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THE TRACTATE
DERECH ERETS ZUTTA.

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Morris S. Lazaron

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PREFACE

No one appreciates more than the author, the responsibilities incumbent upon the Rabbi of to-day. He stands between the Old and the New. There must burn within him all the yearning, all the aspiration, all the accomplishment, all the martyrdom of his people; there must glow within him as a continuous fire, the promise of the future. He is a link in the most glorious tradition of the centuries. He must stand with one hand clasped lovingly about the past, while the other, bearing the light of his faith, blazes a way into the future. His is a wondrous privilege. But it is a sacred obligation.

It is therefore with trepidation that I offer these pages as a thesis for graduation as Rabbi. I cannot but express my sense of their inadequacy, of their incompleteness, of their lack of scholarship, of originality and real merit. That so humble an effort should be the "sesame" which opens the door to the goal, I cannot sincerely ask.

I offer then, rather, the spirit than the letter; a fascinated mind by the miracle of my people, that deeply wishes to identify itself with Israel's continued preservation and Israel's spiritual conquest; a heart, which, responding with love to the faith of the fathers, and to the call of humanity, can find its fullest and finest expression in laboring in the vineyard of God.

May the love that fills me for my faith and my God; may the humility that comes over me as I realize the greatness of my privilege; the thankfulness that I am given this opportunity to strive for the good, the noble, the pure; and the high resolve to approximate the ideal that I have set before ^{me,} may these, be placed in the balance.

M. S. L., April, 1914.

FOREWORD.

Because of the condition of the Talmud texts, which frequently were confusing, conflicting and at times obscure, I have based this translation upon the text of Tawrogi, who, after examination of many Talmud texts and extant manuscripts, published his reconstruction of the original. It had been my wish to procure a second copy of the Tawrogi Edition, that I might include the Hebrew text in this thesis, thereby facilitating its review; however, the work is not easily procured and the time was too short to obtain it before the date set for presentation of theses.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

- Tawrogi:- Der talm. Tractat Dersch Erez Sutta
- Kohler:- Sys. Theol.
Ethics of the Talmud (pub. Am. Hebrew)
The Ethical Basis of Judaism.
- Zunz:- Gottesd. Vor. pp. 110-112
- Winter & Wünsche:- Vol. I
Jew. Encyc.
- Weiss:- Gesch. d. Jud. Trad. II p. 22
- M. Goldberg:- Der. Tal. Trac. D. E. R.
- S. Krauss:- Revue d. Etudes Juives (1898)
- Schechter:- Aspects Rabbinic Theology

I. Name.

In the group known as the *Shulchan Aruch*, the "smaller treatises" of the Talmud, there occurs one called *דרכי ערץ* Derech Erets. This usually has three divisions:-

1. *דרכי ערץ רב* Derech Erets Rabbah,
2. *דרכי ערץ זוטא* Derech Erets Zuta, and
3. *פרק השלום* Perek ha-Shalom.

As the division signifies, they are three different works. The second will be the subject of our study.

The term Derech Erets (the way of the world) is a general designation in rabbinical literature for ethics, behavior towards ones fellows . . . "and comprises among other things etiquette, that is, good breeding, dignified behavior, urbanity, politeness."¹ Derech Erets (Zuta) is therefore a very suitable name for the miscellaneous collection of ethical regulations and rules of conduct, which form the substance of the tractate.

Naturally the terms *רב* large and *זוטא* small, bring to mind a comparison. Indeed the relation of the one to the other is the subject of much difference of opinion.²

1. Jew. Encyc. Vol. 5, p. 529.

2. "The name is misleading. The word Zuta Jew. Encyc. Vol. 4, p. 528. would seem to indicate that it is a shorter version of the treatise D. E. R., which is not the case. Raschi knows it under this name, calling it Masseket D. E. (Ber. 4^a), and the Tosafists call it "Hilkot D. E." (Bek. 44^b) The designation Zuta is probably later in origin."

Taurogi Der. Talm. Tr. D. E. Z. page 3, note 4 . . the name Zuta was probably to distinguish it from D. E. R. and hethinks z. later. He too quotes Bek. 44^b and Ber. 4^a (supra) Also other names by which our treatise was known: "Mishna" Tane debe Eliahu, c. 16; (Over)

Aside from the question of date, the general conclusion, however, appears to be that the name zuta was adopted to distinguish it from the longer treatise.

2: (Cont'd):-

"Mischnath D. E. S." Tanje Rabthi Ed. Wonschan
1879, p. 9.

Zunz:
wie Bb 00

Called by Raschi A. Boraita in
(above cited) by existing name.

Cites also those mentioned by Taurogi, and
concludes: "therefore, the designation 'Zutta'
so like the designation Rabbah, in relation to
the first part is of younger origin; zutta
appears considerably younger and actually made use of
Aboth, the T. Simcheth, the Aboth D. R. Nathan,
the Tal. before the Mesechta D. E.

CONTENTS:

Under this head, we shall discuss, first, the various divisions or original parts into which the tractate naturally falls, and which on the whole are agreed upon by the scholars, and second, its materials or subject matter.

Divisions:- An examination of the original manuscripts and fragments, has shown that there are three well-defined general sections into which the tractate may naturally be divided, e. g., 1.- I-IV 2. V-VIII 3. IX¹

1. Contents.

Jew. En. 1. Talmud Editions give the treatise 9 sections,
divisions: (Perakim) to which the section on Peace
Vol. IV, (perak hadbalan) is added as a supplement.
page 38.

2. The Halakot Gedoloth (Ed. Hildesheimer pp. 644-652) gives another version. Here the same material is in two parts:
(1) D. E. K.- corres. Sections V-VIII, and
(2) D. E. R.- " Sections I-IV and IX.
Two manuscript copies with this division in the Bodleian (Nos. 120, 380 Newbauers catalogue).

3. Mahzor Vitry (Ed. Homitz pp. 721-723) when to the first part of eighth and whole of ninth section, are found under the title "Hilkot Darkon shel Talmide Hakamim." It is noteworthy that in Talmud Edition, Sections IV-VIII are marked as having been taken from the M. V.

Taurogi
divisions:
pp. II &
III

From the closing words of IV, one would infer that I-IV are one book which ends there. But this cannot be for in many places expressions are either repeated or are contrary. Likewise the passages with which one closes have no connection with the rest of it, and appear to be later addition.

V-VIII. M. V. only later became attached to tractate as the second part, as the edition Frankfurt, 1699, hadn't these four chapters.

