

## ARTICLE XI.

## CRITICAL NOTES.

## THE OLD SYRIAC VERSION OF THE LORD'S PRAYER: ITS RENDERING OF 'ΕΠΙΟΤΣΙΟΣ.

THE recent discovery of a MS. of the entire Curetonian Syriac Gospels has awakened fresh interest in the Syriac versions of the New Testament. A new edition of Dr. Murdock's translation has also appeared.<sup>1</sup> This is from the Peshito version, which, though certainly as early as the fourth century, is, in the general opinion of scholars, later than the Curetonian. Both these versions have been called in to aid in the interpretation of that much discussed word in the Lord's Prayer, *ἐπιούσιος*. Τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον, "our daily bread."

I wish to recall attention to the rendering found in the Curetonian or Old Syriac. The word in Hebrew characters is אַמְיָנָא, and may be Anglicized with Continental vowel sounds, *amīna*, showing its correspondence to the English *amen*. Our two questions are, of course, What is the meaning of the word? and What is the value of its testimony to the meaning of its Greek original?

The meaning of the Syriac word is sufficiently attested by its biblical usage. In the New Testament it is used once, adverbially, to translate *διὰ παντός*, "always a conscience void of offence" (Acts xxiv. 16); several times, *προσκαρτερώ*, "continued steadfastly" (Acts ii. 46); also *πικνός*, thine often infirmities" (1 Tim. v. 23); *προσμένω*, "continueth in supplications" (1 Tim. v. 5); *ἐκτενῶς*, "prayer was made without ceasing" [Rev. earnestly], (Acts xii. 5); *ἀδιδλευτος*, "remembering without ceasing" (1 Thess. i. 3). These examples, being outside of the Gospels, are from the Peshito version.

In the Old Testament, where *amīna* is of frequent occurrence, it regularly represents, often adverbially, the Hebrew אַמְיָנָא. It is found in every part of the Old Testament, except the Psalms, which are acknowledged to be peculiar. Thus Aaron's breastplate is a memorial "continually" (Ex. xxviii. 29). The burnt offering is "continual" (xxix. 42). The fire is to be "ever" on the altar (Lev. vi. 13). The shew-bread is "continual" (Num. iv. 7). Nine times in the twenty-ninth chapter of Numbers the word is applied to the "daily burnt offering." The eyes of the Lord are "always" upon the land of prom-

<sup>1</sup> The Syriac New Testament. By James Murdock, S. T. D. With an Historical Introduction, by Horace L. Hastings, and a Bibliographical Appendix, by Isaac H. Hall, Ph. D., Litt. D.

ise (Deut. xi. 12). Elisha passeth by "continually" (2 Kings iv. 9). The trumpets sound "continually" before the ark (1 Chron. xvi. 6). And so on in Ezra, Nehemiah, Proverbs, Isaiah ("continually upon the watch-tower," xxi. 8), Jeremiah, Ezekiel ("men of continual employment," xxxix. 14), Daniel, and elsewhere. I have verified more than sixty examples in which *amtna* translates תָּמִיד. The Syriac word, then, according to biblical usage, means continual, constant. The dictionaries, covering a wider than biblical usage, give the meanings, *stabilis, constans, assiduus, perpetuus*. The meaning, then, of the whole phrase would be, "Our constant supply of bread."

Next, what is the value of this testimony as to the meaning of *ἐπιούσιος*? Mr. Chase in his "Lord's Prayer in the Early Church" says: "It is difficult to see that it represents any probable meaning of *ἐπιούσιος*." Carrying out a suggestion of Dr. Cureton, he thinks that the Greek word, not being understood by the translator, was represented "by a classical phrase about bread in the Old Testament, slightly changed."<sup>1</sup> Now it is true that among the great variety of actions to which the Syriac word is applied in the Old Testament, it is two or three times applied to eating bread. Mephibosheth is to "eat bread continually at David's table (2 Sam. ix. 7, 10), and Jehoiachin "did eat bread continually" with the king of Babylon (2 Kings xxv. 29; Jer. lii. 33). These, so far as I can discover, are the only cases of association with ordinary bread. Twice, also adverbially, it is used of the shew-bread (Num. iv. 7; 2 Chron. ii. 4), but I can find no example of its use as a *descriptive epithet* of bread. Even if we assume, perhaps ungraciously, that the translator was in serious doubt, it is hard to see how his mind would be influenced much by any "classical phrase about bread in the Old Testament."

