

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *The Expositor* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_expositor-series-1.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expositor-series-1.php)

words, his part has not yet been done. He is only struggling onwards through the hard trials of life, forgetting everything except the prize of righteousness that lies before him, hurrying towards the goal like a runner straining every nerve and staking all his energy in reaching the mark and gaining the prize. He has not attained salvation, and yet he has attained it. He has not been made perfect, and yet he is made perfect : " let us therefore, as many as are perfect, be thus minded " (verse 15).

The perfect union with God, then, is the perfect development and perfection of the individual nature. Not even Mohammedanism, much as it has sacrificed of this truth, has forgotten it wholly. These are all religions of energy and of work (though history shows how little Islam has remained true to its start).

W. M. RAMSAY.

### *THE ELEPHANTINÉ PAPYRI.*

THE long-expected collection of Aramaic Papyri and Ostraka from Elephantinê is now before the world ; and general admiration is being aroused by the editor's patience and industry, ingenuity and learning. The difficult texts, some hundreds in number, have been deciphered, copied, translated (to a great extent), elucidated, indexed, and had their grammar and vocabulary tabulated ; whatever is now said about them can only be in the nature of gleanings after Professor Sachau's harvest. A volume of the first order has therefore been added to the archaeological library of the East.

Yet it must be confessed that the result is most disappointing. Even if the authenticity of the Biblical books were still generally maintained, we should look eagerly for the discovery of copies or parts of copies nearer the time of the authors than those late MSS. whereon our editions are based ; for even the most " orthodox " would allow the

possibility that some alteration had taken place during the long series of transferences. But in times when the Biblical books are usually regarded as patchwork belonging to different ages, when e.g. Isaiah is supposed to contain materials dating variously from the eighth to the third or even second century B.C., even a few pages of a Biblical book belonging to the fifth century B.C., which is the time of most of these papyri, would be of incalculable value. They might establish or they might refute the pretensions of critics. They might bring into the region of reality such phantasms as the Elohist and Jehovist, the Second and the Third Isaiah, or dismiss them finally to fairyland. They would furnish a sure basis for criticism, such as at present is lacking.

The library of the Jewish colony at Elephantinê offers us instead considerable fragments of *the Story of Achikar*, and an Aramaic version of the Behistun Inscription! Its contents in addition to these are various fragments of letters, contracts, receipts, registers, etc. If the fragments of Achikar are compared with the texts already known in Syriac, Armenian, and Arabic, it is doubtful whether anything has been gained even for the understanding of this fabrication, which by no means deserves any profound study. The Aramaic fragments are not only wanting in continuity, but they are rarely intelligible; they do not admit of more than occasional translation. In places it is evident that this Aramaic text is a bad translation from some other language; thus in a sentence like one which the Jewish Oral Tradition attributes to Ben-Sira Achikar is made to say, "I have lifted straw and I have lifted a *plough*, and there is nothing lighter than a sojourner." The word "plough" looks very like a misreading and mistranslation of the word for "bran" used by the Rabbis in the passage cited.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> סובין, *Baba Bathra*, 98b. Unless פֶּרֶן stands for the German *Faden*, "thread." The Aramaic also uses נָסַף wrongly for "lift."

Now the suspicion that these papyri are forgeries has already been mooted, though it has not spread, and it may be observed that a skilful forger who in these days wished to father documents on a community of the fifth century B.C. would almost certainly select the Behistun inscription and the story of Achikar. For such persons are by no means anxious that a strong light should be shed on their works. Hence the skilful fabricator Simonides forged works of Greek authors whose names were familiar to few even among professional scholars. Where the discovery of a text would make or mar a hundred reputations, the microscope and chemical analysis would certainly be called in to help the study of it; and the forger does not wish his works to be submitted to such cross-examination.