(Over)

Materials:- In general it treats of everything from the proper behavior of the scholar, I and V, to the things which mark the clod, VII. Naturally between these extremes will be found rules of conduct for the individual and for the student, general rules of ethics and maxims to govern particular occasions. Zunz thinks that it was meant chiefly as regulation for the ethical and religious life for the schools of the sages. His remark is often quoted: "The D. E. Z. which is meant to be a mirror for scholars, is full of high moral teachings and pithy worldly wisdom, which philosophers of to-day may yet study to advantage." According to Winter and Wünsche, Vol. 1, p. 634, it seems to have been used in the regular services . . . "its phraseology is popular so that it could be recommended as the basis for lectures for Sabbath mornings (Seder R. Amram Gaon Warsaw, 1865 S. 30)".

In general it may be said that the treatise "deals mainly with man's relation to man, and is moral rather than religious in nature." (Jew. Encyc. IV, 529).

V-VIII (Cont'd):-

These four seem by their unimportant compass and their similar contents, in contradistinction to the first collection to be the work of one and the same author. IX he groups alone, and it seems to have patterned itself after IV - -, and forms the conclusion of the whole.

Winter & Wünsche Vol. I, p. 634	Division W. & W. "There are to be noticed three parts which deal all with the same material:
	1. I-IV
	2. V-VIII
	3. IX

& tenth chapter added.

DATE

It is very difficult to assign any definite date to Derech Erets Zuta. However, most scholars argue that in its essential parts, it cannot have been later than the ninth or tenth century.

Date.

Jew Encyc. Date can only be conjectured. Almost certain - Sections V-VIII are the work of the editor who lived after the completion of the Bab. Talm. Based on this that: the Spanish version of the Halakot Gedolat probably made about 1000, adopted these four sections as a complete treatise. Hence one would not be wrong in setting the ninth century as the date of comp. The I-IV date form a much earlier period. From their contents, they may even have been an independent collection already in existence at the time of the Tannaim. The IX is between the two. X late. Not found in M. V. nor in Halakot Gedolat, nor in the mss.

Tawrogi:- Expressions of Amorale and even older authorities, yet they pass the spirit of a higher civilization. Not probable that they came from one time. Likewise work of compiler is conjecture.

Zunz: "Its tone and style belong to a later time, yet probably before the tenth century."

Winter & Wünsche I-IV appears to be oldest V-VIII does not appear in Frankfurt Ed. 1669. Appears to have formed much later than the close Vol. I of the - - - Tractate. "The 'Ton and Still' of p.634. one tractate refers it in its essential parts to the ninth century."

Materials, Weiss Gesch. d. Jud. Tr., II, p. 22.

"..... is only a later collection. Thinks these in M. V. original, but others are later edition.

Krauss in Rev. d. E. Juives takes an interesting stand, but he seems to be alone.

Krauss: "The author of M. V. knows only the same D. E., and ignores the division into R. and Z." V. Bib. D. E. R. is later than Z. Z. is the model and R. the imitation and not the contrary as Zunz believed."

There can be no doubt but that certain maxims and sayings are very much older than the ninth century. Many of them are similar to those

(Over)

TEXT AND MANUSCRIPT

As stated in the preface to our study, the translation of this treatise has been based upon the edition of Tawrogi. He says, p. V: "The various Talmud editions show such changes, corruptions in the text as is possible only after a hundred years neglect." This he explains for its difference in subject matter from the Talmud. It was not so authoritative, not made so much the basis of continued study as the Talmud, and there was no necessity to fix firmly the text.²

1. (Cont'd):-

ascribed to Jesus, and a fruitful study would possibly be to determine by comparison the oldest portions of the tractate. One would hardly be very wrong in ascribing many sayings as far back as the second century, B. C.

2.

Present Texts and Parts of Texts Consulted
by Tawrogi: VI, notes:-

Augs. Wilna 1843
Wien 1847
Berlin 1865
Riva di Trento 1561

Amram Gaonis Sidder, 1865 (containing I and
part of IV)
Reshit Chochma von Elia di Vidas (parts)
Comment. quinque von Coronet, Wien 1864 (parts)
Jheve Schanim von Aben Susan Venedig 1573 I

Mss. Used by
Tawrogi:-

(a) Fragment in Paris Library only I
fifteenth century.

(b) Vatrien Ms, with divisions.
I, II, IV, & IX - - D. E. R.
V, VI, VII, & VIII D. E. Z.

(c) Two Mss. in possession of Sterem
Hallustam in Brelitz, sixteenth century.

The Jew. Encyc. also cites two Bodleian Mss. in
existence. Newbaneis, Cat. Nos. 120, 380.

Glossaries and commentaries on Derech Erets Zuta
and attempts at correct texts: Aacor. to Tawrogi. V, 2. 3.

Glossaries
and commen-
taries:-

by Josna Falk Dyhernfurth	1783
by Jacob Naumburg Fürth	1793
by Gedalje b. Israel Lip- schütz Dyhernfurth	1776
by C. J. D. Asulai Livorno	1801
by Elia Wilna Salkorvo	1803

Attempts at correct text:-

by Frieseik Luneville	1807
by Harburger Bayreuth	1839
by Landa	1872

Two Yiddish- Deutsch translation Wagenseil
Regiom. 1699 and the "Wilna 1878" Edition.

TRANSLATION.

The essential qualities of the scholars are: modesty, meekness, quickness, sagacity, to bear injustice, to be beloved by all men, gracious in the family intercourse, fearing sin, and judging each man according to his deeds. He says of all the things in this world, I have no desire concerning them, for this world is not mine. Wrapped in his garment, he sits at the feet of sages. No one sees an evil thing in him. He asks questions to the point and he replies according to the Law.

Be like a bag in which there is no opening to receive the air, and like a deep pit which holds its water, and like a jug covered over with pitch which keeps wine, and like a sponge which absorbs everything. (Aboth v¹⁵)

Do not be like a large door which causes the wind to enter, nor like a small door which degrades the nobles. Be like a lower threshold upon which everyone treads, and as a nail fixed so that everyone may hang on it.

If you suffer damage through your property, remember Job, who lost his substance and his health.

If you suffer bodily harm, remember Dothan and Abiram, who while yet living went down into Sheol. (Numbers XVI)

Do not stumble through thine eyes, for there is no stumbling except through the eyes. And do not shame yourself through your mouth that you may not eat more than enough. Do not study about the

1.

1. The Minim were those who belonged to the various sects which existed without the pale of authoritative Judaism in all periods, of its early development, among them being Samantian, Gnostic, Judaeo-Christians, etc.

Do not abandon the ¹¹ that you may not be left to Gehinom..

