

comprising 'Abodah Zarah' and 'Shebuoth.' To his reproduction of a few pages of the tract 'Pesachim,' of the Babylonian Talmud, from a Cambridge MS., Mr. Lowe has appended a lengthy essay on the philology of the Talmud, as well as on passages relating to the New Testament. A revised edition of 'Pirke Aboth' ('Sayings of the Fathers'), with all the passages of the Talmud and Midrashim relating to the sayings, has appeared at Warsaw. Dr. Zuckermann has finished the fifth fasciculus of his critical edition of the 'Tosiftha.' Herr Chodovsky's edition of the Midrash or Canticles from a Munich MS. is a complete failure. With M. Schwab's French translation of the Jerusalem Talmud, the first part of which is now finished, we have to mention Dr. Samter's German translation of the tract 'Baba Metsia' of the Babylonian Talmud. The latter is much more critical than the former, and contains besides many valuable notes. Of philological books on the Talmud we may mention Dr. Berliner's essay on the grammatical knowledge of the doctors in the Talmud, which has already been noticed in the *Athenaeum*. Dr. Levy's Dictionary for the Talmud and Midrashim advances slowly but surely: it reaches the letters *צ*. Dr. Lattes has contributed valuable additions to this dictionary in the *Transactions* of the Turin Academy. Dr. Kohut's edition of the 'Aruch' advances rapidly; two fasciculi of the second volume have appeared in the course of the year. Dr. Levy's essay on the traces of Greek and Roman antiquities in Talmudical literature, read at the thirty-third German Philological Congress, contains many explanations of Greek and Latin words used in the Talmud. Not a few monographs have come out on Talmudical subjects. Dr. Bloch, of Buda-Pesth, has brought out a first part of a Hebrew work on the historical development of the ceremonial laws and institutions in the Talmud, a book which when finished will be, no doubt, of great value even for elucidating passages of the New Testament. The author, although critical, we must confess, treats his subject too much from an orthodox point of view. His *Programm* containing the laws of police in the Talmud has been shortly noticed in the *Athenaeum*. Dr. Ritter's 'Philo and the Halachah' is of great interest, as has been already said in these columns. The Halachah in the Targum of the Pseudo-Jonathan has been fully treated by Dr. Grunemann. M. Simon has written a monograph on the instruction of children amongst the Jews, according to the Bible and the Talmud. Herr Weissmann's Hebrew pamphlet on cremation in the Talmud ought to be reproduced in a modern language. Dr. Stern's lecture on the women in the Talmud is popular but instructive. So is also Dr. Jacobson's short essay on the psychology of the Talmud. Dr. Herzfeld's 'Handelsgeschichte der Hebraer' has been reviewed in the *Athenaeum*, from which it can be seen that the book refers much to the Talmudical writings. Dr. Graetz's *Programm* on the kingdom of Mesene gives all that the Talmud knows about that country, which had Jewish congregations. Dr. Scheinin's dissertation on the school of Jamnia (Jabne) cannot give many new facts after the elaborate works on Jewish history by Dr. Graetz, and more especially by M. Derenbourg, whose volume contains all the details of the subject. In his *Monatsschrift* Dr. Graetz publishes many articles concerning Jewish history during the time of the second Temple, the substance of which will no doubt be incorporated in the next edition of the history of the Jews. Prof. Schurer's monograph on the history of the early Jewish communities at Rome is of great interest. Turning to later Jewish history we may mention Dr. Bergl's history of the Jews in Hungary, Dr. Giesse's history of the Jews in Westphalia, and Dr. Lowenstein's history of the Jews about Lake Constance and the surrounding country. M. Camille Arnaud's 'Essai sur la Condition des Juifs en Provence au Moyen Age' contains many inedited documents from archives. M. G. Saige continues in the *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartes* his interesting studies on the condition of the Jews at Toulouse in the fourteenth century. Some good contributions have been made to Hebrew grammar. Dr. Stade has published the first part of his Hebrew Grammar, in which he pretends to keep the mean between Ewald and Ohlschläger. Mr. Kennedy's excellent translation of Ewald's Hebrew Syntax has been favorably noticed in the *Athenaeum*. The revised edition according to MSS. of Ben Asher's Massoretical treatise, by Drs. Baer and Strack, is of great importance for the history of the Massorah, owing more especially to the excellent notes appended to it by the latter. MM. Joseph and Hartwig Derenbourg's long-expected edition of R. Jonah ibn Janah's grammatical *uposeula* in Arabic, with a French translation, is out. We are now able to get a clear insight into all the grammatical and lexicographical works of this celebrated grammarian of the twelfth century. The editor's extensive preface contains not only documents concerning R. Jonah, but also inedited texts by Samuel the Prince on grammatical matters as well as others

