



CINCINNATI, O.....AUGUST 16, 1872

VARIETIES.

There are in the kingdom of Saxony among 2,556,224 souls only 3328 Israelites.

Letters to D. G. L. I. O. B. B. received and delivered.

Banker Bleichroeder of Berlin offers 100,000 thalers without interest for a number of years, to any association, to provide dwellings for the poor without drawing any interest from the enterprise.

Our agent, Mr. H. M. Davis, will visit our friends in Indianapolis, Lafayette, Chicago and Milwaukee, to do general business for these papers. Our friends are kindly requested to give him their advice and support.

I have seen a very rich man who was very poor, for he was an uncharitable miser, the watch-dog of his treasures. So have I seen a very learned man who was very foolish, for he used his vast knowledge to make himself miserable. But I have seen no dying man who repented the acts of righteousness in his earthly career.

In regard to the late Dr. Julius H. Dessar (Dessauer) we learn additionally, that his friend and traveling companion, Mr. Beeber of New York, wrote to the sons of the diseased, the doctor was missing on the morning of the fifth of July, and the impression on board the ship was, that he fell overboard, during the night, which is easily explained.

The Jew is the best Christian, if the lessons taught by Jesus are Christianity. If so, he is the only Christian, for neither the Unitarian nor the Universalist keeps the Sabbath as Jesus did. The Jew is the oldest Protestant. Ever since history records, he has protested against paganism, idolatry, dogmatism, mysticism and all other sorts of errors; and he does so yet.

Dr. Alexander Kohut, some time ago, published in Geiger's Zeitschrift an essay on the Book Tobit, in which he establishes the fact that this book was written in Persia, in the third century, A. C., in the reign of Ardeshir I, as a polemic against Zoroasterism and the prohibition of burying the dead, imposed also on the Persian Jews of that century.

It is a remarkable fact, that Josephus in his defense (Contra Apion I, 12,) already boasts upon this: "Our principle care of all is this, to educate our children well." The idea of establishing public schools for the young, and making attendance compulsory, originated with Jews. A law to this effect from the days of Simeon ben Shatach, about 100 B. C., is preserved in the Talmud.

The oldest grave stone on Jewish burial grounds is in Worms, bearing the date corresponding to 1083 A. C. The oldest Hebrew inscription extant is from the grave stone of Rabbi Isaac Alfasi at Lucena, written by Moses ben Ezra, in the year 1103. Rashi's grave stone pointed out in Prague, is uncertain. The tourists Benjamin, Petachia and Hillel, between the years 1160 and 1260, report grave stones and inscriptions much older than the above, but their authenticity is not proved.

The first edition of Josephus (Greek,) was taken from a manuscript in possession of Diego Hurtado Mendoza, and published by Arnold Peraxylus in Basel, 1541. The first Latin addition appeared in the year 1490 at Lubeck, by Lucas Brandis. The first French translation appeared in Paris, 1492, by Paul Orose. It then appeared in German, by D. Caspar Hadion, Strassbourg 1556; Italian, by Francesco Baldelli, Venice 1581; Spanish, in the year 1482, inscribed to Queen Isabella; English, London 1683; also, in Portuguese, Dutch, Russian, Bohemian, Swedish and Danish. No Hebrew translation was made of it, except portions rendered recently. The Hebrew "Josephon ben Gorion" is an independent work, probably from the ninth century.

The Sabbath schools, in some of our congregations, we are told, are very much neglected. The pupils learn absolutely nothing besides somebody's catechism. No Hebrew, no history, not even the Shema and the Decalogue they are taught in the original. Most of the parents, it is maintained, do not know it, and many of the directors do not understand it. This ought not to be tolerated anywhere. First of all, Hebrew children must learn to understand Hebrew, be instructed to read the Bible, to know the history of our people, and then, when they possess material and the understanding is developed, then comes the catechism, not till then.

