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Hyrchanus established the "Pairs." However unhistorical this may be, it probably contains an element of fact, namely, that the Hasmonean High Priests sanctioned the entry of the Soferim into the Sanhedrin.

The question remains, how did the Talmudic conception of the Sanhedrin arise? It is hardly necessary to say that the Mishna and Gemara were committed to writing long after the aristocracy had lost their power by the break-up of the Jewish State. By that time the party of the Law was supreme; and the doctors of the Talmud held that the constitution which they were familiar with was the constitution which had existed from the first. At the same time, their view contained some details of fact. It is an interesting point to work out the unmistakable connection between the Talmudic view and Num. xi. Either the Jews conceived their Sanhedrin on the model of Num. xi., or the latter must be a post-exilic interpolation. But this is impossible; for Num. xi. is an early and independent document. Therefore, we conclude that the Talmudic doctors fashioned a more or less ideal constitution on the basis of the Mosaic ordinance, and at the same time connected it, according to their lights, with what they knew of the history of their national senate.

It only remains to be said that the translation which Prof. Budde has given us reads extremely well, and bears clear traces of the scholar-like and vigorous hand from which it comes. It is a matter for congratulation that Prof. Budde has found time in the midst of his own multifarious labours to confer this boon upon all students of the Old Testament, who, as they use it, will realise afresh how much they owe to the master-mind of Kuenen.

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G. A. COOKE.

Maimonides' Arabic Commentary on the Mishnah.

It was the merit of Pocock, the great collector of Hebrew and Arabic MSS. in the East—a collection which is the pride of the Bodleian Library—to have begun to edit parts of Maimonides' *Arabic Commentary on the Mishnah* in his *Porta Mosis* (Oxford, 1655, and re-edited in London, 1740). It contains, not as Pocock wrongly says, the introduction to the tractate of *Zeraim*, but the general introduction to the Mishnah, followed by the commentary on *Helek*—the tenth chapter of the tractate of *Sanhedrin* (re-edited critically

by Dr. Wolff, Rabbi at Gothenburg, Sweden, under the title of "The Eight Chapters," Leipzig, 1863). There follows in the *Porta Mosis*, lastly, the introductions to the *Sedarim* of Qodashim, Tohorot, and, in an appendix, of Menahot. Since Pocock, the Arabic commentaries of Maimonides had been used only fragmentarily, by some scholars who had access to the libraries which contain such MSS., until Professor Barth, of Berlin, continued Pocock's tradition by publishing the *Arabic Commentary*, with an emended Hebrew translation of the tractate of *Makkoth* (Berlin, 1879 and 1880). The veteran Semitic scholar, M. J. Derenbourg, member of the French Institute, undertook a gigantic labour, viz., the *Arabic Commentary*, with a correct Hebrew translation, which was published by the society called מקיצי נרדמים, 1886 to 1892. Indeed the Hebrew translation, as printed in some editions of the Mishnah, and in nearly all editions of the Babylonian Talmud, is scarcely intelligible, for the translator was in fact less than a mediocre Arabic scholar, and did not understand Maimonides. These editions are besides full of typographical mistakes. We should have expected that a literary society for the publication of Maimonides' *Commentary on the Mishnah* would have been formed under the direction of the Paris savant, as is the case for the publication of Saadiah Gaon's works, in print and in MSS. Alas! such was not the case, for the rich Jews do not care for the glory of past Judaism, and no means were forthcoming for the honour of Maimonides. Maimonides now has to rely upon candidates for the doctor's degree in German universities, some of whom take up small parts of his *Commentary* as their thesis, and some fragments have been published in volumes of collected essays. We are afraid that their best efforts are not equal to the difficult task. The candidates are, in the first instance, too young for such a critical edition, and, on the other hand, they have no material means for bringing out the *Commentary* on whole tractates. Thus we get from them only fragments, for which they had no means for consulting the best MSS. Of these fragmentary editions we may mention up to date the following:—The commentaries on *Aboth* I. and on *Rosh Hashanah* I. 3 and III. 1 (Berlin, 1890, in the *Jubelsschrift*, dedicated to Dr. J. Hildesheimer on the occasion of his seventieth year). In dissertations were treated, from 1891 to 1894, the Arabic commentaries, with the corrected Hebrew translations, on the tractates *Berakhot*, *Kilayim Demai*, and *Sanhedrin* (I. to III.).

We have now before us the edition of the *Arabic Commentary* of the tractate *Peah*, with the corrected Hebrew translation, edited by Dr. David Herzog, which is again the subject of a dissertation, with instructive notes, on the orthography of the MSS. he used, as

well as on lexicographical points. We may expect soon the edition of the tractates *Betsa* and *Hulin*, as far as we know also in a dissertation. It will be seen that these authors do not try to complete one *Seder* of the Mishnah, neither agree about the uniformity of the size. Thus we may say that of Maimonides' *Arabic Commentary on the Mishnah* only *Seder Tohorot* (or *Toharot*) is published.

A. NEUBAUER.

Introduction to the Chronicle called סדר עולם רבה (in Hebrew), by
Bär Ratner. Part I. Wilna, 1894.

THE author has undertaken a most difficult task with relation to the composition of the Chronicle, usually attributed to R. Yose ben Halaftha. The real title of it, as will be seen from the edition in *Mediæval Chronicles* II., which will appear soon, is סדר עולם, as it is stated in the Egyptian fragments of it; the epithet, רבה, "the great," sprang up when another Chronicle was composed, most likely in the ninth century A.D., which is called סדר עולם זוטא (*The Minor Chronicle of the World*). After a short preface about the method of this introduction, M. Ratner gives his minute studies and results in twenty-two chapters, which we shall indicate only, for it is impossible to go into details of the thousand quotations from Talmudic and casuistic literature. First, naturally comes the investigation concerning the author of our Chronicle, the result of which is that, according to quotations in the Talmudic literature, R. Yose cannot be the author of it. Here comes a chapter about the date of the work, which, according to M. Ratner, was composed before the Mishnah was settled, since quotations in the Mishnah are excerpted anonymously from our Chronicle, and the Babylonian Talmud mentions it. The third chapter states the use of Palestinian Midrashim. The Jerusalem Talmud seems not to quote our Chronicle distinctly, but many quotations are certainly derived from it. Next, it is stated that R. Johanan is the compiler of our Chronicle as it lies before us. The sixth chapter shows that the *Seder Olam* was not always at the disposal of the Rabbis of the Talmuds and the Midrashim. Next come proofs that the Geonim, down to the Tosaphists, had not always the *Seder Olam* at their disposal. Our author follows up with an important chapter, where it is stated that the quotations of the Mishnah and the Talmud from our Chronicle are different from the printed text. The tenth chapter