The main object of this paper is to point out the fact—hitherto, I believe, unnoticed—that in Col. i 16-18 St Paul is giving an elaborate exposition of the first word in Genesis, יְרֵשִׁית בְּרֵאשִׁית, and interpreting יְרֵשִׁית as referring to Christ. This interpretation depends, as we shall see, upon an inferred connexion between יְרֵשִׁית of Gen. i 1 and the same term applied to Wisdom personified in Prov. viii 22, יְרֵשִׁית אֱלֹהִים יְרֵשִׁית־דָּרְקָו—a passage to which there is obvious reference in πρωτόκος πάσης κτίσεως in Col. i 15. Since the interpretation of Prov. viii 22 has raised greater controversy than that of almost any other passage in the O. T., and is still in some degree unsettled, we shall do well to begin with a discussion of it.

Interpretation of Prov. viii 22.

The renderings of A.V. and R.V. are identical:

The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way,
Before his works of old.

R.V., however, adds the marginal alternatives 'formed' for 'possessed', 'as' (the beginning) for 'in' (the beginning), 'The first of' for 'Before'.

Meaning of יָרֵשִׁית.

In the first place, the fact needs emphasis that the verb יָרֵשִׁית קָנָה always seems to possess the sense 'get, acquire', never the sense 'possess, own' simply, apart from the idea of possessing something which has been acquired in one way or another. This clearly appears from examination of the usages of the verb in Hebrew, and through comparison of the cognate languages.

There are (if my computation is correct) 88 occurrences of the verb in the Hebrew Bible and the Hebrew text of Ecclesiasticus. The various shades of meaning which it has may be classified as follows:—

1. 'Buy', Gen. xxv 10, xxxiii 19, xxxix 1, xlvii 19, 20, 22, 23, xlix 30,

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1 13; Ex. xxi 2; Lev. xxii 11, xxv 14, 15, 28, 30, 44, 45, 59, xxvii 24; Deut. xxviii 68; Josh. xxiv 32; 2 Sam. xii 3, xxiv 21, 24; 1 Kings xvi 24; 2 Kings xii 13, xxvi 6; Isa. xxiv 2, xliii 24; Jer. xiii 1, 2, 4, xix 1, xxii 7 bis, 9, 15, 25, 43, 44; Ezek. vii 12; Am. vii 6; Zech. xi 5, xiii 5 (s.v.1); Prov. xx 14; Ru. iv 4, 5; 8; Eccles. ii 7; Neh. v 8, 16; 1 Chron. xxi 24 bis; 2 Chron. xxxiv 11; Ecclus. xxxvii 11. Total 60.

2. 'Own' (by right of purchase), Isa. i 3 ('The ox knoweth its owner'). Gesenius (Thesaurus, s.v.) also includes under this head Lev. xxv 30; Zech. xi 5; but seeing that in both these passages there is an antithesis between nip and ḫōd 'sell', it is clear that the sense 'buy' is intended, and that they belong to the first category, where we have included them. Total 1.

3. 'Acquire' (otherwise than by purchase). 'Get' wisdom, &c., by application of the mind and will, Prov. i 5, iv 5 bis, 7 bis, xv 32, xvi 16 bis, xvii 16, xviii 15, xix 8, xxiii 23; Ecclus. li 20, 21, 25, 28. Of these passages Prov. xxiii 23 ('Get truth, and sell it not') shows that the metaphor of buying is in the writer's mind. 'Get' a wife, Ecclus. xxxvi 29. Of Yahweh's acquiring Israel, Ex. xv 16; Isa. xi 11, Ps. lxiv 22; obj. 'the hill' of Zion, Ps. lxviii 54. Total 21.

4. (a) 'Beget', Deut. xxii 6 ('Is He not thy Father that begat thee? He made thee and established thee'). (b) 'Get' (by bearing), Gen. iv 1 ('I have gotten a man with [the help of] Yahweh'). The verb is here chosen to explain the name ḫōyān. Total 2.

5. 'Create', Gen. xiv 19, 22 ('Creator of heaven and earth'), Ps. cxxxix 13 ('For thou hast formed my reins'). Total 3.

These, with Prov. vii 22 (where the meaning of the verb must for the present be considered ambiguous), make up the sum total of 88.

To make this evidence complete we must briefly notice the usages of substantives derived from the root. These are—

 Penis kinyān. 1. 'Acquisition' (by purchase), Lev. xxii 11. 2. 'Property' (as acquired), Gen. xxxiv 23, xxxvi 6; Josh. xiv 4; Ezek. xxxvii 12, 13; Ps. cv 21.

3. 'Act of acquiring', Gen. xxxi 18; Prov. iv 7. 4. 'Creation', i.e. collectively 'creatures' (parallel to Penis 'Thy works'), Ps. civ 24.

 Penis miṅnu. 1. 'Object purchased', Gen. xviii 12, 13, 23, 27, xxiii 18. 2. 'Act of purchase', Lev. xxvii 22; Jer. xxxvii 11, 12 bis, 14, 16. 3. 'Purchase-price', Lev. xxv 16 bis, 51.

 Penis miṅnē. 'Property', more especially such as consists in cattle. This is very frequent. That the underlying conception is that of something acquired (cf. κτήμας from κτάμαι) is clear from Gen. xlix 32, 'The purchase of the field (i.e. the purchased field) and the cave that is in it from the sons of Heth' (to secure a good sequence in English R.V.

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transposes, 'The field, &c., that was purchased from the children of Heth'.

