

Recent Foreign Theology.

Kautzsch on the Poetry of the Old Testament.¹

THE name of Professor Kautzsch of Halle is happily well known to the readers of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, as to most students of biblical and theological subjects in this country. His work on the Old Testament, its translation, its history, and its permanent significance, is valuable not only for the scholarship it displays, but for the sound judgment with which difficult questions are discussed and handled. Professor Kautzsch has paid somewhat special attention to the Psalms, and in the volume before us he gives an interesting, popular, and general account of the poetry and poetical books of the Old Testament. The substance of this short treatise was delivered in six lectures, intended rather for the educated layman than for the scholar. The author does not profess to bring forward any new contribution to the discussion of the many vexed questions which gather round his subject—unless it be in the pages which he devotes to recent theories concerning the Book of Job,—but the theme in itself is full of interest, and it is handled, one need hardly say, with clearness, skill, and discrimination.

The earlier sections of the book are devoted to a general discussion of the structure of Hebrew poetry, and the various kinds of poetical composition that have come down to us. Under the heading of Secular Poetry, Dr. Kautzsch describes the war-song, the epigram, the 'enigma,' the proverb, the dirge, and other short poetical types, of which specimens lie embedded in the Old Testament literature—from Lamech's song in Gn 4²³ to the elegy upon Saul and Jonathan in 2 S, and the 'taunting song' against the king of Babylon in Is 14. Next he deals very briefly with the collections of verse, such as the Book of Jashar and the Book of the Wars of Jehovah, of which traces are to be found in the historical books. Then the poetical books are handled separately: Psalms, Lamentations, the Song, the

Proverbs, and Job, though the author's limited space allows but a brief treatment of each.

Chief attention is naturally given to the Psalter. This is described as the prayer-book and hymn-book of the Jewish Church after the Exile, arranged for the edification of the community during that period, not for public use in the service of the temple only. Professor Kautzsch shows how impossible it is to trust the titles of the Psalms, and points out how some of the obvious mistakes of the compilers may have arisen. We cannot agree, however, with his view of the way in which David came to be regarded as a pious Psalm-writer, and throughout the author appears to us to minimize the value of early tradition. But in the main the account of the compilation of the Psalter corresponds with that which is now generally accepted by scholars. Some interesting remarks follow on the theology of the Psalter and its value for religion generally. The limits of the Old Testament dispensation are pointed out, especially as illustrated by the imprecatory Psalms and the apparent self-righteousness of the psalmists. Professor Kautzsch partly explains these latter features by interpreting the 'I' of the Psalms in a large number of instances, in a national, not a personal, sense. The purity and spirituality of the Psalter as a book of devotion for all ages receives full and reverent recognition.

In the exposition of the Song of Songs, recent theories—notably that of Budde—which made the book a mere bundle of fragments, a collection of popular songs sung at weddings by professional or amateur singers, like the *waf* in Syria to-day, are duly considered. But Kautzsch, while recognizing the difficulties attaching to almost every explanation of this fascinating but perplexing poem, is wisely inclined to emphasize its character as an artistic whole, though it may be one to which we have not yet fully succeeded in finding the key.

On the whole, though there be nothing specially new or striking in this *brochure*, it renders excellent service in giving a clear account in small compass of the poetical books of the Old Testament, viewed in the light of the best and most recent scholarship—which was precisely the aim which the esteemed author had in view.

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¹ *Die Poesie und die Poetischen Bücher des Alten Testaments.* Sechs Vorträge von E. Kautzsch, Professor der Theologie zu Halle. London: Williams & Norgate.

The Sibylline Oracles.

THE Greek literature of the first three centuries of the Christian Church is being edited under the direction of the Prussian Royal Academy in a way to put all other editions out of date. The most recent addition to the handsome series of volumes is *The Sibylline Oracles*,¹ and it is quite equal in textual scholarship to those which have gone before it. The editor is Dr. John Geffcken of Hamburg.

The story of the Sibylline Oracles is one of the most romantic in the history of literature. It begins with the well-known but ill-attested legend of the offer to some early king of Rome of certain oracular verses by a Sibyl. The verses were rejected as not worth the money; whereupon the Sibyl retired, destroyed part of them, and offered the remainder at the same price as before. They were again rejected. Again the Sibyl destroyed a part, and again she offered the remainder at the old price. At last the money was given and the Oracles were laid up for imperial consultation.

Did the Christian Church—for the Oracles Dr. Geffcken has to do with—are Christian literature—receive its oracles from Rome? What influence, then, had Rome in the development of early Christian theology and practice? It is one of the most intricate and interesting of Church History questions.

Roman or not Roman, the early Fathers believed in the originality of the Sibyls. When it was found that there were similarities between the Oracles and Homer, they had no hesitation in calling Homer the plagiarist, Tertullian going so far as to assert that the Oracles were the oldest literature in the world.

