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35 and after 36 ; therefore he recommends a שיעור, "space." (That is the right reading in a Bodleian MS., instead of the incomprehensible שיפור in our text, which Dr. Joel Müller, in his excellent edition of this treatise, ingeniously proposed.)

The next part in Professor Blau's monograph has for object the pendent letters (JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, I., p. 137), which is followed by a chapter on the *Tikkune Soferim*, of which the earlier documents count eleven, while later on we find mentioned eighteen. Raym. Martini, for instance (*Pugio Fidei*, p. 277, ed. Carpzov), mentions an unknown *Tikkun* for Ps. xxii. 17, which was used as an argument to brand him as a forger (*The Expositor*, 1888, Third Series, Vol. VII., p. 183) ; but from the variations found in different documents on this subject it is highly probable that Martini copied from a genuine text. In the sixth part our author treats of the words written otherwise than read, and in the last he gives explanations of Massoretic notes quoted in the Midrashim.

We hope that Professor Blau will continue his ingenious Massoretic investigations, for if he has succeeded in shaking the foundation of the Massorah, he ought to try to repair the breach by a new construction.

A. NEUBAUER.

Eldad the Danite.

Eldad ha-Dani seine Berichte über die zehn Stämme und deren Ritus in verschiedenen Versionen nach Handschriften und alten Drucken mit Einleitung und Anmerkungen nebst einem Excurse über die Falascha und deren Gebräuche von ABRAHAM EPSTEIN. Pressburg : 1891 (in Hebrew, and with a Hebrew title also), published by Herr Lippe, Wien.

THE author of this interesting and learned monograph is not a stranger in the field of Rabbinical literature. Besides his essays on the *Midrash Rabbathi* and the *Pugio Fidei*, on the *Book of the Jubilees* (of which the first part appeared in the *Revue des Etudes Juives*, t. xxi., p. 80, *sqq.*), and many others of minor importance, Herr Epstein is the author of a remarkable book on Jewish antiquities, entitled, *Beiträge zur Jüdischen Alterthumskunde I.* (Wien : 1887), of which we regard his present book as a second instalment ; indeed, we are astonished that the learned author has not described it as such on the title-page. The present work is composed of three essays. The first treats of the diary of the famous Eldad the Danite, which Herr

Epstein thinks genuine. The native country of Eldad, our author concludes, was either Yemen, or a province of South-east Africa, where the Jews knew Hebrew without having any knowledge of the Talmud, whilst in Palestine, Babylonia, Persia, Egypt, Spain and the Magreb, the decisions of the Geonim were already well known towards the end of the ninth century, the date at which Eldad appeared, bringing with him strange *Halachoth* concerning the *Shehitah* and *Bedikah*, which agree neither with the views of Rabbanites nor Karaites. Eldad, Herr Epstein maintains, could not be a native of Abyssinia, the country of the Falashas, since they speak only the Geez dialect, and know no Hebrew, whilst there is no trace of this dialect in Eldad's Hebrew, but there are some traces of Arabic, which Eldad must have known, although he pretended the contrary. Traces of Arabic in Eldad's Hebrew were already recognised by others before our author (*Jour. Asiatique*, 1861, II., p. 206), although Herr Epstein supplies a larger number of instances; but to affirm that the Yemen Jews, although knowing and writing Hebrew, were completely ignorant of the Talmud and the works of the Geonim, is a premature conclusion, for the early history of the Jews in this country is not so well known as to permit such a definite conclusion. And were this even proved, we could not admit that the Yemen Jews knew nothing of the oral law, as is the case with the Falashas, who indeed are scarcely of the Jewish race at all. Why should the Babylonian and Palestinian Rabbis have communicated Halachas to Africa, Spain, France, Italy, and Germany, and not to Yemen? Surely, the Geonim would have been as anxious for the religious observances of the Yemen Jews as of those in other countries. It is therefore probable that Eldad invented his strange Halakoth as he did his impossible visit to the Ten Tribes and the children of Moses. Why the Geonim in Babylonia and in Africa believed in them, and why the grammarian, Judah ben Qoreish, quoted the explanation of *נצח* according to the dialect of the Danites (not of Eldad; see *Journal As.*, 1861, *loc. cit.*), can be answered by another question: Why did they believe in so many Agadic books, issued in their own time, as ancient, for instance, the *Pirke de R. Eliezer*, and others? The connection of the Ten Tribes with the rise of pseudo-messiahs is well known, and therefore any information about them was not only welcome, but was eagerly believed, and hence no scepticism was roused as regards Eldad's reports.