To this evidence for the Hebrew usage of the verb רָעַם it is important for our purpose to add the proper name אֵלֶּהָנָא, which can hardly mean anything else than ' (He whom) God has begotten or created'. Whether קָנָא here has the sense 'beget' or 'create' is ambiguous. If the former, the name is analogous to the frequent proper names compounded with בָּע 'father' in reference to the Deity, e. g. Abiel 'My Father is God', Abijah 'My Father is Yah' (cf. in Babylonian such names as סֵמאָש-אֲבֻע 'The Sun-god is father', סֵינ-אָבּו 'The Moon-god is his father'); if the latter, we may compare אֵלֶּה, 'Asâhel 'God-made' (sc. the bearer of the name), 'Asaiah 'Yah made', Ya'asiel 'Yah maker' (cf. in Babylonian the frequent names compounded with בָּאָנ 'creator', e. g. Anum-bââni, Sin-bââni, סֵמאָש-בָּאָנ 'The god Anu or Sin or סֵמאָש is creator', ìlušu-bââni 'His god is creator', ìlušu-ibni 'His god created', ìlušu-ibnišu 'His god created him').

Elkana in O.T. is the name of several persons, being borne by the father of Samuel (1 Sam. i f), one of David's warriors (1 Chr. xii 6), a high official in the time of Ahaz (2 Chr. xxviii 7), a son of Korah (Exod. vi 24), and several Levites (1 Chr. vi 8, 10, 11, 20, 21, ix 16, xv 23). The repeated occurrence of the name over a widespread period is important as proving that the verb רָעַם in the sense 'beget' or 'create' was well known in popular usage, and not an uncommon usage as might be inferred from the few cases which we are able to cite (רָעַם verb 4 and 5, and קִנְיָן subst. 4).

In face of this evidence we must surely conclude that the ground-meaning of קָנָא is that of acquiring something not previously possessed, which may be done by buying or making it, in the case of a child by begetting it, in the case of wisdom by accumulating it through mental application. The single instance of the verb in the sense 'own' (Isa. i 3), in which there seems to be no perceptible stress upon the act of acquiring, is no evidence in proof that קָנָא ever means to possess in a sense which excludes the idea of previous acquisition. The ox of the passage in question is far from being inseparable from the man who owns it. There was a time when it did not belong to him; therefore, when Hebrew speaks of its owner, it uses a term which properly means 'he who has acquired it' (נָא). This is also true of the substantival forms derived from קָנָא which bear the sense of property or possessions. The underlying idea is always that of acquired property. The Hebrew קָנָא, in fact, in so far as it contains the idea of possessing, is exactly like the Greek κτάσμα (in the perfect), and the substantives derived from it like κτήμα. A man's money, furniture, children, knowledge, are

1 Cf. instances of these names cited in Thureau-Dangin Lettres et Contrats de l'époque de la Première Dynastie babylonnaise.
kinyanìm or kṭ rumpe because he has come to possess them; his legs and arms, for example, are not kinyanìm or kṭ rumpe because they are inseparable from our idea of him as a complete man—there never was a time when he did not possess them. Of course if we shifted our point of view, and regarded the man as a pre-existing spiritual entity subsequently endowed with a body, we might think of his body as a kinyan or kṭ yma, since thus the body and its members would be pictured as acquired property.

_Evidence from the cognate languages as to the meaning of הָקָא._

This conclusion as to the ground-conception of the verb הָקָא in Biblical Hebrew is borne out by the usage of the same root in the cognate languages.

In New Hebrew the meaning of הָקָא, הָקָא is ‘acquire, buy’, and also ‘create’. Cf. _Rosh ha-shana_ 31 a, 'On the first day what (Psalms) do they recite? “The earth is the Lord’s” (Ps. xxiv); because He created His world and gave it in possession, and is ruler over it.’ Here הָקָא means literally ‘acquired (by creation) and caused (men) to acquire (it)’. Cf. other instances of the use of the verb in _Levy Neuheb. u. chald. Wörterbuch_, s.v.

Aramaic נַפַע, Syriac נָפַע kēna corresponds in usage precisely with Hebrew. The O.T. occurrences of Hebrew kēna are regularly reproduced by kēna in the Targums and the Peshītța,1 and in addition Heb. נַפַע rākash ‘gather property’ is rendered by kēna in the Aramaic versions (Gen. xii 5, xxxi 18, xxxvi 6, xlvi 6), and שֶׁבֶר ‘(gathered) property’ normally by kīnāna (niksin ‘riches’, s’gullā ‘treasure’ also occur as renderings). The N.T. and patristic occurrences of נַפַע exhibit the same usage (cf. Payne Smith _Thesaurus_, s.v.).

Arabic نَا kānā means ‘to acquire’ (e.g. sheep or goats) for a permanent possession, not for sale (Lane, Supplement to _Dict._), and in conjugation VIII ‘to possess’ property so acquired. The verb may also have the sense ‘create’ (Kamus, p. 1937,قناء الله خلفه).

In Sabaean votive inscriptions the causative נַפַע haknt is the regular term for ‘dedicate’; i.e. ‘cause to acquire’; cf. _CIS._ iv nos. 2, 3, 30, 37, 75, 77–91, &c. In _ib._ no. 37 we find the simple stem, . . . הָקָא גַּפַּע . . . והָקָא עַזִּי, ‘and his riparian property . . . which he acquired and made’. The subst. נַפַע means ‘property’; _ib._ nos. 3, 29, 37.

1 Exceptions are Prov. viii 22, where both Targ. and Pesh. use the verb נוּב ‘created’ (see below on the Versions), and Deut. xxxii 6 where Targ. Onkelos paraphrases הָקָא ‘who begat thee’ by תַּמַּע ‘and thou art His’, doubtless in order to obviate the anthropomorphism of the original.
Ethiopic ḫanāyā. Dillmann (Lex., cols. 44-78) gives as meanings (1) 'Acquire, purchase', citing Am. viii 6, ‘To buy the poor for silver’; (2) ‘Subject to one’s power, reduce to servitude’; (3) ‘Impose labour, drive to work’. He makes no mention of a sense ‘possess’ in Ethiopic.

In Babylonian the verb ḫanā seems to be infrequent. Meissner, however, quotes two instances of it (Supplement, p. 85); amar ša abāa [ina] willi barri iš-nu-u-ni intaiced, ‘All that my father acquired under the protection of the king he has taken away’ (K. 1101, 16; Harper Letters no. 152); ekī kirti niše ša ina willi iš-nu-u, ‘The fields, gardens, (and) slaves which under my protection they acquired’ (BA. 2, 566, 24). Here we might perhaps render ‘owned’ in place of ‘acquired’; yet still the reference would be to the owning of wealth acquired during a period of prosperity.