If others say anything evil about thee, let even an important thing be in thine eyes unimportant. If you say something evil against others, then let even an insignificant thing be in thy sight important, until thou hast gone and obtained forgiveness of him. Let not your conduct be evil, for this is no praise of the Torah, but let your conduct be blameless, for thus will it be for the merit of the scholars. Love the Law and do honor to it. Restrain thy desire before the desire of thy friend, for thus did Rachel to Leah.¹ And David to Saul.²

Restrain thy will and the will of thy friend before the will of God, for thus we find in the case of Jacob who was not kissed by Joseph.³

Love the expression "Perhaps", and hate the expression "Then What". Rabbi Hidkiah⁴ used to say in the name of someone else, love the expression "Perhaps", and hate the expression "What does that mean?"

1. Taurogi: ^{According} ~~Endring~~ Raschi to Gen. 29-33, and Baba Bathya, 123^a, says Rachel first to marry Jacob, foregoing her own right, being prompted by love.

2. Cp. I Sam. 24⁷ and 26⁹: When David coming upon Saul asleep, has the opportunity to slay him, but refrains.

3. Gen. 46²⁹. Tawrogi, quoting Raschi and Midrosh, saying that when Joseph came up, Jacob was saying his prayers, and Joseph would not interrupt him.

4. A teacher of the second century. An interesting haggadic saying by him is quoted in the Jew. Encyc. Vol. VI, page 386:- "The question was asked, 'Who testifies against the selfishness of man on the day of judgment?' Among the answers given was that of Hidkiah:- 'Man's soul testifies against him, for it is written (Micah VII: 5): 'Keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom'". (Ta'anila)."

Keep far from that which causes to sin, from ugliness and that which resembles ugliness, lest others will accuse thee of sin.

Do not calumniate your friend for there is no remedy for those who calumniate. Do not eat with an ignorant priest, lest he make thee eat of food set aside for priestly use. Keep far from censuring, lest you censure others and add to sin. *of 10/1/11*

With seven patriarchs a covenant was made, and these are they:- Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Phineas and David. Of Abraham it is written: "On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abraham (Gen. 15¹⁸). Of Isaac:- "And I shall establish my covenant with Isaac." (Gen. 17²¹). Of Jacob:- "I shall remember my covenant with Jacob." (Lev. 26⁴²). Of Moses:- "For according to these words did I make a covenant with thee." (Ex. 34²⁷). Of Aaron:- "A covenant of salt forever." (Num. 18¹⁹). Of Phineas:- "And it shall be to him and to his seed after him, a priestly covenant forever." (Num. 25¹³). Of David:- "I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to David, my servant." (Psalm 89⁴).

Seven patriarchs rest in everlasting glory and their earthly remains are far from worm and maggot. These are they:- Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Amfiriam and Benjamin. And some say David also, for it is said:- "Therefore my heart is glad and my spirit rejoiceth, my flesh also doth dwell in safety." (Psalm 16⁹).

Nine entered, while yet they were living, into the Garden of Eden. They are: Hanooh, E. Javed,¹ Elijah,² The Messiah³, Elieser,

1. Gen. 52⁴: "And Enoch walked with God, and he was not; for God took him.

2. II Kings, 2¹¹: And it came to pass as they still went on and talked (Elijah and Elisha) that behold, there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire, which parted them both asunder and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

3. San. 98^b (Taurogi).

the servant of Abraham, Chiram from Zor, Eved Melech, the Kushite, whom Jeremiah resuscitated, (Jer. 38⁶⁻¹³ #), Jabez, the son of Jehuda Ha Nasi. (Tawrogi thinks because Rab. J. Ha-Nasi has no son, it must have been incorporated through mistake).

Serach, daughter of Asher.¹

Bathia, daughter of Pharaoh.²

And others say also R. Joshua. B. Leir.³

CHAPTER II.

Let all thy ways be marked by piety. Love God and fear Him. Tremble and rejoice at all the commands. Sit before the elders and heed their words. Answer thy friend but be not hasty to reply. Be thoughtful to answer propositions according to their content, the first, first; and the last, last. Grant what is the truth and do not speak before him who is superior to thee in wisdom.

If you desire to study the Law, do not say concerning what you do not know, "I know". If they ask you something with which you are not well versed, do not be ashamed to say "I do not know". If they teach you and you have not understood, do not be ashamed to say "repeat it to me", and do not be so gracious to yourself as to say "I have understood it." Do things for the very sake of doing them, and speak of them for their own sake. Do not make a crown,

1. Tawrogi: Because she first brought news to Jacob that Joseph still lived. (Lefer Hajashar to Gen. 45).

2. Tawrogi: "Luchot Habrit", when Moses and Aaron's education is ascribed to her, and for this she is thus rewarded.

3. Tawrogi: Ketub 77^a.

wherewith to adorn yourself, nor a hatchet with which to chop. Learn to receive the words of instruction even in sorrow. Do not seek thy reward, for there is a fitting reckoning, a righteous recompense, a promise and truth. Love the Law and honor it. Love fellow creatures and honor them. Love the righteous, the upright and those who administer conviction.

Know that just as there is a difference between to-day and to-morrow, so there is between what is thine and what is not thine, and why shouldst thou possess what is not thine? He who works with what is not his, Scripture says concerning him: "Woe to him who increases what is not his." (Hats. 26).

Accustom thyself to do good things. Be tolerant and love everyone. Be meek and gentle of speech.

Be obliging to a great man and gracious to the young. Strive for the good and be broad of shoulder. (Bear patiently the trials of life - after Tawrogi).

Keep aloof from anything that leads to sin. Hold back from doing a light sin, lest it bring thee to a serious one. Be zealous in the performance even of an unimportant command, for it may bring thee to an important one.

Let the honor of thy neighbor be just as sacred to thee as thine own; respect all men, and do not say "I shall flatter this one, that he may give me food, and that one, that he may give me drink; This one, that he may clothe me, and that one, that he may cover me." Better is it that thou art of thyself ashamed, than that through others thou art brought to shame. Do not let thy lips cause thee to stumble, nor thy mouth to bring thee scorn, thy tongue to belittle thee, nor thy teeth to shame thee. Do not let thy words bring thee low.

If thou wishest to hold close thy friend in love, do everything for his welfare. And if thou desirest to keep thyself away from sin, go and think and consider its outcome. Let thy soul have pleasure in the commands.