relating to Samuel's biography and his disputes with R. Jonah. Schnedermann's monograph on Cappellus and the Buxtorfs is interesting for the history of Hebrew grammar in the sixteenth century. In reviewing it in the *Revue Critique*, M. J. Derenbourg has developed a new theory of the Hebrew vowel-points. Independently M. Halevy spoke on the same subject at a meeting of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres. The two *servants* agree in most points. Prof. Chwolson's essay on the quiescent letters, *he, waw, yod*, published in the *Transactions* of the Oriental Congress at St. Petersburg, contains many new facts or theories—for instance, he derives the name of Jerusalem from an old Jebusitic (?) word, *Jerushal*, and the dual form *am*—and useful hints for the critic of the Biblical texts. Of poetry we have only to record Dr. Harkavy's edition of the remaining poems of Samuel the Prince, of Cordova, from a unique MS. at St. Petersburg. Very little is to be said about books on medieval Jewish exegesis. Mr. Nutt's edition of Eliezer of Beaugency's commentary on Isaiah has been reviewed in the *Athenaeum*. Dr. Salfeld's essay on the Rabbinical Commentaries of the Canticles has also been already noticed. Of Dr. Herbst's edition of St. Matthew's Gospel in Hebrew it has been said in these columns that the translation is by a Christian of the sixteenth century, and not by Shem Tob ben Shaprut (fourteenth century). Perhaps we ought to mention here Herr Kneucker's reconstruction of the Apocryphal book Baruch in the original Hebrew text. The book, even if the Hebrew text is not accepted as the lost original, is of great value for the sake of the elaborate critical apparatus. Herr Schlosberg has completed the edition of Judah al-Harizi's translation of Maimonides' 'Ductor Perplexorum.' Bibliography had also its small share of books this year. Rabbi Marco Mortara has published a catalogue of the Hebrew MSS. in the library of the Jewish congregation at Mantua. In the first part of the Italian catalogue of Oriental MSS. we find the catalogues of the Hebrew MSS. in the Libraries Vittorio Emanuele and Angelica at Rome. The posthumous edition of Ben Jacob's bibliography and Herr Lippe's alphabetical list of Jewish authors, rabbis, ministers, &c., are advancing. Some extracts from Hebrew MSS. have appeared in the 'Israelitische Letterbode' (inedited letters from Abba Mari's—struc of Lunel—'Minhath Kenaath'—as well as in the literary part of the now suspended *Hammilitz*, by Dr. Hakavy. Dr. Perles has edited Kalonymo's letter to Joseph Kaspi, from the Munich MS., with an instructive preface concerning Kaspi. We can not enumerate all minor articles which have appeared in *Hammagid*, *Hammazkir*, the *Judische Wechenschrift*, Graetz's *Monatsschrift*, Berliner-Hoffmann's *Magazin*, Roest's *Letterbode*, Dr. Brüll's *Jahrbuch* and other Jewish periodicals. We shall conclude with the mention of articles concerning the Karaites and the Falashas published in Graetz's *Monatsschrift*; with Dr. Morgenstern's pamphlet on the accusations of the Samaritans against the Jews and *vice versa*; and with Dr. Joel's popular essay on the attacks of the heathen upon Jews and Christians in the first centuries of the Roman emperors.

