

Northern school prefer *halizah* (Shulhan 'Aruk, Eben ha-'Ezer, 165). The marriage was not necessary if the brother left a child by another marriage, even if such a child were on the point of death (*l.c.* 157). A change of religion on the part of the surviving brother does not affect the obligation of the levirate, or its alternative, the *halizah* (Isaac b. Sheshet, Responsa, i. 2), yet the whole question has been profoundly affected by the change from polygamy to monogamy due to the takkanah of Gershom ben Judah (see MARRIAGE).

The Samaritans followed a slightly different course, which may indicate an earlier custom among the Hebrews; the former practised the levirate only when the woman was betrothed and the marriage had not been consummated (Kid. 65b). The Karaites appear to have followed the same practise, and Benjamin Nahawendi, as well as Elijah Bashyazi, favored it ("Adderet Eliyahu, Nashim," p. 93a).

It has been suggested by Kalisch ("Leviticus," ii. 362-363) that the prohibition in Leviticus is of later date than the obligation under certain conditions in Deuteronomy, but it is equally possible that the Leviticus prohibition was a general one, and the permission in Deuteronomy only an exception when there was no male issue. J. F. MacLennan ("Studies in Ancient History," i. 109-114) suggested that the existence of levirate marriage was due to polyandry among the primitive Hebrews, and has been followed by Buhl ("Sociale Verhältnisse," p. 34) and Barton ("Semitic Origins," pp. 66-67); but this is rather opposed to the Hebraic conditions, for it would be against the interests of the surviving brother to allow the estate to go out of his possession again. There is, besides, no evidence of polyandry among the Hebrews.

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S. S. J.

LEVISOHN, GEORGE (MORDECAI GUMPEL LEIVE): German surgeon; born in Berlin of a family known as "Schnaber"; died in Hamburg Feb. 10, 1797. He evinced an early aptitude for study, and attended the school of David Fränkel, chief rabbi of Berlin. Levisohn chose the medical profession, to which he devoted himself with enthusiasm. He left Germany for England, and, after studying under John Hunter, was appointed physician at the hospital of the Duke of Portland. Being called to Sweden by Gustavus III., he occupied for some time the position of professor at the University of Upsala. Gustavus thought highly of him, and he translated, at the king's command, from English into Swedish his medical and polemical works. Levisohn left the court in 1781 and returned to Germany, where he published German translations of most of his English medical works. Three years later (1784) he went to Hamburg, and, being well received, settled there and followed his profession with remarkable success.

The large number of his daily patients did not prevent him from prosecuting with zeal his medical, philosophical, and theological studies. In 1785-86 he published two medical journals, and during the following years labored at his great work on religious philosophy. He was then engaged for five

years in physical researches. His works are: "Ma'amar ha-Torah we-Hokmah" (London, 1771), a philosophical treatise (this work caused its author to be regarded in the light of a dangerous innovator); "An Essay on the Blood" (*ib.* 1776); "Epidemical Sore Throat" (*ib.* 1778); "Beschreibung der Londonischen Medicinischen Praxis den Deutschen Aerzten Vorgelegt . . . mit einer Vorrede von T. C. A. Theden" (Berlin, 1782); "The Passions and Habits of Man, and Their Influence on Health" (Brunswick, 1797-1801); "Derek ha-Kodesh ha-Hadashah," a Hebrew grammar.

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J.

G. L.

LEVISOHN, MORDECAI GUMPEL. See LEVISON, GEORGE.

LEVISON, ESAIAS: Danish educationist and author; born in Copenhagen April 22, 1803; died there March 23, 1891; educated at the University of Copenhagen (B.A. 1823). In 1824 Levison was appointed tutor at the Jewish school in Copenhagen, in which position he remained till within two years of his death. He published several religious educational works, of which the following may be mentioned: "Kortfattet Forklaring over Lærebogen i Religionen for Ungdommen af den Mosaiske Troesbekjendelse" (Copenhagen, 1825); "Bibelske Fortællinger" (*ib.* 1827); a Jewish prayer-book, with Hebrew text and Danish translation (*ib.* 1833). Levison translated into Danish Bulwer Lyttou's "Paul Clifford." For two years (1837-38) he acted as coeditor of "Borgervennen," a Danish political periodical, to which he contributed several articles. In 1837 the University of Kiel conferred upon him the honorary degree of Ph.D.

