in accordance with 266 *your wish*.'
- 266 The king praised him and inquired of another, What is goal of speech? And he replied, 'To

255. *comparing what is advantageous*. The meaning is not clear. I follow Wendland in supplying the clause in italics. Thackeray translates, 'And while forming our decisions not neglecting to weigh [lit. comparing] the injurious effects of following the opposite view.'

257. *It is a recognized principle*, κοινὸν. Thackeray takes the word with the latter clause only: 'the human race commonly loves,' &c.

- convince your opponent by showing him his mistakes in a well-ordered array of arguments. For in this way you will win your hearer, not by opposing him, but by bestowing praise upon him with a view to persuading him. And it is by the power of God that persuasion is accomplished.'
- 267 The king said that he had given a good answer, and asked another How he could live amicably with the many different races who formed the population of his kingdom? 'By acting the proper part towards each,' he replied, 'and taking righteousness as your guide, as you are now doing with the help of the insight which God bestows upon you.'
- 268 The king was delighted by this reply, and asked another 'Under what circumstances ought a man to suffer grief?' 'In the misfortunes that befall our friends,' he replied, 'when we see that they are protracted and irremediable. Reason does not allow us to grieve for those who are dead and set free from evil, but all men do grieve *over them* because they think only of themselves and their own advantage. It is by the power of God alone that we can escape all evil.'
- 269 The king said that he had given a fitting answer, and asked another, How is reputation lost? And he replied, 'When pride and unbounded self-confidence hold sway, dishonour and loss of reputation are engendered. For God is the Lord of all reputation and bestows it where He will.'
- 270 The king gave his confirmation to the answer, and asked the next man, To whom ought men to entrust themselves? 'To those,' he replied, 'who serve you from goodwill and not from fear or self-interest, thinking only of their own gain. For the one is the sign of love, the other the mark of ill-will and time-serving. For the man who is always watching for his own gain is a traitor at heart. But you possess the affection of all your subjects by the help of the good counsel which God bestows upon you.'
- 271 The king said that he had answered wisely, and asked another, What is it that keeps a kingdom safe? And he replied to the question, 'Care and forethought that no evil may be wrought by those who are placed in a position of authority over the people, and this you always do by the help of God who inspires you with grave judgement'.
- 272 The king spoke words of encouragement to him, and asked another, What is it that maintains gratitude and honour? And he replied, 'Virtue, for it is the creator of good deeds, and by it evil is destroyed, even as you exhibit nobility of character towards all by the gift which God bestows upon you.'
- 273 The king graciously acknowledged the answer and asked the eleventh (since there were two more than seventy), How he could in time of war maintain tranquillity of soul? And he replied, 'By remembering that he had done no evil to any of his subjects, and that all would fight for him in return for the benefits which they had received, knowing that even if they lose their lives, you will care for those dependent on them. For you never fail to make reparation to any—such is the kind-heartedness with which God has inspired you.' The king loudly applauded them all and spoke very kindly to them and then drank a long draught to the health of each, giving himself up to enjoyment, and lavishing the most generous and joyous friendship upon his guests.
- 275 On the seventh day much more extensive preparations were made, and many others were present from the different cities (among them a large number of ambassadors). When an opportunity occurred, the king asked the first of those who had not yet been questioned How he could avoid being deceived by fallacious reasoning? and he replied, 'By noticing carefully the speaker, the thing spoken, and the subject under discussion, and by putting the same questions again after an interval in different forms. But to possess an alert mind and to be able to form a sound judgement in every case is one of the good gifts of God, and you possess it, O King.'
- 277 The king loudly applauded the answer and asked another, Why is it that the majority of men never become virtuous? 'Because,' he replied, 'all men are by nature intemperate and inclined to pleasure. Hence, injustice springs up and a flood of avarice. The habit of virtue is a hindrance to those who are devoted to a life of pleasure because it enjoins upon them the preference of temperance and righteousness. For it is God who is the master of these things.'
- 279 The king said that he had answered well, and asked, What ought kings to obey? And he said, 'The laws, in order that by righteous enactments they may restore the lives of men. Even as you

266. by showing him his mistakes, &c., or 'pointing out his errors by means of the chain of arguments which he has formulated' (Thackeray).

