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## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE translator of the Talmud, who has now reached the thirteenth volume of his task, covering twenty-one tracts of this great work, certainly cannot point with any great pride to the fact that this is the second edition of his translation which first appeared in 1896, for he believes that the opening and bringing to light of a book so long withheld from the gaze of the curious, and even the learned, should have attracted more attention and deserved greater consideration than it has received. However, he is glad to see that thousands of readers have at last taken advantage of the opportunity of looking into the "sealed book," and to such an extent that second editions have become necessary, both of this volume and of the Tract Rosh Hashana of the fourth volume, which he has reëdited and enlarged upon, adding many historical facts and legends, so that they now appear as practically new works.

This is certainly an encouragement to him to continue his work, with the hope that in time it will gain the proper recognition and proper attention which he thinks this great work of the sixth century should receive at the hands of all scholars and even laymen.

In revising this volume the translator had in mind the many criticisms which have been passed upon his effort and which have appeared in various papers throughout different countries, but he gave his attention to those only which were not prompted by animosity and jealousy. He begs to call the attention of all critics to the dictum of the Talmud, "Kal Hat'haloth Kashoth" (all beginnings are difficult); for, bearing this in mind, they would no doubt have been more moderate.

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The translator will be very grateful to critics who will call his attention to any mistakes made in the translation of the original text. However, he will positively ignore criticisms of the kind described above.

The translator further hopes that this and the succeeding volumes will meet with the favor and approval of the public, which will be sufficient reward to repay him for his efforts.

M. L. R.

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