There was a difference of opinion among the Shammaites and Hillelites in regard to the manner of reciting twice every day the Shema, viz. the confession; whether it must be recited in a reclining position or in a bent one. But that is indifferent to us now. Important, however, is the story of the *Tos-phta* in this respect. The Rabbis Ishmael and Eliezer ben Azariah, two important authorities, lived in the same place, both mere Hillelites. Yet it was observed, that while Ishmael said the Shema in a bent position Rabbi Eliezer said it in a reclined position. Asked for the reason of this disagreement, Rabbi Eliezer responded, "That the disciples see not the custom and make of it a law for future generations." (Berachoth I, 12). If all had been as provident as Rabbi Eliezer in this case, thousand and one laws and customs would never have been made the cause of sectarian troubles and orthodox tests.

In the Atlanta (Ga.) Constitution, one Mr. Benj. H. Hill reviewing the majority report on the State road lease, made to the Legislature—winds up his paper thus:

What an encouragement to anonymous momentities to this report of the majority! They come to the front as legal authority. I never thought anonymous writers were great on law and truth. But then I admit I have known even the picayune Jew to hide his littleness behind the stolen names of the God-like Caesar or Napoleon, and beat all the learned Blackstones and Storys of the earth—lying.

BENJ. H. HILL, Radical.

We suppose to know that Mr. Hill is a disappointed politician whose ambition runs away with him, it not being balanced by merit and ability. But we do not know that Mr. Hill ever had any business with Jews. He says, "I have known even the picayune Jew," which strikes us to be a falsehood. Let him name one if he can. If Mr. Hill was in trouble about a flourish to wind up his dry paper, we could have given him one which is true, viz. I have known a hungry office seeker hide his meanness behind a show of patriotism and integrity, and still failed to beat any of his opponents. There is certainly more truth in this metaphor than in Mr. Hill's; for if one intends to beat Blackstone or Story, he will certainly not begin to do it by assuming the names of two soldiers, none of whom was ever noted as a great jurist. Besides what has the picayune nature of a man to do with his sagacity as his juridical knowledge? Mr. Hill is too mean to write the truth, we will dismiss him in contempt.

Why did Jesus not marry? It was contrary to the prejudices of the people among whom he lived. They held, at the age of eighteen every lad is marriageable and should marry, and considered it the first duty commanded in the Bible. Why did Jesus not marry? Why did no Pharisee and no scribe censure him for this neglect of duty? Not one of their great men known to posterity was unmarried. When Jesus entered upon his public ministry, he was past the age of marriage according to the customs of that country. Why was he not married? Speculation can invent many a reply to this question, but neither will have much value in reality. His neglect to marry in proper time might be explained by various hypotheses, but there is no cause imaginable why the Pharisees, priests and scribes should not have censured him for what was a gross neglect of duty in their estimation. We believe to have found an answer to this question, provided it is true what Matthew and Luke maintain, that Mary, while the betrothed bride of Joseph, was found with a child, whether Joseph or the Holy Ghost was the father makes no difference in the law governing the case. The Jewish law was, as recorded from the Talmud by Moses Maimonides in his code *Mishnah Thorah*, Division *Issurav Bee'ah* chapter xv, and paragraph 17:

* "A betrothed bride found with a child while

yet in the house of her father—her child is supposed to be a bastard (i. e. not a bastard in fact, but one in law). Therefore, if a male person, he is prohibited to marry a daughter of Israel (because he is a bastard in law) or a bastard woman (because he is no bastard in fact.)"

The explanatory additions only are ours, the rest is the letter of the law. Therefore if Jesus was begotten before marriage and after betrothal, he was prohibited to marry either a legitimate or an illegitimate daughter of Israel, hence he could marry a Heathen woman only, which marriage the law would not have recognized at all. Therefore his celibacy and the silence of his opponents on this point. The main question, however, is, whether Matthew's and Luke's account in this particular is reliable.

