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FRANK AND THE FRANKISTS.

Frank i Frankiści Polscy (1726-1816). Monografia Historyczna przez ALEXANDRA KRAUSHARA. Cracow, Gebethner & Co. (Frank and the Polish Frankists. An historical monograph, by ALEXANDER KRAUSHAR.)

DR. ALEXANDER KRAUSHAR, of Warsaw, has long been known for his researches into the more obscure parts of Polish history. By exploring the archives of various countries, he has contrived to throw considerable light upon the careers of some of the leading figures of the old Polish days; among others the strange life of the prodigal Alexander Laski, and of Arciszewski, who when banished from his native country, took service with the Dutch, and rose to the position of admiral in their service, in the middle of the seventeenth century. To his other works he has now added an interesting account of the remarkable impostor Joseph Frank, who during the latter half of the last century contrived to get together a large band of followers. Frank pretended to adopt the Christian faith, and he and his disciples were baptized. They seem, however, to have been looked upon with a certain suspicion by those whose religion they had joined. On the other hand, they were of course repudiated by the Jews.

Frank, into whose coffers the tribute of his devotees flowed lavishly, succeeded in renting from a petty German prince the castle of Offenbach on the Rhine. Here he lived in almost regal state, and assumed the fantastic airs of a Messiah. The description of him, sitting on a divan *à la Grand Turc*, and smoking his pipe as he watched his votaries crawling round him, is very graphic. After his death, his daughter Ewa, a woman of considerable intellect, kept the brotherhood for a short time together, but at her decease it collapsed.

There are still old people at Offenbach who remember these vagaries, and the last of the disciples of Frank died a short time ago at an advanced age. He could never be induced to talk about the prophet's doings.

These two very readable volumes are furnished with many *pièces justificatives*, which show how thoroughly Dr. Kraushar has gone into the question. He has had the advantage of consulting some important manuscripts, especially one in the possession of Count Constantine Przedziecki. In this respect he justly boasts of having an advantage over his predecessors. Of those who have treated of this episode of Jewish life, the most important was the late Dr. Graetz,

but Dr. Kraushar does not attach much value to the account of Frank given by this historian. He taxes him with ignorance of the Polish sources. He frequently commits solecisms in the citation of Polish names. Moreover, he lacks the proper objective spirit of the historian, as shown in the abuse which he continually heaps upon Frank. These remarks apply, not only to the mention of Frank in the *Geschichte der Juden*, but also to the work of Graetz, entitled, *Frank und die Frankisten* (1868).

W. R. MORFILL.

MEDIAEVAL JEWISH CHRONICLES.

Mediaeval Jewish Chronicles and Chronological Notes, ed. by A. NEUBAUER.
(Oxford: Clarendon Press.) 1887-1895. Parts I-II.

DR. NEUBAUER'S unabated zeal in his useful labours in the field of Hebrew Literature, which he successfully continues in spite of physical suffering, has enabled him to complete the collection of Mediaeval Jewish Chronicles, the first instalment of which appeared in 1887. Students of Jewish History and Hebrew Literature must welcome the work as a valuable treasure that contains a rich supply of desirable information. It is owing to Dr. Neubauer's genius and inexhaustible store of knowledge, in addition to the opportunities, which all have who live in an institution like the Bodleian Library, that the collection is as complete and as perfect as possible. The numerous various readings from different manuscripts and editions, contained in the footnotes, and the many supplementary extracts from different works, give evidence of the immense labour bestowed on this work by the editor. How conscientiously Dr. Neubauer works, and what difficulties the deciphering of the MSS., frequently illegible, involves, can best be seen by the Additions and Corrections of pp. 252 to 255. Each volume contains a brief literary account of the various treatises it includes, and at the end of the second volume a complete Index for the whole work has been added. In these two volumes Dr. Neubauer includes thirteen different treatises, seven of which are edited here for the first time. We will consider them seriatim.

(Part II, p. 3.) *Megillath-taanith*, "Scroll of Fasting," deserves the first place as the oldest of these Chronicles. It contains two different elements, the original scroll in Aramaic, and the Commentary on it in Hebrew of a much later date. The title is apparently chosen after the manner of *lucus a non lucendo*; for the scroll enumerates only the days on which fasting may not take place. Such a name is