Chaldee and Syriac.—Dr. Turpie's manual of the Chaldee language has already been noticed in the *Athenaeum*. Dr. Rülff's book, 'Zur Lautlehre der Aramäisch-Talmudischen Dialecte,' of which the first fasciculus has appeared, is interesting both for the idiom of the Talmud and for the other Aramean dialects. Prof. Th. Nöldeke (in the *Transactions* of the Berlin Academy) and Prof. Graetz (in his *Monatsschrift*) have published essays relating to the edition of the Chaldee text of Tobit. Of Syriac texts we have to record Prof. Gildemeister's 'Acta S. Pelagii,' Syriac and Latin. Dr. Baethgen's 'Sindban,' the Syriac text of Syntipas with a German translation, is important for the critic of the texts of this book as well as for Syriac lexicography. The same scholar has published from a Berlin MS., in the *Transactions* of the German Oriental Society, the text of a Melchitic hymn addressed to the Holy Virgin, and the first part of notes on the Psalms according to the text of the Peshito. Dr. Klamroth has published 'Gregorii Abulfargii bar Ebraya in Aetius Apostolorum et Epistolae Catholicae Annotationes Syriacae.' Let us mention also Dr. A. Brüll's new edition of the Samaritan Targum, which is, however, nothing but the old one with a new title-page.

Ethiopic.—We have only to record the second and last part of Prof. Praetorius' Amharic Grammar, with texts at the end. Amongst them we find the original of the letter of the King of Shoa addressed to the Queen of England.

TUNIS.—The Bey of Tunis has just struck a mortal blow at the usurers in his dominions, by authorizing the establishment of *Monts-de-piété* in all the towns of the regency, with the exception of the holy city of Kairouan. This concession has been accorded for a period of fifty years to a French Jew residing in the city of Tunis, M. Alexander Daninos.

The Sun.

As the mornings now lengthen, and the sun begins to throw his light on the bedroom wall before seven o'clock, and as the evening colors can still be seen at almost six, we should all become modified sunworshippers, and declare that this dear old star is a blessed thing. One could almost wish it were a conscious benefactor, that man might thank it for its immense kindness to man and beast and plant. The ancients thought it such a conscious benefactor, and gave much worship to what we now know as only a ball of fire. One of the most pardonable errors of primitive man was his worship of this gigantic star. It seemed to bring to the human family such blessings, all their fruits and grains, all their out-door beauty and happiness; all their life was so inwoven with these beams that the races may be easily forgiven that were wont to turn their faces toward this flaming star, and pour out their hearts in its worship. Unable to see a spiritual Creator, they mistook for Him His most amazing work, just as we may admire a book and forget the writer, or a steam-engine and forget the inventor. The sun thus excluded the Deity by its own absorbing greatness. But indirectly this blundering religion praised the Almighty by thus adoring His works.

It is doubtful if the sunworshippers really worshiped that luminary, it is more probable that they simply saw in the heavenly bodies the best emblems of the Being whom they really wished to honor. In a catechism of the Persian parses these questions and answers are found:

Q. "What is the form of our God?"
A. Our God has neither face nor form, color nor shape nor fixed place. There is no other like Him. He is Himself singly, such a glory that we cannot praise nor describe Him nor comprehend Him.
Q. Is there anything God cannot create?
A. Yes; he cannot create another like Himself.
Q. What is our religion?
A. Our religion is the worship of this God.
Q. Where should we turn when we worship?
A. We should turn towards some of his creations of light, of glory, of brightness.
Q. Which are these creations?
A. The sun, the moon, the stars and fire, such things as have a spark of His glory."

From which questions and answers it is evident that the so-called fire-worshippers were not persons who worshiped the sun, but persons who felt that the sun and stars were the amazing encampment of Him whom the eye could not see nor the ear hear.

All the early nations and races were more dependent than our times are upon on sensuous symbols. Moses and Aaron felt compelled to have a place for their God and they seemed to carry Him about in the ark and tabernacle, and furthermore, they seemed to find Him in the sparkling jewels of the Urim and Thummim. What the Hebrews thus saw in a tent and in colored curtains and in flashing jewels the Persians saw in the sun and moon and in the blaze of fire. Remains of these sensuous images still are found in Christianity, for Christians if possible bury their dead in such a manner that the face will look to the east, and the legend is that Christ when He comes to judge the world, will come in the East. Thus the sensuous still lingers as drapery of the spiritual and perhaps the idolatry of the ancients was different from modern religion only in the quantity of the material media. The ancients were less spiritual than the moderns, but the moderns are still far from being free from material media.