**Importance of recognizing that the sense ‘acquire’ is inseparable from ḫanā.**

The evidence adduced above as to the meaning of ḫānā is familiar to competent Hebrew scholars, and the conclusion which we have drawn as to its invariable ground-conception would hardly be called in question by them. The reason why it has seemed desirable to marshal the facts in such fullness is that, in the controversy which has raged round ḥānā in Prov. viii 22, they have not been rightly apprehended by theologians, either in the past or in modern times. Thus, for example, Dr Liddon in his Bampton Lectures (Lect. ii, 13th ed. pp. 61 f.) states that ‘modern critics know that if we are to be guided by the clear certain sense of the Hebrew root, we shall read “possessed”, and not “created”, and they admit without difficulty that the Wisdom is uncreated by and co-eternal with the Lord Jehovah’. He adds in a foot-note that ‘the current meaning of the word is “to acquire” or “possess”, as is proved by its certain sense in the great majority of cases where it is used’. Here it is clear that he fails to recognize the sharp distinction which exists between the meaning ‘acquire’ and the meaning ‘possess’ with the force in which he postulates it, viz. ‘possess’ in a sense which not only ignores the idea of preliminary acquisition, but is actually to be understood as excluding such an idea. But, if our argument has been sound, this distinction forms the crux of the question. The idea of creation is closely connected with the idea of acquisition as being one form of it; whereas the idea of possession without acquisition stands sharply apart.

1 Similar statements as to the incorrectness of the rendering ‘created’, and the correctness of ‘possessed’, are made by Newman Select Treatises of St Athanasius ii p. 270; Ottley Incarnation i p. 305.
and cannot, as we have seen, be substantiated for a single occurrence of the verb.

We are justified, therefore, in concluding that יִבְגָּל לָבָא cannot rightly be rendered 'possessed me', but must have the meaning 'gat me' in some sense still to be determined. Now the idea of buying or acquiring from an outside source may clearly be excluded without argument, since Wisdom is certainly not pictured as something originally external to God. We thus have to choose between the two meanings 'created' or 'begat'.

Does יִבְגָּל לָבָא mean 'created me' or 'begat me'?  
Meaning of יִבְגָּל לָבָא in following verses.

Our decision must be guided by the meaning which we attach to the verbs descriptive of the production of Wisdom in the immediate sequel, Prov. viii 23-25. These are יִבְגָּל לָבָא nissakiti in v. 23, יִבְגָּל לָבָא holalti twice in vs. 24, 25. There is no variation between the renderings of A.V. and R.V. in these verses.

23. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning,  
Or ever the earth was.

24. When there were no depths, I was brought forth;  
When there were no fountains abounding with water.

25. Before the mountains were settled,  
Before the hills was I brought forth.

Now we observe that, while there is no doubt at all as to the meaning of יִבְגָּל לָבָא—'I was brought to the birth' or 'was travailed with', there is more than a doubt whether יִבְגָּל לָבָא is correctly rendered 'I was set up'. Though this meaning may be supported by the single occurrence of the verb in Ps. ii 6, יִבְגָּל לָבָא 'I have installed my king' (cf. Babylonian násaku 'appoint'), and by the subst. יָבְגָּל לָבָא nāśik 'prince' (Babylonian nāsiku), Josh. xiii 21, Mic. v 4, Ezek. xxxii 30, Ps. lxxxiii 12, we cannot fail to observe that the interpretation of יִבְגָּל לָבָא in our passage as the Niph'al of this verb involves an unnatural hysteron-proteron, the official installation of Wisdom being mentioned prior to the repeated figure of the birth-pangs which produced it. We notice further that יִבְגָּל לָבָא might be the Niph'al of another root יִבְגָּל לָבָא to weave (Arabic nasağa), which occurs in Isa. xxv 7, xxx 1 (probably), and in the subst. יִבְגָּל לָבָא massēka, יִבְגָּל לָבָא massēketh, 'web, piece of woven stuff'; or, it might be Niph'al of the related יִבְגָּל לָבָא sākak, 'interweave' (whence New Heb. יִבְגָּל לָבָא 'weave'), of the form which is illustrated by Gesenius-Kautzsch Heb. Gram. § 67 v (לָבָא from לָבָא, Ezek. xxii 16, xxv 3; לָבָא from לָבָא, Ps. lixix 4, cii 4, &c.).
Now there are two O.T. passages in which this verb נָּדַע (l3fe>) is applied to the weaving of the embryonic body in the womb, the thought being of the mysterious interlacing (as it were) of bones, sinews, and veins, as appears from the passage Job x 11.

With skin and flesh didst Thou clothe me;
With bones and sinews didst Thou weave me.

(So R.V. rightly, 'knit me together'. A.V. wrongly, 'fenced me', marg. 'hedged').

The other passage is Ps. cxxxix 13.

For Thou didst form my reins;
Thou didst weave me in my mother's womb.

(A.V., R.V. text wrongly 'didst cover me'; R.V. marg. rightly, 'didst knit me together').

The meaning of נָּדַע 'didst weave me' is further illustrated by v. 15 נָּדַע רְקָקָם 'I was skilfully wrought' or 'embroidered', the figure being that of the working of a piece of tapestry (רְקָמָה rikkāmā, Judg. v 30, &c.).

**Conclusion that נָּדַע means 'begat me'.**

If, then, in Prov. viii 23 (stage 2) נָּדַע means 'I was woven' (pre-natal growth of the embryo), and in vv. 24, 25 (stage 3) נָּדַע means 'I was brought forth with travail' (birth), the inference is obvious that the figure described in v. 22 by (stage 1) נָּדַע is 'beget me' (act of pro-creation). We notice that Job x 10—the verse which immediately precedes the passage which we have discussed as referring to embryonic growth—runs,

Hast Thou not poured me out like milk,
And curdled me like cheese?

