but we can gather something of its contents from references in the author’s other works, and from the statements of his opponents. The controversy turned largely on the calendar, which of course involved the dates of festivals, and, since the Rabbanite calendar had come down from ancient times, opened up the whole question of oral tradition and the authority of the Talmud. The conflict raged for many years, the chief repre- sentative of the other side being Solomon ben Yeruḥam, a virulent if not successful opponent. It was not, however, the only contro- versy in which Saadia was engaged. In 922 Ben Meir, a person of importance in Palestine, attempted to make alterations in the calendar, against the authority of the Babylonian schools. Saadia, who was then at Baghdad, warned him of his errors, refuted him in a work called *Sefer ha-Mō'adīm* (the Book of the Festivals), and finally procured his excommunication by David ben Zakkai, the exilarch or head of the Jewish community in Babylonia. The vigorous action of Saadia seems to have brought him more prominently to the notice of the exilarch, and that at a time of more than usual difficulty. The honourable rivalry of the two schools of Sura and Pumbeditha, as the recognized authorities in matters of religion, had degenerated into jealousy and contention. The Gaon (*q.v.)* or President of Pumbeditha, taking advantage of his own position and of a vacancy in the Gaonate of Sura, wished to abolish the rival school. The exilarch, however, no doubt in recognition of his recent services, appointed Saadia as Gaon of Sura, although it was against the usual custom to appoint a person who was not a member of the school. Un­fortunately this step did not lead to peace. Pumbeditha was jealous: the exilarch was weak and not very scrupulous. Money had to be raised not only for the support of the schools, but also to buy immunity from the government, and Saadia was not the man to connive at the corruption and oppression practised by the exilarch to raise it. Within two years matters had come to a crisis, and the exilarch dismissed Saadia, while Saadia retorted by declaring the exilarch deposed (930). After three years of contention David succeeded in sufficiently bribing the new and needy Caliph (Qāhir, 932-934; see Caliphate, § 19), who definitely forbade Saadia to act as Gaon. The next four years, spent in retirement at Baghdad, were devoted to literary labours, which had no doubt been impossible during the previous years of trouble, and in fact it was at this time that most of Saadia’s work was produced. Eventually a reconciliation was effected with David, favoured probably by the new Caliph Radi (934-940; see Caliphate, § 20), and Saadia was reinstated as Gaon of Sura in 93S. Under his rule the school attained the highest reputation among the Jewish communities of East and West—but it was not of long duration. His health had been impaired by the strenuous life he had led, and in his later years he suffered from melancholia. In 942 he died, two years after the exilarch.

That some of the many works of Saadia, in spite of their merits, have been neglected, and others partly or entirely lost, is not as surprising as it appears at first sight. They were for the most part written in Arabic, the vernacular of the Jews in the East, so that after the break-up of the Babylonian schools in the middle of the 11th century, they would only be studied in Spain, the new centre of Jewish learning, and in Egypt. After the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, Arabic practically ceased to be used by them for literary purposes, and in the rest of Europe (except perhaps in S. Italy) it was never understood. Even some Hebrew works, of great interest to us now, must have been regarded at the time as of purely temporary value, such as e.g. the *Sefer ha-Mō'adīm,* fragments of which have only recently been recovered in the Geniza at Cairo. The anti-Qaraite works@@1 against 'Anan, Ibn Sãkawaihï and Ben Zütâ, the *Kilab at-tamyiz, Kitāb al-Shara'ī, Kitāb al-'Ibbur* (calendar) and a book on anthropomorphisms, all in Arabic, are now lost and only known from quotations. So also are the refutation of the sceptic Hīvī of Balkh, and the *Sefer 'Orayōth* (on prohibited marriage, against Qaraites). Of the *Sefer ha-Mō'adīm* and *Sefer ha-Galūī*

(against David ben Zakkai), both in Hebrew, some fragments have been recovered recently.

