Srepresents the hard open (or fricative) sound produced by bringing the blade of the tongue close to the front palate, immediately behind the gums, or rather, this is the normal position for S, as slight varieties can be produced by bringing the tongue farther back. By the “ blade ” is meant the pointed end of the tongue, not the mere point, which at the same part of the palate produces R. This position differs little from that for TH, into which S passes in a lisping pronunciation ; a larger part of the surface of the tongue is brought near to the palate for TH than for S. The symbol which represents the soft open sound corresponding to S is Z, though in practice S often stands for both.

The history of our symbol S is easy up to a certain point. It is the rounded form of 5, rounded at a very early period for convenience of writing, for the change is apparent in the old Italian alphabet of Cære, and still more on the recently discovered vase of Formello; and even in the scribbling of the Greeks at Abu Simbel—the oldest, or nearly the oldest, bit of Greek epigraphy—per­fectly rounded forms stand side by side with the angular ones. The common Greek form Σ was obtained by adding a fourth stroke, and gradually making the top and bottom ones horizontal. When, however, we wish to identify the Greek symbol of three strokes with its Phoenician counter­part, the difficulty begins. The Phoenicians had four symbols for sibilants, known in Hebrew as Zayin, Samekh, Ṣade, and Shin ; the last of these at a very early date represented two sounds, the English *sh,* and another sound which resembled that of Samekh and ultimately became indistinguishable from it, both being pronounced as the English s. The Greeks did not want all these symbols, consequently in different parts of Greece one or other— not the same—Phoenician symbol fell into disuse. One of these, M or N, called San, though lost in Ionic, appears in old Doric inscriptions, as those of Thera, Melos, and Crete, Argos, Corinth, and Corcyra ; but the later Doric form is the usual Sigma ; probably San was too like the nasal M. There is no doubt that in form Zeta represents Zayin, and that Xi represents Samekh. Moreover, Zeta and Zayin stand seventh in the Greek and Phoenician alphabets respectively, and Xi and Samekh each fifteenth. Again, the form of San with three strokes corresponds fairly with Ṣade, and Sigma is moderately like Shin ; but here the evidence of position comes in again to strengthen a somewhat weak case, for in the old Italian alphabets San has the place of Ṣade, the simpler form occurring in the Cære alphabet, the fuller in that of the Formello vase ; in both Sigma (rounded in form) has the place of Shin. These identifications would be certain if the names cor­responded as well as the forms ; but they clearly do not : Zeta and Ṣade (not Zayin) seem to hold together in sound, and Sigma (as has often been suggested) looks like a “ popu­lar etymology” for Samekh. But the objection from difference of names is not fatal. All names which are thought of habitually in rows or sets tend to be modified under the influence of analogy ; and analogy has certainly been at work here, for Xi, which is a purely Greek name, is, like Psi, and like Chi and Phi, due to the older Pi. Similarly Eta and Theta have probably made Zeta ; but it must be allowed that the metamorphosis of Ṣade is more intelligible (as a matter of sound-change) than that of Zayin. Probably we must have recourse to a different principle to explain at least some part of our difficulty. We may suppose that in some part of Greece the sounds

denoted originally by Ṣade and Zayin became indis­tinguishable ; there would then exist for a time one sound but two names. It would be a matter of little moment which name should survive; thus Ṣade (or Zeta) might supersede Zayin, or one name might survive in one district—as San in the Doric, but Sigma in the rest of Greece. This suggestion is made by Dr Taylor *(The Alphabet,* ii. 100). The history of the sounds, as well as of the forms, of the Greek sibilants is difficult. Probably Sigma was generally hard—our *s* in *sign.* But Zeta did not originally denote the corresponding *z* : rather it was *dz;* some say *dj,* as in “John,” but this is not likely. Xi was probably a strong sibilant with a weak guttural, as X was in Latin. If the sound *z* existed in Greek, as is prob­able, it was denoted by Sigma. In Italy, also, we must infer that the soft sibilant was heard too little to need a special symbol, because *z*, which exists in the old alphabets of Cære and Formello, was lost early enough to leave a place for the newly-made Italian symbol G. When Z was restored, it was placed at the end of the alphabet and doubt­less with the value of Greek Z in the Greek words in which alone it was used. One Latin *s—*probably *z—*became the trilled *r* between two vowels,—*e.g.,* in "Papirius ” for “ Papisius,” “arboris” for “arbosis.”

In English the symbol *s* alone existed till z was intro­duced from France with words of French origin, as “zeal,” “ zone.” An attempt was made to employ it at the end of plural nouns, where the sound is regularly heard except when the last sound of the noun is hard, *e.g., “* bedz ” (beds), but “hops”; but this was not maintained, nor even consistently done, for the symbol was used even when the sound must have been *s.* We regularly write *s* for both sounds,—*e.g.,* in “lose” and “loose,” “curs” and “curse,” “hers” and “hearse.” When there is a distinc­tion in spelling the *s* commonly has the value of *z*,—*e.g.,* “ vies ” and “ vice,” “ pays ” and “ pace,” “ his ” and “ hiss.” S has the sound of *sh* in “sure,” “sugar,” and some other words ; this is due to the palatal sound heard before the *u. Sh,* in spite of its spelling, is a single sound, the position of which differs from that for s only in a slight retraction of the point of the tongue; it is commonly found in English words which originally had *sk,—e.g.,* “shall,” O.E. *seeal* ; “ shabby,” a doublet of “ scabby ” ; “ fish,” O.E. *fisk.* The sound is the same as that of French *ch* in “ chateau,” “chef,” “sécher,” where it is due to assibilation of original *k.*

SAADI. See Sa'di.

SAADIA, or Saadias (Heb. *Se'adyah,* Arab. *Sa'îd @@1),* was the most accomplished, learned, and noble gaon (head of the academy) of Sūrā (see Rab). Mar Rab Se'adyah b. Yoseph @@2 was born in the Fayyûm, Upper Egypt, in 892 and died at Sūrā in 942. Of his teachers only the Jew Abú Kethír is positively known by name, @@3 but he must have had at least three more . teachers of considerable learning, one a Karaite, @@4 one a Mohammedan, and one a Christian, as his acquaintance with the literature of these four religious bodies testifies. His pre-eminence over his

@@@1 He signs himself םציך acrostically in his *Azharoth (Ḳobeṣ,* pp. 52, 53 ; see note 4 on next page).

@@@2 Mas'údí, a contemporary, calls the father Ya'aḳob ; but see Fürst, *Literaturblatt d. Orients,* vi. col. 140.

@@@3 Mas'údí (De Sacy, *Chrest. Ar.,* 2d ed., i. 350, 351).

@@@4 The late learned and ingenious Rabbi S. L. Rapoport rolled here,

as in many other places, the stone of Sisyphus (“ Toledoth Rahhenu Se'adyah Gaon,” in *Bikkure Ha'ittim,* Vienna, 1828, note 31). Per­haps, after all, the Karaites may be right in asserting that Salmon b. Yeruḥam was Rah Se'adyah’s teacher.