Without admitting any presumption against the Syriac rendering, in estimating its value I would say:—

1. The rendering is simple and clear, and betrays no wavering and no effort to solve an etymological difficulty. In this last respect it is in contrast with the Peshito rendering, which means "bread of our necessity." This seems like an attempt to carry out a certain theory of the etymology of the Greek word, viz., that it is compounded of *ἐπι* and *ούσια*, the latter meaning *essence*, that which is essential, then that which is necessary, or *ούσια* meaning *existence*, as is advocated by Cremer in his *Lexicon*, and the compound adjective meaning "for, i. e., necessary for, existence." The Jerusalem Syriac rendering seems to have a similar origin—"bread of our abundance," *ούσια* having the sense of *substance*, then wealth, abundance.<sup>2</sup> We have a striking—I might say, huge—example of this kind of translation in Jerome's *supersubstantialem*, rendered in the Wyclif Testament "over other substance," though in Luke Jerome left standing—or others restored—the Old Latin *cotidianum*. In contrast with all this, the Old Syriac gives a simple, intelligible word that

<sup>1</sup> The Lord's Prayer in the Early Church. By Frederic Henry Chase, B. D. p. 51. In the Series of Texts and Studies, Cambridge University Press.

<sup>2</sup> I know nothing at first hand of this version, but am indebted for the rendering given above, as for other favors, to my friend Dr. Isaac H. Hall.

has the appearance of being based on known usage, or on some ground other than philological reasoning.

2. Although *antina* does not indicate a conscious attempt at etymologizing, it distinctly supports the derivation of *ἐπιούσιος* from *ἐπιών*, the participle of *ἐπιεῖν*. This participle, in taking the suffix *-ιος*, would by regular euphonic changes become *ἐπιουσι-*, very nearly as its feminine becomes *ἐπιούσα*. We must distinguish, in meaning, the participle from the adjective. The ending *-ιος* is like the English *-y*. Compare "snowing" and "snowy." 'Ο *ἐπιών ἄπρος*, literally "the on-coming bread," might mean the next loaf that should come on the table, but *ὁ ἐπιούσιος ἄπρος* would mean, not the *next*, but, if we had such a word, "*next-y* bread," i. e., bread that we expect continuously, continually, the constant supply of bread. If the point be pressed that *ἐπιούσιος* is a very unusual word, and unlikely to arise in the way now supposed, the answer is that it comes from a very common participle by means of a suffix that is very common. The participle is so common that it is even used substantively, *ἡμέρα* being understood, for "the next day," *ἐπιούσα*. To illustrate again from English, if one should coin the word "*freez-y*," it might seem strange, and might never be adopted into the language, but it would be perfectly intelligible, so long as we say "freez-ing."

3. The Old Syriac rendering connects, indirectly, *ἐπιούσιος* with the Hebrew *למחר*. If the Septuagint and later Greek versions had translated this Hebrew word by *ἐπιούσιος*, no one would ever have doubted the meaning of the latter, and a world of discussion would have been saved. No such translation is found, but we do find that this one Syriac version makes *ἐπιούσιος* the equivalent of a well-known equivalent of *למחר*. This does not amount to much, but it is something. So far as it goes, it serves to identify the rare Greek word with a very common Hebrew word.

4. The early date of the Old Syriac version ought to be taken into account. Bishop Westcott places it in the second century. The fact that we hear only of the Gospels in this version points to a very early origin. Is it, then, improbable that the version reaches back into the influence of tradition, and that the Syriac rendering gives us a traditional meaning?

