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collection of Midrashim on the five scrolls with his usual excellent method and notes. May he completely recover his health, which is sometimes failing, and thus be enabled to continue editing Midrashim.

A. N.

Midrash Suta. Hagadische Abhandlungen über Schir ha-Schirim, Ruth, Echah und Koheleth, nebst Jalkut zum Buche Echah. Von SALOMON BUBER. (Berlin, 1894. pp. 172, 8vo.)

THE Committee of the Mekizé Nirdamim must have been in great straits for matter to edit when it agreed to include among the publications for this year the *Midrash Suta*, by Herr Buber. The readers of this Review are probably acquainted with Herr Buber's redaction of various Midrashic pieces, and they feel themselves under great obligation to him, especially for his edition of the Pesikta d'R. Kahana.

Herr Buber's work, however, has shown signs of an evident haste, the effects of which students could not fail to observe. Those who read, for instance, the reviews, by specialists, of Herr Buber's editions of the *Midrash Tanchuma*, the *Midrash Mayan Ganim*, and the *Midrash Agadoth*, need no further details. But the most marked effects of this haste are seen in this *Midrash Suta*, which has just now appeared under the auspices of the Mekizé Nirdamim. As the *Midrash Suta* includes also the אנגרת שיר השירים, the text of which, with a part of the notes, appeared in Volumes VI and VII of the JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, it need scarcely be said that there is something of a priority controversy between Herr Buber and the writer of these lines. However, priority questions are tedious, and might perhaps lead to personalities in which the writer does not care to indulge. Suffice it to say that Herr Buber, in his haste, did his work in a careless way, every page of his edition betraying the superficial method with which he approached his work.

First, as to his introduction. Students who are acquainted with Herr Buber's introductions, know what delight he takes in carrying them to almost unconscionable and unbearable length. Now if there ever was a work at whose editing the enumeration of the authorities who knew or made use of it was imperative, it was this Midrashim Collection, especially the Agadath Shir Ha-Shirim; for, not only was the world quite ignorant of its existence for centuries, but the only complete copy in which the text has come down to us, is in a most corrupt state. Every quotation made from it by the earlier authorities is therefore not only important

on account of its bibliographical value, but also, because it might prove helpful towards emending the text. But just when every philological and bibliographical consideration required it, Herr Buber chose to be short. Of all the authorities who quoted the *Agadath Shir Ha-Shirim*, he knows only a paltry half-dozen.

The use made of this Midrash by R. Tobyah b. Eliezer, the author of the *לקח טוב*, the Paitan, R. Solomon ben Jehudah, and the commentators of the *Piyutim*, Rashi, R. Moses Tako, the anonymous author of *יחוסי תנאים ואמוראים*, R. Eliezer of Worms, R. Simon Duran and the author of the *אגרות אגרות*, has altogether escaped Herr Buber. In addition, Herr Buber, who also possesses a copy of the *Yalkut Machiri* on the Psalms, must also know that this MS. contains many passages which are only to be found in our Midrash; but he makes no mention of this fact. With regard to the commentary on Canticles, by R. Moses ben Tabun, Herr Buber shows, by his remarks on p. x, that he never read it properly; otherwise he would have known that this commentary contains, besides the one whose acquaintance he evidently made through Herr Epstein, a goodly number of quotations from *ב"ר פ' ויצא* which are only to be found in the *Chasitha* and in our text. That Herr Buber in his description of the MS. omits to state the fact of the writer's having published the text of *Midrash Shir Ha-Shirim* in this *REVIEW*, as well as that of the *Seder Olam Suta* in the *Monatsschrift*, is perfectly conceivable, since any allusion to these publications and to the writer's name would have amounted to a virtual confession of a lack of originality, which was clearly Herr Buber's earnest desire to evade. But is there any reason why Herr Buber did not mention Zunz, who was the first to refer to this MS. in his *Gottesdienstliche Vorträge* (p. 277, note i, 2nd ed.)? Again, why did he not mention poor Brüll? All the learning displayed in par. 13, p. xvii, is directly copied from Brüll's *Jahrbücher*, VI, 100, and VII, 278, without acknowledging the source. Nor did Herr Buber refer to Ozar Nechmad, I, 10, where it is clear that Reggio was in the possession of a MS. which, among other pieces, contained also the Midrash Ruth in another version, *פנים אחרות*. What is even worse, he omitted to refer to and make use of the Bodleian MS., No. 152; a MS. of the importance of which Herr Buber speaks in the *Mabo* to his edition of the *Tanchuma*, p. 71 b, note 7.