273. in return for the benefits, or 'for the glory of rendering thee service' (Thackeray).
for those dependent on them, τῶν βίον, or 'for their welfare' (Thackeray).

277. by nature intemperate. Aristeas has no developed doctrine of original sin but he lays stress on the natural bias or *yesei* in human nature, cp. § 108, 222 f. His clear enunciation of this view is remarkable, because there is little reference to the *yesei* in Alexandrian literature. Tennant says that he is unable to find 'any certain proof that the *yesei* doctrine was adopted by the Alexandrian' (*The Fall and Original Sin*, p. 138). It is of course common in Sirach and Palestinian literature.

by such conduct in obedience to the Divine command have laid up in store for yourself a perpetual memorial.'

- 280 The king said that this man, too, had spoken well, and asked the next, Whom ought we to appoint as governors? And he replied, 'All who hate wickedness, and imitating your own conduct act righteously that they may maintain a good reputation constantly. For this is what you do, O mighty King,' he said, 'and it is God who has bestowed upon you the crown of righteousness.'
- 281 The king loudly acclaimed the answer and then looking at the next man said, 'Whom ought we to appoint as officers over the forces?' And he explained, 'Those who excel in courage and righteousness and those who are more anxious about the safety of their men than to gain a victory by **risking** their lives through rashness. For as God acts well towards all men, so too you in imitation of Him are the benefactor of all your subjects.'
- 282 The king said that he had given a good answer and asked another, What man is worthy of admiration? And he replied, 'The man who is furnished with reputation and wealth and power and possesses a soul equal to it all. You yourself show by your actions that you are most worthy of admiration through the help of God who makes you care for these things.'
- 283 The king expressed his approval and said to another 'To what affairs ought kings to devote most time?' And he replied, 'To reading and the *study* of the records of official journeys, which are written in reference to the *various* kingdoms, with a view to the reformation and preservation of the subjects. And it is by such activity that you have attained to a glory which has never been approached by others, through the help of God who fulfils all your desires.'
- 284 The king spoke enthusiastically to the man and asked another How ought a man to occupy himself during his hours of relaxation and recreation? And he replied, 'To watch those plays which can be acted with propriety and to set before one's eyes scenes taken from life and enacted with dignity and decency is **profitable and appropriate**. For there is some edification to be found even in these amusements, for often some desirable lesson is taught by the most insignificant affairs of life. But by practising the utmost propriety in all your actions, you have shown that you are a philosopher and you are honoured by God on account of your virtue.'
- 285 The king, pleased with the words which had just been spoken, said to the ninth man, How ought a man to conduct himself at banquets? And he replied, 'You should summon to your side men of learning and those who are able to give you **useful hints** with regard to the affairs of your kingdom and the lives of your subjects (for you could not find any theme more suitable or more
- 286 educational than this) since such men are dear to God because they have trained their minds to contemplate the noblest themes—as you indeed are doing yourself, since all your actions are directed by God.'
- 287 Delighted with the reply, the king inquired of the next man, What is best for the people? That a private citizen should be made king **over** them or a member of the royal family? And he
- 288 replied, 'He who is best by nature. For kings who come of royal lineage are often harsh and severe towards their subjects. And still more is this the case with some of those who have risen from the ranks of private citizens, who after having experienced evil and borne their share of
- 289 poverty, when they rule over multitudes turn out to be more cruel than the godless tyrants. But, as I have said, a good nature which has been properly trained is capable of ruling, and you are a great king, not so much because you excel in the glory of your rule and your wealth but rather because you have surpassed all men in clemency and philanthropy, thanks to God who has endowed you with these qualities.'
- 290 The king spent some time in praising this man and then asked the last of all, What is the

280. crown of righteousness, cf. 2 Tim. iv. 8. The phrase is also found in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (T. Levi viii. 1) where it is used of the crown of the High Priest.

