

And after all is told, there comes a most useful epitome of the events, places, dates, and other matters in the Gospels.

**PAULINE THEOLOGY.** By H. L. HASTINGS. (*Stock*. Crown 8vo, pp. 96. 1s.) It is a singular thing that Conditional Immortality has made so little progress amongst us compared with Universalism. It has certainly far more to say for itself, both biblically and philosophically. This little book is in favour of Conditional Immortality. Its author is quite well and favourably known as the author of many anti-infidel writings, and the editor of the *Christian* of America.

**REVELATION AND THE BIBLE.** By R. F. HORTON, M.A. (*Unwin*. Crown 8vo, pp. xiv, 412. 3s. 6d.) A new edition of Dr. Horton's book is no surprise. For it is an honest and earnest attempt to answer the questions that thousands of thinking persons are asking. That it is not a final answer to these questions would not hinder its circulation, and need not hinder our appreciation. Dr. Horton does not claim that it is. He knows and says that it is not. His complaint, therefore, that some have come to curse it, is reasonable. No doubt it is always

dangerous to suggest difficulties, and half our religious difficulties are suggested by others, not discovered of ourselves. But a man must write for those he knows, and Dr. Horton is surrounded by men who feel these difficulties keenly. He has helped these men. There is no record that he has hindered any. Let us therefore, as he properly suggests to us, either go and do better, or leave him alone to do his best. Dr. Horton's book is not final, but it is a stepping-stone to higher things. He himself will reach them yet, and give us something final.

**PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND. THIRTY YEARS' WORK IN THE HOLY LAND.** (*Watt*. Crown 8vo, pp. 256. 3s. 6d.) This is the third edition of the book. Each edition adds some years' work and several pages to the volume. Now it is the easiest introduction to the great subject of Palestinian Exploration, and the best résumé of its results. Then there is a useful index, and having it we may refer to the place we wish to know about, and find the latest and most reliable information about it. The illustrations are numerous, and art is not allowed to rub all their accuracy away. It is a witness to the great work that has been done in Palestine, it is a witness to the greater work that yet remains.

## Requests and Replies.

In the *Quarterly Statement* of the Palestine Exploration Fund for October 1888, there is a most interesting description of the discovery of the site of the Pool of Bethesda. Then in the *Expositor* for February 1893, the Dean of Armagh refers to that discovery as finally settling the question of the site. Can you tell me if scholars in general agree with the Dean?—D. F.

THE questions connected with the site of the Pool of Bethesda have not yet been finally settled. They remain very much as they were when Mr. Schick wrote his report on the discoveries made in 1888. Those discoveries proved the existence beneath the rubbish of the pool, called 'Probatina Piscina' in the twelfth century, which is clearly described by John of Würzburg. It was known that such a pool had existed, but its character was unknown, and it was supposed that all trace of it had disappeared. The excavations have not been complete or ex-

haustive, principally, it is believed, on account of the difficulty experienced in obtaining the permission of owners to excavate on their lands. It is, for instance, by no means certain at present that the second pool mentioned by Mr. Schick is ancient, and the limits of the pool over which the small church was built have not been defined. Some authorities identify Bethesda with the 'Souterrains' at the Convent of the Sisters of Zion, others with the pool described by Mr. Schick, and some still follow Dr. Robinson in placing it in the Kedron Valley at or near the Fountain of the Virgin. A summary of what is known and of the views of different authorities is given under 'Bethesda' in the new edition of vol. i. of Dr. Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*.

C. W. WILSON.

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My son, the other day, put to me the following dilemma. He comes in contact far more than you or I could do with people who have got hold of Bible difficulties:—

'You preach,' he said, 'salvation by *faith* in Christ. Faith in Him is the "one and only way." The Jews do not believe in Christ at all—they reject Him. They are the descendants of God's ancient people. Do you mean to tell me that from the Crucifixion till now, and on to the "ingathering," all the countless Jews who are still worshipping God after the manner of their fathers, but not believing in Christ, are hopelessly and eternally lost? If not so, then faith in Christ is not the only condition of salvation. If so,'—but I will not put down what he said. Perhaps it was only the echo of what those had said who put the dilemma before him. If you have time, what would you say?—T. F.

It is said the Jews, while rejecting Jesus Christ, worship God 'after the manner of their fathers.' Are all the Jews, after the Crucifixion, hopelessly lost? If not, 'faith in Christ is not the only condition of salvation'—'the one and only way.'

It is incorrect to suppose modern Jews equal to those of the Old Testament because the former 'are still worshipping God after the manner of their fathers,' inasmuch as, since the advent of Christ, the Jews resist the claims and credentials of Jesus as 'the Christ, the Son of the living God,' which their Old Testament fathers never did. There may be Jews who have no more power or opportunity to believe in Christ than have the inaccessible heathen. But the Jews who 'reject' Christ are in a different category, and will have to answer for rejecting Him.

Faith in Christ is part of the evangelical message, and is the sole condition of salvation only within the area actually covered by the message. Such faith as the condition has no fitness or place, and indeed is unintelligible where the other parts of the message cannot be known. 'He that believeth . . . shall be saved' is inapplicable apart from the instruction, 'Preach the gospel' (Mark xvi. 15, 16). That is, wherever the gospel is preached, faith in Christ is the condition of salvation. From the nature of the case it cannot be the condition where Jesus Christ is unknowable. The benefit of the redeeming work affects all the race; but the condition of faith is only coextensive with the preaching of Christ. In this respect 'there is no distinction between Jew and Greek.' 'How shall they believe in Him they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?' (Rom.

x. 12-14). Consequently to all to whom Christ is not offered, be they Jews, heathens, or Mohammedans, faith in Him cannot be the condition of salvation.