5. We may, I think, go further, if we go carefully. I assume that the speech of the Jews in the time of Christ was bilingual—Aramaic, or early Jewish Syriac, and Greek. This matter is fully discussed by Professor Hadley in Smith's Bible Dictionary.<sup>1</sup> For our present purpose it is sufficient to take the case of Paul speaking to the Jews in Jerusalem, as described in Acts xxii. He at once gained the attention of his hearers by speaking in Aramaic ("Hebrew tongue"). They evidently expected to hear him speak Greek. It seems that they would have understood him in either language, but the Aramaic pleased them. This may have been because the Aramaic was their national and domestic tongue, and they were more familiar with it. If this was true of the multitude in their chief city, it would be emphatically true of

<sup>1</sup> Vol. ii. p. 1590 (American Edition).

the dwellers in Galilee, and the country districts generally. It must be, therefore, that Jesus largely used the Aramaic in his teachings. The Lord's Prayer certainly was spoken by him in Aramaic, and may also have been spoken in Greek.

In regard to the bilingual character of this Prayer, two suppositions are possible. (1) Two forms of the Prayer may have existed side by side from the first. Then if *ἐπιούσιος* was in the Greek form, *amtna*, or some modification of it, would very likely have been in the other; so that both words would come down together, and a very early Syriac translator of the Gospel would find his word supplied by tradition. (2) The other supposition is that the prayer in Aramaic was strictly the original, but that the translation into Greek was made in Palestine, while both languages were familiar. Now a large part of the mystery of *ἐπιούσιος*, viz., its isolation in the language, will vanish, if we think of it as itself a translation. Translators are inclined to coin words.<sup>1</sup> But if the Greek word is a translation, where shall we look for its original? I would not for a moment entertain the idea that it came from the Curetonian version, but why may it not at some earlier time have come from the Aramaic, or popular Syriac, word which, in meaning if not in form, was afterwards represented by the Curetonian *amtna*?

It is pleasant to think that the rendering "daily bread" is not far from the meaning of the Greek original, as interpreted by the early Syriac. It came to us, no doubt, from the Old Latin *colidianum*, but this might come easily from the notion of continual. The affinity of "continual" and "daily" is well illustrated in the parallelism of the Received version of Psalm lxxii. 15.

"Prayer also shall be made for him *continually*,  
And *daily* [Rev. all the day long] shall he be praised."

With this may be fitly joined, from a modern Jewish Prayer-Book, the closing words of The Grace after Meals—"Thanks for the food wherewith thou dost feed and sustain us *continually* [the original is תמיד] every day and hour."

*Adelbert College.*

L. S. POTWIN.

## II.

### SEMITIC LITERARY NOTES.

A REVIEW of the products of recent Semitic study shows that there is not only no diminution, but on the contrary a steady increase of interest in the questions connected with Old Testament philology and criticism, and, in connection with the same and as a part of the same movement and endeavor, in the collateral and related lines of Semitic work. It may fairly be said, in re-

<sup>1</sup> The Septuagint abounds in new words, many of which, but not all, lived to find place in the New Testament.

spect to the variety of the results and the multiplicity of methods revealed in reaching them, that the past year has had no equal among the recent years of the revival of Semitic investigation.

Naturally the largest part of the material is connected with the Old Testament, and is important chiefly because of that fact. But in the reconstruction, of religious ideas and in the philological influence upon comparative religious study, important results have also been secured. In this connection it must be noted that the centre of the discussions in this department has changed, from the mere consideration of texts, manuscripts, and their interpretation, to the consideration of the ideas they represent, as in force at the time of their writing, and the bearing of this fact upon the natural history of religion. The Tell-el-Amarna tablets are a striking illustration of this fact. Important as they are in themselves, and interesting as affording a fair picture of the practices in vogue, of the relation of the Egyptian court to its subject dependencies, and of the diplomatic methods employed, the main question upon which they cast an almost decisive light is upon the possibility of extensive literary operations in Palestine and vicinity at that early period, among other peoples than those immediately concerned. To be sure, conservative scholars have hastened with a great many inferences to claim that their views have been confirmed, though it is a juster estimate to wait for more decisive data on some of the most contested points.