If thou hast done much good, let it be in thy sight but little and say: "not of mine own have I done good, but from the good which came to me through others," and it is thy duty to give thanks to God. If, however, others have done thee a little good, consider it to be much, and do not say: "~~if it~~ not because of my becoming deeds that it has gone well with me," but "because of my blameworthy deeds, good came to me", for thus is it written: "And repayeth those that hate him to their face, to destroy them." (Dt. VII¹⁰). If only a little wrong (thou hast done) consider it much and say "Woe is me for I have sinned; woe is me for stumbling has come about through me!" And if others have wronged thee greatly, consider it small and say: "Less than I deserve have I suffered, is it not that I deserve even more?"

CHAPTER III

Judge carefully thy words before they pass from thy mouth; consider well thy deeds to conform them to the established etiquette, and take reward for thy meritorious actions. that always acknowledge the decree of the righteous Judge and keep thyself from murmuring.

Judge thy neighbor according to his merits and do not incline the weight toward his guilt. (compare Aboth I, 6). Do not hate him who admonishes thee. Hold thyself insignificant in thine own eyes. Rejoice in thy portion. Take pleasures in the little that is thine. Then wilt thy lot be blessed always, thine eye pleased and thy soul satisfied.

Teach thy tongue to say "I do not know", lest thou lie and come to be caught. If thou neglect one command, finally it will be that thou wilt neglect another; similarly, if thou disdain one command, finally thou wilt disdain another - in like manner, if thou hast overlooked the words of the Torah at thy own desire, finally it will be that they will overlook thee, whether thou desirest it or not; and there will be no recompense for thee in thy sorrow. (Aboth IV, 2.)

If thou hast taken what is not thine, what is thine shall likewise be taken from thee.

Be careful about the devoted things, whether giving them or eating them.¹

1. (Deut. 26:14, with reference to those things which had been devoted to the use of the sanctuary, the priests or for charity.

Be patient and kind in answering those who know thee¹, and humble before all men, to the individual of thy house even more than all. If thou livest in dissension and quarreling with thy family, thy end will be Gehinnom.²

If thou hast gone security for some one, then thou hast put thyself under the obligation to pay. If thou hast loaned it, thou hast loaned it to collect it. If thou hast borrowed it, thou must pay - - Hasten to settle thy account.

He who begins to make vows, opens the door to folly. The first uncleanness is an open door to idolatry and astrology. He who begins frivolity with women, opens the door to adultery.³

He who has gained a good name possesses it for himself. He who has acquired the law, possesses life everlasting.⁴

Those who are ashamed, cannot learn; nor can an irascible man become a teacher; an ignorant man cannot be pious. A boor does not fear sin, and any one who engages much in commerce cannot become wise. Set thyself and thy heart to the Torah more than trade.⁵

1. Prov. 15. A soft answer turneth away wrath.

2. The Rabbinical figurative equivalent for hell, into which all souls are cast. Jew. Encyc. Vol. V, p. 582.

3. Aboth *אבות דרבי הורוב* x9

4. Aboth II, 7.

5. Aboth II, 5.

There are fifteen qualities which are spoken of as characteristic of the scholar, and these are :

He is pleasant in entering,
 He is pleasant in leaving,
 He is pious in fearing God,
 He is wise in his knowledge,
 Manifests sagacity in his behavior,
 Acquires knowledge and retains it,
 Detailed in his answers,
 Ready to help,
 Goes often to the Yeshibah,
 Asks questions according to the point,
 And replies according to the Law,
 Hears and then answers,
 Adds something new to each paragraph,
 Seeks the company of the wise,
 Learns in order to teach and for the sake of doing Good,-

For he must be the example, remarks Tawrogi.

Be not on the upper threshold which one cannot reach with the hand, nor like the middle which injures the feet, but be like the lower threshold on which all tread. When finally the whole building is falling, it remains standing in its place.

CHAPTER IV

The learned conduct themselves with propriety in society, but the ignorant do not.

Whoever occupies himself with the study of the law only , it is a merit and not a merit. (Since the written law is incomplete without the oral law, his knowledge is imperfect).

But if he add the study of the Mishnah to his knowledge, he gains a reward. (That is his education will be better). But nothing exceeds the study of the Gemara in importance; seek the study of the Mishnah sooner than that of the Gemara. (Though tradition is laid down in the Mishnah, but for a thorough completeness, the Gemara is indispensable).

Do teaching for nothing and require no compensation, for no one ^{take} took reward for the Torah which God gave free, and man ought not to receive pay for imparting this Law. Should he do so, however, he would contribute to the moral downfall of the world.

Do not say "I possess no money", for all money belongs to Him. (Haggai II, 8). "Mine is the silver and Mine the gold saith the Lord of hosts." If thou hast done charity, thou wilt obtain worldly possessions, and if thou hast acquired these, then be benevolent with them, while thou dost yet possess them. Acquire substance in this world and thou wilt inherit the future world, but if thou ~~dost~~ not charity with thy money, thou wilt be suddenly deprived of it, there will be wings to it and it will spread them out in heaven, for it is written (Prov. 23, 5): "When thou lettest merely thine eyes flow over it, it is no more, for it will even make itself wings, and like an eagle will it fly toward heaven."

Do not say "That man is rich, I am poor," for not all men are worthy of Two Tables. (This world and the next)

Say not "that man is handsome and I am ugly", for when dead, man stands like a carcass, and moreover a dead animal can be sold or given away, but no one regards the corpse of a human being.

Say not "that man is righteous, but I am not", for both

will enter at the bar of judgment in the future.

Say not: that man is wise, but I am not wise, for you have not served as has he.

Say not: "That man is strong and I am weak", for true strength exists only in the observance of the law, as it is stated: (Psalm, 103, 20) "Bless the Lord, ye His Angels, mighty in strength that execute His word, hearkening unto the voice of His word."

Let these my words be on thy heart "Know whence thou hast come and whither thou wilt go, and before whom thou wilt in the future render an account in judgment." (Literally from Aboth 3,1)

Do not turn thine eyes covetously upon the possessions of another, for these will sink to the earth, even if they are at the gates of heaven. Let your ears not listen to foolish talk, for these will suffer before the other limbs of the body. Let your mouth not speak evil speech, for it is brought to judgment first. Let no act of violence be found against thee, for all the limbs of the body will testify against thee in thy everlasting dwelling. Beware, lest thy feet lead thee to commit a sin; the Angel of Death might mistake thee before thou hast corrected thy evil ways.