Linguistically, much of the matter contained in the Sachau papyri appears to the present writer highly suspicious. A document (papyri 8 and 9), purporting to contain the description of a ship, seems to be made up of late Hebrew and modern Persian, with an admixture of some other languages. It has two Armenian words, *navapet* for "naval commander," and *hamarakar*, "accountant." For "commander" we might expect it to employ the Armenian *hramanatar*, since in Jewish Aramaic the Armenian form is used; but it offers instead *farmandar*, which appears to be a fabricated word. The sentence כלתרין נופתיא זי כרכיא נגידה עלתבלא, "both naval commanders of the cities are an affliction on the world," may belong to the fifth century B.C., but it looks like a reference to present day politics and the naval rivalry between two great states. The sentence with which the list of items commences ערן הוה זנה אשרנא זי אפתי אופשרה למעבר, "it is time to squeeze the dough which I have baked," consists of one Hebrew word, one modern Persian word in the Judaic spelling, *afshurah*, and one old Aramaic word given a modern

Persian etymology (*âshurdan*, "to knead"), for that which is baked must be kneaded. Among the articles connected with this ship is הַנְּרִינָה זְרִינִךְ "a pumpkin of arsenic"; now the genuine Persian form for the name of "arsenic" is thought to be not *zarnîk*, but *zarnâh* or *zarnî*.<sup>1</sup> The word for "pumpkin" bears no sign of antiquity. Among the parts of the ship two at least, the הָן and the הַלֵּא, appear to be modern Persian for "hold" and "rudder" or "oars."<sup>2</sup> Further, this document, like many others, appears to reckon values in modern Egyptian piastres, כֶּרֶשֶׁן, on the supposition that the name is connected with *Cyrus*, whereas it is really the German *Groschen*; the error, which consists in substituting a K for a Q, is a natural one.

The following facts are also to be borne in mind. There is still a papyrus factory at Syracuse, and when there is a factory, there must be a market for its output. The German expedition appears to have gone for the purpose of discovering Aramaic documents belonging to the old Jewish colony. The first papyrus edited by Dr. Sachau looked in facsimile as if it had been written very recently; and its spelling of the name *Kambyses*, *Kanbuzi*, whereas the Greek has *Kambyses*, and the old Persian *Kabuiya*, had a savour of the German pronunciation of the name. Besides, it was not natural to find in Elephantinê a document sent from Elephantinê; according to the Arabs the practice of keeping copies of *state documents* commenced with the Caliph Muawiah in the seventh century A.D., and a begging letter is not a state document, and we should still less expect a copy of it to be kept. These considerations all seem to the present writer very serious, but naturally he cannot pronounce decidedly on a subject which involves so much varied knowledge.

<sup>1</sup> Lagarde and Horn.

<sup>2</sup> *Pakhtemoni*, "supports," is an artificial form based on the modern Persian *pushtabân* or *pushtimân*. *Tamis* is the Turkish *tamîz*, "clean," thinly disguised, etc.

Still we can account for the absence of matter that is of real value from this collection in other ways. That which is worth preserving is worth destroying ; the waste-paper basket serves as a repository only for what does not deserve preservation or demand destruction. Neither the banknote nor the compromising letter finds its way thither ; its contents are indifferent and insignificant. Now the papyri brought to Europe and housed in our Museums and Public Libraries are the contents of ancient waste-paper baskets ; not one per cent of those which are deciphered and edited with so much care tell us anything worth knowing. Let any reader of Deissmann's *Light from the Ancient East* estimate the amount of elucidation which its learned author has been able to get out of contemporary papyri for the difficulties of the New Testament, and he will see " that what we say is true."

That which was valuable in the way of literature was either effectively preserved or effectively destroyed. At one time it was the practice for men to destroy their libraries before their deaths ; thereby indicating the value which they put upon them. A savant of the tenth century, Abu Hayyan Tauhidi, burned his collection when he had reached an advanced age ; when a letter of reproof was addressed him, he replied that numerous men of eminence had done the like. One had buried his books in the earth and no trace of them had come to light (in Mesopotamia, whose soil does not preserve like that of Egypt) ; another had thrown his into the sea, uttering over them as he flung them in, " Ye have been good guides, but a guide is no longer necessary for one who has reached his destination " ; another had consigned his books to a mountain cave, of which he afterwards closed the entrance ; another had thrown his books into a furnace ; another had torn his to pieces and flung them to the winds ; another, leaving his books to his son, had warned him to burn them if ever he suspected the

doctrine which they contained. The Jews, who have shown such skill in preserving the twenty-four books of their Law through so many migrations, expulsions, and threats of extermination, have also known how to destroy.