In America comparatively little has been produced that is either new or important, though there have been some notable advances made in the recognition and acceptance of the results of European scholarship. Germany continues to be the productive mother of the science, and to her we must look for our main results. French scholars have given us something too, but not very much. In England the battle rages most fiercely, because of the diversity of the conclusions which appear to be drawn from exactly the same facts. How this works out will appear in the examination of some of the more recent books.

The death of M. Renan removes from the ranks of Semitic scholars a figure who has laid the whole world under a large debt for his immense and erudite work in connection with the *Corpus*,—a work the magnitude of which only those who have carefully gone through it can fully appreciate. Although his position with reference to the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments was of the character described as "destructive" in the hands of experienced and well-trained men, their minds could not but feel a healthful impulse from contact with so ardent a nature as his. Renan was not only a critic, but a poet as well, and could not hold in check sufficiently for the purposes of the most enduring results in criticism his exuberant fancy and his restless and productive imagination. These two circumstances will always vitiate more or less the reliability of much that he wrote, but his suggestiveness and realistic appreciation of the genesis of religious ideas will always invest his books with an enduring charm. With familiarity his works lose their terrors for sober thinkers, just as the similar vagaries of Matthew Arnold are charming but harmless.

Perhaps the best symbol of the progress made in the past year is the appearance in English of a new edition of Schultz' OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY. Dr. Toy has justly remarked in the *New World* that this book is an example of "continuous and healthy evolution." He might have added, what is equally true, that it is an example of moderation and careful progress as opposed to unbalanced radicalism. Dr. Schultz' views with reference to the Hexateuch are now well known; though it is sufficient to say that his positions are yet in advance of the prevailing conservative American views. They are, however, in the main just, and are fairly representative of those of advanced conservatives. This work is perhaps as good an example as any of the change of base which we have already alluded to, namely, in the increasing preponderance given to the development of religious ideas and to the philological results as dependent and illustrative of these, rather than in themselves independent and conclusive evidence of historical setting and situation. His view of the relation of monotheism and prophecy is sound and fruitful, and it is this alone which can preserve the unity of the Israelitish religion. To be sure, the evidence is not always complete, but it is always suggestively forthcoming. His treatment of the religious ideas of the Old Testament is refreshing, in view of what we have been hearing so frequently of late concerning the character of the Jews and the real nature of their religious practices. It will be a healthful stimulus to Old Testament study with the right method prevailing in the acceptance of new ideas and the rejection of old ones.

Dr. Dillmann's KURZGEFASSTES EXEGETISCHES HANDBUCH ZUM ALTEN TESTAMENT, DIE GENESIS is another noteworthy book that has recently appeared. The five preceding editions have been fruitful and helpful, but this seems to make considerable advances upon them in many ways which in themselves are minor, but on the whole quite extensive. He is still firm in his adherence to what is substantially the Grafian theory, though concessions seem inevitable, together with the final adoption of the practical consensus of scholars with reference to the analysis of the primary sources. The work is characterized by the same minuteness and painstaking care that was the most striking characteristic which was impressed upon his pupils in the lecture room and *seminar*.

The publication of the remaining fragments of Wellhausen, while adding a considerable bulk in material of various value, gives us nothing new with respect to his well-known position or influence. The same may be said of Reuss's INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT and Renan's HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL. These are all parts of larger works, or continuations of old ones, which have been before the public a long time and are pretty generally known and understood.

The publication of Driver's INTRODUCTION seems to have been the beginning of a very considerable movement in England which for intensity has not been equalled by any recent discussion, unless it be that begun by Mr. Gore and his associates in the publication of "Lux Mundi" and the controversies which have grown out of it. This is especially interesting when we come to

