

Recent Foreign Theology.

Christianity in the Near East.

In March 1901 the trustees of the Schleiermacher Fund conferred on Dr. Karl Beth a travelling scholarship, which enabled him to spend five months in Turkey, Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and Greece. His object was to investigate the present condition of the Churches and the religious life of the people of these countries; he has published the results of his observations and studies in a book¹ full of information of the deepest interest to all students of modern Church history.

The Orthodox Greek Church—which describes itself as the Orthodox Anatomic Church—is represented in all these lands. With its dogmas and practices, its liturgies and worship, Dr. Beth is chiefly concerned; his travels did not, however, extend to Russia, and his remarks do not apply to the Russian Church, which should, he thinks, be studied separately, inasmuch as the Orthodox Anatomic Church in Greek-speaking nations is free from the dogmatic and ritualistic leanings towards Rome which characterize that Church in Russia. A full account is also given of the Armenian and Coptic Churches.

Dr. Beth dwells frequently on the contrast between the impressions which he formed during his travels and those which he had derived from the study of ecclesiastical history. The priests, for example, did not correspond to the description of them by such authorities as Kattenbusch. 'Neither amongst the people nor amongst the clergy did I meet with the idea that the priest is endowed with special spiritual powers. . . . So far as religion is concerned, the patriarch is no more than the smallest bishop, and the bishop is no more than the priest and the layman. . . . The purpose of the Eucharist is the same for the priest as for the layman; both experience a *θέωσις* or a *ἐνώσις πρὸς τὸν Θεόν*.' In like manner, the author corrects what he regards as current misconceptions of monks, 'whose rôle is played out.' Orthodox

Christians look down upon them as upon 'men of a lower order'; it is openly said that their ranks are recruited from 'the weakly and idle classes of the community. . . . The monk is no longer a pattern either of religious devotion or of moral sentiment: the exact opposite is the fact.'

In the course of his observations, Dr. Beth also found great discrepancies between ecclesiastical rules and popular practice. In regard to fasting, great laxity prevails. The only time when the regulations of the Church are generally observed is during the week before Easter. The majority of Greek Christians do not regard these regulations as binding; many neither fast nor think of including the neglected fasts in their confession of sins of omission. Four hours are prescribed for daily prayer and reading of the Psalms in churches, but only the last hour is observed, and this in many places on Sundays only. At the other hours the priest reads the service at home. These regulations, the author truly says, cannot be obeyed; but 'the Orthodox Church can allow her regulations to be disregarded, though she would cease to be orthodox if she were to revise and simplify them so as to make them practicable.'

Dr. Beth believes that the Greek Church in these countries is in a state of transition. Instead of ossification or petrification he saw movement and change. 'The Church feels her weakness, and is striving to remedy her defects.' The clergy—except the uneducated—recognize 'that the Church ought to offer the laity more of God's word, and the laity loudly express their longing for it.' This statement applies not to Egypt, Palestine, and Syria, but to Greece, Turkey in Europe, Asia Minor, especially the coast towns. Many interesting details are given of a remarkable religious movement amongst the laity. 'In the last nine years societies have arisen whose only object is to arrange for the public exposition of God's word in sermons and in catechumen-classes. Almost all these societies were founded by laymen.' For centuries the Greek Church has neglected this essential part of her duty; with rare exceptions, even the educated clergy have not felt called to preach every Sunday, but this

¹ *Die orientalische Christenheit der Mittelmeerländer. Reise Studien zur Statistik und Symbolik der griechischen, armenischen und koptischen Kirche.* Von Lic. Dr. Karl Beth, Privatdozent an der Universität Berlin. Berlin: Schwetschke und Sohn. Pp. xvi, 428. M.8.

movement amongst the laity has the sympathy of the bishops, with the exception of a few, who refuse to leave the ancient paths. 'Many changes must, however, be made before the preaching services can yield the blessing that may be expected; first of all, the churches must be furnished with seats.'

Another hopeful sign is the movement for the better education of the clergy. Since Joachim III. became Patriarch an enlightened policy has been pursued. Theological colleges have been established in the several provinces; the clergy have also received instructions 'so far as they are able' to preach once every Sunday.