281. **risking**. MSS. read περιβάλλοντας, which Schmidt has emended into παραβάλλοντας.

282. **possesses a soul equal to it all**, or 'yet inwardly regards himself as on an equality with all men' (Thackeray).

who makes you care, διδόντος εἰς ταῦτα τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν. This is the reading of the MSS., but Wendland prefers to emend ἐπιμέλειαν into ἐπιτέλειαν. 'Who grants you the capacity for attaining these things.'

283. **the records of official journeys**. Illustrations of these travel-diaries or *acta diurna* are to be found in the Papyri as Wendland points out. See Wilcken, article on ὑπομνηματισμοί in *Philologus*, liii. 80 ff.

written in reference to the kingdoms. Mendelssohn reads τοὺς βασιλείς for τὰς βασιλείας, 'written for kings.'

284. **is profitable and appropriate**, following the suggestion of Mendelssohn to read βίῳ σύμφωρον καὶ καθήκον for the MSS. βιοῖ (βιοῖς) σωφρονῶν καὶ κατέχων, which cannot be translated without infringing the canons of Greek syntax.

286. **give you useful hints**, reading with Wendland χρήσιμα for χρήματα.

more suitable or . . . educative, ἐμμελέστερον ἢ μουσικώτερον. Thackeray renders 'No more harmonious or sweeter music could'st thou find'.

288. **king over them**, reading ἐπ' αὐτῶν (Wendland) for ἐν' αὐτῶν 'appointed by them'.

He who is best, reading τὸν ἀρίστον (with Schmidt) for τὸ ἀρίστον.

291. **some time**. Wendland attaches this phrase to the previous clause.

- greatest achievement in ruling an empire? And he replied, 'That the subjects should continually dwell in a state of peace, and that justice should be speedily administered in cases of dispute.
- 292 These results are achieved through the influence of the ruler, when he is a man who hates evil and loves the good and devotes his energies to saving the lives of men, just as you consider injustice the worst form of evil and by your just administration have fashioned for yourself an undying reputation, since God bestows upon you a mind which is pure and untainted by any evil.'
- 293 And when he ceased, loud and joyful applause broke out for some considerable time. When it stopped the king took a cup and gave a toast in honour of all his guests and the words which they had uttered. Then in conclusion he said, 'I have derived the greatest benefit from your presence.
- 294 I have profited much by the wise teaching which you have given me in reference to the art of ruling.' Then he ordered that three talents of silver should be presented to each of them, and appointed one of his slaves to deliver over the money. All at once shouted their approval, and the banquet became a scene of joy, while the king gave himself up to a continuous round of festivity.
- 295 I have written at length and must crave your pardon, Philocrates. I was astonished beyond measure at the men and the way in which on the spur of the moment they gave answers which
- 296 really needed a long time to devise. For though the questioner had given great thought to each particular question, those who replied one after the other had their answers to the questions ready at once and so they seemed to me and to all who were present and especially to the philosophers to be worthy of admiration. And I suppose that the thing will seem incredible to those who will
- 297 read my narrative in the future. But it is unseemly to misrepresent facts which are recorded in the public archives. And it would not be right for me to transgress in such a matter as this. I tell the story just as it happened, conscientiously avoiding any error. I was so impressed by the force of their utterances, that I made an effort to consult those whose business it was to make
- 298 a record of all that happened at the royal audiences and banquets. For it is the custom, as you know, from the moment the king begins to transact business until the time when he retires to rest, for a record to be taken of all his sayings and doings—a most excellent and useful arrangement.
- 299 For on the following day the minutes of the doings and sayings of the previous day are read over before business commences, and if there has been any irregularity, the matter is at once set right.
- 300 I obtained therefore, as has been said, accurate information from the public records, and I have set forth the facts in proper order since I know how eager you are to obtain useful information.
- 301 Three days later Demetrius took the men and passing along the sea-wall, seven stadia long, to the island, crossed the bridge and made for the northern districts of Pharos. There he assembled them in a house, which had been built upon the sea-shore, of great beauty and in a secluded situation, and invited them to carry out the work of translation, since everything that they needed for the purpose
- 302 was placed at their disposal. So they set to work comparing their several results and making them agree, and whatever they agreed upon was suitably copied out under the direction of Demetrius.
- 303 And the session lasted until the ninth hour; after this they were set free to minister to their physical
- 304 needs. Everything they wanted was furnished for them on a lavish scale. In addition to this Dorotheus made the same preparations for them daily as were made for the king himself—for thus he had been commanded by the king. In the early morning they appeared daily at the Court, and
- 305 after saluting the king went back to their own place. And as is the custom of all the Jews, they washed their hands in the sea and prayed to God and then devoted themselves to reading and
- 306 translating the particular passage upon which they were engaged, and I put the question to them, Why it was that they washed their hands before they prayed? And they explained that it was a token that they had done no evil (for every form of activity is wrought by means of the hands) since in their noble and holy way they regard everything as a symbol of righteousness and truth.