Thomas Paine, in his extreme fear lest he should be made the victim of some childish fancy, or that somebody else would be victimized, attacked Masonry on the ground that it was a superstition that had come down from the Persian world, and was as full of nonsense as anything could be. He said that in the Masonic hall the presiding officer must sit in the east end of the room, the Masons must thus salute the east, the lamps must be most abundant on the south wall of the room to mark the path of the sun; and that the 24th of June, a day so sacred in Masonry, was the day on which all the old sun-worshippers built fires upon all the mountain tops and hill tops near their homes to celebrate the fact that the sun had reached his hottest place in the temperate zone. But, like much of Paine's reasoning, it was not important if true. There is no harm in paying great respect to his dignity, the sun. One would better take off his hat before the sun in a grand summer morning than to render such a homage to a wicked duke or a painted girl. The first day of a year is a good day to celebrate, because it opens up a new future to pleasure and business, and equally the 24th of June is worthy of grand fires upon the hills by night, for in those hours the solar heat and light are doing humanity a sublime service in the fields of grain and in the orchards of fruits. Then is the vine full of vigor on the wall and over the window of cottage or palace, full of the inner impulse that will burst forth in the rose or trumpet-flower or in the bunch of grapes, then are the birds in the height of their matin and the brooks sweetest in their murmurings.

Upon the origin and quality and destiny of this sun, modern astronomy casts little light. It speaks of it as a

mass of fire, but it is very much like ignorance when man speaks of a fire that can cast its heat hundreds of millions of miles and abate not for millions of years. The fossil plants and animals of earth tell us that perhaps a million years ago the sun arose and set as he does now and cast his morning beams across an ocean that then rolled where our West now is in its wide fields; and then after our continent arose above the flood, the same sunrise came to waken birds which are known here no more and animals whose bones and teeth tell us what monsters they were, and what acres of wild rice or grass they ate or trampled under foot. But of such a heating apparatus as the star which has thus warmed up many worlds, for millions of years man's science has no adequate explanation or conception. We may know a little more than was known by those ancients who were wont to shoot arrows in an eclipse, at the monster which seemed eating up the day-god, but what we think we know, is a small part compared with what we do not understand. But, what is better than philosophy, along comes the fact. The mornings are coming earlier. The sunsets are delaying so that the workman can go home from his toil while it is yet day, and step by step along is coming that wave of warmth which will soon invite the buds to appear, and which will make even old hearts young again in the spring-time inspiration.—D. S. in *The Alliance*.

A Leaf From My Own History.

BY HENRY GERSONI.

IX.

THE SEMINARISTS.

R. came to see me a few days after I had made his acquaintance in the seminary. He was a "girlish" boy of about fifteen years old; his very beauty was quite feminine—soft, smooth, transparent, without a single strong line in his countenance to betray somewhat of a character. He told me his tale of woe. He was a native of Grodno. After the demise of his father his older brother, who became master of the house, once threatened to whip him. He was afraid and ran away. He found shelter in the house of a Russian peasant a few miles from his native town. That peasant was very kind to him, and made him confess Christianity. The Priest who performed the ceremony on him, prevailed upon the peasant to send him off to a seminary at M., where he was treated very badly and had to suffer hunger. A teacher of that seminary took pity on him, and despatched him to Dinaburg with recommendations, and thence he was sent to the Metropolis. He felt very unfortunate at the seminary of St. Petersburg. The Jewish students were bad fellows. The one had changed his religion to escape punishment by law; the other, to rid himself of his wife to whom he had been tied against his will, etc. They were unkind, quarrelsome, hypocritical, one and all of them. "If I could but get some employment—the boy moaned,—I do not care of whatever nature it may be; to black boots, to sweep floors, anything, only to get out of the company of those fellows."

"I believe I can help you—I said,—would you like to become a photographer?"

"I would bless you all my life-time, if you could help me to learn a profession."