Hence the light which the Elephantinê find—*assuming that it is genuine*—throws on the Old Testament is rather indirect than direct. If the Achikar papyri are genuine and of the age to which Professor Sachau assigns them, it follows that Ben-Sira must have borrowed copiously from this source; for the same aphorisms are found in both collections. Ben-Sira does not indeed mention Achikar in his list of sages, but then he has also omitted Greek authors with whom he seems to have had some acquaintance; although, then, the intellectual calibre of Ben-Sira appears to be vastly higher than that of Achikar, we may conceivably have here one of the sources of the former. Now it is observable that Achikar is quoted in another Apocryphal book, that of Tobit; whence it might appear that the separation made by the Jews between canonical literature and uncanonical was based not merely on subjective grounds. Of the Apocryphal Literature the sources were known to be tainted, of the canonical literature they were thought to be pure.

The indirect light may however turn out to be of great importance. Professor Sachau observes that his documents prove that the Jewish colony was in origin a military colony, and its Temple according to the first papyrus published by him had probably been built by mercenaries employed by Psammetichos II. against the Ethiopians near the beginning of the sixth century B.C. The authority for their being so employed is Aristeeas, the author of what is ordinarily thought to be a mythical history of the origin of the LXX translation of the Old Testament, who is thus partially at least rehabilitated. Now in Isaiah xix. 19 there is a prophecy that “in

that day there shall be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt and a pillar near her boundary to the Lord." Mr. Box (after other authorities) dates this prophecy about 275 B.C. ; i.e., about three hundred years *after* its fulfilment ! Why such a prophecy should be made at all after it had been generally agreed (at any rate in Palestine) according to the Higher Criticism that there could be an altar only in Jerusalem, is far from apparent ; it would seem clear that the prophecy belonged to a date long before such a rule had come to be recognised. But the fact that the prophecy was fulfilled renders it practically certain that the dating of the oracle must be erroneous to the extent of at least three hundred years. Nor again is it easy to apply the theory of *vaticinium post eventum* ; for such prophecies are only fabricated when evidence is required of the genuineness of some prediction not yet realized ; a person, e.g., who could be shown to have prophesied the English occupation of Egypt might claim credence for a prophecy of the Italian occupation of Tripoli. On the other hand if the prophecy of the Temple at the extreme end of Egypt was uttered only a little before its actual erection, it is not clear why it should have been ascribed to Isaiah ; for prophecy was at that time a recognised form of literature, and there was no reason why an oracle of this sort should be attributed to an earlier prophet. Hence the conservative side in the matter of the ascription of this prophecy is the strong side, and it is the destructive criticism which is involved in difficulties.

It is probable that those with whom prophecy is neither history nor guesswork, but *vision* or second sight, will find the paragraph Isaiah xix. 16-25 in the highest degree instructive in the new light which the Elephantiné discoveries have shed. " Five cities in Egypt will be speaking the lip of Canaan." What is the " lip of Canaan ? " We should



imagine *Hebrew* ; but the word used by Isaiah for that is *Jewish*. For *Syriac* his word is *Aramaic*. The mixture of Hebrew and Aramaic which is used in these documents, and which is the " lip of Canaan " as late as the Palestinian version of the Gospels, is then probably what is signified by this term.

That a prophecy such as that contained in these verses could in any sense be a fabrication appears to the present writer unthinkable ; it has the peculiarity of the words ascribed to this Prophet, viz., that " they burn like fire." But it seems likely that from the study of these and others like them a theory of prophecy as *second sight* may be evolved which, though differing from both the traditional theory and the prevalent theory, will be far nearer the former than the latter. It will endeavour to discover in the prophecies laws of *perspective* ; laws neither analysed nor understood by the Prophets themselves, who in consequence make grave errors both in the location and in the estimation of events ; which errors are evidence of the genuineness of their second sight. As in photography, what are called the " high lights " come out first, as the plate is developed ; these with Isaiah are the altar to the Lord near the frontier of Egypt, the sacrifices and meal-offerings made to the God of Israel, the vows that are promised to Him and paid ; the five cities speaking " the lip of Canaan " ; these are familiar and therefore clear. In the matter grouped round these " high lights " much is obscure and may be incorrectly arranged, distance both in space and time being misunderstood. And this may be the account of the thrilling though bewildering prophecy that " in that day " Egypt, Assyria and Israel will all three be a blessing in the middle of the earth ; the names " my people," " the work of my hands," " my heritage," so similar in import, being bestowed upon them. Something seen by the Prophet from his " watch-

tower" found expression in this wonderful oracle; but it needs another prophet to interpret it.