Here, without a doubt, the figure is that of (a) procreation, and (b) conception (cf. Gray and Ball *ad loc.*). and for the idea underlying (b) Wisd. vii 2 πανεκίνει ἐν αὐγάρι with Goodrick's note).

Thus this long discussion brings us, with close approximation to certainty, to the conclusion that נָּדַע כֶּנִי means 'The Lord begat me'.

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1 This is the view of Hitzig, Ewald, Zückler, Frankenberg, Toy.
Interpretation of 'the beginning of His way'.

Passing on to consider the rival interpretations of 'the beginning of His way' as (1) an adverbial accusative 'in the beginning of His way' (A.V., R.V. text), or (2) a direct accusative in apposition to the object of יָם, 'as the beginning of His way' (R.V. margin), we note that an adverbial usage of יָמֶשׁ is never elsewhere found in O.T., 'in the beginning' being regularly expressed by prefix of the preposition ב (Gen. i 1; Jer. xxvi 1, xxvii 1, xxviii 1, xlix 34). The absence of a parallel for such a usage cannot, however, be greatly pressed; since the adverbial usage is well illustrated with other substantives,¹ and is thus theoretically possible. In particular, we may notice two passages in which the synonymous substantive יָמֶשׁ 'beginning' seems to be used as an accusative of time: Hos. i 2 יָמֶשׁ וְהַשָּׁבָעַת יִדְעֵהוּ וְכָל הַקָּבָעַת, lit. 'Beginning of Yahweh spake by Hosea, and (= then) Yahweh said'; i.e. 'In the beginning of Yahweh's speaking by Hosea, Yahweh said' (the construction is, however, undoubtedly harsh, and some uncertainty attaches to text and interpretation); 2 Sam. xxi 9 יָמֶשׁ חָֹצְרָה אֱלֹהִים יָעַשׁ 'in the beginning of barley-harvest' (here, however, there exists a Massoretic correction embodied in the הֹרֶה which inserts the preposition ב 'in' before חָֹצְרָה).

Jerome (Ep. cxl ad Cyprianum) cites the Hebrew of our passage in transliteration with the preposition ב before יֵהָשָׁא, Adonai canani bresith dercho. Since, however, we have no trace of this reading elsewhere, it seems likely that, having decided that the use of יָמֶשׁ was adverbial, he instinctively substituted יֵהָשָׁא with preposition in citing the passage from memory, because the prepositional usage was natural in this sense to a scholar with a feeling for the language. Such inadvertency would of course have been impossible had it appeared to him that a question of importance turned upon the interpretation of the phrase. This, however, does not seem to have been the case, since his whole interest in the exegesis of the passage centres in postulating for יֵהָשָׁא the meaning 'possedit' rather than 'creavit'.

In favour of the interpretation of יָמֶשׁ as a direct accusative in apposition to the object of יָמֶשׁ, we may cite the parallel of Job xl 19, where it is said of Behemoth, יֵהָשָׁא יָמֶשׁ לְאָדָם 'He is the first of God's ways', i.e. the prime fruit of His creative activity.

Interpretation of the corresponding phrase in the parallel line, יָמֶשׁ יָפָֹל, to some extent hangs together with that of יֵהָשָׁא; and thus

¹ The statement of Cornelius a Lapide that יֵהָשָׁא is often used for יָמֶשׁ has no foundation.
² Cf. Gesenius-Kautzsch Grammar § 118 i.
A.V., R.V. text, having rendered 'םיִדּוּן תְמוֹרָה ' in the beginning of His way', gives to the corresponding expression the meaning 'before His works', intending doubtless to obviate the inference that Wisdom is described as one of the created works of God. R.V. margin, on the other hand, parallels the direct accusative 'as the beginning of His way' in stichos 1 by a second direct accusative in stichos 2, likewise governed by יִנְנָה 'the first of His works'.

דָּלֶם is regularly a substantive denoting that which is in front or foremost, whether in place or time. Its interpretation in a prepositional sense, 'before', is unparalleled in Hebrew, and this rendering may be definitely excluded, unless we are prepared to revocalize the word as the Aramaic דַּלֶם, an expedient which can hardly be contemplated seriously. The natural interpretation of יִנְנָה דָּלֶם is 'the foremost (in time) of His works', Wisdom being regarded as one of the works of God, though indefinitely anterior to all other works which she was instrumental in calling into being. It would, however, be legitimate to render, 'the antecedent of His works'—a rendering which serves merely to state the priority of Wisdom to the works of God, without necessarily placing her in the same category with them. This rendering appears to be preferable, as preserving a measure of ambiguity which is inherent in the original.

Lastly, יִנְנָה, rendered by A.V., R.V. 'of old', and referring, like the expressions which follow in vv. 23-25, to remotest antiquity, is intended to qualify יִנְנָה ('begat me of old'), and should therefore be preceded by a comma in the English renderings in order to obviate connexion with 'His works' (as though, 'His works which were of old').

We arrive, then, at the following rendering for the verse as a whole:

The Lord begat me as the beginning of His way,
The antecedent of His works, of old.

The Versions.

The renderings of Prov. viii 22 in the principal ancient Versions are as follows:

LXX. Κύριος ἐκτισαν με ἄρχην ὀδῶν αὐτοῦ εἰς ξηρα αὐτοῦ. κτίζειν is also found as the rendering of יִנְנָה in Gen. xiv 19, 22, and Jer. xxxix (xxxii) 15 (where, however, κητοθήσονται is probably an error for κητοθήσονται). We find ἄγοράζειν in Ecclus. xxxvii 11 and γεννῶν in Zech. xiii 5 (Hiph'il). Elsewhere, κτάσθαι is the regular equivalent, and this verb is employed in our passage by the later Greek translators Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion.
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A. Κύριος ἐκτίσατο με κεφάλαιον [όδων] αὐτοῦ, ἀρχῇθεν κατεργασμάτων αὐτοῦ [ἀπὸ τότῃ].