"Well, now cheer up—I said dismissing him—whatever will be in my power, I shall do for you."

I was acquainted with an official of the Senate, (*stolomatchnik*) who was immensely rich and owned a large photographic attelier. His lady was a very amiable, well educated young woman, an intimate friend of the young lady whom I mentioned in a previous chapter. To the photographic establishment of this friend I would come up very often to make chemical experiments, as there was an excellent laboratory attached to it. As an intimate friend of the house, I was free to do in the attelier whatever I pleased. And playfully, for mere fun, I had learned all the photographic processes, so that whenever the ladies wanted to have their likenesses taken, they compelled me to do it. There was another object of attraction for me in that establishment; it was the German foreman. He was a Westphalian, and spoke his native language very nicely. Chatting with him I improved in the German dialect. He was rather rough and addicted to drink.

The scientific procedure of his profession mattered very little to him; but by long experience he became an expert. I cared very little for his *naturelle*; all I wanted of him was that he should talk German to me. And this I could very easily obtain; I had only to do him a little service, or treat him to a glass of good liquor, or simply call him *Meister*, and I could put him to talk the whole day long. He was never more pleased than when I gave him a good drink and did his work for him; while he sat by and spinned his yarns about his *Vaterland*, or *die uncultivirten Russey*. I made it a rule to spend at the attelier one afternoon every fortnight at least speaking German and learning the photographic art.

To this photographer I intended to recommend the poor fellow, R. The Dean of the seminary was quite pleased, when I came to ask him for permission to put R. into a photography to learn the trade. "The boy could perhaps learn something better—he said—if he were not such a mamma's baby. Certainly let him learn a trade. But I would rather put him into a blacksmith's shop in order to roughen him by hard work." But I had some trouble to get out the boy's papers from the consistory. There is a multitude of bureaucrats, who will find all sorts of pleas and objections before they do a thing; their object is bribery. I could not trouble the Count about R's affairs as I had already troubled him about another protégé of mine, a Jewish boy, whom I had helped to study in the gymnasium. Of my new friend the Archerey, I did not want to ask any favors. Thus, I had to rely upon myself in this instance. It took me no less than three months time until I got out R's papers from that crowd of parasites. Having felt aggravated about this injustice, I had given hard words to several of the officers, and at last cooled my temper by a satirical poem on the system of "Faith, Love and Hope," as represented by that institution. But, although I was a regular contributor to a serio-comic journal, I could not get this poem published: the editors were afraid even to submit it to the censor.

R. at last was taken by the photographer. The ladies liked him very well, the *Meister* treated him well to please me. I had the satisfaction of seeing him get along excellently; but was compelled to avoid him as I disliked his frequent expressions of gratitude. He really told the ladies that he considered me as his "saving angel," and I was often teased with this soft expression. He thought he could not please me any better than by purchasing a pair of *téphilin*, and reciting his prayers regularly every day. When he informed me of this with an air of confiding simplicity, which made me feel like a grandfather, I could hardly suppress an outburst of laughter. I only admonished him to take care that no one should see him performing the Jewish rites, and while doing so he should think of a Higher providence than a thoughtless student, who may just as well commit all sorts of foolishness for fun, as do something commendable.

The satirical poem which I have composed came to the sight of the Count, one of the young ladies of the house, to whom I had given a transcript of it showed it to him. She told him also that I was a contributor of some articles to the papers. He was so pleased with the poem that he had it lithographed, and circulated among friends. I took good care that copies of it should reach all the dignitaries of the consistory.

—The Vienna correspondent of the *Times* telegraphed on Wednesday: The *pourparlers* between Germany, France, and England on the subject of the recognition of the independence of Roumania, are expected to lead soon to an understanding. Though the three Powers are now ready to recognize Roumanian independence, they wish it at the same time to be understood that they do not regard the Jewish question as yet settled in the sense of the Berlin Treaty; but what Roumania has hitherto done in this respect is merely an installment in the discharge of its obligations, justifying the hope that it will go on in the same direction. The negotiations now in progress seem to refer to the form in which these views of the three Powers should be expressed to the Roumanian Government.