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FRIEDLAENDER'S "ARABIC WRITINGS OF MIAMONIDES."

Selections from the Arabic Writings of Maimonides. Edited with introduction and notes by ISRAEL FRIEDLAENDER. Leiden: E. J. BRILL, 1909. pp. xxiii + 130, 8°. No. XII of the *Semitic Study Series* edited by Richard J. H. Gottheil and Morris Jastrow, Jr.

It was a happy thought on the part of the editors of the *Semitic Study Series* to have Judeo-Arabic represented, and in the person of the famous Moses ben Maimon. It is the more useful and necessary as the great Arabists have neglected this department of Arabic literature, under the pretence that Jewish Arabic is not good Arabic, is not classical, is under the influence, grammatically and stylistically, of the Hebrew. And this, too, seems to have been said without a thorough study of the Jewish Arabic writers, and a comparison of the Mohammedan writings of the same class (see Steinschneider, *Arab Lit.*, Introd., p. xxxi f.). Prof. Friedlaender, wisely chosen to prepare this volume as being among the best Arabists in this country and one who has made the language and style of Maimonides his special work for a number of years, argues in the introduction to the volume under review as well as in two other works bearing on the same subject, that the opinion current regarding Judeo-Arabic has no basis in fact; that most of the peculiarities of the Jewish-Arabic dialect can be paralleled in the scientific writings of Arabs of pure blood, Ibn Abi Uṣāibi'a, for example, and that more similarities will be found as the so-called Middle Arabic becomes better known, and its grammatical structure is more carefully studied. He admits that the Jewish writers approach the popular or "vulgar" Arabic more closely than do the Mohammedan Arabs. But he does not charge this circumstance to Jewish or Hebrew influence, and rather finds therein an added interest, which should make the

study of the Jewish Arabic writers even more valuable for following the natural development of the language than the writings of the pure Arabs. The latter were kept by religious, hence externally superimposed, motives to the usage hallowed by the Koran. This was an artificial check on the spontaneous development of the language, which widened gradually the gulf between the written and the spoken language. The separation was greatest in books dealing with religious subjects. It was less as the writings were more remote from the subject of religion. Hence, in Ibn Abi Uṣaibi'a, who writes a history of physicians, we find deviations from the classical Arabic in the direction of the vulgar dialect. The Jews had no religious scruples to prevent them from following their bent, and hence the form which the Arabic takes with them is a result of natural development. Hebrew influence is out of the question, as it is not likely that a language used for writing and for learned purposes only should influence the habit of daily speech in all relations of life. The few Hebrew words and phrases found in the Jewish writers argue nothing against the statement just made, for they are very few, and represent a few technical terms for which there is no precise equivalent in Arabic. They do not in any way tend to modify the grammar of the language.

In 1902 Prof. Friedlaender published a work entitled "*Der Sprachgebrauch des Maimonides, ein lexikalischer und grammatischer Beitrag zur Kenntnis des Mittelarabischen, I, Lexikalischer Teil*". We have there an examination of Maimonides' vocabulary, which serves as a supplement to existing Arabic lexicons. He there promises to treat in Part II of the Grammar of Maimonides. We are still waiting for that part to appear, for upon the details given there will depend, in a great measure, the judgment of Arabists regarding Dr. Friedlaender's views of the Judeo-Arabic dialect. In the meantime, we have, in the introduction to the little volume under review, in twenty-two brief paragraphs, a list of the grammatical and syntactical peculiarities of Maimonides with references to the text which follows and to the standard grammars of Caspari-Müller and Wright, and the writings of Fleischer, Nöldeke, and Spitta. Thus, almost all the peculiarities of Maimonides appear

in the grammars mentioned, which are based upon the writings of Mohammedans.

The occasional vowel signs and other diacritical points in the text are judiciously distributed with a view to the needs of the beginner and the one who is not accustomed to read Arabic in Hebrew characters. The grammatical foot-notes and references to Wright and Caspari-Müller are also very valuable for the student of Arabic, who in general may be tempted to content himself with the first part of Socin. The notes are intended to give assistance which is beyond the Grammar and the lexicon, and they are especially full in the explanation of Rabbinical citations, with a view here especially to the needs of the non-Jewish reader. A number of misprints are corrected in the notes. A few others noticed in a rapid reading of the text are p. 2, l. 5, ותסתדל, instead of ותסתדל; 16, 8, דאימה, instead of דאימה; 26, 13, אלא לפאט, instead of אלא לפאט; 27, 7, ובה, instead of ובהא; 30, 6, ואלאסטקסאת ins. of ואלאסטקסאת (so Freytag and Wahrmond); 30, 15, אלפעאל probably instead of אלפעאל; 56, 1, וימילון, instead of וימילון; 59, 8, חתי, instead of חתי; 64, 4, ואכד, instead of ואכד; 69, 1, ללמטלום instead of ללמטלום; *ib.* חילה instead of חילה. (29.2) are, I think, technical terms, and are best rendered, "continuity and discreteness," rather than "connection and separation". Aristotle in the *Categories* (c. 6) divides the category of quantity (= ποσόν = כמות) into "discrete" (διωρισμένον = منفصل = מתחלק) and "continuous" (συνεχές = متصل = מתדבק [see Munk, *Guide*, I 234, n. 1]). Mathematical solid or body (σῶμα = גשם = جسم) belongs to the latter. In our text Maimonides speaks of God's incorporeality, that he is not a body, and has not the accidents of body. Hence he has neither اتصال nor انفصال, continuity or discreteness. Though body here does not mean mathematical solid, still it suggests it, since the term is the same and all body is possessed of quantity.—Aristotle's phrase of God is not ὡς φιλόμενος (sic) κινῶν (98, on 30, 6 f.) but

κινεῖ ὡς ἐρόμενον Metaph. Λ. 7, p. 1072b 3. —The commentator of Aristotle referred to p. 57, 6 is called in English Philoponus. *Philopone* (119) is the French spelling.

I should say a word about the selections. There are five in all, of which the first is from Maimonides' introduction to the eleventh chapter of the treatise Sanhedrin in his Commentary on the Mishna. The second is from the *Sefer ha-Miṣwot*, which serves as an introduction to the Code, known as *Mishneh Torah*, or *Yad ha-Ḥazakah*. The last three are taken from his famous philosophical work, the *Guide of the Perplexed*. The first of these three is from the introduction; the second, from the seventy-first chapter of the first part on the rise of the *kalām* in Jewish literature; the third is the twelfth chapter of the third part, on the problem of evil. The more technical portions of the "Guide" were not drawn upon, as they would not illustrate specially the language of Maimonides, and besides are not adapted to the needs and interests of the general student of Arabic literature.

It would, however, add to the interest and completeness of the series if the editors would include in their list philosophical texts, with a view especially to the philosophical terminology, which is not adequately treated in the existing lexicons.

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