Σ. Κύριος ἐκτίσατο με ἀρχὴν οὐδὲν αὐτοῦ, πρὸ τῆς ἐργασίας αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τότῃ.

Θ. Κύριος ἐκτίσατο με ἀρχὴν οὐδὲν αὐτοῦ, πρὸ τῆς ἐργασίας αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τότῃ.

Peshitta.

‘The Lord created me in the beginning of His creation, and before all His works’.

Targum. קָנָהָ בְּרֵעַ שָׁרֵי שָׁרֵי יְהוָה שָׁלֹו מַעְלֶה יְהוָה.

‘God created me in the beginning of His creation, and before His works from the beginning.’

Vulgate. Dominus possedit me in initio viarum suarum, antequam quidquid faceret a principio.

Here we observe that, with the exception of the Vulgate, all Versions give a legitimate sense to ἐκτίσατο—LXX, Pesh., Targ. ‘created me’; A’, Σ., Θ., ‘gat possession of me’. Vulg. ‘possedit’ stands alone, and it is a mistake to group it, as has sometimes been done, with ἐκτίσατο of the later Greek Versions, because the idea of acquiring, which is inherent in ἐκτίσατο as in ἐκτίσαμαι, is absent in ‘possedit’; and, as we shall notice presently when speaking of the explanations of the Fathers, this rendering was chosen by Jerome expressly to exclude the conception of acquiring.

The explanation of ἐκτίσαμαι as a direct accusative is adopted by all the Greek Versions; while Pesh., Targ., Vulg., interpret the phrase adverbially. On the other hand, all the Versions give to ἐκτίσαμαι a prepositional sense ‘before’.

Jewish authorities.

In the Wisdom of Ben-Sira the following passages are clearly based on Prov. viii 22.

Ecclus. i. 4

προτέρα πάντων ἐκτισαί σοφία,
καὶ σύνεσις φρονήσεως ἐξ αὐτῶν.

Here we have the interpretation ‘created me as the beginning of His way’.

Ecclus. i 9

Κύριος αὐτῶς ἐκτίσειν αὐτήν,
καὶ ἔξεχεν αὐτήν ἐπὶ πάντα τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ.

ἔξεχεν seems to take ἔργα of Prov. viii 23 in the sense ‘I was poured out’.
Ecclus. xxiv 8, 9 (Wisdom speaks)

8 τότε ἔνετιλετὸς μὲ ὁ κτίστης ἀπάντων,
καὶ ὁ κτίστης μὲ κατέπτωσεν τὴν σκηνὴν μου.
9 πρὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος ἀπ᾽ ἀρχῆς ἐκτισεν με,
καὶ ἔσω αἰῶνος ὑμὶ ἑκλήσω.

None of these passages is included among the extant fragments of the Hebrew text.

Philo De Ebrietate § 8

ο θεὸς ἐκτησάτο με πρωτότητη τῶν ἱοντοῦ ἐργῶν,
καὶ πρὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος ἐθεμελιώσε με.

Here we notice that, while the first line varies from LXX and is obviously based on an independent knowledge of the Hebrew, whether direct or indirect, the second line is drawn directly from the LXX rendering of v. 23a. The rendering 'the very first of His works' seems to combine the parallel phrases τὴν σκηνὴν μου and ἐθεμελιώσε με, the LXX rendering of יִשָּׂבַי in v. 23, which A.V., R.V. render 'I was set up', but for which we have postulated the meaning 'I was woven', may imply connexion with a verb יָכַב which is used of casting or founding an article of metal, such as a molten image; unless, as is possible, LXX read 'my foundations were laid' in place of יִשָּׂבַי.

Ibn Ezra interprets יִשָּׂבַי in accordance with the use of the verb in Gen. iv 19, 22 ('create', which is the explanation given by Rashi in Gen.). He explains יִשָּׂבַי as meaning first in order among created things, as in the passage in Job xli 19, 'He is the first of God's ways'; and states that יִשָּׂבַי is the equivalent of יִשָּׁבַי, רַבִּי אִבֵּן גֹּרְשָׁם being synonymous with יִשָּׁבַי.

R Levi. ben-Gershom interprets יִשָּׂבַי 'created me', and explains the passage as meaning that Wisdom was created prior to the other works of God.

The Fathers.

The interpretations of Prov. viii 22 offered by the Fathers depend, with but few exceptions, on the LXX rendering Κύριος ἐκτισεν με ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὑτοῦ, not attempting to go behind and challenge it. The Arians used the passage as one of their principal proofs that the Second Person of the holy Trinity is a created Being. The orthodox replied that His Divine Sonship is fully proved by the whole tenor of Scripture; therefore the Arian interpretation of this obscure passage
is certainly wrong. For things created and made are external to the maker; whereas the Son exists not external to, but of, the Father who begat Him. In regard to the meaning of "created out of nothing", and therefore affords no argument against the eternal generation of the Son of the substance of the Father. Taken absolutely, it may be referred to the mode of generation without change or passion in the Divine Generator; or, regarded as limited by its close connexion with "άρχην οὗν αὐτῷ," it refers, not to the eternal generation of the Son, but to His position in regard to creation, in a sense which practically amounts to "constituted Me head of creation". A very general tendency, however, is to accept the rendering "created" in its ordinary sense, and interpret the passage as prophetic of the Incarnation.