In regard to the *Bund der Cultusbeamten* "Union of Ministers," lately proposed in the *Deborah*, have received several endorsing communications, among others also one of Rev. Mr. Wechsler of Columbus, which appears in this week's *Deborah*. We call once more attention to this matter, to state how precarious, dependent and unpleasant the position of many an officiating minister or teacher in our congregations is, how many a man is maltreated without any justifiable cause, or discharged without sensible reason, leaving him to take care of his family as best he can, simply because the matter is under no rule, and is governed by the whims of individuals. This ought to be changed for the better, and it can be done, if those ministers, teachers, etc., will take care of themselves. Association is the great word to ameliorate the condition of individuals, to remedy evils, and to carry out useful and benevolent purposes impossible to the individual. While we promise our hearty co-operation to cement a union of the American Jewish ministers, teachers, etc., to all practical purposes, we would suggest to the friends of the cause to volunteer as an acting committee, in order to work the matter, by correspondence with their respective friends, and thus bring about an early meeting of all who wish to have it carried out. All who wish to volunteer to the said committee, please send us their names. As soon as a respectable number of names have been sent, we will publish them, so that they can act in concert, and offer them these journals for all they might wish to bring before the public.

Truth can not injure; it can be beneficial only. Those used to darkness are dazzled by the sudden approach of light, which may even confuse them. Persons attached to sweet and delusive error may look upon truth as a bitter medicine, which produces a crisis followed by convulsions which frighten the unexperienced physician. Still the experienced physician knows well how the crisis is the beginning of the recovery. It is a contradiction against the supreme wisdom of Providence, against the absolutely logical character of God's government, to suppose man was so constituted that truth makes him miserable, and falsehood contributes to his happiness. Truth makes us free; free of the dominion of animal propensities, brutal passions and selfish interests; free of caprice and lawless arbitrariness; free of all irrational authority, free of all lords and masters besides truth itself, which is a mild, just and wise ruler. Truth is ethical, venerable and holy. Nothing is a more solid basis to a sound moral character than unexceptional love of truth. It tolerates no injustice and no selfishness, and presses man onward and forward on the path of life to higher and holier ideals. And yet, the belief is general among public teachers, that the masses must be treated to darkness, mystery and falsehood, in order to give them happiness; and yet, it is seriously maintained, a dose of falsehood and delusion is necessary to every grain of truth administered to the multitude. You must not speak too plain, or else you make the common man wretched and miserable. Delusion and deception are recommending labels to the grain of truth, diluted in the air of mystery. We have not, can not, and shall not subscribe to this theory of falsehood. It has been tried long enough, and what was the result? The slavery of nations, the oppression of the impotent and ignorant, terrified savans dreading their own discoveries, stupid masses kneeling spell bound before tyrants and symbols, the wild dominion of unbridled passions, crusades, inquisitions, auto-da-fes, dungeons, pyres, bloody wars and bloodier persecutions, have been and still are the results of dogmatized mystery, idolized

symbols, painted falsehoods and galvanized lies. Long enough deception has been practiced and falsehood venerated, and their curse re-echoes from all regions of suffering humanity. Down with the idols and the priests of darkness, down with the monuments of fiction and the altars of error! Let reason handle the cold steel of logic, and battle for the freedom of the human race. Reason must cut out the cancer and dip the wound with *lapis infernalis*, to cure the human family of the old and chronic malady of mysticism, symbolism, dogmatism, error and falsehood, that it recover and prosper. It must be advanced as the first principle of ethics and religion, use your reason correctly, fully and continually. Whatever is contrary to reason, let it fall to resurrect no more. Whatever we can not grasp with our reason, lay it aside for future use, but be not troubled with it. Whatever reason offers as truth, let us have it, by all means, let us have it and venerate it, if it costs a dozen creeds and scores of dogmas.

THE LAW.

I.

Every Israelite must bear in mind that the nineteen books of the Bible, called Prophets and Hagiography, are the commentaries, defense and historical development of the *Thorah*, the Five Books of Moses, the Pentateuch. "Can there be any thing in the Prophets not implied in the Pentateuch?"—was admitted and so stated in the Talmud, to which was added, that none of all prophets and prophetesses in Israel said any thing new not expressed or implied in the *Thorah*. In the *Thorah* again, it is the Law which must be looked upon as its main portion. The doctrines, precepts and principles are expressed in laws. Each law is the incarnation of a principle, and each principle is a doctrine or precept. These are the themes expounded by the prophets and sacred bards of Israel, in their own manner, by the Rabbis again in their peculiar manner, and by the modern expounder of the Law in his manner. Neither of them could, or can step outside of the Law and preach Judaism, which is the system of religion and ethics taught in the Law of Moses.

