

*Abodah Zarah* 46a; *j. Shabbath* ix, 11d an idol is referred to by the derogatory epithet עין קרין: 'Thorn in-the-eye'.

It remains to note that וישבני means either, 'they continue to provoke me',<sup>1</sup> or 'they provoke me still more'.<sup>2</sup> The entire chapter (vv. 6-16) is a description of the various ritual abominations committed in the Temple. But Ezekiel would not be a prophet if he failed to see their concomitant in the moral iniquity of the people, which arouses the Divine displeasure even more profoundly. The passage is now forceful and clear:

'Is it a light thing for the house of Judah to commit the abominations which they commit here, that they fill the land with violence and continue to provoke Me,<sup>3</sup> and irritate Me utterly?<sup>4</sup> Therefore, I, too, will act in fury, Mine eye shall not spare, nor will I have pity, and though they cry in Mine ears with a loud voice, I will not hear them.'

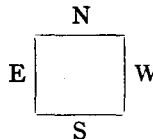
ROBERT GORDIS.

## THE TWELVE HOUSES OF ISRAEL

THE interesting article on the 'Twelve Houses of Israel' by the Rev C. E. Douglas on pp. 49-56 has rather an unfortunate footnote at the bottom of p. 53:

The reader who is unacquainted with astrological convention may be puzzled as to why East is written on the left, and not on the right as in our maps. The reason is said to be that observations were made by two people facing respectively South and North. One called and the other wrote. When the former (the actual observer) called 'left hand' he meant his own left hand, i.e., East, and the scribe made the necessary entry on the left of the plan.

Such an explanation is quite unnecessary. The plans are astronomically correct as they stand. All one has to do is to go out any night or evening and look at any well-known constellation (e.g., Orion) near its culmination on the Southern Meridian. It will be seen at once that it presents the appearance shewn in Mr. Douglas's Houses:



<sup>1</sup> As in Gen. xxx 31, Lam. iii 3, Ecc. i 7, and elsewhere. See Brown-Driver-Briggs, s.v. וישבני sec. 8.

<sup>2</sup> So Jewish version and others.

<sup>3</sup> Or 'provoke me still more'.

<sup>4</sup> Lit. 'put the twig to my nose'.

No other arrangement is possible for an observer in Northern latitude. The real explanation of course is that we view the Earth (or the Terrestrial Sphere) from the Surface, and the Heaven (or the Celestial Sphere) from the Centre. It is a satisfaction to reflect that by rejecting the alleged 'explanation' Mr. Douglas's interpretation of the Houses becomes much more acceptable.

D. R. FOTHERINGHAM.

## A NOTE ON A JEWISH DIETARY LAW

'THOU shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk.' So many hypotheses have been put forward on Exodus xxiii 19, xxxiv 26 and Deuteronomy xiv 21 that another one may perhaps be excused.

The main food of nomads is milk. Meat is scarcely used, as they seldom kill domestic animals and hunting is difficult.<sup>1</sup> We may therefore suppose that in early times the sacrifice which they ate together with the deity, thus symbolizing the communion with him, largely consisted of milk. In addition there were, of course, fruit-offerings, but living sacrifices were not introduced until much later.

In Rome, too, e.g., it is probable that originally no bloody sacrifices were offered. It has, indeed, been pointed out that the transition to these was not effected without hesitation. Before an animal was slaughtered it was sprinkled with wine and corn, the materials of the former sacrifice. After the ceremony the king had to flee and it seems that the mysterious *regifugium* derives from this fear of the new type of sacrifice.<sup>2</sup>

I should like to suggest that a similarly tardy development took place in Hebrew history. If so, the above-mentioned provision may be regarded as directed against the maintenance of a milk-offering along with the living sacrifice. 'Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk' is a demand to do away with the remnants of milk-offering and to present a purely living sacrifice.

As to the analogous change from fruit-offerings to living sacrifices, traces of it may be found in the Cain and Abel story.<sup>3</sup> Possibly one of the aims of this story is to shew the prevalence of bloody sacrifices over fruit-offerings: God accepts Abel's offering of sheep and refuses Cain's gift of fruit.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> W. Robertson Smith *The Religion of the Semites* 3rd edition, ed. by S. A. Cook, 1927, p. 222 sq.

<sup>2</sup> L. Deubner *Die Römer* in P. D. Chantepie de la Saussaye's *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*, 4th ed. by A. Bertholet and E. Lehmann, vol. ii (1925) p. 454.

<sup>3</sup> Gen. iv; see also A. Ehrenzweig *Kain und Lamech* in the *ZATW* xxxv (1915) p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. also Gen. ix 3: 'every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you;