Fear the tribunal of Earth though thy witness love money. (I Saml 6, 7 - Man looketh to the eyes, but the Lord looketh to the heart). Fear, however, more the Divine judgment, for there thou wilt have witnesses who will testify about thee. Besides (remember) that every hour a voice calls out to thee. "If thou wilt fulfill my word with pleasure, my legion of Angels will come to greet thee, and even I myself will come to meet thee and welcome thee 'Come in peace'. Thine eyes, with which thou hast not greedily turned to possessions which are not thine, shall shine forth in the midst of

densest darkness, as it is stated (Is. 58, 10 - "Then shall shine forth in the darkness, thy light, and thy obscurity be as the noonday."). Thine ears, with which thou hast not listened to idle talk, shall already enjoy peace in this world and hear it in the future world, for Scrip. says (Is. 30, 21 - "And thy ears shall hear the word behind thee saying 'this is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand and when ye turn to the left.'") Because thy mouth did not utter slanderous language but busied itself in the words of the Law, it shall be worthy to relate the praise of God at the resurrection, and there shall be blessed through it, all worthy of blessing. The reward for thy hands, in which not a stolen thing was found, and which were not closed to charity, What can the doers of iniquity and violence do to thee? Thy feet, that did not hasten thee towards sin, what can the Angel of Death do to thee?

With these words I have warned thee; thou canst do as thou pleasest; do not say, however, that thou wast not warned.

CHAPTER V.

The scholar will not eat while standing, nor drink while standing. He will not eat out of the plate nor lick his fingers while eating; is not proud towards his associates; he speaks little, he limits his enjoyment, his sleep, his pleasures and worldly pursuits. (Compars Aboth, 7, 6) Say yes slowly and no slowly. Let one always know before whom he sits, and before whom he stands, with whom he eats, with whom he speaks, and in whose presence he signs his documents.

By four things the scholar is known, - by his purse, his cup, his temper and his dress. Some add also by his speech.

The adornment of learning is wisdom; of wisdom is modesty; the adornment of modesty is fear of God; of the fear of God is fulfilling his Commandments; the adornment of the fulfilling of God's Commandments is humility.

There are eight things:- Do not be awake among the sleeping, do not sleep among those who are awake; do not weep among the merry-mothers, do not laugh among those who are weeping; do not sit among those who stand, nor stand among those who sit; do not read Holy Writ among those that study the Mishnah, and do not study the Mishnah among readers of the Holy Writ. In a word: Do not depart from the prevailing custom.

CHAPTER VI.

Four things are unbecoming to a scholar: He does not go about at night, he does not go out perfumed, he does not come last to meeting house, and he spends little time in the society of the illiterate.

On entering, the man of rank precedes; on leaving, the inferior person precedes. Ascending the steps, the greater man precedes; in descending, the inferior one. On entering the council the man of rank precedes; into the prison house, the inferior goes first. The man of rank has ^{by precedence} preference in pronouncing the benediction. The one who passes along should ^{by} first salute the one seated.

We should not recline before him who is greater than we.

When one comes to cut a loaf of bread, let him begin at the side which is well baked. When one eats radish or onions begin from the place where the leaves grow.

One must not eat a whole loaf. Bite a piece away and place the rest on the table.

When one drinks in the presence of others, let him turn aside and drink. Do not sip nor empty the cup completely. Be no drunkard. {Forgive his injurious conduct}

Do not seek glory in the degradation of your neighbor.

Sinful thoughts are the beginning of sin, a second step is mockery. (See Prov. 9¹², 13¹, 14¹⁶), a third is haughtiness, a fourth, hardheartedness, fifth idleness, sixth is false hatred, seventh envy, - as Solomon said, (Prov. 26²⁵):- "Though he make his voice sound ever so graciously do not believe him, for there are abominations in his heart."

CHAPTER VII.

There are seven characteristics of a boorish man (Lit. same as Aboth 5⁷). He speaks before he who is his superior; he interrupts another when speaking; he gives ill-considered answers; he will not shape his questions in accordance with the matter under discussion, and he does not answer according to the law; he speaks of what first occurs, last; and of what is last, first; concerning which he has not heard, he says I have heard; and he does not admit the truth. (Aboth 5⁷)

The scholar should be discreet in his eating and drinking, in bathing and anointing. He should be particular about his sandals, his gait and his bearing; in his speech, in his

Shun the wicked and every resemblance to it, and draw near to that which is pleasant and to everything like it. Guard against him that advises thee to his advantage.

Whoever ^{for gives} ~~figures~~ grievances, will have all his transgressions for given for it is said: "Who is a God like unto ^{Thee} still pardoning iniquity and forgiving transgressions?" (Micah 7¹⁸) Whose iniquity does he pardon? He who forgives transgressions.

Whoever ^{humiliates} degrades himself on account of the Law will finally be elevated through it, for it is said: "If thou hast degraded thyself therein shalt thou be uplifted." (Prov. 30³²) For whoever humiliates himself on account of the Torah, will exalt himself.

Whoever increases his wisdom in the Torah, adds wisdom to wisdom, as it is written: "Give to the wise (instruction) and he will become yet wiser." (Prov. 9⁹)

So long as man is sinning he is afraid of man. But as long as man does not sin, men will have fear of him.

Whoever depreciates but one word of the Law deserves the punishment of excommunication, it is said: "Because the word of the Lord hath been despised and his command hath been broken, that person shall be cut off." (Num. 15³¹)

Whoever undervalues the command with reference to the washing of the hands (i.e., The Brocho) will be cut off from the world. Whoever has no shame, is likely soon to sin, for ScMp. says:- "The boldness of their face testifieth against them". (Is. 3⁹) But the modest will not sin so readily, for it is said:- "His fear may be before your faces, - ye sin not." (Ex. 20¹⁷)

It is unseemly to eat before one's invited guest. It is more unseemly for a guest to bring another with him. It is worse to eat before a learned man. The most improper of all these, is when one guest troubles another. R. Meir said it is improper when one takes anything from a table before him and gives it to the host's child. For this was once the cause of a father's killing his child. (In Chulin 94, it is related of a person who during a famine invited three guests, before whom he could place only three eggs. In his absence they gave their portion to the child. On his return, when he saw the three portions in his child's hand, he struck it so that it fell to the ground and was killed in consequence of the fall. On seeing this the mother committed suicide and after her, the father.)

Every one who serves a wise man must pay close attention to what he does, and he who doesn't deserves death.

R. Ahiba related:- "I thus began my association with the learned. One day I was walking on a road and I found an unburied corpse. I carried it four miles till I found a cemetery where I buried it. When I told this to R. Eliser and R. Joshua, they said to me: 'for every step you took, you were guilty of shedding innocent blood.' 'According to Law the body should have been buried at the spot where found.'¹

1. In Kohler: Ethics of Talm. Am. Heb. Vol. 54, page 162, the following interesting reference is made to the Meth Mitzvah, in the light of which this story takes an even greater interest..... "the Rabbinical Maxim was that there is no commandment of God so important as not to be laid aside when a dead body found unburied is to be given the honor of burial. The Law had a special term coined for this case: Meth Mitzvah: the corpse enjoining a duty upon the finder. And this unwritten law was

I asked them, just as when intending to do right, whether I had committed a sin, how much more then did I sin, if I had not intended to do right! From that hour I never left the society of the learned. He used to say whoever does not associate with the learned does not deserve to live.

