

sharp and bitter then as since, and that peace between the sects in Egypt was only maintained by the strong hand of the law.

Of the high priest Jehochanan mentioned in this petition I have already spoken in respect of his relations with Bagohi, the Governor. Their quarrel, as related by Josephus, was at a date subsequent to Jedoniah's letter. Of this high priest and his family we have the following in Nehemiah III 1, "Then Eliashib the High Priest rose up with his brethren the priests, and they bulled the sheep gate; they sanctified it, and set up the door of it; even unto the tower of Meah they sanctified it, unto the tower of Hananeel." (This was John's grandfather.)

XII, 22, "The Levites in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, and Johanan, and Jaddua, were recorded chief of the fathers; also the priests of the reign of Darius the Persian.

XII, 23, The sons of Levi, the chief of the fathers were written in the Book of Chronicles even until the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib."

XIII, 28, "And one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the High Priest was son-in-law to Sanballat the Horonite; and therefore I chased him from me."

Here we learn from Jedoniah that John had another brother not previously known to us. Why did the High Priest, John, and others in Jerusalem, pay no attention to the application of the Jews at Jeb? I would suggest two reasons: The Jews of Jerusalem wished their temple to be the centre of Judaism, that it should be the holy of holies, the capital of the world, in the spirit of Isaiah II, 2. A rival temple would both lower the prestige of Jerusalem, and diminish their revenue, both directly, and by reducing the pilgrimages made to the holy city. And the mere fact that John, the High Priest at Jerusalem, slew his

own brother in the temple would tend to shew that he was not a person of high principle, that would set the interests of religion above his own.

But there was probably also a ritualistic reason. Under the rescript of Darius, and the service described in Ezra, Chapters Six and Seven, there was a considerable departure from the ancient liturgy in the temple service at Jerusalem. Dancing formed a popular and expressive part of the religious rites of the Jews,—as probably amongst most races at one time or another—from Moses up to David. It seems to have fallen into disuse by the time of Hezekiah and Josiah, in the seventh century B.C. The dance is mentioned three times in this letter, and seems to have been an important part of their service in the temple at Jeb. It would therefore perhaps not be unreasonable to infer that the Jeb ritual, which was clearly of the old type, had been established there even before the days of Josiah. It certainly would not be pleasant to the high priest at Jerusalem to find that at Jeb the more modern service was not followed. It will be noticed that in the minute authorising the rebuilding of the temple of Jeb, the Dance is not mentioned, though meat offerings and incense are specified. This was in conformity with the ritual of Ezra then in use at Jerusalem.

There is much significance—beyond the light thrown on the character of a Persian Governor—in the promise of the Jews of Jeb to present offerings on the altar of Yahu in the name of Bagohi. This promise shows a marked contrast between Rome and Persia in religious policy. With the early Roman Emperors Christians would have been allowed to have their own religious service, provided that they recognized the divinity of the Emperor, which was an absolute obligation on