There are some, indeed, who persuade themselves or others, that they could preach Judaism without the Law of Moses, or without the Bible altogether, but they are mistaken. All the truth they do preach are their reminiscences from the Bible. Any body knowing the book by heart has no particular use for the book. But they can not preach any moral truth not contained in the Law of Moses. Without claiming to be posted any better in the Law than other preachers, we would undertake it any time to point out the very passage in the Law, which gave the idea to the preacher, although he might suppose it original, or gleaned from some other book; provided, of course, the idea is true.

Again, in the Law of Moses, according to its own provisions, the eternal truth must be carefully distinguished from the Law in which it is incarnated. The law may be of a local or temporary nature, subject to amendment, change or abrogation; yet the principle involved may be eternal. These are the *תורה* "The mysteries of the Law." Therefore all the solemnities and all the importance given in the Pentateuch to the Decalogue. It is the groundwork of the eternal law. The whole Bible is a tree, which, with its branches, foliage, blossoms and fruits, grew out of the Decalogue. Tell us any religious or moral truth, and we will point out how it is expressed or implied in the Decalogue, which is the real Logos, *הדבר*, THE Word, to redeem, save, regenerate, elevate and humanize man, to rouse him from the bondage of animal instincts to freedom immortality and happiness.

Therefore the Laws of Moses, contained, expressed or implied, in the Decalogue, are beyond human improvement. It is concerning them, that it is commanded not to add to them and not to diminish thereof. None of these laws can be taken away and none added, as eternal law, without injury to the system. It is a complete structure. Take out one stone and there is a hole.

In all these laws, it is a rule, that the spirit can at no time be contrary to the letter. For instance, the Law ordains the seventh day Sabbath. If it be claimed and admitted, that the spirit of the Law is to keep one day out of every seven as a Sabbath, it is still proper and rational to claim; therefore, we keep the seventh

day Sabbath, as the spirit can never contradict the letter of the Law. But there is no positive proof that such is the spirit of the Law, while there is positive proof that such is the letter. Anyhow it can never be wrong to keep the seventh day sabbath; but it may be wrong, in the Law, to keep another day, or two days.

Another holding rule concerning these laws is, they explain one another. The Law, for instance, ordains, that none should pass by his personal enemy's breast of burden, which lies helpless under his burden, without rendering assistance to the animal, helping him up and starting the same on the proper way. According to its spirit, this law teaches the principle that the duties of humanity extend to the animal, which is also taught in the fourth commandment and elsewhere.

If we would know the fourth commandment only, we might suppose, we have this duty only to our own animals, and regarding them, it is our duty not to overwork them. The other commandment explains the first to the extent, that this duty to animals is general and holds good under all circumstances, also if the animal be the property of a personal enemy. But, in the law stated, the animal is property. If we had not the passage, in the fourth commandment, "thy ox, and thy ass, and all thy cattle" to be given a day of rest, we would suppose the law extends merely to ordain the duty of protection to our neighbor's property, in whatever personal relations we may stand to him. Therefore, the two laws explain one another.

Again, in the law before us, the animal is property, hence the law itself must relate also to property and involve a second principle, viz: the duty to protect our neighbor's property. Therefore we know that the commandatory side of the law, "Thou shalt not steal," is the duty not only of the State, but also of the individual, to protect the property of others. So these two laws explain one another. But notwithstanding all these and other duties which the spirit of this law may suggest, the spirit can never contradict the letter, and so it can never be wrong, if one helps up his enemy's ass crushed by the weight of his burden.

This is the case with all laws of Moses contained, expressed or implied in the Decalogue. The laws not contained in the Decalogue, either expressed or implied, are of another category. In them, it is the principle only which claims divinity; the letter may be local, temporary and subject to change. But we speak of these in our next paper.

LESSON FOR THE YOUNG.

Babylon and Hebrew Exiles.