If this notion of Israel's as the world's religion pervades the book of Isaiah, there is another which equally binds the whole together and like a threefold cord is not quickly broken. It is the reunion of a scattered Israel. The documents from Elephantinê help us to throw back the date of the *diaspora* in such a way as to render it intelligible that the Prophet should make it his main theme; for even if he lived more than a century before the employment of the Jewish mercenaries by Psammetichos II., it is likely that these were not the first Israelites so employed. Dispersed or to be dispersed to the four corners of the earth, for the Prophet was well aware that the chief dispersion was yet to come, they were yet again to be gathered to their land, when all jealousies and enmities would be forgotten. The vista which this opened out, the glory and splendour wherewith it was surrounded, have inspired the Prophet to utterances which in fervour surpass anything to be found in any other literature; if, as our texts imply, it enabled him to break through the veil of futurity so as even to read correctly the name of a king yet unborn, those texts are not necessarily to be altered. But it is of interest to us to know that the dispersion whereto he foresaw so glorious a termination had begun in his time; though, as he foresaw, the chief agency in bringing it about was to be not the Assyrian power which loomed so large to his contemporaries, but Babylon as yet far from its zenith.

Hence it may be that the discoveries at Elephantinê will have marked the commencement of another reunion after dispersion, viz., of the prophecies attributed to Isaiah, the gem of the Hebrew Scriptures. The emptying of the waste-paper baskets of Elephantinê will perhaps lead to the filling of others at home with even less valuable material.

For it is clear that criticism must be content to let its performances be generally judged by those cases whereon a certain pronouncement can be made. The authorities who through ignorance of facts which have afterwards come to light misdated a document by three hundred years can claim little value for similar conjectures where there is a like probability of future discoveries proving them to be in error. Mistaken conclusions are invariably due to mistaken premises ; and the premises whence the misdating of the prophecy about the " pillar to the Lord at the border of Egypt " was derived are that prophecy means not second sight, but preaching, pamphleteering or guess-work, and that classical Hebrew of the first order could have been composed in the third century B.C. A third premise which is probably as false as the others is that the Sacred Books were liable to interpolation on a great scale ; whereas the probability is that the operation was a difficult one, which could only be executed on a minute scale, e.g. [the substitution of the word " damsel " for " virgin " in Isaiah vii. 14, which, slight as it is, has left its traces in an obvious contradiction, for an ordinary domestic event was not comparable to " any sign in heaven or earth." But the alteration of a word or a letter in a case where the existence of the community seemed to depend upon it bears little or no analogy to the introduction of fabricated texts on a large scale where there was no such necessity. The demonstration that this process has been falsely assumed in one case may therefore embolden us to deny its existence in other cases. And this may save the printers of " Rainbow Bibles " some of their trouble.

Professor Sayce, in the November number of this magazine, called attention to another result of the find, which became apparent almost as soon as Professor Sachau's first papyri were published. The first stone in Wellhausen's building is the hypothesis that the Priestly Code assumes that sacrifice can

only be offered in one place, Jerusalem, and that the Deuteronomic Code does not assume it, but institutes it. As was shown in another article, Wellhausen's opening sentence is as unsound as a sentence can be ; for he quotes as " the Gospel " a passage in the Fourth Gospel (whose authenticity is constantly questioned), a passage put not into the mouth of the author or any person of authority, but into that of a Samaritan who could not speak authoritatively about Jewish beliefs, and a woman, who could not so speak about religion at all, and a woman who in the course of the narrative is proved to be of bad character ; and whose words finally say something very different from what Wellhausen wishes her to say. The Elephantinê papyrus (*if genuine*) shows that in the fifth century, when the Priestly Code had become established in Jerusalem, not only was there an altar with sacrifice to the Lord at the extreme end of Egypt, but the sacrificers counted on the sympathy of their brethren at Jerusalem and their co-operation in getting leave to rebuild their temple when it had been pulled down. Professor Gunkel in a paper printed in this magazine hoped to elude this argument by endeavouring to show that the priests of Elephantinê counted on that sympathy in vain ; but even if this could be shown, no argument could be based upon it. Thus quite recently the governor of the Sudan appealed to England for subscriptions towards a cathedral at Khartum. It might reasonably be inferred from this that he supposed such an enterprise would be countenanced in England ; and it would by no means follow that it was not countenanced, even if not a single subscription were sent. For men cannot always do the thing which in principle they approve ; they may have other uses for their money that are more pressing, and they may doubt their influence with the persons to whom they are asked to appeal. However Professor Sachau has produced a fresh document showing that an ordinance and *firman*

was transmitted to the Jews of Elephantinê bidding them keep the Passover in accordance with the provisions of Deuteronomy. Clearly then these Jews were not "outside the pale," but recognised as within it.