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S.

F. C.

LEVISON, FERDINAND EMANUEL: Danish physician; born in Copenhagen Nov. 9, 1843; educated at the University of Copenhagen (M.D. 1868). He was successively assistant physician at Frederik's Hospital, the Lying-in Hospital, and the Almindelig (Communal) Hospital in Copenhagen. In 1887 he was appointed guardian of the poor, which position he still (1904) occupies. Levison is an energetic advocate of cremation; the first Danish society for cremation was founded (1881) at his initiative, and he has ever since officiated as its president.

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S.

F. C.

LEVITA, ELIJAH (known also as **Elijah ben Asher ha-Levi Ashkenazi, Elijah Bahur, Elijah Medakdek, and Elijah Tishbi**): Grammarian, Masorite, and poet; born at Neustadt, near Nuremberg, in 1468; died at Venice Dec., 1549.

From his childhood Elijah showed a predilection for Biblical studies and Hebrew grammar. He settled early in Venice; but in 1504 he was at Padua, earning a livelihood by instructing Jewish children in Hebrew. At the request of his pupils he wrote a commentary to Moses Kimhi's "Mahalak"; but a

ספר החשבי
לא יהו החשבי
שרשיו כמיני
חשבי

ורובם הם שרשים מלפנים אינם מפורשים
ומורגלים בדברי דמותינו בתלמוד ומדרשים
פראשית דבא וילמדנו ולא יהיה שרש
בכל הספר שאינו דבר חדש מספר
ועל זה פסוק אחד אישיר על
דרך מליצת השיר אין בית
אשר אין שם מ"ת חדש
איזה דבר אשר
לא נשמע
כבר

certain Benjamin Colbo, to whom Elijah had given the manuscript to transcribe, published the work at Pesaro under his own name. Colbo interspersed the annotations with excerpts from another work; and in this form Elijah's first production was most incorrectly printed. In spite of this, however, it became the favorite manual for students of the Hebrew language, both among Jews and Christians. It was soon reprinted several times at Pesaro, and made its way into Germany and France, where also it was reprinted; it was translated into Latin by Sebastian Münster (Basel, 1531, 1536). It was not until 1546 that Elijah, urged by his friends, claimed the authorship of the work and published a corrected edition of it at Venice. During his stay in Padua, Elijah published in German a version of the *BABA BUCH*.

The relatively happy circumstances enjoyed by Elijah at Padua did not long continue. In 1509 the city was taken and sacked by the army of the League of Cambray, and Elijah, losing everything he possessed, had to leave the place. He betook himself to Rome, and having heard of the scholarly and liberal-minded *Ægidius* or *VITERBO*, general of the Augustine Order, who was studying Hebrew, he called upon him. This prelate, in exchange for Hebrew lessons from Elijah, offered to maintain him and his family. For thirteen years

**Gram-
marian.**

Elijah remained in the palace of the cardinal, writing works which spread his reputation, giving lessons in Hebrew, and, in turn, taking lessons in Greek from the cardinal. During this period Elijah produced the "*Sefer ha-Baḥur*," a grammatical treatise written at the request of the cardinal, to whom it was dedicated, and first published at Rome in 1518 (2d ed. Isny, 1542, and many subsequent reissues). As the author explains in his preface, he called the work "*Baḥur*" because that was his surname, and further because the word denoted both "youth" and "excellent." The treatise is divided into four parts, each of which is subdivided into thirteen sections, corresponding to the thirteen articles of the Jewish creed; while the total number of sections, fifty-two, represents the numerical value of "Elijah," his name. The first part discusses the nature of the Hebrew verbs; the second, the changes in the vowel-points of the different conjugations; the third, the regular nouns; and the fourth, the irregular ones.

In the same year (1518) Elijah published tables of paradigms for beginners, entitled "*Luah be-Dikduk ha-Po'alim weha-Binyanin*"; and a work, on the irregular words in the Bible, entitled "*Sefer ha-Harkabah*." Desiring to explain every intricacy and anomaly in the Hebrew language, but fearing that too many digressions might prevent his grammar from becoming a popular manual, he in 1520 published dissertations on various grammatical subjects under the general title "*Pirke Elyahu*." This he divided into four parts: the first, "*Perek Shirah*," discussing in thirteen stanzas the laws of the letters, the vowel-points, and the accents; the second, "*Perek ha-Minim*," written in prose, treating of the different parts of speech; the third, "*Perek ha-Middot*," discussing the various parts of speech; and the fourth, "*Perek ha-Shimmushim*," treating of the ser-

vile letters. Like his preceding works, it was translated into Latin and published by Sebastian Münster.

