of this sort required some organization : the general order of the service was directed by one or more “ rulers of the synagogue” (*ἀρχισυνάγωγοι*, Luke xiii. 14; Acts xiii. 15), who called on fit persons to read, pray, and preach ; alms were collected by two or more “collectors” (*gabbâe sedākā}·,* and a “minister” (*hazzān, ὑπηρέτης,* Luke iv. 20) had charge of the sacred books (preserved in an “ark”) and of other ministerial functions, including the teaching of children to read. The discipline of the congregation was enforced by excommunication (*hērem)* or temporary exclusion (*niddûy),* and also by the minor punishment of scourging (Matt. x. 17), inflicted by the *hazzân.* The disciplinary power was in the hands of a senate of elders (*πpεσβύτεpoι, γερουσία),* the chief members of which were *ἄρχοντες.* The principal service of the synagogue was held on Sabbath morning, and included, according to the Mishnah, the recitation of the *shema* (Deut. vi. 4-9, xi. 13-21; Numb. xv. 37-41), prayer, lessons from the law and prophets with Aramaic transla­tion, a sermon (*derashah)* based on the lesson (Acts xiii. 15), and finally a blessing pronounced by the priest or invoked by a layman. On Sabbath afternoon and on Monday and Thursday there was a service without a lesson from the prophets; there were also services for all feast- days. Synagogues were built by preference beside water for the convenience of the ceremonial ablutions (comp. Acts xvi. 13); and remains of very ancient buildings of this class exist in several parts of Galilee ; they generally lie north and south, and seem to have had three doors to the south, and sometimes to have been divided by columns into a nave and two aisles.

Jewish tradition has a great deal to say about a body called “the great synagogue,” which is supposed to have been the supreme religious authority from the cessation of prophecy to the time of the high priest Simeon the Just, and is even said (by modern writers since Elias Levita) to have fixed the Old Testament canon (cp. vol. V. p. 3 *sq.).* But Kuenen in his essay “Over de Mannen der Groote Synagoge ” ( *Verslagen* of the Amsterdam Academy, 1876) has shown that these traditions are fiction, and that the name *keneseth haggadôla* originally denoted, not a standing authority, but the great convoca­tion of Neh. viii.-x.

Compare in general Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes,* §27, where the older literature is catalogued. For the usages of the synagogue in more recent times, see Buxtorf, *Synagoge Judaica,* Basel, 1641.

SYNEDRIUM (*συvέδpιov*), a Greek word which means “assembly” and is especially used of judicial or representa­tive assemblies, is the name by which (or by its Hebrew transcription, םנחדין, *sanhedrin, sanhedrim)* that Jewish body is known which in its origin was the municipal coun­cil of Jerusalem, but acquired extended functions and no small authority and influence over the Jews at large (see vol. xiii. p. 424 *sq.).* In the Mishnah it is called “ the san­hedrin,” “the great sanhedrin,” “the sanhedrin of seventy- one [members],” and “the great court of justice” (*bêth dîn haggadôl).* The oldest testimony to the existence and constitution of the synedrium of Jerusalem is probably to be found in 2 Chron, xix. 8 ; for the priests, Levites, and hereditary heads of houses there spoken of as sitting at Jerusalem as a court of appeal from the local judicatories does not correspond with anything mentioned in the old history, and it is the practice of the Chronicler to refer the institutions of his own time to an origin in ancient Israel. And just such an aristocratic council is what seems to be meant by the gerusia or senate of “ elders ” repeatedly mentioned in the history of the Jews, both under the Greeks from the time of Antiochus the Great (Jos., *Ant.,* xii. 3, 3) and under the Hasmonean high priests and princes. The high priest as the head of the state was

doubtless also the head of the senate, which, according to Eastern usage, exercised both judicial and administrative or political functions (comp. 1 Mac. xii. 6, xiv. 20). The exact measure of its authority must have varied from time to time, at first with the measure of autonomy left to the nation by its foreign lords and afterwards with the more or less autocratic power claimed by the native sovereigns.

As has been shown in vol. xiii. p. 424 *sq.,* the original aristocratic constitution of the senate began to be modified under the later Hasmoneans by the inevitable introduction of representatives of the rising party of the Pharisees, and this new element gained strength under Herod the Great, the bitter enemy of the priestly aristocracy.@@1 Finally under the Roman procurators the synedrium was left under the presidency of the chief priest as the highest native tribunal, though without the power of life and death (John xviii. 31). The aristocratic element now again preponderated, as appears from Josephus and from the New Testament, in which “ chief priests ” and “ rulers ” are synonymous expressions. But with these there sat also “ scribes ” or trained legal doctors of the Pharisees and other notables, who are simply called “ elders ” (Mark xv. 1). The Jewish tradition which regards the synedrium as entirely composed of rabbins sitting under the presidency and vice-presidency of a pair of chief doctors, the *nasi* and *ab beth din,@@*2 is quite false as regards the true synedrium. It was after the fall of the state that a merely rabbinical *beth din* sat at Jabneh and afterwards at Tiberias, and gave legal re­sponses to those who chose to admit a judicature not recognized by the civil power. Gradually this illegal court usurped such authority that it even ventured to pronounce capital sentences,—acting, however, with so much secrecy as to allow the Roman authorities to close their eyes to its proceedings (Origen, *Ep. ad Afr.,* § 14). That this was possible will appear less surprising if we remember that in like manner the synedrium of Jerusalem was able to extend an authority not sanctioned by Roman law over Jews beyond Judæa, *e.g.,* in Damascus (Acts ix. 2; xxii. 5).

The council-chamber (*βουλή)* where the synedrium usually sat was between the Xystus and the temple, probably on the temple- hill, hut hardly, as the Mishnah states, within the inner court. The meeting in the palace of the high priest which condemned our Lord was exceptional. The proceedings also on this occasion were highly irregular, if measured by the rules of procedure which, according to Jewish tradition, were laid down to secure order and a fair trial for the accused.

Of the older literature of the subject it is enough to cite Selden, *De Synedriis.* The most important critical discussion is that of Kuenen in the *Verslagen,* &c., of the Amsterdam Academy, 1866, p. 131 *sq.* A good summary is given by Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes,* 2d ed., § 23, iii.

SYNESIUS, bishop of Ptolemais in the Libyan Penta­polis from 410 to *c.* 414, was born of wealthy parents, who claimed descent from Spartan kings, at Cyrene about 375. While still a youth (393) he went with his brother Euoptius to Alexandria, where he became an enthusiastic Neoplatonist and disciple of Hypatia (*q.v.).* Returning to his native place some time before 397, he was in that year chosen to head an embassy from the cities of the Pentapolis to the imperial court to ask for remission of taxation and other relief. His stay in Constantinople, which lasted three years, was wearisome and otherwise disagreeable ; the leisure it forced upon him he devoted in part to literary composition (see his *De Providentia).* The oration he delivered when at last admitted to the presence of Arcadius is also extant (*De Regno).* Returning abruptly to Cyrene in 400, he spent the next ten years partly in that city, when unavoidable business called him there, but chiefly on an estate in the interior of the province, where

@@@1 The name *synedrium* first appears under Hyrcanus II. (Jos., *Ant.,* xiv. 9, 4).

@@@2 The former word properly means the sovereign and the latter the president of the tribunal. The false traditional application is post- Mishnic.