

level so lucidly, so completely, or by so superbly qualified an authority. The account of the history of the Qumran settlement, which begins with and is firmly based upon a clear *résumé* of the archeological evidence, is no less satisfying and complete. The evidence points conclusively to the identification of this community with the Essenes described by Pliny and Josephus, and the fact that no other major ruins have been found (apart from 'Ain Feshka) between Engaddi and Jericho, confirms this identification. The development of the Essene movement is then traced, clearly relating it to the history of the Maccabees and Hasmoneans. The 'Impious Priest' must be Jonathan Maccabaeus. The various characteristics ascribed to him '... grand prêtre et gouverneur de son peuple, guerrier, bâtisseur, enrichi par le butin des guerres et les confiscations, qui meurt captif et maltraité par ses ennemis—ne semblent se retrouver en leur totalité que dans la personne de Jonathan' (p. 56). The organization, way of life, and doctrine of this branch of the Essenes are then described, and certain similarities with the life of the early Christian community are indicated. The use of 'sweet wine' in the sacred repast suggests, perhaps, that the accusation in Acts, 'These men are full of *new wine*', may refer to a similar usage in the Christian *agape*. In the fifth chapter Fr Milik assesses the importance of these discoveries for history, for linguistic studies, for paleography, for Hebrew literature, and for the history of religions. The resemblances between Qumran and Christianity are briefly recapitulated under the heads of Literature, Way of Life, and Doctrine. Coming whence it does, this will, perhaps, be considered the most significant chapter in a uniformly excellent book.

It is, therefore, no ill-founded enthusiasm which leads one to suggest that for a short popular account of the Dead Sea discoveries, this is by far the clearest, the most accurate, the most readable, and the most authoritative which has so far appeared. The illustrations are excellent and most helpful, especially for comparing the various types of script, and a magnificent plan of the community settlement is provided. It is in fact the ideal book for the uninitiated. Finally the appendix, in which Fr Milik amplifies his view of the history of the sect, strikes one as a major and original contribution to the more advanced study of the subject.

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THE SECRETS OF THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS. By H. J. Schonfield. (Valentine and Mitchell; 21s.)

At the end of a long and intensely complicated argument based chiefly on supposed literary affinities between the Dead Sea Scrolls on the one hand, and all sorts of obscure Jewish and Christian apocrypha, traditions, and legends on the other, Dr Schonfield arrives at the following conclusions:

The history of the community of the Scrolls falls into two periods, early and late, each having its own 'Teacher of Righteousness'. The early period was not spent at Qumran at all. The sect derived originally from the Hasidim perhaps about 196 B.C., were led into exile at Damascus probably about 159 B.C., and there evolved their rule of life and developed into a permanent religious community. A period of vicissitudes and wanderings followed upon the death of their founder, during which they found their way back to Israel. Finally, under the stimulus of the same fervour of Messianic expectation which ushered in Christianity, the second period, referred to as the 'End of Days', began just before the end of the first century B.C. Most of the work of copying and writing was done during this period. Dr Schonfield sees this as 'a gigantic effort, the most careful planning and preparation so that the Elect of the period of the Consummation (which was even then at hand) would be primed with everything they would need' (p. 159).

The original 'Teacher of Righteousness' was a shadowy figure, probably 'with features borrowed from more than one suffering saint, priest, prophet, and judge. In the same way his bitter opponent seems to be compounded of more than one Wicked High Priest of his day, Jason, Alcimus, etc.' (p. 150). The corresponding figures in the late period are prophetic, and are awaited in the period of Consummation; they are not therefore to be sought in any figures which have already appeared, though they borrow certain characteristics from these.

The type of evidence invoked and the way it is used strike one as unconvincing and over-elaborate. This is particularly so in the case of the 'Atbash' cypher which the author believes he has discovered underlying one or two key words. Nothing can be more hazardous than applying cyphers to a language like Hebrew, which is based on tri-literal roots. So many different combinations of letters can be made to make sense, as certain rabbinical commentators found to their delight. Without independent evidence it is impossible to be convinced by this 'discovery'.

Finally it must be observed that Dr Schonfield's theory does not really fit the archeological evidence as we know it. Notably it fails to account for the long pre-earthquake phase of occupation at Qumran, and for the fact that many of the scrolls were written *and deposited* (especially in Cave One) during this earliest phase of occupation. As for the paleographical evidence, Dr Schonfield ignores it completely, and here again the late date which he ascribes to most of the Scrolls conflicts in many cases with evidence drawn from more reliable sources.

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