In 1527 misfortune again overtook Elijah; he was driven from his studies when the Imperialists sacked Rome, and lost all his property and the greater part of his manuscripts. He then returned to Venice, and was engaged by the printer Daniel Bomberg as corrector of his Hebrew press.

To the income derived from this employment was added that earned by tuition. Among his pupils was the French ambassador George de Selve, afterward Bishop of Lavaur, who by generous pecuniary assistance placed Elijah in a position to complete his great Masoretic concordance "*Sefer ha-Zikronot*," on which he had labored for twenty years. This work, which De Selve, to whom it was dedicated, sent to Paris to be printed at his expense, has for some unknown reason never been published, and is still extant in manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. An attempt to edit it was made by Goldberg in 1875, but he got no farther than "וְנִסָּח." The introduction and the dedication to it were published by Frensdorf in Fraenkel's "*Monatsschrift*" (xii. 96-108). Still the "*Sefer ha-Zikronot*," to which Elijah often refers as his *chef-d'œuvre*, made a good impression in Paris, and Elijah was offered by Francis I. the position of professor of Hebrew at the university there, which he declined, being unwilling to settle in a city forbidden to his coreligionists. He declined also invitations from several cardinals, bishops, and princes to accept a Hebrew professorship in Christian colleges.

Two years after the completion of the "*Sefer ha-Zikronot*" Elijah published his Masoretic work "*Massoret ha-Massoret*" (Venice, 1538), divided into three parts, respectively denominated "*First Tables*," "*Second Tables*," and "*Broken Tables*," each with an introduction. The "*First Tables*" is divided into ten sections, or commandments ("*Aseret ha-Debarim*"), dealing with the "full" and "defective" writing of syllables. The "*Second Tables*" treats of the "*kere*" and "*ketib*," "*qamez*" and "*patah*," "*dagesh*," "*mappik*," "*rafe*," etc. The "*Broken Tables*" discusses the abbreviations used by the

**"Mas-
soret."**

Masorites. In the third introduction Elijah produces an array of most powerful arguments to prove that the vowel-points in the Hebrew Bibles were invented by the Masorites in the fifth century of the common era. This theory, although suggested by some Jewish scholars as early as the ninth century, provoked a great outcry among the Orthodox Jews, who ascribed to the vowel-points the greatest antiquity. They were already dissatisfied with Elijah for giving instruction in Hebrew to Christians, since the latter openly confessed that they studied the Hebrew language with the hope of finding in the Hebrew texts, especially in the Cabala, arguments against Judaism. To this Elijah replied in the first introduction to the "*Massoret ha-Massoret*" that he taught only the elements of the language and did not teach Cabala at all. Moreover, he pointed out that Christian Hebraists generally defended the Jews against the attacks of the fanatical clergy. Elijah's theory concerning the modernity

of the vowel-points caused still greater excitement among Christians, and for three centuries it gave occasion for discussions among Catholic and Protestant scholars, such as Buxtorf, Walton, De Rossi, and others. The "Massoret ha-Massoret" was so favorably received that in less than twelve months after its appearance it was republished at Basel (1539). In this edition Sebastian Münster translated into Latin the three introductions, and gave a brief summary of the contents of the three parts. The third part, or the "Broken Tables," was republished separately at Venice in 1566, under the title "Perush ha-Massoret we-Kara Shemo Sha'are Shibre Luhot." This part of the book was again republished, with additions, by Samuel ben Hayyim at Prague in 1610. The three introductions were also translated into Latin by Nagel (Aldorf, 1758-71). In 1772 the whole book was translated into German by Christian Gottlob Meyer, and in 1867 into English by Christian D. Ginsburg.

