

It is always a mark of the power of a book when it has wrought some of its phrases into the popular speech of this world. What phrases are more common than 'A brand plucked from the burning' (iv. 11), and 'Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel' (iv. 12)? But I wonder how many people reflect that the sea-serpent—the welcome friend of every newspaper in the dull season—has its origin in Amos? (ix. 3).

The abiding value of the book for all time is

reserved for my last word. It places man's claim to favour with God in moral conduct, and not in external offerings, however magnificent. 'For thus saith the Lord unto the house of Israel, Seek ye Me, and ye shall live' (v. 4). 'Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live; and so the Lord, the God of hosts, shall be with you.' 'Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate' (v. 14-15). 'Let judgment roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream' (v. 24).

## Recent Foreign Theology.

### Among the Periodicals.

#### The Hittite Inscriptions.

IN the *Z.D.M.G.* (p. 441 ff.) PROFESSOR JENSEN publishes a transcription, translation, and explanation of Inscription I of Jerabis. The present article represents, as he himself remarks, the highest level he has yet reached in his interpretation of the Hittite Inscriptions. In some points of detail it shows deviations from Jensen's former results, but he claims that it marks a distinct advance which, owing to the scantiness of the material to work with, he would have considered impossible so recently as a year ago. The article is intended to serve not only as a justification of the favourable judgment already passed on Jensen's decipherments by Brockelmann and Zimmern, but as a reply to the diametrically opposite contentions of Sayce, Halévy, Messerschmidt, and Hommel. The reader is specially requested to judge of the probability of the results not merely from the translation of the Inscription, but also from the appended commentary. Jensen makes no claim to infallibility. Here and there he may have given a false reading or rendering of a word and yet be on the right track. At all events he claims to have distinctly inaugurated the work of decipherment, and protests against having the fruit of long years of hard toil treated with ridicule, especially by critics whom he accuses of lacking even a superficial acquaintance with the subject. The article is sure to receive abundant attention from the few scholars who are entitled to the name of experts on the Hittite

question, and it treats the whole subject so lucidly and in such detail that, like Hommel's article in the *P.S.B.A.*, which we noticed some time ago, it puts even a lay reader in a position to form something of an independent judgment on the matters in dispute.

#### The Unity of Obadiah.

IN the *Revue Biblique* of April last DR. CONDAMIN of Toulouse writes in defence of the unity of the short book of Obadiah. As is well known, the great majority of recent critics divide the book into two parts, the first nine or ten verses being reproduced from an early prophecy, which is quoted also (more freely) in Jer 49<sup>7-22</sup>, while the closing verses are held to be from the pen of an exilic or, more probably, post-exilic author. Condamin's paper is specially characterized by this, that it builds its conclusion as to the unity of the book upon the *rhythm* and the *strophic arrangement* which he thinks he can discover. He is led, further, to the decision that, in the passage common to both, Obadiah is quoted by Jeremiah.

#### The Sirach Controversy.

The latest issue of the *Jewish Quarterly Review* may well be called a 'Sirach number,' containing as it does no fewer than five articles connected with the Hebrew fragments of the book, besides a short note by Professor Cheyne on Sir 50<sup>9</sup>. Professor Schechter publishes, line by line, and page by page, with critical footnotes, a further fragment of Ben Sira, which belongs to a third MS., called for convenience' sake C. In the multiplicity of MSS

Schechter finds a further proof of the authenticity of the Hebrew fragments, and the relation between this MS. and A and B, as well as other considerations; lead him to express the hope that 'the assumption of a Persian version, with a whole string of romantic incidents accompanying the scribe who constantly corrected himself, will now die for good.'

Dr. E. N. Adler lately discovered amongst the numerous fragments from the Cairo *Geniza* a pair of leaves from the same MS. as Schechter and Taylor's A. In this way the hiatus, Sir 7<sup>20</sup>-12<sup>1</sup>, is now supplied. The new fragment is published by Adler in the same issue of the *J.Q.R.*, in facsimile, with transliteration and translation. He points out the important circumstance that 11<sup>28</sup> in the new fragment corresponds, with the exception of a single letter, with the form in which it is quoted in the *Sefer Ha-Galuy*, and remarks on the extraordinary and unexpected correspondence with the Talmud group of quotations in *Sanhedrin* and *Jebamoth*, of which some phrases do not occur at all in the Greek text. All this is, of course, regarded by Adler as strong evidence for the authenticity of the Hebrew text. 'That it is not a retranslation from the Syriac is made almost certain by its containing verses 28 to 32 of the eleventh chapter, which are altogether missing from the Syriac.'

A large part of the *Review* is occupied with an article by Professor Margoliouth against the

genuineness of the *Sefer Ha-Galuy* as a work of Saadya, with a defence by Harkavy.

Then, finally, comes an article entitled, 'Ecclesiasticus: the retranslation hypothesis,' by Mr. Tyler, who criticizes adversely the theory of Professor Margoliouth.

### The 'Rock' of Matt. xvi. 18.

Professor Schechter in the above number of the *J.Q.R.* has an extremely interesting article on 'Some Rabbinic parallels to the New Testament.' Amongst other instances the following is cited in illustration of Mt 16<sup>18</sup> (see also Taylor's *Sayings of the Jewish Fathers*,<sup>2</sup> p. 160): 'There was a king who desired to build, and to lay foundations he dug constantly deeper, but found only a swamp. At last he dug and found a *petra* [this is the very word the Rabbi uses]. He said, "On this spot I shall build and lay the foundations." So the Holy One, blessed be He, desired to create the world, but, meditating upon the generations of Enoch and the Deluge, He said, "How shall I create the world while those wicked men will only provoke me"? But as soon as God perceived that there would rise an Abraham, He said, "Behold, I have found the *petra* upon which to build and to lay foundations." Therefore He called Abraham "Rock," as it is said (Is 51<sup>1,2</sup>), "Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn. Look unto Abraham, your father."'

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## Thoughts from Tauler.

CHOSEN AND TRANSLATED BY CHARLOTTE ADA RAINY.

CHRIST is Love its very self, and as from a living spring, so floweth His Love unto us.

THAT which we desire to do, with a will sincere and Godlike, is accepted by God as if it had already taken place.

LOVE can love far more than Reason can understand, and Love can enter where Reason must remain without.

A PURE heart and conscience are a Requital of the life and sufferings of Jesus Christ, a beloved friend of the Holy Spirit, a sister of all holy

angels;—for to the pure all things are pure, and to the long-suffering nothing is hard or bitter.

THE Cup of Sorrow which God giveth is sweet, yea, desirable, for after it there followeth a gentle quieting of the heart, a good confidence, a hearty trustfulness, and a steady hope.

OUR good and faithful God hath created us for great things, and every day we are called thereunto by His Holy Word. . . . For, there is nothing He is so willing to give as *Himself*, and that in the highest and most perfect manner.