But apart from the question of the genuineness of Eldad's diary, we consider Herr Epstein's geographical notes, as well as the comparison of Eldad's Halakoth with the Rabbanitic ones, as a boon to Rabbinical literature. His publication of the different texts of Eldad's diary from old editions, and from MSS. is also an important contribution,

and this remark applies more especially to the copious and learned notes. It seems, however, that our author was not aware that the JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, vol. I., pp. 95 to 114, has an article on the same subject, where in a supplementary note (p. 423) another text is pointed out in which the diary in a concise form is ascribed to a merchant Elhanan.

The Halakhoth are also given as found in four different texts, of which the most authentic seem to be those reported by Samuel Jama ben Jacob of Cebes in Tunisia. Here in the neighbourhood of Kairowân the tradition was better kept up. That the Arabic book entitled *Risaleh al-Burhân fi Tadzkhiyat al-Haiwan*, without the name of the author, in the unique Bodleian MS. is indeed, according to Herr Halberstam's ingenious deduction, the work of our Samuel, results from passages in Yemen MS. which we shall mention in another number of the JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW. Why Herr Epstein doubts the existence of this MS. (p. 105, 8) we do not know.

The third part treats of the Falashas, which has become now a subject *à la mode*. Of course Herr Epstein, as well as others who have busied themselves with this strange tribe, have to rely chiefly upon the report made by the celebrated M. Joseph Halévy, and the accounts published by Flad and others. The name of *Falasha* is derived from the root *falash* to emigrate; they indeed call themselves "the exiled" in their prayer-book. Is the name of *Pelishtim*, "the Philistines," derived from the same word? It is possible, for they came from Caphtor (Amos ix. 7).

After a brief description of the dwelling-places and the language of the Falashas, Herr Epstein gives an account of their literature. To this ought to be added some apocrypha which M. Halévy brought from Abyssinia, and which are still in his possession. Our author continues then with a chapter on the creed of the Falashas, and with the enunciation of their feasts and fasts with the calculation necessary for fixing them. In mentioning that the Falashas rely in these respects on the book of the Jubilee, our author speaks of the similar calculation of the Samaritans according to a late source. Why not rather quote the introduction to a Samaritan chronicle which appeared in the *Journal Asiatique*, 1869, II., p. 422? After having spoken about the priests, the Nazirites, the house of prayer, the sacrifices, the prayers, the ritual rules and the costumes of the Falashas, Herr Epstein concludes with a chapter on the origin of this curious tribe, for which they have themselves three traditions, and after having mentioned and discussed the opinions on the subject by Filoxene Luzzatto, the late Marcus and M. Halévy, our author comes to the conclusion that the Falashas for the greater part came from Egypt, whence they brought their strange ritual, which is neither Samaritan

nor Judaic, but a mixture of both made by Onias when he built the temple of Heliopolis, and tried to satisfy the different sects by accepting something from each of them. That is also the reason suggested for the strange literature the Falashas possess, and perhaps also of their ignorance of Hebrew. We, for our part, believe that the Falashas are converted slaves, made by the Jews of Abyssinia at an early epoch.

From this short summary it can be seen how much of proved theory as well as of conjecture are to be found in our author's book, the reading of which we can recommend to those who are interested in the fictions found in Rabbinical literature. We only regret that Herr Epstein uses German words written in Hebrew characters, which are unintelligible for all Jewish students, except perhaps in German-speaking countries. טעקסט (Text) could have been given by נוטחה. What a barbarism the word להליטעראטור represents! A Hebrew particle and a Hebrew article appended to the German word "Literatur"! Why not rather employ the word כתבים?

A. NEUBAUER.

Geography of Palestine.

Bibliotheca Geographica Palæstinæ. Chronologisches Verzeichniss der auf die Geographie des Heiligen Landes bezüglichen Literatur, von 333 bis 1878, und Versuch einer Cartographie. Herausgegeben. By REINHOLD RÖHRICHT. Berlin, 1890. (Reuther.)

As the comparatively small volume of the Bible has produced, and still continues to produce, an immense literature, so also Palestine, which was one of the least extensive countries of the ancient world, has been the subject of an immense literature of travels and pilgrimages, which is of the highest importance for the geography of the Bible. Of course, the greatest number of pilgrims were Christians of all denominations, and thus from them proceeded the greater bulk of this literature. A smaller amount was written by Jews, and a still smaller portion by Mahomedans. But the last have composed special works of geography, of which Palestine, of course, forms a part, and they wrote histories of Jerusalem and Hebron, which they also regard as holy places. It was high time for compiling a bibliography of the works concerning Palestine, which are written in so many languages. This task the Nestor of Palestine studies, the late Dr. Titus Tobler, undertook, and issued a bibliography in 1868. Before his book appeared, and soon after, societies for Palestine