

*SURVEY OF RECENT BIBLICAL LITERATURE.*

DURING the last few months Biblical literature has received some additions of permanent value. Dr. Swete has completed the manual edition of the Cambridge Septuagint, of which the first volume appeared in 1887. In this last volume we have the Prophets, such books of the Apocrypha as were not given in the second volume, the Psalter of Solomon, and the Old and New Testament Canticles. For the Prophets, the Vatican MS. has been followed. For the Books of the Maccabees, the editor has used the Codex Alexandrinus, as it alone, among ancient Uncials, contains them all. In Daniel the text of the LXX. is preserved in only one cursive, and that not of earlier date than the ninth century, and as the version of Theodotion was used even before Jerome's time in preference to the LXX., Dr. Swete has given both versions. The editor puts on record his indebtedness to three scholars who showed intense interest in the beginning of this great work, but did not live to see its completion, Dr. Hort, Prof. Bensly and Prof. Robertson Smith, but especially to Dr. Nestle, who generously volunteered to collate the whole of the sheets of the Prophets with the photographs of the Vatican MS. And every reader of this beautiful and handy edition will not only feel grateful to Dr. Swete for the enormous toil involved in its preparation, but will join with him in thanking the officers and workmen of the Cambridge University Press.

Attention has already been called by Archdeacon Farrar in these pages to *A Translation of the Four Gospels from the Syriac of the Sinaitic Palimpsest*, by Agnes Smith Lewis, M.R.A.S. (Macmillan & Co.). It need now only be said that apart altogether from questions of text and orthodoxy, this volume is of great interest to the student of the N. T., and gives us what has long been a desideratum, a handy reproduction in English of the Syriac version of the Gospels. The introduction contains an interesting account of the finding of the MS., and some remarks upon the evidence which exists for our Lord's speaking Aramaic. These remarks might with advantage be amplified.

Some months ago the second (American) edition of Prof. De Witt Burton's *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses in New Testa-*

ment Greek, was recommended to students. This second revised and enlarged edition is now issued by Messrs T. & T. Clark, of Edinburgh. It need only again be said that it is far the most elaborate treatment of the subject we have, and is in all respects most satisfactory. If the student begins to use it, he will never allow it to be far from his hand.

Along with this Syntax should be bound up, or at any rate read, the fifty pages *On the rendering into English of the Greek Aorist and Perfect* by Dr. R. F. Weymouth, the editor of the useful "Resultant Greek Testament." This pamphlet conclusively shows that our simple past cannot always be used as the equivalent of the Greek Aorist, and also that the revisers of our English version have far too frequently proceeded on the assumption that it does, greatly to the detriment of the R.V. Some years ago Prof. Beet, with much careful scholarship, arrived at the same results in the pages of this magazine. It is a point deserving of attention, and Dr. Weymouth is to be congratulated on his clear exposition. This treatise first appeared in the *Theological Monthly*, and is now published by Mr. David Nutt.

Through the neglect of the very points illustrated by Dr. Weymouth, the value of a recent work is much lessened, *The Greek Tenses in the New Testament with a rendering of the Gospels*, by the Rev. P. Thomson, B.D., Dunning (Edinburgh, J. Gardner Hitt). Notwithstanding this error, much may be learned from Mr. Thomson's translation. From the very nature of the case it is pedantic, but the apparent pedantries and overdone accuracies call attention to the precise meaning, if they do not always give us the best English as a rendering.

To his complete and satisfying edition of the Book of Enoch, Mr. R. H. Charles has added a most scholarly edition of the *Ethiopic Version of the Hebrew Book of Jubilees*. The Clarendon Press publish it as part viii. of the Semitic series of the *Anecdota Oxoniensia*. As the Book of Enoch represents the apocalyptic and mystical side of Pharisaism about the time of Christ, the Book of Jubilees is the chief monument of the legalistic Pharisaism of that period. Hence its importance. The book was originally written in Hebrew, as Mr. Charles conclusively proves, and it is virtually a Haggadistic commentary on Genesis. And as the Ethiopic version, although made from the Greek translation,

is slavishly literal, it becomes an important witness to the Hebrew text of Genesis which was current in Palestine during the century immediately preceding the Christian era. There are four MSS. of the Ethiopic, and upon the two best of these, with reference to the others where needful, Mr. Charles founds his text. But with the undaunted industry of the true scholar he has availed himself of other materials, less obvious and requiring the trained caution and perception of a critic if they are to be advantageously employed. To the delegates of the Clarendon Press all acknowledgment is due for the encouragement they give to research by publishing so costly and probably unremunerative a volume.

The cordial welcome which has been accorded to Dr. James Denney's *Studies in Theology* (Hodder and Stoughton), is no warmer than that remarkable book deserves. The secret of this welcome is mainly to be found in the confidence which is inspired in the reader. That he is in strong and honest hands he feels long before he comes to the last page, and reads: "I have spoken to you from my heart, telling you without ambiguity and without reserve how I have been led to think and feel about [the great things of God]." Nothing is more needed at present in theological discussion than a frank seriousness. We have had too much of tentative speculation: Dr. Denney recalls us to a theology that has been tested and has been found substantial. For such a task wide and exact knowledge, great mental capacity, and force of character were necessary; and of all these we find abundant traces in these *Studies*. No one, however opposed to the old theology, can throw this book aside as unimportant. We feel that this man has earned a right to speak. He knows what has been said and what can be said. To many it will be a rare satisfaction and renewal of faith to find so well-equipped and competent a theologian standing in the old paths.

There will be, however, some who cannot give to this dogmatic treatise the same unqualified admiration they have given to the Author's exegetical writings. Throughout the volume we are haunted by the uneasy feeling that the manifest strength and confidence of the writer is due to the fact, not certainly that he does not know the objections which would tend to modify his statements, but that he has not allowed them due weight. In the chapter on "Man and Sin," for example, he very much takes for granted that man is not a part of nature; but is not this precisely the

point which at present requires to be proved? That the Bible teaches that man is not a part of nature, we know; but what we wish to know is, how this squares with scientific knowledge. Again, in expounding the substitutionary character of the Atonement, Dr. Denney would have made more converts had he not only shown that this is the Scriptural view, but also shown a fuller sympathy with other views which have been held by good men and good theologians. He betrays unexpected forgetfulness or lack of his usual perception when he asks: "In what way can the death of the righteous be an advantage to the unrighteous in virtue of its relation to their sins, unless the divine condemnation of those sins which kept them at a distance from God, fall on the righteous and be exhausted there, so that it is no longer a separate and repellent power for them?" That question can easily be answered, and it has been answered satisfactorily again and again.

This dogmatic tone, which here and there somewhat mars the reader's delight, is all the more surprising in a writer who holds Dr. Denney's doctrine of Scripture. As we read his discussions and recognise that he in each case seems satisfied when he has shown that this or that is the teaching of Scripture, we are prepared to hear him enunciate a very stringent doctrine regarding the authority of the Bible. But, on the contrary, he enounces the purely subjective criterion of authority, and in order to square this with his enforcement of Apostolic teaching, he makes what will seem to many a quite unwarranted statement regarding the extent to which the death of Christ has been regarded as expiatory.

But after all deductions these *Studies* remain one of the most forcible and important contributions to theology. They are timely, and they are so well written that persons who instinctively turn with repugnance from such discussions will be interested. They are the work of a man who is at home in the philosophical ideas which enter into theology as well as with the leading systems of our own and other times. Dr. Denney's volume is one which once read will be often read. It is representative, and not only shows what one master in theology holds, but also demonstrates the reasonableness and solid foundation of traditional beliefs.

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