The transmission of this ordinance suggests another explanation of the absence of religious books in addition to the cause already mentioned. It is likely that the Sacred Books were until quite late times the property of a few individuals. The Law was brought from the East to Palestine by Ezra ; apparently the Palestinians had not had it in their possession before his arrival. Isaiah desires his oracles to be sealed and bound among his disciples ; they were to remain with him, his seed and his seed's seed for ever. The king, according to Deuteronomy, is to make himself a copy of the Law "from before the face of" the Priests, the Levites, i.e., at their dictation. The explanation of the festal rites was to be communicated orally by the fathers to the children, when the latter inquired about them ; the children would not then be taught the book which contained the explanation. The historical works were apparently records intended for the use of the government ; similar to the chronicles of the kings of which we read in connexion with the Persian court, and at a later time in connexion with that of Baghdad. The Psalms give the appearance in large portions of belonging to a limited community, possibly a religious order. The Proverbs claims in part to have been a collection made by order of and doubtless for the private use of a particular king. Hence one reason why there is none of the Bible among the papyri of Elephantinê may be that none of the Sacred Books had as yet been published.

But it may further be added that, if any credence is to be placed in the statements of the canonical books, they won their way to general reverence and affection very slowly, even after the return from the Exile. Up to the time of the

Exile their devotees were regularly persecuted. According to Jeremiah and Ezekiel idolatry by no means ceased immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem. These documents present the Jews of Elephantinê as entertaining foreign cults to a degree which the stern prophets of monotheism would certainly have condemned. In one document the phrase "the gods" appears actually to be used. Certain names of deities are "associated" with Yâhô in others, as if there were nothing improper in such association. The triumph of monotheism appears therefore to have been exceedingly late, and the argument drawn from the observation of the Law to the character of the Law to be weaker than ever.

Certainly the documents before us give little evidence that the Jews of Elephantinê were conscious of any sublime mission such as Isaiah would have supposed to be the purpose of their exile. They resemble other papyri in their contents, which are mainly connected with business transactions, inheritance, money-lending relations between the Jews and their governors or their neighbours, and their own domestic relations. Women figure as owners of property, which Sachau rightly regards as a sign that the colony had long been settled in their land; for the first colonists would assuredly be only men who had served.

The question suggests itself: by what process were these Jews originally enrolled? And this leads us to a variety of investigations connected with ancient history for which we have as yet very imperfect materials. Nevertheless the later history of the East suggests some analogies. One method of enrolling foreign regiments was by the purchase of children as slaves; the *Mamluk* or slave dynasty of Egypt was based on this principle; and indeed it would seem that the Turkish bodyguard which at an early period became supreme in the Caliphate of Baghdad was formed of persons

sent as tribute from Turkestan. The prophet Joel upbraids the Phœnicians with trading in the children of Judah and the children of Jerusalem, whom they sold to the Greeks in order to remove them from their border.<sup>1</sup> Such persons in the course of their service were manumitted and often rose to high offices in the state; in Egypt, though they appear to have ordinarily taken wives from the population of the country, they kept apart at least for some generations. Another mode was that whereby a tribe under its sheikh entered the service of a government; they would receive lands as the reward for their services, but in such a case the women of the tribe would accompany it in its migration. Yet a third method was that whereby *condottieri* organised troops of soldiers of fortune, whom they placed at the disposal of some power in need of troops. Finally there were cases in which a sovereign handed over to another a body of troops for temporary employment in the first instance, but who might elect to settle in the country of the sovereign under whom they had served. This is the origin of the Moslem colony in China.