Dr. Beth has little that is good to say of English and American missions in these countries. It is comforting to his 'national feeling and evangelical consciousness' to reflect that German Protestants have been less aggressive; yet charges of 'proselytizing' do not prove that the work of English and American missionaries 'has been no real blessing.' Proof to the contrary is given in the interesting story of the beginning at Smyrna of the religious movement amongst the Greek laity to which reference has already been made. In 1893 a tradesman—Michael Chadsiludis—formed a society for the establishment of weekly preaching of the gospel; to-day, two preaching services are held every Sunday, and one during the week, as well as a Bible class for catechumens. Dr. Beth heard a simple gospel sermon on Mt 10³⁷ from a professor at one of the high schools, and the service was attended by 140 men, 115 women, and 25 children. All who read this narrative will join heartily in the writer's prayer that this movement, which has rapidly spread to Athens, Constantinople, and other towns, may bring new life to the Orthodox Greek Church by the old method—the preaching of Jesus. If this happy result be attained, Englishmen will remember with gratitude that the Greek laymen of Smyrna were roused to action by an English evangelist. His name is not mentioned, but Dr. Beth says: 'thanks are *perhaps* due to an Englishman, who shortly before preached here in the Greek language with great power.' It is pleasant to recall, in this connexion, the words of Ignatius to the Church at Smyrna: 'it is meet that ye should . . . give heed to the prophets and especially to the gospel.'

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The Religion of the Semites.

THOSE who have made acquaintance with Père Lagrange's studies in this subject in the *Revue Biblique*, will be glad to hear that a volume containing these in a greatly extended form has just been published.¹ It is not our intention to criticise the work, so much as to give an indication of its character and contents, and to commend its study very heartily to all who are interested in Comparative Religion.

The main aim of the book is to study the religions of Israel's Semitic neighbours in regard to those points where they touch most closely the religion of Israel, and thus to bring out the contrast of ideas as well as the resemblance of traditions and rites. The author feels that such a work is needed, because there is none available dealing with *all* the fundamental religious institutions of the Semites. The want might have been supplied had Professor Robertson Smith lived a few years longer. But, as Père Lagrange points out, the single volume of that gifted writer on the *Religion of the Semites* deals almost entirely with sacrifice, takes little account of the Babylonian religion, and attaches, in the estimation of many, an exaggerated importance to Totemism. Baethgen, Wellhausen, and Jastrow have done good service, but they have devoted themselves for the most part to special fields of investigation. The same is true of de Vogüé, while the works of Clermont-Ganneau, Hommel, Winckler, Zimmern, Scheil, Loisy, and others, have to be sifted to obtain the materials of which we are in search.

Père Lagrange has a very important opening chapter on the Origin of Religion and Mythology. Here the reader will find acute observations on Animism, Ancestor Worship, Polydemonism, Polytheism, etc., and a careful discussion of the possibility of Monotheism being developed out of Polytheism. Then comes chap. 1 on the Semites, followed by a chapter on their gods. The vexed question of El as possibly the one primitive god, common to the Semites, is elaborately handled, and whatever view may be taken of our author's conclusion, much instruction will be derived from his argument. The same remark applies to his treatment of Baal and Melekh.

¹ *Études sur les Religions Sémitiques.* Par le P. Marie-Joseph Lagrange, des Frères Prêcheurs. Paris: Librairie Victor Lecoffre, 1903. Price 8 fr.

We are next introduced to the goddesses Ashera and Astarte. Then come chapters dealing with the conception of Holiness and Impurity, and with Sacred Objects (waters, trees, stones, etc.), and Sacred Persons. The important subject of Sacrifice is discussed in chap. 7, while the following chapter is devoted to the Dead (including funeral customs, etc., as well as the notions of a future life). The last two chapters of the book are devoted respectively to Babylonian and Phœnician myths. In the Appendices we have the famous Tariff of Marseilles and other important inscriptions. The value of the book, which is eminently readable, is enhanced by a list of the Scripture passages cited in the text, and an Index of Subjects.

The Babel-Bibel Controversy.

SINCE our last notes on this subject a change has come over the scene. The Delitzsch bubble has been pricked by the hand of the agent that created it. By this time all our readers must be aware of the characteristic letter of His Majesty the German Emperor, in which he disavows the theological conclusions of Professor Delitzsch. The letter is marked by consummate skill, and one cannot withhold a tribute of admiration from its author. There is perhaps no living sovereign who could have assumed the rôle here played by the Kaiser, or who by sheer ability could have extricated himself so successfully from what was fast becoming a ridiculous situation. Not but that there is something humorous in the fresh effusion of this Imperial would-be maker of creeds and keeper of the conscience of his subjects. Yet, whatever objections may be taken to his pronouncement, all friends of Assyriology and of theology will be glad that the controversy will now be left in the hands of the proper parties, without Court patronage on either side, and that the points in dispute will now be seen in their true light and proper dimensions.