Closely allied to his polemical writings are his *exegetical* works. He translated most of the Bible into Arabic, and commented on at least some of the books. The memorial edition@@2 contains (1) the version of the Pentateuch (1893), (3) of Isaiah (1896), (5) of Job (1899), (6) of Proverbs (1894), the last three with commentary. The translation of the 5 Meghilloth, and of Daniel (with commentary), usually ascribed to Saadia, is not really by him, but a genuine translation of Daniel, with commentary, exists in manuscript. There is also ascribed to him a midrashic woτk on the Decalogue. These all, no doubt, exhibit the defects necessary to the time in which their author lived. But it must be remembered that Saadia was a pioneer. Hayyüj, the father of Hebrew grammar, was not yet born, nor had the scientific and comparative study of the language begun. In this respect Saadia contributed little to the subject. Moreover, he shows a tendency, common at all times and perhaps due to a particular theory of inspiration, to get more out of the text than it contains, and to interpret it in accordance with preconceived philosophical opinions. At the same time both translations and commentaries are remarkable for their great learning, sound sense and an honest endeavour to arrive at the true meaning of the original. They were thus admirably suited for their purpose, which was, like the earlier Targums and the later work of Moses Mendelssohn, to render the sacred text more intelligible to the faithful generally and to check the growth of error.

The *grammatical* work called *Agron,* a sort of dictionary, is now lost, as are also the *Kutub al-Lughah* and perhaps other treatises on Hebrew grammar. The explanation of the 70 (really 90) hapaxlegomena in the Bible is still extant, and a poem on the number of letters in the Bible.

On *Talmudic* subjects again little is preserved beyond the *Kitab αl-Mawarith,* which was published as vol. ix. of the *Œuvres complètes,* together with the short treatise in Hebrew on the 13 *Middδth* or canons of exegesis of R. Ishmael and some *Responsa* mostly in Hebrew. The translation of the Mishna, the introduc­tion to the Talmud and other works of the kind are known only by repute.

Of the *Siddur* or arrangement of the liturgy by Saadia, a large part exists in a single manuscript at Oxford, and several fragments have been recovered from the Cairo Geniza. Numerous other liturgical poems, or parts of them, have been obtained from the same source, and several have been published in periodicals. His *Azharδth,* a poetical enumeration of the 613 precepts, in Hebrew, is included in vol. ix. of the *Œuvres complètes.*

His *philosophical* works are (1) a commentary on the *Sefer \* Y ezïra,* a mystical treatise ascribed to the patriarch Abraham, which, as the foundation of the Kabbala, had great influence on Jewish thought, and was the subject of numerous commen­taries; (2) the *Kitâb al-Amanät w'al-I'tiqadat (Book of Beliefs and Convictions),* written in 933, called, in the Hebrew translation by Judah ibn Tibbon, *Emünoth we-De'δth.* Its system is based on reason in conjunction with revelation, the two being not opposed, but mutually complementary. It is thus concerned, as the title implies, with the rational foundation of the faith, and deals with creation, the nature of God, revelation, free will, the soul, the future life and the doctrine of the Messiah. It shows a thorough knowledge of Aristotle, on whom much of the argument is based, and incidentally refutes the views of Christians, Moslems, Brahmins and sceptics such as Hivî. From its nature, however, the work, although of great interest and value, never had the same wider influence as that of Ibn Gabirol (*q.v.*). The Arabic text was published by S. Landauer (Leiden, 1880), the Hebrew version at Constantinople in 1562 and frequently since.

**Bibliography.**—Grätz, *Geschichte der Juden,* vol. 5 (ed. 3), cap. 10; Steinschneider, *Arab. Literatur der Juden* (Frankft a. M., 1902). p. 46 ff.; W. Bacher’s art. “Saadia ben Joseph,” in the *Jewish Encyclopedia',* M. Friedländer in the *Jewish Quarterly Review,* v. 177 ff. ; S. Poznañski, ibid. vol. x. 238 ff.; J. Guttmann, *Die Religions- philosophie des Saadias* (Göttingen, 1882); W. Engelkemper, “ Die

@@@1 An excellent account of these is given by Poznanski in the *Jewish Quarterly Review,* x. 238 ff.

*@@@2 Œuvres complètes de R. Saadia,* ed. by J. Derenbourg (Paris, 1893 ff.).