

The other manuscripts in the hands of the messenger from the Syrian Archbishop, although somewhat fragmentary ^{were} of considerable interest. One was a commentary on Habbakkuk; another was the Manual of Discipline of an ancient Jewish sect. It was not ^{long before} everywhere the original story that these manuscripts had been found in the monastery library, ^{that they} was withdrawn, and it was stated had been purchased from some Arabs who had discovered them in a cave in the desert.

The Isaiah Scroll was completely photographed at once. As scholars noted its close similarity to the text of Isaiah which is found in our present Hebrew Bible, some of them were thrilled at this remarkable evidence, carrying back our knowledge of the Hebrew text of Isaiah almost a thousand years, and showing how excellently on the whole our Biblical Hebrew text has been preserved by the great care of the scribes. Others, however, found it impossible to believe that the manuscript was actually as old as that. They recalled the words of the original messenger of the archbishop that these scrolls had been found in the archbishop's library, and insisted that they were not ancient at all, but that they came from the Middle Ages. For a time it looked as if scholarly opinion would veer in this direction. The genuineness of the scrolls and their dating has been discussed by numerous scholars from many lands. Now, however, new facts have come to light which seem definitely to settle the matter.