

Jewish Forerunners of Christianity. By
Adolph Danziger. New York: E. P.
Dutton & Co., \$1.50.

It is a pity that this book has assumed such a misleading title, for it is sure to bring an initial disappointment and annoyance, even to those who are interested in the volume for what it is, while others, who are interested only in what it purports to be, will feel that they have been deceived, and are likely to throw it aside unread. The book should have been called, "The Makers of the Talmud," or "The Great Jewish Leaders During the Early Christian Era," for it is a series of brief biographical sketches of the great Jewish Rabbis who taught and governed between the years 36 B. C. and 220 A. D., and of these only one can in any sense be called a forerunner of Christianity. But while it gives us little or no light in interpreting the beginnings of Christianity, it gives us, what is perhaps more needed, an insight into the inner life and national consciousness of the Jewish people during that tragic period of their history,

and an understanding of the intellectual and spiritual forces that have kept alive in a people so long and so widely scattered so strong and so unique a national and religious consciousness. The author is a Jew of the most liberal type, who here includes Jesus himself among the great Jewish Rabbis, giving him, indeed, the most exalted place among that noble company. "The man Jesus," he says, "is the most heroic, the grandest, the noblest personality of all time and age." . . . "When we place his life and death beside that of the greatest of our other teachers, as Hillel, the soul expands in admiration." The volume abounds in eloquent passages, in interesting incidents, and brings us into contact with ideas and personalities that are strangely and surprisingly like those of the early Christian Church. It will serve to remove many popular misconceptions and prejudices, and will make for a better understanding of that long suffering people whose history the author describes as "the grandest expression of tragedy that the world has ever seen."