295. I have written at length, εἰπα πλείονα. Mendelssohn suggests εἰ πεπλέονα ('if I have been too prolix') and this emendation is accepted by Wendland and Thackeray.

297. I was so impressed, or 'after hearing with approval at their own mouth their powers of speech' (Thackeray). For the allusion to the recorders see Wilcken's article mentioned in § 283.

298. from the moment. The MSS. read ἀφ' ἧς ἂν ἡμέρας for which Mendelssohn reads ὥρας. Probably, as Thackeray suggests, the original text ran ἀφ' ἧς ἂν ὁ βασιλεὺς ἀρχῇται with an ellipse of ὥρας (cp. Luke vii. 45) and ἡμέρας is an interpolation.

300. from the public records, or 'from the keepers of the public records' (Thackeray).

301. the sea-wall. The Heptastadion or breakwater which connected Alexandria with the island of Pharos and divided the bay into two main harbours. See the description in Strabo, xvii. 6. 792, and Botti's map of Alexandria in Mahaffy's *Ptolemaic Dynasty*.

302. making them agree. Contrast the later traditions which represent the agreement as supernatural. See Introduction ix on Pseudo-Justin, *Cohortatio ad Graecos*, Irenaeus, Clement of Alex. and Epiphanius.

304. Dorotheus is represented in § 182 as the special officer appointed to look after the needs of Jewish guests.

305. they washed their hands. For the Jewish customs of purification see Schürer, *ET*, ii. 2. 109; the *Sibylline Oracles*, iii. 591, and the references in the New Test.: Matt. xv. 2, xxiii. 25, 26; Mark vii. 2-5; Luke xi. 38, 39.

306. every form of activity. Thackeray compares the statement of Aristobulus (ap. Eusebius, *PE*, viii. 10. 377 a)