Cheyne's book on the FOUNDERS OF OLD TESTAMENT CRITICISM, and hear the words which he has for Driver with respect to the advance and attitude of scholars in England, and their relation to the great body of the uncritical members of the church. Briefly stated, he accuses Driver of withholding from the public his (Driver's) own views, which Cheyne alleges to be as advanced as his own while printing less radical ones, in order to retain the confidence and support of conservative minded people. Whether Professor Cheyne's charges be true or untrue, it is not less significant that they should be made, and should be made so earnestly and with so much strenuousness. Professor Cheyne has himself advanced with marvellous rapidity and apparently without fairly weighing all the evidence or employing the same reasoning at all times. The same spirit is manifest in his criticism of Professor Sayce, which we must allow to be in the main true and well taken. Whatever may be Dr. Sayce's abilities as an Assyrian scholar,—and he certainly does rank with the leaders,—it is yet true that there are many signs which reveal a too great eagerness to "defend" accepted ideas, rather than fairly represent the results of Assyrian scholarship and let them have whatever effect they will. There is a golden mean between Professor Smith's notorious contempt for the Assyrian material and Professor Sayce's anxiety to stave off supposed dangers to traditional views. By all means let us have all the material, but let us have it without prejudgment as to what it must and shall prove. In this respect all of Sayce's work must be taken *cum grano*.

Cheyne's book will no doubt stir up other writers to reply. In his presentation of the work of American scholars we have another illustration of the singular inability of Englishmen to appreciate American conditions. Thus Dr. Briggs, of Union Seminary, and Professor Moore, of Andover Seminary, each of them receive a very much larger consideration than does Professor Toy, of Harvard, who in point of scholarship, and productive power, and original research has at the present moment no peer in America. This is not saying that from their relation to the American public, especially in the case of Professor Briggs, the former may not have been in the public eye more, but that the Harvard professor has been the most real and pregnant force in Semitic critical work in America for at least a dozen years or more.

In this connection we must note, in passing, Dr. Briggs' *THE HIGHER CRITICISM OF THE HEXATEUCH*. Here we have what perhaps is as fair a statement of the relation of the higher criticism to the divine character of the revelation to Israel as can be produced. Without yielding the ground to the naturalistic theory of development, he yet explains the growth of the ideas of the Old Testament, the Hexateuch in particular, and shows how it can be traced back to Moses himself, substantially, and may with perfect propriety be called Mosaic. This does not prevent his acceptance, for the most part, of the conclusions of other leading scholars in the world. It does, however, meet the scientific necessities of the case, and give what is at once a rational and yet an evangelical conception of the writings in question. This is not the place to go into details, or to state what objections may be fairly brought against Dr. Briggs' views where these are distinctly his own, but it is just to state

that this is to our judgment somewhere near the true line of deliverance, and will serve as a suggestive beginning for a larger development along the lines which Dr. Briggs has laid down.

The publication by the British Museum of the Tell-el-Amarna tablets deposited there is another one of the evidences of the worth of just such institutions. The work itself is handsome, and of great value because it enables Assyrian scholars everywhere to examine practically at first hand the original material. The importance of this discovery has recently been set forth in this magazine with great fulness. Probably no one discovery in recent years has had so great an influence in the adjustment of theories of Semitic national and linguistic development. In the light of these tablets, and of the state of international relations and civilization which they reveal, not a little of all that has been written in the past twenty-five years becomes ridiculous. It is but another of those admonitions which archæological science and effort is constantly giving to scholars not to be in too great haste in the formation of conclusions, since a day's work in the proper place may overturn whole half-centuries of conjecture. This occurrence both in the Old Testament and New Testament departments so very recently, should at least tend to eliminate the positive and final tone of some critics on the questions at issue. Pastors will find in the examination of this material much suggestion for both doctrinal and expository sermons which cannot but be very stimulating and interesting.

In this same connection one cannot but regret the unhappy differences between Messrs. Rassam and Budge, both eminent in Semitic scholarship, culminating in a libel suit against the latter which did not help the matter very much in its conclusions. The labor of securing the remains of valuable material from the Orient is at best attended with great hardship and sometimes peril. It is very unfortunate that some of the workers have been more anxious for their own reputations than that the material should find the light, and in this respect have followed the example of an American scientist who is said to have destroyed hundreds of valuable specimens in Colorado which he was unable to carry away with him, lest they should fall into the hands of rival experts in the same line. We have been told that hundreds of cuneiform tablets lie buried on the banks of the Euphrates, planted there by an American who proposes sometime to get them, but who, if he had been more devoted to pure science than to his own reputation, might have caused them to see the light long ere this.

