SOME RECENT OLD TESTAMENT LITERATURE.

THE second volume of Prof. G. A. Smith's *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*[1] completes the Expositor's Bible. The idea of such a series was a veritable inspiration; and, by its conception and realisation, Dr. Robertson Nicoll has rendered a great service to English-speaking students of the Bible. The concluding volume is worthy of the series and of the great reputation of the author of the famous exposition of Isaiah i.–xxxix. The books expounded are Zephaniah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Obadiah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Joel, and Jonah. A very valuable feature of the exposition is a complete new translation. There are also full historical and critical introductions, and occasional critical and explanatory notes on the text and exegesis. Prof. G. A. Smith considers that these books do not suggest so much practical teaching for our own day as their predecessors. On the other hand, "they form a more varied introduction to Old Testament Criticism, while, by the long range of time which they cover, and the many stages of religion to which they belong, they afford a wider view of the development of prophecy." We may say a word or two about sections of the book which deal, in the author's clear and scholarly fashion, with some important questions. One of the shocks administered by recent criticism has been the assertion of Kosters that the narrative in Ezra i.–iii. is midrash, as little reliable as some sections of Chronicles; that there was no attempt to build the Temple before 520; that there was no Return of Exiles at all under Cyrus; and that the Temple was not built by Jews who

[1] "The Expositor's Bible," edited by the Rev. W. Robertson Nicoll, M.A., LL.D.; *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, by G. A. Smith, D.D., LL.D.; London: Hodder & Stoughton; pp. xx. 543, 7*s*. 6*d*.

had come from Babylon, but by Jews who had never left Judah. Since this view was published it has been fiercely assailed and warmly defended; it has been substantially accepted by Canon Cheyne. Our author states and discusses the pros and cons.; and decisively rejects Koster's theory. One naturally hesitates to set aside the definite statements of Ezra i.–iii. on anything less than overwhelming evidence to the contrary; and the evidence adduced is not overwhelming. Moreover the chronicler's authority is much greater for post-exilic than for pre-exilic history; and it is not so likely that we have here an example of his habit of constructing history on *a priori* data. Another important subject very fully dealt with is the date of Joel. Dr. G. A. Smith refers to the discussion of the same question by Dr. Driver in the *Cambridge Bible,* but his treatment of it is parallel and not dependent. It is very interesting and satisfactory that two such great authorities should publish, almost at the same time, two independent investigations arriving at the same conclusion. Our author, also, places Joel after B.C. 444.

Another important question is the interpretation of Habakkuk i. 2–4. Following Budde, Dr. G. A. Smith rejects the views that the wicked oppressors are Jews who are to be punished by the Chaldeans; or that the righteous are Israel and the oppressors the Chaldeans. He holds also with Budde, that the righteous are Israel, the oppressors a heathen power who are to be punished by the Chaldeans; and to render this view possible he places i. 5–11 after ii. 2–4. But whereas Budde thinks that the heathen power is Assyria, our author suggests Egypt as at any rate an alternative. We may also mention that the following passages are regarded as additions to the books in which they stand: Zephaniah ii. 8–10, iii. 14–20; Zechariah ii. 10–17, ix.–xiv.; Malachi ii. 11–13*a*. That the

last passage is an interpolation is, apparently, a discovery of our author's.

We have also received two volumes of the new *Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament.*[1] This series is not, as its title might suggest, an abridgment of the *Handkommentar zum Alten Testament*, but is an entirely independent work. It is a pity that German publishers cannot devise distinctive names for their series: there is a bewildering variety of *Handbuch* and *Handkommentar, kurzgefasstes* and otherwise. The present series seeks to furnish adequate information in a minimum space, and therefore in the most concise and lucid form. It assumes Kautzsch's translation of the Old Testament, but yet is intelligible without that translation. The critical principle of the series is the historical treatment (*religionsgeschichtliche*) of the Bible. Volumes on *Proverbs* by Wildeboer, and on *Job* by Duhm, have already appeared.