In 1538, also, Elijah published at Venice a treatise on the laws of the accents entitled, "Sefer Tuv Ta'am." Meanwhile David Bomberg's printing-office had ceased to exist, and Elijah, although at that time seventy years of age, left his wife and children and departed in 1540 for Isny, accepting the invitation of Paul Fagius to superintend his Hebrew printing-press there. During Elijah's stay with Fagius (until 1542 at Isny and from 1542 to 1544 at Constance) he published the following

Lexicographer. works: "Tishbi," a dictionary containing 712 words used in Talmud and Midrash, with explanations in German and a Latin translation by Fagius (Isny, 1541); "Sefer Meturgeman," explaining all the Aramaic words found in the Targum (*ib.*); "Shemot Debarim," an alphabetical list of the technical Hebrew words (Isny, 1542); a Judeo-German version of the Pentateuch, the Five Megillot, and Haftarat (Constance, 1544); and a new and revised edition of the "Bahur." On returning to Venice, Elijah, in spite of his great age, still labored on the edition of several works, among which was David Kimhi's "Miklol," to which he added notes of his own ("ninuḳim").

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J. I. BR.

LEVITAN, ISAAC (ISAAC ILYICH): Russian painter; born near Eidtkuhnen Aug. 18, 1860; died at Moscow July 22, 1900. His father, who earned a livelihood by giving private tuition, removed to Moscow when Levitan was still a boy and gave him a good home training. About 1875 Levitan entered the Moscow School of Art, where he finished the course. Living in great poverty, and at times in actual want, he still continued his work, and at the age of nineteen displayed considerable talent in his "An Autumn Day at Sokolniki." This pic-

ture was purchased by the well-known connoisseur Tretyakov. In 1880 Levitan exhibited "The Plowed Field," which attracted much favorable comment. As late as 1886, notwithstanding the reputation which he had acquired, he still continued to derive only a very small income from his profession.

The period 1887-97 was the most happy of Levitan's life, and to it belong his best works. He was a tireless worker and painted a very large number of pictures. Twenty-five of his paintings are to be seen in the Tretyakov gallery alone. He probably produced in all about 1,000 paintings and studies, most of them in the decade 1887-97. In 1892, when Levitan was already widely known and after the award to him of the first prize for his picture "Twilight" at the Art Lovers' Exhibition, the notorious May Laws were enforced in Moscow, and he was permitted to remain there only owing to the influence of powerful friends. His nearest relatives, however, were compelled to leave the city, their business was ruined, and Levitan had to render them material aid to the end of his life. In 1897 Levitan was elected an active member of the Munich society Secession, and the Academy of Art selected him an academician.

Levitan's paintings are marked by a thorough knowledge of Russian scenery and types. They possess a decided originality; at the same time they convey an expression of sadness. In his funeral oration Count A. E. Lvov said of Levitan: "He was an artist-poet. He not only painted pictures—in his paintings there was something besides; we not only saw his pictures, we also felt them. He knew how to interpret Nature and her mysteries as no other man." Even the "Novoye Vremya" (July 29, 1900), an organ decidedly anti-Semitic in its policy, admitted that "this full-blooded Jew knew, as no other man, how to make us realize and love our plain and homely country scenes."

Among the works of Levitan may be mentioned: "Over Eternal Rest"; "The Neglected Graveyard"; "A Tatar Graveyard"; "Relics of the Past—Twilight in Finland"; "The Golden Autumn"; "Vladimirka"; "March"; "After the Rain"; "Forest"; "Evening"; "The Peaceful Retreat"; "The Hay Harvest"; and two lake scenes. A picture by Levitan, entitled "A Convent on the Eve of a Holiday," was exhibited at the Columbian Exposition, Chicago, in 1893.

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LEVITES (Temple Servants).—Biblical

Data: Of the Levites, Aaron and his sons were chosen for the priestly office (Ex. xxviii. 1 *et seq.*); the menial services of the Tabernacle were assigned to the rest of the tribe (Num. i. 47 *et seq.*). The Kohathites were to bear the sacred furniture of the Tabernacle; the Gershonites, its curtains; and the Merarites, its boards, pins, and poles (Num. iv. 4-16, 22-28, 29-33). It is distinctly stated that the Levites shall not approach the most holy things (Num. iv. 19)—that is, they shall not act as priests, a function which the context reserves for Aaron and his sons.

In Deuteronomy the representation is quite different; "priests" and "Levites" are there synonymous