In the June issue of the *Transactions of the Society of Biblical Archæology* there was an article of great interest, by Mr. William Simpson, on the "Tower of Babel and Birs Nimroud," which was very suggestive, and full of material for a further study of the Mesopotamian Tower Temples and of the interesting comparisons which he there presents. Mr. Simpson's own researches in China and India gave him abundant knowledge to draw from, and altogether this article is the most interesting thing we have seen on the subject.

A late book of the year, and one which is worthy of careful reading, is Klostermann's *DER PENTATEUCH*. Dr. August Klostermann is professor in

the University of Kiel, and his book is of a pungent and breezy character, especially the appendix to the first chapter, on the "Necessity of the Conjectural Criticism to Biblical Exegesis," in which, by the way, he adds an interesting little section to the Driver-Cheyne controversy, to which reference has already been made. He discusses with considerable vigor in his opening chapter the "Fundamental Mistakes of the Current Pentateuchal Criticism," and makes in the course of the same an earnest plea for his own literary historical method which is not without a certain force. He then discusses much of the stock material of this discussion, that on the Song of Moses having special interest, and finally lays down what he conceives to be the "Safe Starting-Point" (*Sichere Ausgangs-punkt*) in this criticism. It is a book well worthy of study, especially since the standpoint is not the conventional one in Pentateuchal criticism.

From the same author is the first of a series of Hebrew-German texts with Critical Notes, the subject being the "Deutero-Isaiah." The design of these little volumes is very good, and they are just the thing for students who are desirous of a manual of small compass in which a good text and German translation, together with notes of a helpful and useful character, are appended.

The second part (to *Epainos*) of Hatch and Redpath's CONCORDANCE TO THE SEPTUAGINT is out, and is a work of monumental industry and utility. Undoubtedly there is a very much larger use of the Septuagint to be made in the search after the Old Testament text, and such a concordance as this will help greatly toward it. Indeed a critical edition of the Septuagint itself, with notes and parallel readings from the Masoretic text, would be invaluable as a time saver and reference volume. The enormous labor requisite to this work can only be understood when it is remembered that in numberless cases the very words themselves are matters of grave doubt and discussion. The late Dr. Hatch's minute carefulness is everywhere evident, and it is regrettable that the remaining parts will not pass under his own eye.

The publication of the first number of the Johns Hopkins edition of the "Sacred Books of the Old Testament" in Hebrew is elsewhere noticed in these pages. We will only add that special interest awaits the forthcoming number on Ezekiel from Professor Toy, and that on the Psalms from Wellhausen.

In the recent numbers of the *Biblical World*, Professor T. H. Root, of the University of Chicago, has some very interesting articles on the "Self-Consciousness of Jesus" which are interesting ventures into a field that is by no means well worn, if indeed it may be thus spoken of at all. Jesus was a Jew, with the common consciousness of the Jewish nation of his time. We have recently pointed out that one of the important departments of the study of the Semitic life and development which must receive larger attention in the future was psychological. The part that the "Aryan" consciousness has played in the Indo-Germanic development has been abundantly commented upon, and a similar investigation is needed in the same direction of the Semitic consciousness. How far the self-consciousness of Jesus was Semitic, and how far, if at

all, Greek, will be a fruitful study. Mr. Root discusses the subject more especially from the philosophical point of view, but there is an important fund of data to be secured from the philological elements in the question.

An interesting experiment in a direction where the same will be greatly appreciated is Dr. Archibald Duff's OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY, which might better be called by its second title, however, *The History of Hebrew Religion from the Year 800 B. C.* The plan to be carried out in this work, which by the way is to be followed by other volumes continuing the subject, is not merely to trace the history, genesis, and form of the documents through which this history has come down to us, but to reproduce, so far as may be, the subjective conditions under which the Hebrew of the period worked out his religious life. This is, it seems to us, very effectively done, though there is throughout a trace of the assumption and use of ideas which properly belong to the New Testament period. The David revelation which plays so important a part in Dr. Duff's scheme as leading up to the ideas of the prophet Amos is not to our thought so clearly established as it is here presented, though the idea in the main is undoubtedly soundly based. It will be interesting to see how the conclusions which are here set forth will be made to harmonize with the later books, and the progress of thought and the regular development of religious ideas still be preserved.