And how did Herr Buber deal with the text? To enumerate all his oversights would require a treatise; to amend them, it would be necessary to reproduce here all the Corrections and Notes to the *Midrash Shir Ha-Shirim*, contained in the July number of the *JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW*, which has just appeared, as well as those

which are still in the Press. A few specimens, therefore, must satisfy the reader.

In the first place, it is necessary to remark that Herr Buber did *not* give a faithful copy of the text he proposes to edit. It is true, as has been said above, that our text is in a deplorable state. But the recognized rule in such cases is to leave the text intact and indicate the emendations, either by means of brackets, or by giving them in the notes. I adopted the latter alternative as the only possible way of furnishing students with an exact copy of the original MS., without the slightest deviation from the only complete text of the Midrash Suta yet found. For this reason, naturally enough, there will be found occasional divergences between the text published in this REVIEW (JEWISH QUARTERLY) and that contained in the Midrash Suta of Herr Buber. But that is solely due to the fact that Herr Buber took most unpardonable liberties with the text. Thus Herr Buber has quite altered the orthography of the MS. without drawing the least attention to the fact. Our MS. having been executed in France, the scribe writes in the usual way of the Ashkenasim—always *plena*, as מיטח, עיצה, אילו, שיני, מיכאן, תחילת, מיכאן, שיני, אילו, עיצה, מיטח, הנייה. Herr Buber substitutes the modern orthography, thus destroying the original character of the MS. for the student. Our copyist also writes לישבע for which Herr Buber gives להשבע. In other places—to the number of about fifty—Herr Buber omits or adds words without indicating it. P. 7, l. 14, after יקבנו both the MS. and the Machiri have the words אלו שמות ציון, but Herr Buber omits them. P. 8, l. 14, after הנון ורחום the MS. has the words נפרש של הק"ב, which are all the more important as they indicate that all the proofs from the Bible accompanying the various groups of the seventy names are later additions, but the words are omitted by Herr Buber. On P. 9, l. 9, after the word נתנה Herr Buber leaves out a whole Derasha, ד"א שה"ש . . . שיר חדש, occupying in the MS. about four lines (ed. Schechter, ll. 203-206). P. 13, l. 5, after הויתים, the Derasha of ד"א נגילה . . . בראשם occurs (ed. S. ll. 338-340) which is guaranteed also by Yalkut Shimoni, but is omitted by Herr Buber. On p. 38, par. 3, there is, after the word נסכים, a blank in the MS. which is followed by the words בטנן ערימת חייטין סוגה בשושנים. Herr Buber found it convenient not to indicate the blank by the customary dots and also omitted the Hebrew words just given. Of course these words are important, showing as they do that some Derasha on this part of the verse is missing—and this Derasha *is* actually to be found in MS. 621. But on p. 36, par. 9, Herr Buber introduces, after the word כלב, a blank which is *not* to be found in the MS. This Buber-made blank

is filled in the MS. by the words **סם תסם שמטה**. Of course these words have no meaning, but they suggest something like **סר צלם שמעו** as F nearly has it. Again, on p. 27, Herr Buber omitted a whole Derasha, consisting of four lines from **יונתי** up to **האלהים** (ed. S. ll. 889-892), without giving any reason for it or in any way indicating that he is the author of the *lacuna*. To hide his offence, he leaves out the words **ר"א** at the beginning of par. 14 before **יונתי** as well as eight lines later, before **בחנוי**.

Secondly. Can Herr Buber explain why he did not make use of MS. 626, Codex de Rossi, which I quote in my Corrections and Notes as E? This MS. contains fragments which, as will be seen from my quotations, cover about two-thirds of the whole Agadath Shir Ha-Shirim. These not only offer innumerable better readings, but also contain many Derashoth omitted by the neglectful copyist of MS. 541. What excuse can Herr Buber offer for this carelessness? He cannot even plead ignorance, for he refers to this identical MS. in his Introduction to the Midrash Mishle, p. 14 b, under **כתב יר ב'**, where he says **מן דף 1 עד דף 4 מאמרים קטועים מן מדרש ש' ה"ש והם ה"ש מדרשים אחרים מאשר הוא לפנינו במדרש ש' ה"ש**. Did Herr Buber write these words or not?