There is one man to whom both science and faith owe a heavy debt of gratitude for the part he has played in this controversy—we mean Professor Ed. König of Bonn. It is extremely gratifying to note that his famous brochure, *Bibel und Babel*, has now reached its eighth edition. In this, its latest form, it not only includes a

criticism of Delitzsch's *second* lecture, but takes account of all the important literature that has been called forth during the controversy. The reader who wishes to have a thoroughly satisfactory up-to-date refutation of Delitzsch's specious conclusions, will find it in the pages of Professor König's little work (Berlin: Martin Warneck, price 80 pfennigs).

Biblical Criticism.

THE progress of the Historical Criticism of Scripture, especially of the Old Testament, is responsible for not a little of the theological literature of the time. It is natural enough, and only an unreasonable man would make it matter of reproach, that the new view of Bible history which the scientific study of Scripture demands, should confuse old-fashioned faith and make it suspicious of the so-called 'Higher' Criticism. Hence the absolute refusal on the part of many Christians to admit the possibility that the critics can be right, hence the valiant fight maintained, with excellent motives but with obsolete weapons, by the old school of Scripture students against the new. But there is not a little literature that aims at discovering a more excellent way. In all the Churches there are men whose attachment to the old *faith* is beyond suspicion, but whose study of the Bible has convinced them that Historical Criticism is in the main right. They have found, moreover, that their own faith, instead of being hindered has been helped by the new light in which many points have been set by Criticism, and they are anxious to help their fellow-believers, who are as yet unable to accept this view of the situation. We have just read two works, emanating from very different quarters, but with this common aim. One of them is a volume by the above-named Père Lagrange, entitled *La Méthode Historique surtout a propos de l'Ancien Testament* (Paris: V. Lecoffre). The other is by Professor Erik Stave of Upsala, and bears the title *Der Einfluss der Bibelkritik auf das christliche Glaubensleben* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr; London: Williams & Norgate, price 1s.).

All friends of the truth are watching with interest the present attitude of the Roman Catholic Church to the critical study of Scripture; and they rejoice that so enlightened a pontiff as

Leo XIII. is at the helm of affairs. Much will depend, both for the Roman Catholic Church and for Christendom, on the result of the investigations of the recently appointed committee of Roman Catholic scholars and the report they make to headquarters. Meanwhile a brilliant band of scholars, of whom Père Lagrange is one of the most distinguished, are doing splendid service in the way of mediating between science and faith, between historical conclusions and Church authority. The work before us consists of six *conférences* read at the Catholic Institute of Toulouse in November of last year. We may content ourselves with indicating the subjects handled, assuring our readers of every shade of religious opinion that they will find much instruction and edification in the book. We have read it straight through at a sitting, and our interest never flagged for a moment. We have (1) Critical Exegesis and Church Dogma; (2) The Evolution of Dogma, especially in the O.T.; (3) The notion of Inspiration, from the data of Scripture; (4) The Historical Method, in matters of Science; (5) Historical Character of the Civil Legislation of the Hebrews; (6) The Primitive History. We have found (3), (5), and (6) in particular extremely interesting, and calculated to be of much help to many.

No less inspiring is the brochure of the Lutheran professor. Dr. Stave's lecture, whose title is given above, was delivered to a gathering of students at Leckö in Sweden, and is intended to be specially helpful in the way of steadying their faith at a critical period of their life. The lecture shows a very firm grasp of the situation, an appreciation of its needs, and a thorough competency to meet these. An excellent survey is given of the principal changes that Historical Criticism has necessitated in our view of Scripture and its contents, and it is shown conclusively that not only can the old faith live in the new light, but that it is strengthened theoretically and stimulated practically. For it is pre-eminently the *practical* that Professor Stave keeps in view, and rightly so, throughout. For those of our readers who are acquainted with German (and the German in which this pamphlet is written is singularly easy), we can wish no greater pleasure than the perusal of Dr. Stave's lecture. No one can help benefiting from it. *Every word of it is golden.*

A somewhat more limited scope, although its

arguments are well worthy of consideration, belongs to the brochure of Professor Arnold Meyer of Bonn, entitled *Theologische Wissenschaft und kirchliche Bedürfnisse* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr; London: Williams & Norgate, price 2s. net). This work has in view more especially the disappointing tendencies manifested by the Provincial Synods of Prussia to lay an embargo on Criticism, and to pronounce its study detrimental to the real work of the Church. Professor Meyer has no difficulty in showing that the Criticism which some of the Synods assail so fiercely, is a spectre conjured up by their own imagination. He puts forward at the same time a powerful plea in favour of not only the right but the duty of a strictly scientific theology, and seeks to show that this is the friend and not the foe of Church life and work.