- 307 As I have already said, they met together daily in the place which was delightful for its quiet and its brightness and applied themselves to their task. And it so chanced that the work of translation was completed in seventy-two days, just as if this had been arranged of set purpose.
- 308 When the work was completed, Demetrius collected together the Jewish population in the place where the translation had been made, and read it over to all, in the presence of the translators, who met with a great reception also from the people, because of the great benefits which they had conferred upon them. They bestowed warm praise upon Demetrius, too, and urged him to have the whole law transcribed and present a copy to their leaders.
- 310 After the books had been read, the priests and the elders of the translators and the Jewish community and the leaders of the people stood up and said, that since so excellent and sacred and accurate a translation had been made, it was only right that it should remain as it was and no alteration should be made in it. And when the whole company expressed their approval, they bade them pronounce a curse in accordance with their custom upon any one who should make any alteration either by adding anything or changing in any way whatever any of the words which had been written or making any omission. This was a very wise precaution to ensure that the book might be preserved for all the future time unchanged.
- 312 When the matter was reported to the king, he rejoiced greatly, for he felt that the design which he had formed had been safely carried out. The whole book was read over to him and he was greatly astonished at the spirit of the lawgiver. And he said to Demetrius, 'How is it that none of the historians or the poets have ever thought it worth their while to allude to such a wonderful achievement?' And he replied, 'Because the law is sacred and of divine origin. And some of those who formed the intention of dealing with it have been smitten by God and therefore desisted from their purpose.' He said that he had heard from Theopompus that he had been driven out of his mind for more than thirty days because he intended to insert in his history some of the incidents from the earlier and somewhat unreliable translations of the law. When he had recovered a little, he besought God to make it clear to him why the misfortune had befallen him. And it was revealed to him in a dream, that from idle curiosity he was wishing to communicate sacred truths to common men, and that if he desisted he would recover his health. I have heard, too, from the lips of Theodektes, one of the tragic poets, that when he was about to adapt some of the incidents recorded in the book for one of his plays, he was affected with cataract in both his eyes. And when

ὅστε αἱ χεῖρες ἐπὶ δυνάμει νοοῦνται θεοῦ. καὶ γὰρ ἔστι νοῆσαι τὴν πᾶσαν ἰσχύϊ τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ τὰς ἐνεργείας ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν εἶναι. Cp. also the reference to the *Tephilla*, § 159.

310. the Jewish community, τῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ πολιτεύματος. Though the Jews enjoyed the rights of citizenship at Alexandria, they nevertheless formed an independent and separate community within the city. This community, as Strabo (quoted by Josephus, *Ant.* xiv. 7. 2) tells us, was presided over by an ἐθνάρχης, 'who governs the people and administers justice among them and sees that they fulfil their obligations and obey orders just like the archon of an independent city.' The use of the term πολιτεύματα for the Jewish community is confirmed by the Berenice inscription quoted by Schürer, *ET*, ii. 2. 246. It is rather striking that there should be no allusion to the ethnarch in the present passage, and that the term πρεσβύτεροι should be used in connexion both with the translators and the community. It almost looks as if the word 'ethnarch' had accidentally dropped out.

311. They bade them, so Eusebius. The MSS. of Aristeas read 'He (i.e. Demetrius) gave orders' in accordance with their custom, cf. Deut. iv. 2, xii. 32; Rev. xxii. 18f. Possibly this statement may point to the fact that at the time when the Epistle was written, the text of the LXX had begun to be tampered with. We know that corruptions had crept into the text as early as the time of Philo, and Justin Martyr charges the Jewish authorities with the deliberate excision of many passages; see Swete, *Introduction*, pp. 478-9.

314. Theopompus, a Greek historian and rhetorician, born c. 380 B.C. at Chios. He became the pupil of Isocrates, who advised him to devote himself to writing history. He lived under the protection of Alexander, and after his death was expelled from Chios: he went to Egypt about 305 B.C., but was coldly received by Ptolemy I. Among the writings ascribed to him are *The Hellenica*, *The Epitome of Herodotus*, *The History of Philip*, and several panegyrics and hortatory addresses, the chief of which is *The Letter to Alexander*. The papyrus fragment of a Greek historian discovered by Grenfell and Hunt is regarded by some authorities as an extract from the *Hellenica* (*Oxyrhynchus Papy.* V, 1908). He is described (*Phot. Cod.* 176) as a busybody (πολυπράγμων), which gives point to the περιεργασάμενος of § 315. Theopompus' writings seem to have been characterized by a pretentious and turgid rhetoric, and a fondness for sensational stories. The fragments which remain of his works are collected in Müller, *Frag. Hist. Graec.* i, and in *The Fragments of Theopompus and Cratippus* (Oxford, 1909).

