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Midrasch Samuel. Agadische Abhandlung über das Buch Samuel herausgegeben, Von SALOMON BUBER. (Cracow, 1893.)

THERE is no necessity to introduce to our readers the indefatigable and critical editor of various Midrashim, viz., the Pesikta de R. Kahnā, the Thanhuma, the Midrash on the Psalms and on Esther, which is followed now by that on Samuel. For this last work Herr Buber has made use of the editions of Constantinople, 1522, and of Venice, 1546, as well as of the Parma MS., De Rossi, 1563. In a word, he availed himself of all that is extant for the purposes of a critical edition. The editor's method is here the same as in his previous edition, viz., he gives a preface containing everything which concerns the Midrash. After having stated that the *Midrasch Samuel* is sometimes quoted, as is often the case with early Rabbinical works, by the first three words with which it begins, Herr Buber states that the fatherland of this Midrash is Palestine; then follows the enumeration of the sources of which the compiler of it made use, which gives the only clue, when no date is fixed by the compiler, for fixing it approximately. Next come an alphabetical list of the Tanaim and Amoraim quoted in this Midrash, and the enumeration of mediæval Rabbis who made use of it, the earliest of which at present known is Rashi. Then follows the description of the Parma MS., by the help of which the text of the Midrash is critically given, as well as that of the bibliography of previous editions of it. Very useful is the list of passages quoted from our Midrash in the Yalqut. We miss, however, the alphabetical list of Latin and Greek words used by the compiler of the Midrash Samuel. Herr Buber has now in preparation a critical edition of the Midrash on Lamentations, as well as an unknown Midrash on the Pentateuch, edited from a MS. acquired by him at Aleppo. When the forthcoming edition of the Great Midrash of Yemen, which Mr. Schechter has in hand, appears, as well as that of the *Yalqut Makhiri* on Isaiah and the Minor Prophets, an edition of which we may shortly expect by Dr. Gaster and Mr. Spiro (and we hope that that on Psalms will not be forgotten), there will be ample material for writing an exhaustive and critical account of the Midrashic literature, for which Zunz is still the only source.

A. NEUBAUER.

Jews in Poland.

Mr. W. R. Morfill, M.A., Oriel College, Oxford, Reader in Russian and the other Slavonic language in the University of Oxford, has just brought out an excellent history of Poland, in the series of the History

of the Nations (T. Fisher Unwin). The readers of our QUARTERLY will no doubt be interested to see what he impartially says of the Jews in Poland (page 18): "The Jews came into Poland in very early times; they carried on a great part of the trade of the country. In all probability the oldest Jewish immigration reached Poland from the countries on the lower Danube, and from the kingdom of the Khazars, who had accepted the Hebrew faith. The introduction of the Jews into the national Sagas and the legends of the Church, shows that they were very numerous, and not without influence on the country. At the end of the eleventh century another stream of Jewish immigrations came from Germany. In the year 1264 Boleslas the Pious granted them certain privileges. At first these advantages were only conceded to the Jews of Great Poland, but they were extended in 1334 by Casimir the Great, who was probably in want of money. Some think that the Jewish statute enacted by this monarch was suggested by a privilege granted by Frederick, Duke of Austria, in 1244, which was frequently imitated afterwards. It is computed that the number of Jews in the countries which once formed Poland amounted to 2,200,000. They have never become assimilated, and they use German instead of the Polish language." It is scarcely admissible that converted Khazars immigrated to Poland, since, as Morfill rightly says, all the Polish Jews speak German, and none of them Tatar, which was the language of the Khazars. The converted Jews of that race emigrated most likely to the Caucasus and Persia. We know that Jews of Kiev and Tchernigoff came to Germany and Lorraine in the eleventh century, and these were not of German origin.

On p. 44 he says: "In 1334 the great statute concerning the Jews was enacted. There is also another statute called *Privilegia Judæorum*, dated 1357. Casimir is said to have favoured the Jews on account of his fondness for a Jewess named Esther, but the tale is rejected by the historian Caro."

We should have liked to see some more details concerning the large Jewish congregations in Poland, but that is scarcely possible when an author is limited to 375 pages. We take the opportunity of mentioning the second edition of documents concerning the cruel persecutions of the Jews in Poland by Chmielnicki in the years 1648 and 1649, as well as those under Gonta in the year 1768, prepared by the late Magister Jonah Gurlund, Rabbi of Odessa, and edited by Herr David Cohen, with a biography of the deceased. The monograph contains, first, the *מִטַּת הַיִּיִן*, printed first at Venice without date, a second edition appeared in Graeber's *Otsur has-Sifroth*, and now for a third time with many emendations and notes; second, the treatise *פְּתַח*

תשובה, printed at Amsterdam in 1651, edited now with notes in a more correct form ; third, a Selihah for the 20th of Siwan, printed first at Cracow in 1650, and extremely rare ; fourth, collected notes concerning these calamities ; fifth, the history of the cruelties committed by Iwan Gonta in the Ukraine in the year 1768, in *Jüdisch-Deutsch*, printed at Vilna in the year 1805 ; sixth, a sermon delivered on the occasion by R. Abraham Meir ben-Levi Epstein, unedited. We draw the attention of our readers to the fact that the product of the sale of this monograph will benefit the Jewish Society of Agriculture in Syria and Palestine. We hope that our brethren will respond to this appeal for help for the Jewish colonies in the Holy Land. Contributions will be welcome, and Herr Benjamin Sögal Troitzkaia Ulitsa, Dom Reich at Odessa, has undertaken to forward the money to its destination.

A. N.

Discussion on Isaiah (ch. lii. 13ff. and ch. liii.) from an Unpublished Manuscript of the Sixteenth Century, with Preliminary Notes on Judæo-polemic Literature. By REV. ALEXANDER KOHUT, D.D., Ph. D., New York, 1893.

THE well-known Rabbi of the Temple *Ahamath Chesed*, New York, is taking a little rest after the achievement of his great edition of R. Nathan's *Arukh* (which we hope will sooner or later be duly noticed in this QUARTERLY), by publishing minor items concerning Jewish literature. In the present pleasing monograph he notices a hitherto unknown treatise relating to Anti-Christian controversy, from a MS. in his possession, formerly belonging to the late Rabbi of Baltimore, Dr. A. S. Bettelheim, who bought it in Prague many years ago. It seems to have been composed in Holland in the year 1551 A.D., and as far as concerns the passage on the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, this treatise does not agree with any of those given in the *Catena* printed in Oxford in 1877 with the title of "The Fifty-third of Isaiah according to Jewish Interpreters." Consequently Dr. Kohut's MS. is at present unique, and will have to be used for a second edition of the Oxford *Catena*, together with other interpretations which have turned up since 1877. They are, 1. By David Kokhabi (of Estella), in his work with the title of *מגדל דוד* (see *Histoire littéraire de la France*, t. xxxi. p. 472, not yet published) ; 2, by the physician Jacob Zahalon of Rome (1630-1693) in his commentary on Isaiah, and controversial passages in other prophets, to be found in his *ישועות יעקב* (MS. in possession of Dr. Med. Ascarelli at Rome, comprising 404 pages), and by Hillel ben Jacob hak-Kohen, in the MS.