Moses and Hammurabi.

THE recent discovery of the Code of Hammurabi has naturally attracted much attention, and we may expect a copious stream of literature on the subject. Here again Père Lagrange is to the front. Not only has he a full discussion and analysis of the Code in the *Revue Biblique* for January of this year, but in the 5th of the *conférences* above referred to, he compares it in a most interesting way with the laws contained in the Pentateuch, especially with the so-called Book of the Covenant. The same subject is handled by Pfarrer J. Jeremias in a brochure entitled *Moses und Hammurabi* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, price 70 pfennigs). In the latter we have first of all a concise account of the discovery of the diorite block with the Code by the French expedition at Susa in the end of the year 1901, and a description of the stone and the character of the inscription. This is followed by a general account of the degree of civilization and the state of society disclosed by the enactments of the Code, after which there is a more detailed specification of its enactments on particular points. Of most interest are the sections dealing with the Pentateuch, especially the Book of the Covenant, in the light of Hammurabi's Code. There are no fewer than twenty-four enactments in which the latter exhibits certain or almost certain analogies with the Book of the Covenant. The comparison with the latter and with the Priests' Code discloses,

indeed, many points where Hammurabi from a religious and ethical point of view is inferior to 'Moses.' On the other hand, as Père Lagrange shows, there are departments where the Book of the Covenant preserves ruder and more primitive usages than the Code of Hammurabi, which is adapted to an advanced civilization. The general outcome of the whole appears to be that 'Moses' is not *directly* indebted to Hammurabi, but that both codify long-established usages. The giving of the law by God to Moses at Sinai will probably have to be interpreted by some less literally now that they read the similar claim made by Hammurabi to have received his Code from Shamash. Much must be allowed to Oriental figures of speech in such matters. But the great fact will remain that Moses was guided to select a body of laws great or small, for which a special divine approval and sanction can be claimed, and which became the basis of all further development. We are thoroughly at one with Dr. Jeremias when he writes: 'I confess with satisfaction and joy that the discovery and the contents of the Code of Hammurabi have deepened my conviction of the divine character of the Torah.' And where, it may be asked, do such discoveries as this leave us with regard to the literary criticism of the Pentateuch? Just where all sober cautious critics were before. The conclusions of literary criticism as to the date of our documents *in their present shape* have not been shaken, and are not likely to be shaken by any archæological evidence. And if the latter shows more and more convincingly that the materials of which these documents are made up have a long history behind them, what is this but what Old Testament critics like Dr. Driver (cf., e.g., *L.O.T.*⁶, p. 142 f.) have all along been telling us?

Miscellaneous.

Two works of interest on Jeremiah have come to hand. One of these is by W. Erbt on *Jeremia und seine Zeit: Die Geschichte der letzten fünfzig Jahre des vorexilischen Juda* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr; Glasgow: F. Bauermeister, price M.8). Not only are the usual questions regarding the life and activity of the prophet carefully handled, but the passages that are believed to be original are given in their proper place, with a German translation and a transliteration and accentuation

of the text after the scheme of Sievers. The other work is one of the series entitled 'Die poetischen und prophetischen Bücher des Alten Testaments: Uebersetzungen in den Versmassen der Urschrift.' It is a translation by Professor Duhm (*Das Buch Jeremia*, übersetzt von B. Duhm. Tübingen: Mohr; London: Williams & Norgate, price 2s. net) of the text of Jeremiah, with three distinctive forms of type to indicate: (1) what belongs to Jeremiah and Baruch; (2) the supplementary matter; (3) minor glosses and interpolations, as well as the excess of the Hebrew over the Greek text.