The publishers have been fortunate in securing Prof. Budde for *Judges*. Although Schrader long ago suggested that the Prophetic Narratives (J and E), used by the compilers of the Hexateuch, extended beyond the Conquest of Palestine, and were among the sources of Judges and Samuel, it was Prof. Budde, who in his *Richter und Samuel* furnished analytical proof of this position. In the present volume we have a concise exposition of the theory and an exegesis based upon it. There is a convenient table in which the contents of Judges are distributed between J, E, J_2, E_2, Rje, D_1, D_2, Rp, and other later hands. The history of the book is briefly as follows: by the combination of J and E, a Book of Judges was formed containing the account of the Greater Judges, Ehud, Deborah

[1] *Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament*, D. Karl Marti; *Das Buch der Richter*, D. Karl Budde, Ord. Prof. der Theologie in Strassburg, pp. xxiv. 147, paper covers, 3*s*. 9*d*.; *Das Buch Hesekiel*, Lic. Theol. A. Bertholet, Privatdocent der Theologie in Basel, pp. xxvi. 259, five illustrations, paper covers, 6*s*., Williams & Norgate, 1897.

and Barak, Gideon and Abimelech, Jephthah, Samson and Samuel; and also of the Migration of the Danites, and the Outrage of Gibeah. Some slight editorial changes were made in this work by a Deuteronomic Editor, D_1. From this book a second Deuteronomic Editor, D_2, constructed a new work by adding a didactic framework, and the story of Othniel, and omitting amongst other sections the account of Abimelech, of the death of Samson, of the Danite Migration, and the Gibeah incident, and the history of Samuel. The book assumed substantially its present form under the hands of a Priestly Editor, Rp, who added the remaining or Lesser Judges—with the exception of Shamgar, who is a still later addition—and restored many of D_2's omissions, entirely recasting the story of Gibeah.

This scheme will be familiar to many of our readers in Moore's great commentary on *Judges*. Moore largely follows Budde in his analysis, and Budde in turn makes constant reference to Moore, and fully recognises his work as the standard commentary on *Judges*. Naturally they do not always agree, and each has a value of its own. Budde endorses the conclusion of Lagarde and Moore that *Judges* in B is not the Septuagint, but an entirely different translation, which Moore is inclined to date in the fourth century A.D. The analysis of Judges at once explains the confusion as to dates; these are due to the mechanical combination of different systems of chronology. It also disposes of a difficulty as to the *Song of Deborah*; the *Song*, as a whole, is clearly contemporary with the events it describes; yet some words found in it only occur elsewhere in very late Biblical or even in Mishnic Hebrew. Accordingly Seinecke and Maurice Vernes relegate it to a late post-exilic period. Budde holds that the *Song* is a contemporary work, but that it was first inserted in *Judges* by the Priestly Editor to whom the late words are due. According to Kautzsch and Moore about six verses are

unintelligible in the present Hebrew text; each phrase can be translated by itself, but it will not make sense with the context. Probably in these phrases and elsewhere the Priestly Editor has replaced obsolete words, which he himself did not understand, by others current in his own time. Budde also agrees with Moore and other critics that, when Jephthah made his vow, he deliberately contemplated the sacrifice of a human victim—a view, as Moore reminds us, as old as Augustine, who suggested that Jephthah meant to offer up his wife. As against critics who recognise only *one* ancient source of the Micah story, Budde discovers in it traces of both J and E. In this connection we are inclined to suggest that the last clause of xvii. 7, *wehû' gār shām, and he was a sojourner there,* should be read, *wehû' gērshōm, and he was Gershom,* and regarded as a remnant of a clause giving his name Jonathan ben Gershom. Speaking of the book generally, it is admirable for its scale, and will be a most useful companion to Moore, but we regret that Prof. Budde's space should have been curtailed on an important subject to which he has given special attention.