The Babylonian Empire, after the fall of Jerusalem, reached from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean Sea, excluding only Arabia and the city of Tyre, which was protected by Egypt. It included all Syria, Mesopotamia, Susiana and Chaldea. Its neighboring countries were Persia in the East, Media in the North, Arabia and Egypt in the West. Its main rivers are the Tigris, the Euphrates, and the Kebar. The Kebar falls into the Tigris, about 45 miles above the Persian gulf. The Euphrates also falls into the Tigris, which then, in the Delta form, falls into the Persian Gulf. Its principal cities were *Babylon*, the capital, on both banks of the Euphrates river, covering about 112 square miles of ground, surrounded by a broad canal and a brick wall, with 250 towers and 100 gates. *Thapsacus* situated on the upper Euphrates, about 180 miles north of Babylon, was a large and populous city. *Nineveh*, the capital of the old Assyrian empire, was situated on the eastern bank of the Tigris, and was as large as Babylon and fortified in the same manner. It was about five miles from the place now called Mosul. *Susa* was the capital of the province Susiana, and afterward the capital of the kings of Persia.

In the year 605 B. C., the first Hebrews were transported to Babylon. They were soldiers in the army of King Necho of Egypt, which was defeated by Nebuchadnezzar, near Karkemish. Again in the year 602, when Nebuchadnezzar defeated Joakim, king of Judah, a number of Hebrew captives were sent to Babylon. The largest number of captives was sent to Babylon in the year 598 B. C., when Joachim, king of Judah was defeated by Nebuchadnezzar. About 22,000 souls were led into captivity with their king. King Joachim was imprisoned in the capitol. The other captives were permitted to settle on the Kebar river, where they built the

city of Tel-Abib, and on the *Sud* river, west of Tigris. The prophet Jeremiah, (xxix) encouraged those captives in a letter, to establish permanent settlements in the land of their captivity, since they would not return to their old homes before the elapse of seventy years.

In the fall 586 B. C., after the fall of Jerusalem, the last deportation of Hebrews to Babylon took place. It consisted of about 400,000 souls, and five years later 745 families followed (Jerem. LII, 30), so that there must have been about 500,000 captive Hebrews from Judah in Babylon, besides the peaceful emigrants, that had gone there, and the captives from Israel in Assyria, so that about a million of Hebrews must have been in the Babylonian empire.

The language spoken in the Babylonian empire was the Aramaic in various dialects, so much akin to the Hebrew, that the captives found no difficulty in understanding it. The religion of the Babylonians was Zabaism, or the worship of the heavenly bodies through the idols which represented them, some of which are to be seen in a museum in London. The sun was the chief god. He was called *Bel*, also *Baal*, "lord" or *Maloch*, "ruler." Next to him in authority was the moon or *Melitta*, the mother of all creatures, and the five largest planets. The Babylonians were celebrated in astronomy, also in the superstitions of astrology. They were also distinguished as manufacturers and dyers of linen, wollen, cotton and silk goods, carpets and blankets with arabesque and large flowers woven in or embroidered, and other costly manufactures.

It is not known how the captive Hebrews were treated in Babylon, or how they were colonized. It appears, however, from the few stories known from the captivity, as well as from the influence of some Hebrews upon the king, that they were treated well. The colony at Tel-Abib having about one thousand choice mechanics most from Jerusalem among them, and consisting chiefly of young and strong people, soon flourished, and it is of them that we will speak first in our next story.

HISTORY OF ISRAEL

After the Fall of Jerusalem Before the Romans, and Origin of the Talmud.

From Dr. Graetz's Vol. 4, translated for THE ISRAELITE.

BY REV. DR. GOLDAMMER.

CHAPTER III.

Rabbi Elieser ben Hyrkanos—The rigid system—The Anathema and its consequences—Rabbi Josua ben Chananya, the man of the golden middle-course.

From 80-118 A. C.

SCOPE OF THE SECOND GENERATION.
RABBI ELIESER BEN HYRKANOS.