We find that some few of the Fathers go behind and challenge the LXX rendering of ūnā. First we may notice a group who, though not themselves authorities as to the meaning of the Hebrew, are yet aware of other Greek translations offering a different rendering, viz. ἐκτύσεως. Such are Eusebius, who refers to Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion; St Epiphanius, who mentions the rendering of Aquila; and St Basil and St Gregory of Nyssa, who speak without specification of "other

2 Cf. St Athanasius Orat. c. Arianos ii 44; μὴ μόνον περὶ ἀγγέλου ἡ ἑτέρου τινὸς τῶν γενητῶν ἦστι τὸ γεγραμμένον, ἀλλὰ περὶ ἑνὸς ἡμῶν τῶν πουμάτων ἦστω λέγομεν τὸ "ἐκτισὺ με"; ἐπὶ δὲ τῇ Σοφίᾳ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἦστιν, ἐν δὲ πάσα τὸ γεγονέναι διημορίγηται, περὶ ἑαυτῆς λέγοου, τί δὲ καίνῃ ὥς τοῦ τὸ ἐκτισει φάσκουσα, οὐκ ἐναυτῶν τῷ ἐκτύσεως λέγει;
3 So St Hilary de Synodis 16, 17. The same idea, though less clearly expressed, seems to underlie his de Trin. i 35, xii 1, 35. It is also found in the statement of the semi-Arian party drawn up under the leadership of Basil of Ancyra: cf. St Epiphanius Haer. lxxii 20.
4 Athenagoras Suppl. 3, 2 argues that the Son was γένημα to the Father for the work of creation, and then supports his position by quotation of Prov. viii 22. Tertullian c. Hermog. 18 explains, 'Sophia scilicet ipsius exinde nata et condita, ex quo in sensu Dei ad opera mundi disponenda coepit agitari'; Didymus fragm. in Prov. (P. G. xxxix 1629 A–1632 D) distinguishes the reference of ἐκτύσεως in Prov. viii 22 from the eternal being of τὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ Σοφία and associates it not with οἰσίως but with σχετὶς πρὸς τὰ κτισματα, and then goes on to interpret of the Incarnation; cf. his frag. in 1 Cor. v 17 (P. G. xxxix 1705 D–1708 A). Dionysius of Rome (apud Athan. de Decretis 26) explains ἐκτυσεως as 'He set over the works made by Him through the Son Himself'.
5 So St Athanasius de Decretis 14; Orat. c. Arianos ii 1; St Gregory of Nazianzus Orat. xxx 2; St Augustine de Trin. i 12 (24). A long list (yet not professing completeness) of writers taking this view is given by Petavius Theol. dogm. ii 1 § 3.
6 De Ecclesiastica Theologia ii 2, 3.
7 Contra Haereses II lxix 25.
9 Contra Eunomium i.
Greek translators'. St Basil may be cited as making perhaps the most acute comment on the meaning of the passage which is to be found in the Fathers. 'We must not', he remarks, 'ignore the fact that other interpreters, who have reached the meaning of the Hebrew more aptly, render ἐκτίσατο μὲ οὔτ' instead of ἐκτίσεως. This will offer them [the Arians] the greatest obstacle against the blasphemy of their creaturely interpretation. For he who said, “I have gotten a man through God”', manifestly used the expression not as the creator of Cain, but as his generator. 1 St Epiphanius similarly cites the parallel usage of ἐκτητάμην = ἔγγενος in Gen. iv 1; but then somewhat strangely rejects the explanation on the ground that ἐκτητάμην ὑών describes an event which is recent, whereas in God nothing is recent. 2 By this objection he presumably means that ἔγγενος = 'beget' properly implies, as in its ordinary sense 'get', the obtaining of something which at one period was unpossessed—and this, if we press the force of the expression, is of course true. The answer is to be found in the consideration that human terminology, framed to describe events happening in time, is inadequate to the description of eternal facts. But objection to the use of ἔγγενος in the sense 'begat' might equally be aimed against the use of the terms 'Father' and 'Son' in view of their human implications, as in the Arian logic. Epiphanius proceeds to express his preference for the strange view that ἔγγενος is a denominative from the Hebrew ἐκ 'nest', and give it the meaning ἐνώσεωσέ με, 'hatched me like a nestling'. Such a denominative would take the form ἔγγενος from ἔγγος, and not ἔγγενος from ἔγγος; and the verb, which occurs but five times in the Hebrew Bible, means 'to nest', and not 'to hatch'. Epiphanius must presumably have obtained this suggestion from a Jewish source; for we find it appearing in later ages, together with other explanations, in Rashi's commentary on Deut. xxxvi 6 7γος τον θεον ἐνωσεν. 'Is not He thy Father that begat thee?'

We come now to St Jerome, who was the first of the Fathers to apply an original knowledge of Hebrew to the elucidation of the passage. In his commentary on Ephesians ii 10 (dated by Vallarsi a. d. 388) he is still dependent on the LXX, and applies the rendering ἐκτίσεως μὲ to our Lord's Incarnation, arguing that in this respect He

1 Ἐπεζε χε μὴν μηδε ἐκείνο ἑπαρασήματον καταλήσωμεν, ὥστε ἄλοι τῶν ἐρμηνευον, οἱ παρατεκτέον τῆς σημείας τῶν Ἐβραίων καθικότερον, ἐκτίσατο μὲ οὔτ' τοῦ ἐκτίσεως ἕλθασαν. ὅπερ μνημοσύνας τὰ μνήματα ἔσται ἐρωτήμασιν τῆς ἑλπισμῆς τοῦ κτισμάτος, ὁ γὰρ εἶσαι, ἐκτητάμην ἄθροισιν διὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὡς εἶναι τῶν Καθ. ἀλλὰ γεγονότα, ταύτη φασίν τινα χρώσαμεν τῇ φωνῇ. The words 'he who said' imply a mistaken reference of καὶ εἶσαν to Adam, whereas it is clear from the Hebrew text. ἐγεννηθή that Eve is the speaker.

2 'ΑΛΛ' ὅπερ ἄκουας τῆς δύναμιν ἑρμήνευσις. Καὶ γὰρ τὸ, Ἐκτητάμην ὑών, ὅς προσφερῶν ἐστιν, ἐν Θεῷ ὃ ὁμοίως ἐν προσφερῶν.
may legitimately be called a creature. 'Since Wisdom in the Proverbs of Solomon speaks of herself as created a beginning of the ways of God, and many, through fear lest they should be obliged to call Christ a creature, deny the whole mystery of Christ, and say that not Christ, but the world's wisdom, is meant by this wisdom, we freely declare that there is no hazard in calling Him creature Whom we confess with all confidence of our hope to be “worm”, and “man”, and “crucified”, and “curse”.