All students of Scripture will be interested in the *Kurzes Bibelwörterbuch* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr; London: Williams & Norgate, price M.10.50). The articles are concise but thoroughly satisfactory, and supply all that most readers will want, although, of course, those who wish to go minutely into a subject will require to consult larger works. The editorship is in the competent hands of Professor Guthe of Leipzig, whose coadjutors are—Professors G. Beer of Strassburg, E. Kautzsch of Halle, C. Siegfried of Jena, the late A. Socin of Leipzig, A. Wiedemann of Bonn, H. Zimmern of Leipzig. These names are a sufficient guarantee of the excellence of the work. The Dictionary is copiously illustrated, and contains two maps, of which the one at the end deserves special commendation.

Professor Bertholet of Basel is rapidly coming to the front as one of our authorities on Comparative Religion. We have to thank him heartily for the very interesting little work, *Die Gefilde der Seligen* (Tübingen: Mohr, price 60 pfennigs), in which he gives an instructive account of the manifold conceptions that have been formed by mankind regarding the Fields of the Blessed. Professor Bertholet's tractate covers a wide field, and has the merit of being at once thoroughly scientific and perfectly popular.

The last issue of 'Der Alte Orient' we have received has for its subject *Die alten Ägypter als Krieger und Eroberer in Asien* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, price 60 pf.). When we mention that it is from the pen of the author of *Asien und Europa*, W. Max Müller, we have said all that it needs by way of commendation.

Lic. Dr. O. Procksch has done well to publish the volume entitled *Geschichtsbetrachtung und geschichtliche Ueberlieferung bei den vorexilischen Propheten* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, price M. 5. 50). The volume, which is dedicated to Professor Buhl, and which owns special obligations also to Professors Guthe, Giesebrecht, and Jacobsen, will be found of interest by O.T. students of every school.

We have to notice, finally, a new periodical, entitled the *Biblische Zeitschrift*, to be published

quarterly by the Herdersche Verlagsbuchhandlung (Freiburg im Breisgau), at an annual cost of 12 marks. The magazine, which is under the same management as the (Roman Catholic) *Biblischen Studien*, will no doubt, like the latter, take a high place amongst such literature. Amongst the articles of note in the opening number we may mention those on 'Ekklesiastes und Ekklesiasticus' by Dr. Norbert Peters, and on 'Salomons Tempelweihe' by Dr. v. Hummelauer.

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Ezekiel's Vision of the Temple.

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IN a former series of papers (THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, May–August 1898) Ezekiel's temple was studied from the point of view given by himself, which is plainly intended to enable us best to understand the whole vision in chaps. 40–48. In chap. 43¹² we read, 'This is the law of the house; upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy. Behold, this is the law of the house.' The original distinction between the holy place and the most holy has ceased to exist. The veil has been rent, or has been taken away, and every worshipper, or at all events every priest, has now free access to the innermost part of the sanctuary, since every place is now most holy. And now that there are no longer privileges reserved for one chamber, which is most holy, the vision no longer shows us a high priest, an ark with its mercy-seat, an annual day of atonement, and a year of jubilee. There are also some other respects in which it is natural that this temple, whose holy place and most holy place have become virtually one, dispenses with old arrangements. Enjoying the fulness of the Spirit's creative, enlightening, and cleansing work, it has no need of the laver, nor of the candlestick, nor of the distinction between the altar of incense and the table of shewbread. And certain changes emerge in the position and character of the priests, who are no longer named the sons of Aaron, nor the priests the sons of Levi, but the sons of Zadok.

It remains to take note of the religious services by this body of priests in this new temple.

1. The Mosaic law established three feasts, or as some translate the term, pilgrimage feasts: namely, the passover, connected with the feast of unleavened bread; the feast of weeks, or of the first-fruits of harvest; and the feast of ingathering, or the feast of tabernacles, better translated 'booths.' The only one of these which is explicitly named by Ezekiel (chap. 45²¹) is the passover; probably because this feast commemorated God's redemption of His people from Egypt by means of the tenth plague. Perhaps another influence leading the prophet to give such prominence to the passover was the resemblance between the safety of the people in the midst of the tenth plague, when they were marked with the blood of the passover lamb, and that of those in his vision (chap. 9⁴⁻⁶), who received the mark from the inkhorn of the man clothed with linen. But though Ezekiel does not name the feast of tabernacles, there is no doubt that it is this feast which he describes in chap. 45²⁵. In his brief notice he says nothing of the details given at length in Nu 29; he merely alludes to what he has said of the priest's and the prince's work at the passover, saying 'He shall do the like the seven days.' It is, however, quite unsafe to infer from his silence that he knew nothing of those details, or of the eighth day of the feast, or of the feast of weeks.