It is not easy, perhaps not possible, to say, beyond the intimation of Romans ii., what the condition is to those who have no opportunity of knowing the gospel. It may be some kind of moral choice, having in it the principle of faith, which is supremely ethical, and matter of free-will. It is inadmissible that men who, by reason of distance or insurmountable barriers of ignorance or training, have not the proposals of the gospel presented to their choice, will be judged by the terms of the gospel, and not according to their opportunity and freedom.

But with this idea, two others should be always associated: First, that in respect of any particular person, of any country or nationality, it is well that we are not judges of his deserts or doom, nor called upon to say whether he is saved or lost; for which, in fact, we have neither the adequate knowledge nor the authority; though, in the case of those who hear the gospel, we may plainly declare the conditions on which the result depends.

Secondly, we must not infer that the millions whose lives are spent outside the reach of Christian knowledge, or in an environment which virtually precludes a free choice of salvation, are fairly safe, and need not cause Christian people much anxiety, or make great demands on their self-sacrifice. Whatever the terms on which they will be judged, whatever grains of truth may be contained in their teaching, whatever be the possibilities of their salvation, the state of the non-Christian peoples abounds with sin and misery in the present world, and is fraught with dreadful peril for the world to come. Here is the danger of our falling into that easy-going humanitarianism which would leave Moslems, Jews, and heathens to the unspecified mercy of God, and counsel Christian people to discontinue their efforts to evangelize the world. M. RANGLES.

*Didsbury College, Manchester.*

Can any of your contributors recommend a trustworthy Introduction to the Study of the Talmud?—J. C.

I can confidently recommend Professor H. L. Strack's *Einleitung in den Talmud* (2te Auflage, Hinrichs, Leipzig, 1894) to J. C. as 'a trustworthy

Introduction to the Talmud.' Professor Strack's work, which is now in its second edition, is an enlargement of the article 'Talmud' contributed by him to the new issue of Herzog and Plitt's well-known *Realencyclopædie*. Within the compass of 135 pages, the author has succeeded, by vigorous condensation, in conveying a marvellous amount of information regarding the Talmud, its contents (about thirty pages being devoted to a synopsis of the whole sixty-three Mishna treatises), its history and characteristics, and also the authorities most frequently referred to. A special feature of this, as of all the works of this profound Hebraist, is the attention bestowed on the bibliographical sections, in which will be found full information as to the best editions and translations (so far as these exist) of both Talmuds, and as to the best helps for the study both of the Talmud as a whole and of the separate treatises of the Mishna. I may add, as a matter of interest to English students, that the *Einleitung* is dedicated to Professors Cheyne and Driver of Oxford, 'two scholars without guile.'

Edinburgh.

ARCH. R. S. KENNEDY.

I have been a subscriber to *The Expository Times* for two years, and have derived great benefit from it, but feel the need of knowing New Testament Greek, and would be much obliged if any of your correspondents would kindly inform me through the *Times* of the best and cheapest books to get. Also the best methods to pursue.

I am a Methodist lay preacher; my means are limited, so would have to regard price in any book which I may have to purchase.

I am entirely ignorant of New Testament Greek.

J. H. W.

Perhaps some scholar will indicate methods of study later. But to save time, let us mention at once that Mr. Murray published, in 1884, an excellent manual for beginners in New Testament Greek, by T. D. Hall, M.A. The price, we believe, is 3s. 6d. A smaller, but also admirable, work was published last year by the R.T.S. as one of their 'Present-Day Primers' (1s.). The author is Dr. S. G. Green. Then Mr. Kelly, of the Wesleyan Book-Room, announces as nearly ready *An Introduction to the Study of New Testament Greek* (3s.), by J. H. Moulton, M.A. Any of these should do. EDITOR.

## Sermonettes on the Golden Texts.

BY THE REV. R. C. FORD, M.A., GRIMSBY.

### A Helpful Memorial.

'Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.'—1 SAM. vii. 12.

THE spasmodic and local achievements of the judges did little to redeem Israel from the yoke of the Canaanites. By the pressure of their enemies and the silent influence of their surroundings they had been plunged into idolatry. At last they attempted to regain their freedom, but were defeated. They next brought the ark on to the battlefield, but were again defeated, and this time with the loss of the ark. Afterwards there followed twenty years of degrading servitude, though during this time Samuel was quietly preparing for freedom. At the end of that time they won a great victory on the old scene of their double defeat. In commemoration a stone was raised, on which the words of our text were inscribed.

I. WHAT THE MEMORIAL COMMEMORATED.—It was erected on a battlefield where they had been

twice defeated. Thus it reminded them of their own (1) Helplessness. Their most stupendous efforts had failed to deliver them. But it was also erected on a spot which had witnessed a great victory, won with God's help. It, therefore, also reminded them that (2) God was their Helper. They had used the ark as a fetich, and had been superstitious, but not religious. There are brigands who will cheerfully commit murder, but will not eat meat on Friday. Here the people had besought Samuel to plead with God for them, and he had prayed for them and sacrificed. Then came victory. The stone also commemorated (3) The Extent of their Victory. 'Hitherto' had the Lord helped them, *i.e.* as far as this place. It was a kind of border stone marking their advance on a former position.

II. HOW IT HELPED THEM.—They called it 'Help-stone.' In commemorating past help it proved a present help. (1) By keeping them from self-trust. It reminded them that in themselves