In his commentary on Micah iv 8, 9, however (assigned to A. D. 392), he has reached another view through study of the Hebrew text: ‘et qui ex persona assumpti hominis ait in Proverbiis: Dominus creavit me in principio viarum suarum in opera sua, sive ut in Hebraeo scribitur: Dominus possedit me: canani enim non creavit me sed possedit me habuitque significat’. Similarly in his commentary on Isaiah xxvi 13 (assigned to c. A.D. 410) he says, ‘Quod quidem et de Sapientia legimus, quae iuxta Hebraicum loquitur in Proverbiis: Deus possedit me iniuriam suarum, licet quaedam exemplaria male pro possessione habeant creaturam’. His strongest expression of opinion as to the interpretation of the verb is found in Ep. cxli ad Cyprianum, where he argues against the meaning ‘create’ for ἐσχατον on the ground that this meaning is expressed by the verb ἐποιησεν, while ἐσχατον properly means ‘possess’. ‘Inter possessionem autem et creationem multa diversitas est. Possessio significat, quod semper Filius in Patre et Pater in Filio fuerit. Creatio autem eius, qui prius non erat, conditionis exordium’. This is a meaning for the verb ἐσχατον—possession, not merely ignoring the conception of preliminary acquisition inherent in the verb, but actually to be understood as excluding it—which, if our argument as to the usage of the verb has been sound, can by no means be substantiated; yet St Jerome’s verdict has satisfied subsequent theological thought, and is generally accepted by theologians at the present day.

Col. i 15 ἐσχάτον τῆς κτίσεως, a direct allusion to ἐσχάτον τῆς κτίσεως, ἡ ἡμών ἡ ἁγιάζων, ‘The Lord begat me as the beginning of His way’ (i.e. His creative activity) without perceiving that ἐσχάτον τῆς κτίσεως ‘the first-begotten of all creation’ can hardly be other than a direct reference to the O.T. passage. This conclusion, which at first I supposed to have been unnoticed (it is not found, for example, in Lightfoot’s commentary), I have since discovered to have been anticipated by St...
Epiphanius (c. Haer. II lxxiii 7). His words are, 'In place of ἀρχὴν the Apostle used πρῶτος, in place of γεννᾷ με (i.e. the LXX rendering of ἐπλην 'I was brought forth' in v. 25) the term τόκος, for the whole statement "ΕΚΤΥΤΕΙΝ ἐν τῷ ἄνθρωπoν αὐτοῦ and Γεννᾷ με the expression Πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως, instead of εὐθεμελιωκὴν με (v. 23) the statement 'Ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκτύτηθα τὰ πάντα, instead of Δι' ἐμοὶ the statement 'Ἀπ' αἰῶνος, εἰτε θρόνοι, εἰτε κυρώτητες, εἰτε ἀρχαὶ, εἰτε ἐξουσίαι, τὰ πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν ἐκτύτατα.'

Here Epiphanius, having elsewhere, as we have noticed, rejected the meaning 'begat me' for ἐπλην, does not recognize that this verb corresponds to the second portion of the term πρωτότοκος, but finds a correspondence less naturally in γεννᾷ με three verses later. The verses which follow in Col. i 16–18 as a development of πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως are not simply, as St Epiphanius supposes, reminiscent of Prov. viii 22 and its context, but are based upon another O.T. passage, immediately suggested to the Apostle by the allusion in Proverbs. Without a doubt he is passing from the use of ἐπλην 'beginning' in Prov. viii 22 as applicable to Christ, to the use of the same term in the creation-narrative of Genesis, where it occurs as the first word of the Hebrew Bible, ἐπλην Birschith 'In the beginning'. That this is so I hope to prove presently through examination of St Paul's words. As a preliminary, however, we may notice that the tracing of a connexion between the Proverbs-passage and the Genesis-passage would be obvious to a Rabbinic scholar, and has in fact been made elsewhere in Rabbinic literature.

In Bereshith Rabba, the great Midrashic commentary on Genesis, Rabbi Hoshiaiah (c. third century A.D.) opens with a discussion of Prov. viii 30, where Wisdom states, 'Then I was with Him as 'āmōn' ('master-workman'). After mentioning various proposed explanations of 'āmōn, he continues as follows. 'Another explanation of 'āmōn is 'ōmēn “workman”. The Law says, “I was the working instrument of the Holy One, blessed be He”. In worldly affairs a human king who is building a palace does not build it by his own skill, but he has parchment plans (διαφθείραι) and drawing tablets (πίνακες), that he may know how to make the rooms and doors. In the same way the Holy One, blessed be He, was looking at the Law when He created the world. Now the Law says, 'By rēshith God created'; and there is no rēshith except the Law; compare the passage, 'The Lord gat me as rēshith of His way'.

This connexion between the two O.T. passages, which R. Hoshiaiah

1 The reference is to v. 16:

detach oneself from the world,
and turn them to detach oneself from the world.
makes and interprets with reference to the function of the Law as rēshīth in Creation, is made by St Paul in Col. i 15-18, and interpreted as referring to Christ: δι’ ἐστίν . . . πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως ὥσπερ ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκτίσθη τὰ πάντα, ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, τὰ ὁρατὰ καὶ τὰ ἄνωτα, ἐτείχον οἵτε κυριότητες οἵτε ἄρχαι οἵτε ἐξουσίαι τὰ πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν ἐκτίσταται καὶ αὐτὸς ἐστι πρὸ πάντων, καὶ τὰ πάντα ἐν αὐτῷ συνάστηκε. καὶ αὐτὸς ἐστὶ Ή ἱεραρχὴ τοῦ σώματος, τῆς ἐκκλησίας; δι’ ἐστίν ἀρχή, πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν, ὑπὲρ γέννησαν ἐν πᾶσιν αὐτῶς πρωτούς.

Here we have an elaborate exposition of Bērēshīth in Gen. i 1 in the Rabbinic manner. Three explanations are given of the preposition bê; then four explanations of the substantive rēshīth: and the conclusion is that, in every possible sense of the expression, Christ is its Füllifier.