An instructive book on this general subject is Dr. George Matheson's DISTINCTIVE MESSAGES OF THE OLD RELIGIONS, which, though popularly written, has in it nevertheless some of the most suggestive ideas on the comparative religious development of the world we have seen anywhere. It seems more and more incredible that the religion of the Jews in particular, and of the Semitic peoples generally, should be absolutely unique and have no points of contact and assimilation with the remaining of the pre-Christian faiths. The universality of Christianity would seem to require a power which is at once able to overcome and embody whatever of permanent truth is lying dormant in the ancient faiths. Yet Christianity is a Semitic religion, and as an historical outgrowth from Judaism must have received not a little of its assimilative power from Judaism. This idea is further suggested when the progress of thought from the earlier to the later prophets can be clearly seen to be an advance from provincial or national religion to universal religion. Undoubtedly Greek thought and the Greek forms which Christianity assumed early in its history had much to do with the speedy and revolutionary acceptance of Christianity in the first three centuries. It is always to be remembered, however, that its progress was made as a variant from the religion of the Hebrews; the Romans at first hardly perceiving any difference between Christianity and Judaism. Indeed, had that difference been known and recognized, it is extremely doubtful if the gospel could have received so extensive a hearing as it did, or have found the immense opportunity for its full presentation which Paul everywhere enjoyed in the synagogues of the Jews.

Dr. Matheson says that the "Semite is distinguished from the Aryan by the predominance of the sense of mystery." And working from this notion

upward, he holds that the message of Judæa to the world is one of the "inwardness of the religious life," quite contrary to the prevailing opinion that it was chiefly a religion of ritual and external form. This conception is both right and wrong. In his earliest stages the Semite has no more spiritual conception of religion than the Aryan, while there are many things to indicate that he was bound by an external code which was rigorously imposed and enforced. Dr. Smith has abundantly shown this in his "Religion of the Semites." But the underlying idea of kinship between the worshipper and the deity gave an inwardness to the ceremonial which is decidedly unique when we examine how the conceptions of God and Man were evolved by other peoples. The great superiority of the Hebrews and the reason for their earlier development of spiritual religion are due to the fact that the national consciousness of sin apparently reached national recognition among them first, and with this came the ethical religious sense which set in motion the whole machinery of an organized religious life based upon sin. The great questions of critical research in the future will not deal so much with form as with matter. In Dr. Mathe-son's book there is a notable lack, namely, a discussion of the religion of Assyria and Chaldea, which he omits for the reason stated in the preface, that the material is hardly in shape to warrant any generalizing and he is unwilling to go into the region of conjecture where data are wanting. The spirit which prompted this omission is creditable, but in point of fact there is already sufficient material at hand for a reconstruction of the Assyrian religious life. The Izdubar epic, with its story of the flood, the prayers to the goddess Ishtar, the structure of the Assyrian pantheon with a classification of the gods and their duties, are not only suggestive, but constitute a fairly abundant quantity to warrant a history of the religious life and ideas of the Tigris-Euphrates valley. Professor Sayce, we believe, has issued a small volume on the subject. But there is need that these ideas with a critical comparison of the same with the similar ideas of the Old Testament should find full and careful exposition. We venture to say that the spirit of the penitential psalms will be found as keenly sensitive and as sadly eloquent in some of the Assyrian prayers as anywhere in literature.

Another great need is a good but compact History of Arabic Literature. Arbuthnot's "Arabic Authors," which appeared a year or two ago, was well enough in its way, but by no means what is needed for students and others who wish a general survey of what Arabic literature has to offer to the literary student. This is especially true if we are to be compelled finally to revise our notions of Semitic sacrifice after the conceptions derived from modern bands of roving Bedouins, as Professor Smith seems to suggest. It will give great light certainly to the interpretation of many Old Testament customs which are now very greatly misunderstood.

A. A. BERLE.

*Boston, Mass.*