The volume of the *Kurzer Hand-Commentar* on *Ezekiel* is by A. Bertholet, of Basel, the author of an important monograph on the attitude of the Israelites and Jews towards the Gentiles. His *Ezekiel* is very complete and scholarly, and yet not overloaded with technical details; so that, in spite of limitations of space, it is lucid and interesting. One of the principles of the series evidently is that the Introductions should be as brief as possible. Hence we have chiefly the statement of results. Perhaps this is not much to be regretted here, seeing that few problems of the Higher Criticism arise in connection with the Book of Ezekiel. The denial of its authenticity, as a whole, by Zunz and Seinecke has met with no support; and criticism is only concerned with the question of minor

interpolations. According to Bertholet, the most important addition by a later hand is the description of the commerce of Tyre, xxvii. 9*b*–25*a*. This passage is in a different rhythm from the rest of the chapter, and is a prosaic list of wares and customers, interrupting the great description of Tyre as a stately ship. The chief sacrifice to brevity is the absence of any discussion of the relation of Ezekiel xl.–xlviii. to the Law of Holiness, Leviticus xvii.–xxvi. The author merely mentions the leading views, and quotes with approval Stade's conclusion that the editor of the Law of Holiness is not Ezekiel himself, but a member of the priestly circle in which Ezekiel moved.

A word or two may be added on other points. One of the trials of the modern student is that by the time he has learnt a new date, and thinks he has got a firm foothold amidst the shifting sands of Biblical chronology, some ruthless critic proposes to alter it. For instance, we have been told pretty emphatically and unanimously that Deuteronomy was published in B.C. 621; Dr. Driver and Dr. G. A. Smith both give this date in their latest works without a hint of alternative or uncertainty. But Bertholet gives B.C. 622 for that event in just the same unhesitating fashion. The author agrees with Dr. Davidson and Dr. Skinner that Ezekiel was a man in middle life at the outset of his ministry, and not, as Josephus states, a mere youth. He further agrees with them in their picture of the prophet as a pioneer in the writing of a volume of prophecy; in his pastoral care for individuals; in the systematic discussion of theology; and in the prominence in his writings of the apocalyptic element. Our author, like Orelli, accepts Klostermann's view that Ezekiel did actually remain silent and motionless for seven days (iii. 15, cf. iv. 1–8), and that the prophet suffered from catalepsy. He quotes with approval a sentence of Orelli's: "We must regard the disease as a divinely-ordained means

for prophecy." For a brief discussion and rejection of this theory we may refer the reader to a note in Dr. Skinner's *Ezekiel*, Expositor's Bible, p. 55, which concludes: "In the hands of Klostermann and Orelli the hypothesis assumes a stupendous miracle; but it is obvious that a critic of another school might readily 'wear his rue with a difference,' and treat the whole of Ezekiel's prophetic experiences as hallucinations of a deranged intellect."

Dr. H. Zimmern—one of the great masters of Semitic grammar—has composed a brief *Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages.*[1] It is on a smaller scale than Dr. Wright's Comparative Grammar, and is intended as a handbook for students. It is however by no means merely an introduction to larger works, but has an independent value of its own. As an English transliteration is given of all the Semitic words it can be used by readers who know no Semitic language but Hebrew. The parallel tables of forms in the various languages will often show at a glance the origin of apparent anomalies in the Hebrew. The use of this little volume will render the study of Hebrew or Aramaic much more intelligible and interesting. Of the origin of "the so-called Phœnician Alphabet," Dr. Zimmern writes: "It is probably in a measure dependent both on the Egyptian Hieroglyphic and the Babylonian Cuneiform script; but its inventors worked, comparatively speaking, very independently (*relativ sehr selbständig verfahren sind*)."

Babylonian Influence on the Bible[2] is a very full discussion of Genesis i. 2, with a profusion of parallels and illustrations from Babylonian and other folklore.

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[1] *Vergleichende Grammatik der Semitischen Sprachen, Elemente der Laut- und Formenlehre*, von Dr. H. Zimmern; Berlin, Reuther & Reichard; London, Williams & Norgate; pp. xi. 194, 5*s*. 6*d*. nett.

[2] *Babylonian Influence on the Bible and Popular Beliefs*, by A. Smythe Palmer, D.D., Vicar of Holy Trinity, Wanstead; London, David Nutt, pp. 110, 3*s*. 6*d*.