Thirdly. Brevity is not the soul of Herr Buber, and students know how fond he is of giving references, even when he could easily rely on the Masorath Hammidrash. But in our text he was exceptionally short and hasty, to the incalculable damage of his work.

Here are a few instances:—

Page 4. We have the passage **ד"א ש' ה"ש . . . מתנה לשלמה**. Herr Buber in his notes 17 and 18 refers to Aboth and Yadayim, which, of course, "every school-boy knows." But the real parallel to the whole sentence is Midrash Mishle, ch. I,—a book edited by Herr Buber himself!—at the beginning.

Page 9. The passage commencing **אמר ר"א בן עזריה** and finishing **נסלחה מכולם** Herr Buber, in note 34, refers to Chasitha, which, as he himself confesses, has a totally different version. The only place where a version similar to ours is to be found is the Midrash Agadoth (p. 170 b), edited by Herr Buber himself!

Ibid. We have the passage of the two angel-songs to which Herr Buber gives no reference whatever, whilst an exact parallel is to be found in Tosephta Sota, VI, Cr. B. T. Sota, 30 b.

Page 10. With regard to the **נשיקה על הפה** Rashi and the Lekach Tob ought to have been mentioned.

Page 11. Here we have the strange Derashoth of **ר' הדקא**; Herr Buber refers only to the Yalkut. Passing by his neglecting MSS. we can certainly not overlook his omitting to refer to the

פרק ר' יאשיה in Jellinek's Beth Hammidrash, V, pp. 112 and 113. The parallel to this latter is the more important on account of its showing the close affinity of the Agadath Shir Ha-Shirim with that class of Messianic Midrashim or Apocalypses to which the פרק ר' יאשיה belongs.

Page 14. We have the Derashoth on נטרה את הכרמים. The passage is, on account of its enumerating the various eras known to the redactor, of great historical importance, but is unfortunately very corrupt. All that Herr Buber has to say of it is that it "requires explanation," but without feeling any call to supply it. But why did not Herr Buber, at least, look up the partial parallels in Mechilta, 61 a and b, and Seder Olam, ch. XXX, and Chasitha to the same verse, which prove greatly helpful towards correcting the text?

Page 18, note 96. Herr Buber refers to Peah, I, 11. Of course one knows this Mishnah, but the real parallel is Aboth d'R. Nathan, chap. XL, where the words ארבעה דברים occur.

Page 20. ר' יונתן העושה מצוה מרחוק וכו'. Herr Buber has nothing to say about it, though parallels to these passages are to be found in Aboth, III, 7 and IV, 9, and Sabbath, 151 b. But he ought at least to have remembered *his own* Mabo of the Tanchuma, p. 62 b, where the real parallel is to be found. The importance of this parallel consists in the fact that it suggests to us the source of this whole long Zedakah Midrash, extending over nearly seven pages (16-23), which is, as may be seen in my Corrections and Notes, the ילמדנו.

Page 25. Herr Buber reads לו מטב, which is nonsense, but the MS. has מנוס, which ought to be corrected into מאונס.

Page 26. ר"א למה נמשלו. Herr Buber omits to give a parallel to Chasitha, yet it would seem that he should have given some sign to his readers that he had not forgotten his own edition of the Pesikta d'R. Kahana (p. 101 b), a reference to which is the more instructive, since it shows the way in which our redactor employed the old Midrashim. R. Tobijah b. Eleazar uses here our text.

Page 27. אחוזו לנו שועלים. Herr Buber is silent. But he ought at least to have thought of the Midrash Mishle (c. XIX) also edited by himself, which offers the only real parallel to the passage. Of course we must read ומוסרו למיתה instead of ומייסרו. Herr Buber shows a lack of acquaintance with the works edited by himself, which is strange and surprising.

P. 32, verse 14. Herr Buber reads אורי for אהליאב, but the latter is guaranteed by the Paitan R. Judah b. Menachem, who (in a MS.) has: נרד וכרכום אהליאב ובצלאל הם חנבונים אושרו במלאכת המשכן לשבח ולא לננאי.

P. 36. The Derasha concerning שישק is given by Rashi in the

name of Midrash Shir Ha-Shirim ; but Herr Buber does not mention this important fact.

The reader is assured that the list of Herr Buber's sins of commission and omission in the single Agadath Shir Ha-Shirim could be easily trebled, not to speak of the other Midrashim contained in the MS. But the reviewer fears to trespass too much on the space of this periodical.

S. SCHECHTER.