

note that the Acts of Babgen's Council were redacted in Greek and, with the approval of all three nations, sent to Edessa, to be stored in the archives of that city, whence a hundred years later the Armenians procured them, their own copy having been lost in the burning of Dwin by the Persians in 571.

F C CONYBEARE

THE MISHNA

Die Mischna Joma by Dr JOHANNES MEINHOLD *Die Mischna Baba gamma* by Pastor WALTER WINDFUHR *Die Mischna Middoth* by Dr OSCAR HOLTZMANN *Die Mischna Challa* by Dr KARI ALBRECHT (A. Topelmann, Giessen, 1913)

THE Mishna presents so many curious and difficult problems, and its material is of such importance for the purposes of New Testament research, that the recent activity of scholars in this subject is very welcome. Despite the excellent editions which Dr Baneth, Dr Hoffmann, and others are producing, and the fine work accomplished by Dr Strack on certain tractates, there is certainly room for the edition commenced under the guidance of Drs G. Beer and Oscar Holtzmann. This new series, of which the above four tractates are a part, differs markedly from other studies of this subject in one important feature, namely in its relative disregard of Jewish tradition. Something can be said for this attitude. It is true that the Talmud is for the most part less primitive than the Mishna, and frequently its attempts to explain difficulties in the Mishna are mere conjectures. In such cases the opinions of the modern editor are more likely to be right. But there is also much in the Talmud which is probably as old as the Mishna, and therefore its interpretations deserve careful attention and are often worth recording. Similarly the work of some Jewish commentators repays study if used with discrimination. Rashi, no doubt, writes what is simply a commentary on the Mishna as part of the Talmud, and is apt to be content with a 'This is explained in the Talmud'. But Maimonides gives us a real commentary on the Mishna itself, perceiving that it requires to be treated as an entity distinct from the Talmud, and, of course, the work of modern Jewish scholars is an invaluable aid, to which the present series seems at times to have paid insufficient attention. Thus in Dr Meinhold's edition of *Joma* (the Day of Atonement) in 8 we miss a reference to the interesting controversy concerning the variant reading בשם for השם . Whatever be the rights of the case, mention should have been made of Derenbourg's article in *R. É. J.* vi p. 70 ff. Again the lack of references detracts from the too brief

note on the curious legend of the foundation stone of the world—the *אבן שתייה* mentioned in v 2. Dr Meinhold includes in the Introduction a full and useful discussion of the Old Testament passages relating to the Day of Atonement, and concludes that the ceremony is a development of Judaism subsequent to the period of Ezra.

The tractate *Challa* deals with the regulation laid down in Num. xv 18-21, the heave-offering to be made from the dough. The subject is naturally less important than that of *Joma*, at any rate from the point of view of general scholarship. But as regards the life of the Jewish people the case is different. Herein lies our one criticism of Dr Albrecht's edition. We feel that the very short Introduction would have gained by the inclusion of a paragraph dealing with the continuity of the custom in Jewish circles to the present day. Reference might also have been made with advantage to the passage in *Mishna Sabb* 11 6, where neglect of the *Challa* offering is one of three things for which, it is said, a woman may incur death in childbirth—a curious idea which nevertheless illustrates the stress laid by Judaism on the duties of the home, and has given this tractate no small ethical value.

The tractate *Middoth* on the measurements and arrangements of the Temple is very thoroughly treated by Dr Holtzmann. The information given in the *Mishna* forms a valuable supplement to the notices left by Josephus concerning the Herodian Temple. On the other hand Josephus records much which is not found in the *Mishna*. Unfortunately the evidence furnished by *Middoth*, Josephus, and archaeological sources is so conflicting that Dr Holtzmann concludes 'it is not possible as yet to present an accurate picture of the Herodian Temple'. He does not therefore enter into a full discussion of the divergences, but contents himself with giving in the Introduction a comparison of the passages common to *Middoth* and Josephus. Students will find it valuable to refer to the conclusions reached by Dr G. A. Smith from his use of the same material in vol. 11 of his work *Jerusalem*.

In *Baba gamma* (The First Gate) we pass to a very different topic, that of Civil Jurisprudence. The principle underlying the regulations made by the tractate is that the various inquiries to be discussed should be brought under one of four main categories deduced from Exod. xxi 28-xxii 6 and known quaintly but succinctly as 'ox, pit, tooth and fire'. This procedure may seem pedantic when the method is applied to questions of ritual, but in the present connexion it is easy to recognize its soundness. No system of law is able to avoid the problem of drawing fine distinctions, and a thorough study of the Jewish system, so far from confirming the popular opinion that the Rabbis loved casuistry more than justice, impresses one rather with a sense of their fundamental desire for equity. A fuller discussion of the relations

between the Jewish and the Roman and Greek codes of law might have been given in the Introduction, although we agree with the opinion stated by Pastor Windfuhr that the Jewish code is essentially an independent growth

We wish that the critical notes in this series could be given at the foot of the text, where they would be easily seen, instead of being placed in an Appendix at the end of each tractate. It is also a pity that the editors have not been able to collate the evidence for the text which is to be found in the MSS brought from the Cairo Genizah and now in the Cambridge University Library

W A L EISLIE

The Story of Ahikar from the Aramaic, Syriac, Arabic, Armenian, Ethiopic, Old Turkish, and Slavonic versions By F C CONYBEARE, J RENDEL HARRIS, and AGNES SMITH LEWIS. Second edition (Cambridge University Press, 1913)

SINCE the first edition of this learned and important work appeared in 1898 unexpected light has been thrown upon the subject by Professor Sachau's discovery of fragments of the Story of Ahikar among the Aramaic papyri found at Elephantine, and the present edition contains a translation of these fragments and a translation of a second Armenian recension, together with a text and translation of an Old Turkish version derived from the Armenian and an introduction to the Armenian and Turkish versions, of which all except the translation of the papyrus are the work of Mr Conybeare. Dr Rendel Harris's general introduction has also been amplified by the addition of chapters on the Aramaic version and on editions and discussions of the Story of Ahikar which have appeared since the date of the first edition, especially the works of Smend, Vetter, and Nau,¹ and a few notes are added in other chapters, but the text seems to have been left unchanged. As, however, the question of the date and origin of Ahikar has been completely revolutionized and a large portion of the introduction is therefore obsolete, it seems most unfortunate that it was not rewritten. It is, for instance, there maintained that the Story of Ahikar is a work of the second century B.C., similar in character to Daniel and the Wisdom books, but we now know that it cannot be later than the fifth century, and in the chapter on the Aramaic version Dr Harris follows Professor Sachau in placing it earlier than 450. Again, in the earlier introduction the hypothesis of a Hebrew original is maintained, but in the very next

¹ See *JTS* xi 98. There is no mention of the Arabic text published by M Leroy *Rev de l'Or Chr* xiii 367, xiv 50, 142, and the old Arabic text has been reprinted without reference to the MSS used by him.