CHAPTER IX.

R. Eliezer-ha-Kapar said:- "Keep far from anger, lest by being angry at others, thou dost add to thy sin. Love him who admonishes thee, in order that thou mayest add wisdom to thy wisdom; hate him who praises thee that thou mayest not learn thy wisdom. Love humility in order that thou mayest fulfill thy days. Love the practice of doing good deeds in order that thou mayest save thyself from the angel of death. Love the poor that thy children may not come to this fate. Love the house of study in order that thy children may come to give themselves to the study of the Torah. Love the house of prayer that thou mayest take thy reward every day.

1. (Cont'd) :-

extended even to the high priest and the Nazarite, neither of whom was permitted to attend to the funeral of his own father or mother, lest he be defiled, yet when they found a corpse on the road while no one else was there, they were enjoined to give it a decent burial notwithstanding their own holiness.

Be watchful in the reading of the Shema and the Tefilla (The 18th Benedictions - She^{ma} ~~Shema~~ ^{Esra}) in order that thou mayest be saared from the Gehinnomⁿ. And let thy house be open wide (Aboth 1⁵) that thy food may never be wanting. Be careful that the doors of thy house are not closed when thou dost sit to eat and drink, because it may bring them to poverty. Be glad in the sufferings that have come upon thee because they have saved thee from Gehinnom. Guard the honor of thy wife, that thou mayest not be childless. Be joyful at thy table when the hungry come and derive enjoyment from it, in order that thy days may be prolonged in this world and in the world to come. Rejoice in a gift which thou canst give from thy house (i.e., in secret) that it may pacify the anger^{against} thee, as it is said:- "A gift in secret pacifieth anger." (Prov. 21¹⁴)

If thou hast kept thy mouth from the speech of slander, all thy days will be in peace. If thou hast borne thyself haughtily before him who is greater than thou, in the end thou shalt fall into leprosy.¹ If thou art ^{lazy} in fulfilling the command, the Angel of Death will precede thee. If thou hast humbled thy feet for the poor and for the commandments, these words may be said of thee: Blessed shalt thou be in thy coming and in thy going. If thou hast forsaken a thing which might lead to a Mitzvah, and engage in a sinful thing, in the end thy wife will die, as it is said Ezek. 24¹⁶, "Son of man beloved I will take away from thee the desire of thine eyes by a sudden plague."

1. Ex. 4⁶: Where Moses arguing with God is given the sign of leprosy?
 Mem. 12¹⁰:- Where Miriam becomes leprous after her speaking against Moses?

If thou dost run to do honor to a wise man, well-bred sons and daughters shalt be thine. If thou runnest to do honor to the poor, thou shalt have sons who will be masters of the Law and fulfillments of the commands of Israel.¹

If thou seest a wise man dying, rend thy garment for him until he is dead. If thou seest a poor man dying, stay with him till thou hast buried him, so that thy time to die shall come in peace and thou mayest rest. If thou dost see thy friend hath become poor, and his hand fails, do not turn him away empty-handed, in order that thou mayest be saved from every evil, as it is said:- "Eccle. 8⁵: Whosoever keepeth the commandments will experience no evil thing." If thou hast loaned him something when he needed it, this verse will be fulfilled in you:- "Then shouldst thou call and the Lord will answer." (Is. 58⁹). If thou thyself hast fallen, God will lift thee up, but if thou hast aggrandized thyself above thy neighbor, God will bring thee down. Seek peace and they shall relate concerning thy peace, that it is like the peace of Phineas b. Eliezer. So said Rab. Eleazar ha Kapar:- "Love peace and hate dissension."

Great is peace, for even Israel, when they worshipped idolatry, had peace among them and the Shechinah was unable to suspend a judgment over them, for 'tis said:- Hos. 4¹⁷:- "Ephraim is bound to idols; let him alone!"

Kohler:-
"Ethics of J."
Am. Heb. 54,
page 315.

1. Why does the letter א precede the
ת? The ת on פדא - the charity
worker must run to the פדא = the door
of the poor in order to search after
his welfare, and not wait until he
becomes a beggar. (Sabbath 104⁶)"

If they quarrel among themselves, what is said of them, Hos. 10²:- "Their heart is divided now shall they bear their guilt." See how great is peace. Hate dissension! Why? There was a city in which there was quarreling. It was finally given over to the sword, and the sages said:- "The dissensions in the city poured forth the blood." There was a house of prayer in which dissension was; finally it became a place of idolaters. There was a house in which dissension was - Its end was destruction. Two sages dwelt in the same city, likewise two judges houses, and between them were dissensions. Their end was death.

Abba Saul said:- "Strife between courts destroys the world."

Abba J. Issi B. Johanan, in the name of Samuel the Small, said:- "This world is like the eyeball of a man. The white is the ocean, which flows around all the land. The black is the earth, the pupil is Jerusalem. The image in the pupil is the temple, which ^{may} be rebuilt speedily in our days and in the days of all Israel. "

~~From that hour I never left the society of the learned.~~
~~He used to say whoever does not associate with the learned does~~
~~not deserve to live.~~

GROUPING AS TO SUBJECT

Because there is no attempt in the tractate at unity of subject or grouping of content, it would be impossible to give an outline of the substance of each chapter. According to Matthew Arnold, humanity is indebted to the Jewish spirit for "its law of conduct, which is four-fifths of our civilization." While the treatise *Derech Erets* is but a part and a small part of the vast literature of the Jew, which deals with conduct, it embodies certain attitudes of mind, certain injunctions of behavior, in short a method of conduct for layman, scholar and sage, which are the very backbone of our intercourse to-day.

The following ^{is a partial} attempt is to group the maxims with reference to subject.

A. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOLAR

I. The essential qualities of the scholars are modesty, meekness, quickness, sagacity, to bear injustice, to be beloved by all men, gracious in the family intercourse, judging each man according to his deeds. He says of all things in this world, I have no desire concerning them, for this world is not mine. Wrapped in his garment, he sits at the feet of the sages. No one sees an evil thing in him. He asks questions to the point and replies according to the Law.