In the rank of these Tanaites Rabbi Gamaliel represented, as had been shown, the principle of union rooting in an authoritative power, strong enough to regulate, as from a fixed central point, the entire scope of the religious and national life of the people, while Rabbi Elieser, his brother-in-law, supported the principle of the opposite direction; the right of personal persuasion against and above dictatorial legislation. Rabbi Elieser was a weighty link in the Tanaitic chain. There are some features preserved of his early life, partly obliterated, however, by legendary additions. A son of a wealthy husbandman, named Hyrkanos, was tilling his father's grounds among his brothers until he was 20, according to others, 28 years old. But mortified for having been disregarded by his father who overburdened him with heavier labors, and to that afraid of a punishment he incurred one day by a misfortune suffered with his team, he deserted his father's house, went to Jerusalem where he attended Yochanan ben Saccal's school, and through his unflinching zeal soon became his master's most favored and admired scholar. The father, ignorant of his son's whereabouts, betook himself to Jerusalem for the purpose of effecting his legal disinheritance. Rabbi Yochanan, informed of Hyrkanos's intention, made an arrangement such as to allow his favorite scholar, Elieser, to deliver a public lecture before an auditory consisting of the most respected and prominent men of Jerusalem, on the very day on which the act of disinheriting should be effected. The delivery was successful, and rewarded with Rabbi Yochanan's public approbation. Think of father Hyrkanos's astonishment when in the celebrated youth he recognized his own son whom he was just intending to destitute. Carried away by the ecstasy of overflowing

paternal love he was about to assign unto him all his property; but Rabbi Elieser, too conscientious to enrich himself on account of his brothers, refused this favor of his father. (1) His reputation increased more and more, in such a degree as to render him worthy of the affinity with the patriarchal house; and Rabbi Gamaliel's sister, Imma Shalom, became his wife.

After his master's death, Rabbi Elieser founded a school at Lydda, which subsisted several centuries and was the central place for the traditions in South Judea. He had his school house situated at a Career (Stadium Ris.), at which place existing, may be, since the time when Lydda was yet inhabited by Greeks, and designed once for a stage of thoughtless plays, Rabbi Elieser used to deliver his lectures while sitting on a stone before his disciples. Rabbi Josua, in his admiration for this sage, compared him to the holy arch and the stone to the mountain of Sinai.

HIS SYSTEM.

Although trained up in the Hillellic school, Rabbi Elieser, by nature, adhered to Shammai's principles, a condition which gave to his method and life in general a particular feature. According to Hillel's school, two different sources have been acknowledged for the origin of the doctrines beyond the Scriptural laws. The one was the verbal or oral transmission of the traditions from generation to generation, warranted by the authenticity and faithfulness of their conveyors; the other consisted of advanced rules adapted to give origin to new results through certain intimations in the Scriptural text. While from the first source the doctrines emanated thoroughly complete and free from any personal influence, though for the same reason also inapt for development and incommensurate to complicated cases; the second source, consisting merely of rules and formulas, gave rise to multifarious inferences toward new Halachal results, it was a productive power, and spoken of already as rules of interpretation. Rabbi Elieser, in conformity with the Shammaties, acknowledged but the verbal doctrines as genuine and true, and rejected the whole class of derived traditions as questionable and wanting thoroughly the authenticity of the oral doctrines, even when rooting in logical evidence. He, therefore, was called "the Shamuti." (2) Like all characters guided by principles, he tenaciously clung to his singularity through all stages and painful conditions of his life and aimed with all his efforts solely to secure and to preserve the matter of the verbal traditions, holding its development as inefficient and of no value. Since his youth he made the Halachoth handed down and coined as they were, almost to the chief object of his study and the property of his memory in order not to be at a loss even "with one dust of them," as he said. He, therefore, was called "a cemented cistern that never loses a drop of water." And in the manner he learned, in the same manner he taught. To questions concerning the laws, his usual answer was, "Thus I heard from my teachers;" or "I do not know that; I never heard it." During his sojourn at Cesarea (Philippy) in Upper-Galelea, thirty questions were laid before him, "for twelve of them," he said, "I know decisions by traditions; but I am ignorant as to the other eighteen," and when asked if he never did teach what is beyond he had heard, he returned: "You compel me to pronounce what I never heard; know, then, that I never in my life have taught what has not been communicated unto me by my teachers." (3) To obviate similar molesting questions, and to show his aversion to answer, he returned with cross-interrogations. Asked once "if a natural child is to be considered as a legitimate heir?" he replied, interrogatively: "Is a natural child to be considered as a brother?" The question, "If it is allowed, after the catastrophe of the Temple, to paint one's own house white?" he gainsaid with the interrogatory sentence, "Is it suitable to paint graves?" And keeping on his principle, never to pronounce any precept which was not warranted by oral tradition, he rejected even the thoroughly logical major of the inference from the minor to the major (Kal Wa-chomer), by which means Rabbi Josua produced a new Halacha. Rabbi Elieser represented the conservative element in the Synhedrin body, and being the most faithful organ of memory