Let me give a running paraphrase of St Paul’s words, in order to illustrate how, as I conceive, the argument developed itself in his mind.

‘Christ is the First-begotten of all creation, for it is written (Prov. viii 22 ff), “The Lord begat me as rēshīth of His way, the antecedent of His works, from of old. From eternity was I wrought . . . when there were no deeps was I brought forth.” This passage has obvious connexion with Gen. i 1, where it is written “Bērēshīth God created the heavens and the earth”. Now the force of the preposition bê attached to rēshīth may be interpreted as “in” (“IN rēshīth God created”); hence IN HIM were created all things in the heavens and upon the earth, seen and unseen, whether thrones, or dominations, or principalities, or powers. But again, the preposition may bear the sense “by” (“By the agency of rēshīth”); hence all things were created THROUGH HIM. Yet again it may be interpreted “into” (“INTO rēshīth”); from which it follows that creation tends INTO HIM as its goal. Passing on to the substantive rēshīth, we note that it ordinarily bears the sense “BEGINNING”; hence Christ is BEFORE all things. It may also have the meaning “SUM-TOTAL”; so that all things ARE SUMMED UP IN HIM. Yet another meaning is “HEAD”, i.e. He is the Head of the body, namely, the Church. Lastly, it means “FIRST-FRUITS”; He is FIRST-FRUITS, first-begotten of the dead. Hence it follows that in all senses He is the Füllifier of the meaning of rēshīth (πρωτούς).

Putting the argument in tabular form for the sake of lucidity, it appears as follows.

Prov. viii 22 ff, where Wisdom (i.e. Christ) is called rēshīth, gives the key to Gen. i 1, ‘Bērēshīth God created the heavens and the earth’.
Concluded. Christ fulfils every meaning which may be extracted from Rishith—"ina γένησα ἐν πᾶσιν αὐτῶν προτεύων"

If this interpretation is correct, we can trace phrase by phrase the lines along which St. Paul’s thoughts were running. It is true that, if we look up Rishith in a Hebrew Lexicon, while we shall find the meanings Beginning and First-fruits, we shall not find the meanings Head and Sum-total; but since the substantive Rishith is derived from rish, which means Head, and which is also used with considerable frequency in the sense Sum-total, these two additional meanings would easily be referable to it. The Aramaic rēṣ stands for both Hebrew rish and rishith, and is susceptible of all the meanings postulated.

We have reference to the line of thought here based on the two Old Testament passages elsewhere in St. Paul’s Epistles. Christ as the goal of creation is referred to in Ephes. i 10 αὐτῷ εἰκόνος τὰ πάντα ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ, to bring all things under Rishith in Christ, who is the Head and Sum-total of creation. The reversion of humanity to its Source, which is the aim of Christianity, is the koine KTUTIS to which the Apostle refers in 2 Cor. v 17, Gal. vi 15; cf. also Ephes. ii 10, αὐτοῦ γὰρ ἐσμὲν ποίημα, κτισθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. When this has been accomplished in the world, creation will have reached its goal.

We may notice that several of the Fathers adopt the interpretation of Berēshith in Gen. i 1 as referring to Christ. We find it in Origen, Homily I on the Pentateuch, the opening of which runs thus in the translation of Rufinus: “‘In principio creavit Deus coelum et terram.’ Quod est omnium principium nisi Dominus noster et Saluator omnium Christus Jesus, ‘primogenitus omnium creaturarum’? In hoc ergo principiō, hoc est in Verbo suo, ‘Deus coelum et terram fecit’, sicut et Evangelista Ioannes in initio Evangelii sui ait, dicens: ‘In principio erat verbum’ &c. Non ergo hic temporale aliquod principium, sed ‘in principio’, id est in Salvatore, factum esse dicit coelum et terram et omnia quae facta sunt.’ St. Ambrose (Hexae-

1 Cf. Exod. xxx 12 οὖν ἐνεργήσατε πρὸς οἱ παιδίατροί ὑμῶν ἵνα ἐπιτίθητε ἀπόκεισθαι τοὺς παιδίατρούς τοῖς γιοῖς (i.e. their census); Lev. v 24; Num. i 2, 49, iv 2, 22, v 7, xxvi 2, xxxi 26, 49; Ps. cxxix 160, cxxxix 17.

9 The thought underlying διὰ τοῦ ἄρχην κύριον ἐκ τῶν πατέρων εἰς τῶν νεκρῶν is brought out again in 1 Cor. xv 10 ἀναστήσεως τῶν νεκρῶν (cf. also v. 23).
meron I iv 15) and St Augustine (De Genesi ad litteram I 2) also give the same interpretation.

Another New Testament allusion to Prov. viii 22 in reference to Christ is found in Rev. iii 14 ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ Θεοῦ, a title of the risen Christ which Dr Swete and Dr Charles have not a shadow of authority for limiting in meaning to 'the Source of God's creation'. There is every reason to suppose that ἀρχὴ is here used with all the fullness of meaning which St Paul extracts from ἥρεσθι—Beginning, Sum-total, Head, First-fruits. This at any rate fits in with the statement of xxi 6, ἐγὼ τῷ Α καὶ τῷ Ω, ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ τὸ τέλος, where τὸ τέλος embodies the interpretation of ἥρεσθι 'into Him' as the goal.

C. F. Burney.

TWO NOTES ON THE BAZAAR OF HERACLIDES.

I.

In § 72 of the first part of Nestorius's Apology, known as 'the Bazaar of Heraclides', there is a passage represented by dots only in Dr Bethune-Baker's Nestorius and his teaching p. 127, and very obscurely rendered in the Oxford translation, p. 65. It will be convenient to give the Syriac and a suggested translation at once.

And because He was accounted to be a more eminent observer of the Law than any on account of His behaviour towards all men,—but while He was spending time among many things it was easy,—contrariwise where there was nothing from which He might be helped He went forth into the wilderness by Himself, to be tempted by the Devil when He was more in need than anything in the world; and out of what is...