earlier and... unreliable translations, τινὰ τῶν προηρηνημένων ἐπισφαλέστερον ἐκ τοῦ νόμου προσιστορεῖν. I follow Wendland in taking ἐπισφαλέστερον with προηρηνημένων. Thackeray, however, takes it with προσιστορεῖν and translates, 'when he was too rashly intending to introduce into his history some of the incidents from the law which had previously been translated.' For the reference to Greek translations earlier than the LXX, see note on § 30.

316. Theodektes (c. 380-340 B.C.), Greek rhetorician and tragic poet, pupil of Isocrates and Plato and friend of Aristotle, lived the greater part of his life at Athens. He is said to have been defeated by Theopompus in the contest for the oratorical prize arranged by Artemisia, though he won the prize for tragedy. He is said to have been victorious eight times out of thirteen dramatic contests. The fragments of his works are collected in Nauck (*Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, 1887). See monograph by C. F. Märker (Breslau, 1835), and article in Smith, *Dict. Gr. and Rom. Biog.*

in the book. As Thackeray says, 'This seems to be the earliest use of ἡ βιβλος for a collection of sacred writings.'

he perceived the reason why the misfortune had befallen him, he prayed to God for many days and was afterwards restored.

- 317 And after the king, as I have already said, had received the explanation of Demetrius on this point, he did homage and ordered that great care should be taken of the books, and that they should
318 be sacredly guarded. And he urged the translators to visit him frequently after their return to Judea, for it was only right, he said, that he should now send them home. But when they came back, he
319 would treat them as friends, as was right, and they would receive rich presents from him. He ordered preparations to be made for them to return home, and treated them most munificently. He presented each one of them with three robes of the finest sort, two talents of gold, a sideboard weighing one talent, all the furniture for three couches.
- 320 And with the escort he sent Eleazar ten couches with silver legs and all the necessary equipment, a sideboard worth thirty talents, ten robes, purple, and a magnificent crown, and a hundred pieces of the finest woven linen, also bowls and dishes, and two golden beakers to be dedicated to God.
- 321 He urged him also in a letter that if any of the men preferred to come back to him, not to hinder them. For he counted it a great privilege to enjoy the society of such learned men, and he would rather lavish his wealth upon them than upon vanities.
- 322 And now Philocrates, you have the complete story in accordance with my promise. I think that you find greater pleasure in these matters than in the writings of the mythologists. For you are devoted to the study of those things which can benefit the soul, and spend much time upon it. I shall attempt to narrate whatever other events are worth recording, that by perusing them you may secure the highest reward for your zeal.

We have elsewhere βίβλος or βιβλίον διαθήκης (Ecclus. xxiv. 23; 1 Macc. i. 57), τὰ βιβλία τοῦ νόμου (1 Macc. i. 56) τὰ βιβλία τὰ ἅγια (1 Macc. xii. 9). It is possible, however, that the reference to the τὴν ἱερὰν βίβλον in 2 Macc. viii. 23 may be earlier. Cp. also the allusion to the line as Scripture, διὰ τῆς γραφῆς in § 168.

318. they would receive rich presents, καὶ πολυδωρίας τῆς μεγίστης τεύξεσθαι. For πολυδωρίας (MSS. and Joseph.) Mahaffy (*Class. Rev.* viii. 349) suggests πολυωρίας, which is adopted by Wendland and Thackeray, 'They would meet with the utmost consideration at his hands.'

319, 320. a sideboard. The MSS. read κυλίκιον (in both paragraphs), which generally means goblet or beaker. Wendland suggests κυλικεῖον—side-board. 'The form κυλίκιον, however, occurs in 1 Macc. xv. 32, where a piece of furniture for supporting vessels is clearly intended, and that is probably the meaning here' (Thackeray).