child-marriage has failed to effect the remedy intended. It is the intelligent student of India's past who can best judge of the difficulty of engrafting on an ancient civilization such as hers one so different in nature and aims as that of Western Europe, and we may be grateful to Herr Hillebrandt for what he has said on the subject. As he points out, India is in a transition state. What the final outcome may be it is difficult to foresee. One can only point, as does the author, to the prevailing influences and more important tendencies, and draw from them conclusions which may be useful towards determining her future.

C. M. DUFF.

THE CHRONICLES OF JERAHMEĒL, OR THE HEBREW BIBLE HISTORIALE. Translated for the first time from an unique MS. of the Bodleian Library, by M. GASTER, Ph.D. (Oriental Translation Fund, New Series, IV.) 8vo ; pp. 341, five facsimiles. (London, 1899.)

The work under consideration has a literary importance far above that which it claims as a mere compilation of stories and legends. The very fact that the opinions of scholars on its composition, country, and date differ so widely, shows the widespread interest it has aroused. As there is only one single MS. of the original, the publication of this in its present form was extremely desirable, and students interested in apocryphical and agādic literature as well as folklore in general will be indebted to Dr. Gaster for having prepared the volume.

The translation is preceded by a lengthy introduction, in which the enormous difficulties involved in the text are tackled. A definition of the work is by no means an easy matter. In spite of the title "Chronicles" which it bears, it is not a historical work, the bulk of it being of legendary character. Neither is it a Midrāsh, because it is not a homiletic commentary on the Old Testament or any part of it, the narration flowing in a continuous stream from the creation of the world down to the destruction of the

second Temple, and even including some episodes of mediaeval history. The present volume, however, ends with the history of the Maccabees.

The composition of the book gives the reader hard problems to solve. Compiled by a certain Elāzar b. Ashēḥal Lēvi in the year 1325, it includes not only nearly the whole text of the Josippon, but chiefly the records made by a certain Jeraḥmeēl b. Solomon, who was also acquainted with Josippon. The preponderance of the portion which goes under the name of Jeraḥmeēl induced Dr. Gaster to name the whole book after him, although "Hebrew Bible Historiale" as the chief title would perhaps have been more appropriate.

In the course of his investigations Dr. Gaster calls attention to a Latin work of "Antiquities" attributed to Philo, but until recently almost entirely ignored. Strangely enough, the book proved upon close examination to be identical with the narrations of Jeraḥmeēl. Now one would think that this ingenious discovery ought to be of great help in proving the identity and date of Jeraḥmeēl, but as a matter of fact it makes things more complicated. Dr. Gaster is no doubt correct in his criticism of these "Antiquities," which he shows to be a Latin translation from a Greek version of an originally Hebrew text, the author of which lived in Palestine very near the beginning of the Christian era. Moreover, Jeraḥmeēl himself quotes (p. 165) "Philo, the friend of Joseph, the son of Gorion (author of the Josippon)." Now, although one cannot but observe—and Dr. Gaster has, of course, seen it too—that 'Jeraḥmeēl' is but the Hebrew of 'Philo,' the Jeraḥmeēl of our book cannot be identical with the Hebrew original of this Philo. In fact, Dr. Gaster, with all his clever and learned arguments, could hardly do more than place the material and all details before the reader, and leave it to him to adopt one of the many opinions already in existence on the matter. The late Dr. Perles gives the thirteenth century as Jeraḥmeēl's date and Germany as his country.

Dr. Neubauer, in a recent article (J.Q.R., 1899, p. 367),

decides for Italy and the eleventh century ; whilst Dr. Gaster with good reason considers him to have been a Spaniard and to have lived at an earlier date. But I believe he places too much reliance in the pure Hebrew style of the book, because this is an argument for the skill of the author rather than the age in which he lived.