Which of these was the process whereby a regiment of Jews came to be established in Upper Egypt is uncertain; the probability is in favour of one of the processes which would admit of the women accompanying the men. For where that does not happen amalgamation with the neighbouring population necessarily takes place rapidly, and the language of the settlers disappears. Moreover it is clear that in this Jewish settlement the national religion was really maintained so far as service under rulers of another religion permitted. In ancient warfare religion played so important a part that the hostile attitude which Judaism as we know it adopted towards other cults could not be consistently held by Jewish soldiers under a foreign flag. Ancient poetry

<sup>1</sup> Joel iv. 6.

and ancient inscriptions attest the belief that the fighting was really done by the gods ; the *rôle* of the human fighters was secondary. Foreign service was therefore service under a foreign god ; and though the corps might have a regimental cult, that cult could not be in any open hostility to the god or gods who conducted the chief operations. When Mohammed declined to let any who rejected his system serve in his army he drew the true consequence of monotheism as the ancient world understood it. If a god was offended by worship paid to another god, or by worship differing in form from that which he had prescribed, his help would not be forthcoming in any engagement ; on the contrary he might be expected to hinder and even wreck the joint operations. Now this is what is meant by the " jealousy " ascribed in the Old Testament to the God of Israel, and such of His worshippers as held that doctrine would thereby have been excluded from military service under the followers of any other deity. The contempt wherein they held their confederates' gods would be resented by those beings if they existed ; whereas if the Jews were in the right, then the operations would be wrecked for another reason.

It has also been pointed out that the Jewish Sabbath and feast-days would interfere seriously with military operations, and indeed are known to have done so. Whenever the Jews in monotheistic times formed a state, their Sabbath gave the enemy his chance ; for in warfare neither ancients nor moderns could or can afford to be chivalrous.

From the very fact of their being enrolled as a foreign legion then the Jews were compelled to be tolerant, and even, as the Old Testament expresses it, to serve other gods. They had to do what the Israelites throughout the Bible are taunted with doing, reject the Law of the Lord, and indeed the first commandment. We cannot infer from this that the first commandment did not exist ; the truer inference



is that the Biblical representation of the national history is in general trustworthy, viz., that the system prescribed to the Israelites was absolutely repugnant to the majority of them ; that after the Exile as before they wanted none of it. Even the Prophets from Moses onwards undertake their mission with unwillingness, have to be compelled to undertake it after offering excuses vainly ; and their message is received with anything rather than thanks and approval. Isaiah complains of violent ill-treatment, and the same is attested in other cases. The Israelites wished to be like the other nations of the earth, and to have no obvious distinction from those other nations ; they wished, in short, to ignore what was to be their mission. The Law, the Prophets and the Hagiographa therefore belonged to a small minority of the nation.

It agrees with this that the Elephantinê sanctuary has priests who do not apparently claim to belong to a tribe specially appointed to discharge sacerdotal duties. According to Professor Sachau's index the word " Levite " does not once occur in these documents. It is well known that in one period of the Old Testament literature the Priests are specified as the Levites, whereas in another the two are distinguished. It is probable that the same difference of opinion might exist on the subject of the necessity of sacerdotal, succession, as is to be found in these days in the Anglican community. If a number of lay members of the Anglican Church are settled in a foreign land, must they necessarily dispense with the ceremonies of religion, and especially the Eucharist, or may a layman in the absence of an ordained minister celebrate ? May a layman in such circumstances read the Absolution which according to the Rubric may only be read by a Priest ? The liberal view (which is held by few persons) answers this question in the affirmative ; the view that is probably orthodox in the negative. Yet neither in

these days do people go through religious rites merely as a matter of form, nor in ancient days did they sacrifice for no purpose ; the ceremonies were a matter of vital importance. In these days persons in the predicament described are said in consequence to leave the Anglican community and join some other ; and the Jewish colonies would similarly have had to choose between the services of a priest who was not a Levite, and quitting the Jewish religious union for some other. Those of Elephantinê clearly chose the former alternative ; probably adopting therein a middle course between orthodoxy and apostasy ; but they may have been unaware that that course was unorthodox.

In spite of all this they do not appear to have conciliated their heathen neighbours. On the one hand there is every reason for believing that the Egyptians themselves were intolerant and fanatical ; on the other even this modified form of Judaism could probably not conceal its inherent hostility to Paganism. Probably too the Jewish colony came to be identified with the foreign power under whose protection it lived, and when that foreign domination was removed, the Jews were swept away with it. Somewhat the same was the fate of the Jews who long after lived in Spain under Moslem protection ; when the Moslem power had been broken, the Jews, who had themselves not enjoyed the most favourable conditions under that power, were expelled. Their desire to be like the nations of the earth could be gratified only by actual amalgamation with the nations of the earth. Their attempt at maintaining a state within a state here met with one of its earliest failures.

D. S. MARGOLIOUTH.