II. There are fifteen qualities which are spoken of as characteristics of the scholar, and these are they:-

He is pleasant in entering,

He is pleasant in leaving,

He is pious in fearing God,
 He is wise in his knowledge,
 He manifests sagacity in his behavior,
 He acquires knowledge and retains it,
 He is detailed in his answers,
 Ready to help,
 Goes often to the Yeshibah,
 Asks questions to the point,
 Replies according to the Law,
 Hears and then answers,
 Adds something new to each paragraph,
 Learns in order to teach, and for the sake of doing good,
 Seeks the company of the wise.

III. Scholars conduct themselves with propriety in society
 but the ignorant do not.

IV. The scholar will not eat nor drink while standing; he will
 not eat out of the plate, nor lick his fingers while eating. He is
 not proud towards his associates. Speaks little, limits his
 enjoyment, his sleep, his pleasures. He says "yes" slowly and "no"
 slowly. By four things the scholar is known: by his purse, his
 cup, his temper and his dress. Some add also, his speech.

V. Four things are unbecoming a scholar:- He does not go
 about at night; he does not go out perfumed; he does not come
 last to the meeting house; and he spends little time in the
 society of the illiterate.

VI. The scholar should be discreet in his eating and drinking;
 in bathing and anointing. He should be particular about his
 sandals, his gait, his bearing, in his expectoration, his speech,

and in his good deeds. Just as a bride, who always lived in a quiet manner at home, when she leaves, attracts public attention and says:- "Let anyone, who knows anything against me, come and accuse me." So should the scholar be, making himself inconspicuous through his good acts and known by his pleasing ways. He should search eagerly for truth and not for falsehood; pursue honesty and no ill gotten property; modesty and not pride; peace and not strife; he should seek the counsel of the old and not of young men; he should seek the company of a lion rather than of a woman.

B. ATTITUDE TO THE LAW.

So much is said in accusation of Judaism and its harsh, binding yoke of the Law which crushed out spirituality and growth, that it may be of interest to examine the material of our treatise from this point of view. The truth of the matter, as has been frequently and ably stated, is, that to fulfill the obligation of the Torah, was the greatest joy of the Jew, and in its yoke he considered himself truly free. No greater reward could be his than that his children become masters of the Law.

I. Do not abandon the — that you may not be left to Gehinnom. Let not your conduct be evil, for this is no praise of the Torah, but let your conduct be blameless for thus will it be for the merit of the scholars. Love the Law and do honor to it.

II. Tremble and rejoice at all the commands.

Do not make (the Law) a crown wherewith to adorn thyself, nor a hatchet with which to chop. Learn to receive the words of instruction even in sorrow. Do not seek thy reward, for there is a fitting reckoning, a righteous recompense, a promise and a truth.

Love the Law and honor it.

Be zealous in the performance even of an unimportant command, for it may bring thee to an important one.

III. If thou hast overlooked the words of the Torah at thy own desire, finally it will be that they will overlook thee, whether thou desirest it or not; and there will be no recompense for thee in thy sorrow.

He who has gained a good name possesses it for himself. He who has acquired the Law, possesses life everlasting.

IV. Whoever occupies himself with the study of the Torah only, it is a merit and it is not a merit; but if he add the study of the Mishna, he will gain a reward. But nothing exceeds the study of the Gemara in importance. Seek the study of the Mishna sooner than the Gemara. (Explanation supra)

VIII. Whoever degrades himself on account of the Law will finally be elevated through it, for it is said:- "If thou hast degraded thyself therein shall thou be uplifted." (Prov. 30³²) For whoever humiliates himself on account of the Torah will exalt himself. Whoever increases his wisdom in the Torah, adds wisdom to wisdom - "Give to the wise instruction and he will become yet wiser." (Prov. 9⁹)

Whoever depreciates but one word of the Law, deserves the punishment of excommunication, for it is said:- "Because the word of the Lord hath he despised and His command hath he broken, that person shall be cut off." (Mem. 15³¹)

Whoever undervalues the command with reference to the washing of the hands will be cut off from the world. (The story of Akiba-supra).

IX. Love the house of study that thy children may come to give themselves to the study of the Torah.

Be watchful in the reading of the Sh'ma and the Tefilla, in order that thou mayest be saved from Gebinnorn.

The following from Schechter's Aspects of Rabbinic Theology, page 149, may be interesting and pertinent to conclude this chapter:- "How anxious a Jew was to carry out a law, and what joy he felt in fulfilling it, may be seen from the following story, which perhaps dates from the time when the Law was denounced as slavery and as the strength of sin. According to Dent. 24¹⁹ - a sheep forgotten in the harvest field belonged to the poor, the proprietor being forbidden to go again and to fetch it. This prohibitive law was called "The commandment with regard to forgetfulness." It was impossible to fulfill it as long as one thought of it. In connection with this we read in the Tosefta: 'It happened to a Chasid (saint) that he forgot a sheep in his field, and was thus enabled to fulfill the commandment with regard to forgetfulness. Whereupon he bade his son go to the temple, and offer for him a burnt-offering and a peace-offering, whilst he also gave a banquet to his friends in honor of the event. Thereupon his son said to him:- 'Father why dost thou rejoice in this commandment more than any other prescribed in the Torah?' He answered that it was the occurrence of the rare opportunity of accomplishing the will of God, even as the result of some oversight, which caused him so much delight." (Tosefta Peah 22)

C. GENERAL MAXIMS OF CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOR
TO STRANGERS AND FELLOWMAN.

I. If others say anything evil about thee, let even an important thing be in thine eyes unimportant. If you say something evil against others, then let even an insignificant thing be in thy sight as important, until thou hast gone and obtained forgiveness of him.

Restrain thy desire before the desire of thy friend.
 Restrain thy will and the will of thy friend, before the will of God.

Do not calumniate your friend, for there is no remedy for those who calumniate.

II. Let all thy ways be marked by piety. Love God and fear Him.
 Love thy fellowcreatures and honor them. Love the righteous and the upright and those who administer correction.

Be tolerant and Love everyone.

Strive for the good and be broad of shoulder.

Let the honor of thy neighbor be just as sacred to thee as thine own. Respect all men and do not say "I shall flatter this one that he may give me food; and that one that he may give me drink. This one that he may clothe me; and that one that he may cover me." Better is it that thou art of thyself ashamed than that through others thou art brought to shame.

III. Judge thy neighbor according to his merits, and do not incline the weight toward his guilt.

VI. On entering, the man of rank precedes, on leaving, the inferior precedes. Ascending the steps, the greater man precedes, in descending, the inferior. On entering the council, the man of rank precedes; into the prison house, the inferior goes first.

One should not recline before him who is greater than he.