Dr. Gaster has not confined his investigations to the material offered by the work, but refers to the whole class of writings of similar character both in Hebrew and other languages. The knowledge he displays of the Jewish as well as non-Jewish literature on the subject is so extensive that it is evident that there are few, if any, other scholars who would have grappled with the work so successfully.

In the "Chronicles" themselves many details invite comparison with the legendary literature of the Mohammedans. From small beginnings, which can be traced back to the Qorān and some of Mohammed's contemporaries, an enormous literature of Biblical legends developed. A small but carefully selected instalment of the same was made accessible to European readers in Weil's *Biblische Legenden der Muselmänner* (1845), compiled from various Arabic sources. Al-Tha'ālibī's large work *Kitāb alarāis* is very comprehensive, though little attention has been paid to it. Several portions of Firdausi's epos "Jusuf and Suleicha" have been published in German translation by Baron Schechta-Wssehrd in the Proceedings of the Congress of Orientalists held in Vienna in 1888 (Semitic Section, p. 48 sqq.).

Most akin to Jerahmeel as to matter and form is Mirkhond's *Rawdhat-as-Safā*, written in Persian, of which the late Professor E. Rehatsek gave an English translation (ed. F. F. Arbuthnot, Oriental Translation Fund, New Series, vol. i). The Mohammedan literature on sacred legends is, if one may so express it, second-hand. Its Jewish archetype had assumed imposing dimensions already, when this was only at its commencement. Jerahmeel's "Chronicles" give us, therefore, an excellent clue to the way in which this Mohammedan literature was evolved.

They not only draw upon the Apocrypha, the Talmud, and the various Midrāshim, but also on the "Chapters of Eliezer" and a host of other works. A closer investigation of the Mohammedan branch of this literature is therefore sure to yield most interesting results. There are legendary elements even in the Qorān the origin of which it is very difficult to trace. To mention only one instance, the journey of Moses with "his servant" told in Sūra xviii (v. 59 sqq.) has hitherto defied all attempts to discover its origin. In Moslim tradition (Al Bokhāri, ed. Krehl, iii, p. 276) this servant is *Joshua b. Nūn*, whilst the companion whom they meet and who advises them during their journey is Al-Khidhr (the prophet Elijah).

The form in which Jerahmeel gives the legend differs considerably. It relates the meeting of R. *Joshua b. Levi*, a famous Talmudical authority, with the prophet Elijah, who journeys with them through paradise and hell. Now whilst the Rabbinic legend is focussed round the person of a Rabbi (who from a collector of legendary tradition became their hero), the Moslim counterpart of the same tale clung to the Biblical Joshua, "the servant of Moses," who thus becomes the chief person concerned in the legend. It must be mentioned, however, that there are great discrepancies in the single incidents of the journey in both versions.

It goes without saying that the Jews in Arabic-speaking countries have also developed a large legendary literature in Arabic. Much of this exists in print, and forms the chief sacred reading in the communities of the East and Maghreh. Although in the main borrowed and translated from Rabbinic writings, the translators allowed their own imagination free vent. There exists, e.g., an Arabic version of Hāmān's letter which is not identical with that reproduced by Jerahmeel. This Arabic letter, which is said to have been translated from a Syriac original, has long existed in print (see "Semitic Studies," in memory of the Rev. Dr. A. Kohut, p. 249 sqq.). For 'Syriac' we have evidently to place 'Rabbinic Aramaic,' but the source whence it is borrowed is unknown.

Dr. Gaster's introduction is followed by a synopsis of the contents of the "Chronicles," in which he gives much useful information as to the sources from which the compilers drew their material. It cannot but be commended that, instead of publishing the original text, he has first of all given his attention to the translation. The chief importance of works like Jeraḥme'el lies in the material they offer, while they hardly claim to be considered from a linguistic point of view. The purity of Jeraḥme'el's style is, of course, an additional attraction, but we can barely discriminate whether and how far the hand of the last compiler, Elāzar, has helped to purify and polish the diction. The book certainly deserves to be well received by all interested in Bible stories.

H. HIRSCHFELD.