for the traditions, he delivered the substance of the Halachoth in the self-same frame as they were handed down, without the least modification. "The cemented cistern," he was truly allowing no drop of water to trickle in or out. Contemporaries and posterity gave him the honorable surname, "Sinai"—a living table of immutable laws. But, however distinguished he was on one hand as a faithful preserver of the verbal doctrines, yet, on the other hand, he found himself isolated at his one-sided position of steadily persevering in their exclusive authority. His colleagues were too far advanced in the Hillellic direction as to be mere repositories of undeveloped and uninterpreted laws, and his exclusive tendency collided greatly against the main drift of his time. Principles of such a strain as those of Rabbi Elieser could not fail to clash against Rabbi Gamaliel's administration, and thus we see in him the most pertinacious adversary against the patriarch's system of centralization. Hence we find on one side the normal authority justified by the quests of the time to assume the power of suppressing oppositional aggressions against the established rules, and on the other side an unruly swing of independence sanctioned by prejudices of bygone times; antithesis not easy to reconcile. Nor was Rabbi Elieser the man to give up and to subordinate his view to others, which was the very cause he was blamed for by his contemporaries." (4)

HIS EXCOMMUNICATION.

The dispute about the Achnal-stove was the immediate cause of the open rupture between the two brothers-in-law; too unimportant as to itself, however, as to be the origin of their discord. Its origin is to be sought in Rabbi Elieser's actual opposition, and he was excommunicated not because of his theoretical opposition, but because of his practical resistance. The high reverence toward his person, however, made it difficult as how to announce him his penalty. Again, the ready Rabbi Akiba undertook the displeasing mission. In the black garb of mourning he appeared before Rabbi Elieser, and announced him his doom in the following sparing words: "It seems to me that thy colleagues dislike henceforth thy companionship." Rabbi Elieser understood the hint, submitted to the dreary verdict, and underwent the anathema. He left Lydda, and sojourned henceforth at Cesarea in Upper-Galelea, taking but little interest in the proceedings of the Synhedrin at Yamna, and when informed of an important resolution, he either supported or decided it by means of his vast knowledge of the Halachoth.

4.—Taanith, 25.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Review.

BY DR. EPPSTEIN.

"Shir Hashirim, oder das Salomonisch Holielied, uebersetzt, und Kritisich erlautert, von Dr. H. Graetz, Professor an der Universitaet zu Breslau," Wien, 1871. Wm. Beaumuelier.

"Shir Hashirim, or the Song of Songs of Solomon, translated and critically explained by Dr. H. Graetz, Professor at the University of Breslau. Vienna, 1871. Wm. Beaumuelier."

Some nine months ago I took up the Song of Solomon in the Hebrew, and made of it a careful study, and resolved to write down my ideas about it, with a view of publishing them. Although familiar with this book in the original from my childhood, I thought I discovered new beauties, and the true meaning of it, which were not known to me and others beside me.

About six weeks ago, while writing my notes on the last verses of the Song, there came to my hands a notice from a German secular paper in Vienna, Austria, highly laudatory of the book named at the head of this article. In a few days the commentary of Dr. Graetz was in my eager hands. The notice above mentioned, as well as the well known fame of the Dr. as a Jewish historian, led me to surmise that my own work had already been done, and better done by him. I feared the wind was taken out from my sails. With those thoughts I turned at once to the concluding comments of Dr. Graetz upon the last verses of the song. And to my grateful surprise I found him differing from me, and my own work, therefore, not superfluous. I finished my own notes, and then turned my critical attention to Dr. Graetz's work, and read it carefully, pencil in hand.

1.—Shirah-Shirim, Rabba b. d. 130. Yerush. Teruma, v. 43. Haggirin Seder ha-Doroth, the resp. article.
2.—Succa, 28.