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article in the *Muhīt al Muhīt*, where the form כסבר is mentioned. P. 6, l. 3 from the bottom, read אכתלמה. P. 16, l. 1, נאהיך is good Arabic, and has the signification of חסבך, *sufficient for thee*; see *Muhīt*. P. 30, l. 15, read פתנתמע; p. 31, last line, is ותמר *preferable*. P. 33, line 15, אלצוור is right, the *waw* being *mater lectionis*, which is quite a common occurrence in Jewish-Arabic texts. P. 37, l. 6 from the bottom, אלי is quite right, because חאנ viii. is always followed by that preposition. *Ibid.* l. 3, זמגמה need not be altered. P. 45, l. 8, ברר is certainly given in the dictionaries. Freytag, it is true, says only *nomen plantæ*, but see *Muhīt*, I., p. 80, first column, l. 7, etc.

The remarks attached by the editor, both to the Arabic and Hebrew text, are carefully thought out, and the table of figures helps greatly towards the understanding of the Commentary.

H.

Religion and Morals: A Short Catechism for the Use of Jewish Youth.
By the REV. J. STRAUSS, D.D., *Rabbi*. Second edition.

A CATECHISM is perhaps one of the most difficult books to write, and one of the most easy to criticise. The difficulty of writing it and the ease of criticising it are increased when the catechism is a short one. There are obviously so many different ways of imparting to children the elementary truths of a religion, and there are so many different views as to what precisely constitute the religious essentials, that no two catechisms will be compiled quite on the same plan. The work before us lays emphasis on spiritual religion, and not upon ritualism. The Rev. Dr. Strauss has taken pains to teach his youthful readers that the fundamental principle of Judaism is the belief in the existence, eternity, unity, omnipotence, omnipresence, and infinite wisdom of God. These are long words, it is true, for the comprehension of a child, but they are each referred to a note of explanation. The explanation embodies a passage from the Bible, which sets forth the doctrine which the word signifies. Thus, the term "belief" is referred to the passage in Isaiah xlv. 10, 11: "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Eternal, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe and understand that I am He; before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I am the Eternal, and beside me there is no Saviour."

The word "unity" has beneath it the obvious quotation, "Hear, O Israel, the Eternal our God, the Eternal is One" (Deut. vi. 4). It is just questionable whether these words from the Bible are of a

sufficiently explanatory character. The task of explaining the answers to the questions is left exclusively to Scripture texts. This no doubt is a strong test of the intelligibility of Scripture phrases. The answers do not attempt to explain the quotations. Question 3 is, "What relation does God bear to man?" Answer: "The relation that God bears to man is this—God is the loving and just Father of all mankind." Then come the quotations under the adjectives, "loving" and "just." A very apt quotation is here given from Jer. **xxxi.** 3: "I love thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness I have drawn thee." As children are not Biblical critics, it matters not to them whether these words were addressed to mankind at large, or only to the "families of Israel." The same may be said of the accompanying quotation from Malachi: "Have we not all one Father, and hath not one God created us?" (Mal. iii. 10). The Ten Commandments and the Shemah are given with somewhat more minute explanations embodied in the answers to the questions upon them. This is, perhaps, the most satisfactory part of the little book. It emphasises the meaning of each commandment by expressing it in words less formal and more homely than those of the Decalogue. The sixth commandment, which, in its bald five words, "Thou shalt do no murder," does not forbid much that an ordinary child is likely to infringe, is elaborated in the following answer:—"We are enjoined by the sixth commandment to avoid everything that can injure or destroy life, either in others or ourselves, and to use all lawful endeavours to preserve life." Flies and caterpillars might have been mentioned as creatures that children ought not to destroy. The doctrine of rewards and punishments is tactfully treated in the last question and answer thus: "What is our belief concerning retribution?" Answer: "Our belief concerning retribution is that the good will be rewarded and the wicked punished either in this world or in the world to come." Then follow texts which support either theory. That is a perfectly safe statement as far as it goes, and few children will be found to misunderstand it. At the same time a more satisfactory teaching on this point might have been a direct reference to the conscience. The conscience deserves a more prominent place than it obtains in most catechisms, because it is the one thing which comes within the spiritual experience of every child. On the whole this catechism is better than many others, because it is more concise. It may be of much value to those who are teaching children, as a guide to the rudimentary ideas of faith and morals.

O. J. SIMON.