When one comes to cut a loaf of bread, begin at the side which is baked.

One must not take a whole loaf, bite a piece away and place the rest on the table.

When one drinks before others, let him turn aside and drink.

VII. In what is honor shown? In providing food, drink, clothing and shoes, and in harboring and escorting on their way, father, teacher or sage.

In what is respect shown? When one does not occupy their seats, nor talk in their place, nor contradict them.

VIII. Whoever forgives grievances, will have his transgressions forgiven.

So long as man sins, he is afraid of men; but as long as man does not sin, men will have fear of him.

It is unseemly for one to eat before his invited guest; it is more unseemly for a guest to bring another with him; it is worse to eat before a learned man. The most improper of all these is when one guest troubles another.

IX. Hate him who praises thee, that thou mayest not lessen thy wisdom.

Love humility, love the poor, love the house of study, love the house of prayer.

Be glad in the sufferings that have come upon thee, because they have saved thee from Gebinnorn. All evil and trouble are looked upon as agents in the plan of God to mould and perfect character.

If thou dost see thy friend hath become poor and his hand faileth, do not turn him away emptyhanded, in order that thou mayest be saved from every evil, as it is said:- "Eccle. 8⁵ - whosoever

keepeth the commandments will experience no evil thing."

If thou thyself hast fallen, God will lift thee up, but if thou hast aggrandized thyself above thy neighbor, God will bring thee down.

GENERAL ATTITUDE OF TRACTATE.

To construct a theology or a system of ethics from the vast literature of the Talmud, Mishnah, from the rich streams of Hagada and Halacha, so filled to overflowing with unplumbed depths of material, to bring some order out of the chaos of wisdom, law, theology, ethics, philosophy, science, religion, - out of all the clashings of individual opinion, the opposite decisions of authorities, to choose from this picture of multifold color and shape, the high lights, the predominant tones, and mould them into some systematic presentation of the authoritative ethical viewpoint of Rabbinical theology, is a mighty problem, which has but in recent years been attempted. Many attempts have been made. Schechter's work has been admirable. But after all he has given only aspects. It remained for Kohler, with his encyclopaedic grasp of the entire Rabbinic literature, with his philosophic intuition, to give the first systematic presentation of the theology and ethical system of the Rabbis. It is he who first worked over the endlessly complex mass of material, chose therefrom the salient viewpoints, and gave an authoritative and systematic presentation of Rabbinic thought. But more than this, on the basis of the old, the new was given foundation. Liberal Jewish theological and ethical thought is under lasting obligation to that scholar whose double task was to create order out of chaos, and then to build upon it, preserving with it our historical continuity, the viewpoint of liberal Judaism. But it is only the giant mind that can accomplish such things. We, who are his disciples, can but follow in our humble

way the path he has blazed.

Applying to this tractate the general ^{attitude} ~~weight~~ of Kohler, we find that even in its limited scope it embodies essentially the same "Weltanschauung."

There is throughout, the sense, first, of a God who is at the apex of things and whose basic principle in governing the universe is justice.

II. Do not seek thy reward for there is a fitting reckoning, a righteous recompense, a promise and truth.

IV. Let these my words be on thy heart: "Know whence thou hast come and whither thou wilt go, and before whom thou wilt in the future have to render an account in judgment." And further: "Fear the tribunal of earth, though thy witness love money. Fear however more, the Divine judgment, for there thou wilt have witnesses who will testify against thee. Besides remember that every hour a voice calls out to thee 'If thou wilt fulfill my word with pleasure, my legion of angels will come to greet thee, and even I myself will come to meet thee and welcome thee "'Come in peace.'" This is brought out strongly in the maxims of the ninth chapter:-

"Keep far from anger, lest by being angry at others thou dost add to thy sin.

Love him who admonishes thee that thou mayest add to thy wisdom.

Hate him that praises thee that thou mayest not lessen thy wisdom.

Love the poor that thy children may not come to this fate.

If thou hast troubled thy feet for the poor and for the commandments, these words may be said of thee: "Blessed shalt thou

be in thy coming and thy going.

If thou seest a poor man dying, stay with him till thou hast buried him, so that thy time to die shall come in peace and thou mayest rest.

If thou thyself hast fallen, God will lift thee up, but if thou hast aggrandized thyself above thy neighbor, God will bring thee down."

There is a Divine justice in all things. Even as God's first relation with man is based on justice, so man's relation to his fellow, will be governed by the same principle.

After this primary principle, there follows the law of kindness. Through the tractate there is repetition of the ^{word} ~~old~~ love, ~~MAN~~, - thought and consideration for others - family, friends, fellow-creatures.

I. Restrain thy desire before the desire of thy friend.

II. Love fellow creatures and honor them. Be tolerant and love everyone. Be meek and gentle of speech. Be obliging to great men and gracious to young men. Let the honor of thy friend be just as sacred to thee as thine own.

III. Judge thy neighbor according to his merits and do not incline the weight of his guilt.

And throughout chapter nine, the duties to others are emphasized.

Finally the virtue of humility:-

I. Be like a lower threshold upon which everyone treads and

III. as a nail fixed so that everyone may hang on it.

IV. If thou hast done much good, let it be in thy sight but little.

If others have wronged thee greatly, consider it small and say:-

"Less than I deserve have I suffered; is it not that I deserve even more?"

V. The adornment of learning is wisdom; of wisdom is modesty; the adornment of modesty is fear of God; of fear of God is fulfilling His commandments. The adornment of fulfilling God's commandments is humility.

Around these as the center, there may be placed all the virtues, content, temperance, resignation, honesty, truthfulness, etc., all of which are referred to or mentioned by inference in the tractate.

In Chapter IX are several references to peace, as if that were the end to be sought. Even when Israel worshipped idols, because they were at peace among themselves, the Schechinah had to suspend judgment. Abba Saul said :- "Strife between courts, destroys the world."

Then follows as a beautiful conclusion the words of Abba Issi B. Johanan:- "The world is like the eyeball of a man. The white is the ocean, which flows around all the land. The black is the earth; the pupil is Jerusalem. The image in the pupil is the temple, which will be rebuilt speedily in our days and in the days of all Israel - Amen."

That is to say, Israel, the people, and Israel's religion are the hope of the world. It is through them that God's Law and Providence are to be made known, and it is through them that peace is to come.

Here then, in our tractate, we find the central core of Jewish thought and aspiration. Indeed it may well be studied to-day with profit and inspiration not only by him whose heart responds with pride to any high expression of Israel's ideals, but also by him who, not knowing them, may be led to false conclusions regarding the ideals of the Jew and Judaism.