But Dr. Geffcken does not give himself to the deep discussion of these matters. Touching just what is necessary for his purpose, he spends his strength on the text. This he gives with utmost care and with much apparatus of footnote. And the text is so beautifully printed that it is a delight to read it.

The first volume of Professor Bovon's *Étude sur L'Œuvre de la Rédemption*² has appeared in a

¹ *Die Oracula Sibyllina*. Von Dr. Joh. Geffcken. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1902. M. 9. 50.

² *Théologie du Nouveau Testament*. Par Jules Bovon. Tome I. La Vie et L'Enseignement de Jésus. Deuxième édition revue et augmentée. Lausanne: Georges Bridel et Cie. Fr. 10.

new edition, revised and enlarged. It is the first of the two volumes which deal with the Historical Basis, and describes the Life and Teaching of Jesus. The success of this great work is very welcome to all students of theology. It is to be hoped that even more than it has yet done, the book will make its way in our own country. Teachers cannot afford to ignore it; and preachers will find it very stimulating and enriching.

The new edition of the *Grammar of New Testament Greek*³ by Dr. Blass will be welcomed on several grounds. It is a sign that the new study of the language of the New Testament—its study by aid of MSS and inscriptions—is making good progress. It is also an encouragement to men of great classical learning who are weary with translating Aristophanes' *Wasps* for the thousandth time to turn their attention to that mine of inexhaustible intellectual interest, the New Testament, whose language is as scientific as the most severely 'classical' model. When Professor Blass gave his mind to the study of New Testament Greek, he found his heart soon follow. And it is a boon to us all to have the very latest findings of so great a scholar on so important a subject for our study.

So far as we can gather, the corrections and additions in this edition are mostly to be found in Macmillan's English edition, which is so admirably translated by Mr. St. John Thackeray. Professor Blass read all the proofs of that edition and made his corrections and additions upon them.

BOOKS RECEIVED FOR REVIEW.

Wie predigen wir dem modernen Menschen? Eine Untersuchung über Motive und Quietive. Von Lic. theol. F. Niebergall. Tübingen: Mohr; London: Williams & Norgate. 3s. net.

Das Wesen des Christentums. Von Adolf Harnack. Akademische Ausgabe. Leipzig: Hinrichs. M. 1.

Jesus Christus und das gebildete Haus unserer Tage. Von Gustav Sorglich. Berlin: Schwetsche und Sohn. M. 80.

Le Magnificat, doit-il être attribué à Marie ou à Élisabeth? Par M. Lepin. Lyon: Em. Vitte.

Die evangelisch-lutherischen Freikirchen in Deutschland. Von Georg Froböss. Leipzig: Hinrichs. M. 60.

Histoire des Livres du Nouveau Testament. Par E. Jacquier. Tome I. Paris: Lecoffre. Fr. 3. 50.

³ *Grammatik des Neutestamentlichen Griechisch*. Von Friedrich Blass. Zweite verbesserte und vermehrte Auflage. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht; Glasgow: F. Bauermeister. M. 6.

Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten. Von Adolf Harnack. Leipzig: Hinrichs. M. 9.

Among the Periodicals.

The New 'Dictionary of the Bible.'

EACH of the volumes of the *Dictionary* has now been reviewed in the *Theol. Literaturzeitung* by Professor Schürer. We gave our readers some account of the former three reviews, and it will no doubt be of interest to them to hear Professor Schürer once more, on the work as a whole and on the last volume in particular. All the reviewer's notices have been discriminating, although commendation has always far outweighed censure. The notice of the fourth volume approaches very nearly to unmingled praise, Dr. Schürer apparently feeling that this is the most solid of the series.

It is natural that Dr. Schürer should start with a reference to the almost contemporary issue of the *Encyclopædia Biblica*. For thoroughness (*Gründlichkeit*) he considers that there is nothing to choose between the two publications, and if he finds the *Dictionary* unduly conservative in some matters, he admits that the *Encyclopædia* carries its criticism at times to the extreme of fantasy. 'English theology may be congratulated on being enriched with both these works at once.'

Starting with the Biblical Theology articles, the reviewer notes as a peculiarity (*Eigenart*) of the *Dictionary* that in some instances Biblical passes into Dogmatic Theology. This is the case, he considers, in 'Predestination' (Warfield), 'Reconciliation' (Adamson), 'Regeneration' (Bartlet), 'Resurrection' (Bernard), 'Righteousness in the N.T.' (Stevens), 'Salvation' (Brown), 'Sanctification' (Bartlet), 'Sin' (Bernard), 'Son of God' (Sanday). As examples of a more strict adherence to the Biblical sphere, he specifies 'Praise in the O.T.' (Selbie), 'Prayer' (Bernard), 'Prophecy and Prophets' (A. B. Davidson), 'Propitiation' (Driver), 'Psychology' (Laidlaw), 'Righteousness in the O.T.' (Skinner), 'Satan' (Whitehouse), 'Shekinah' (Marshall), 'Soothsayer' and 'Sorcery' (Whitehouse). Professor Driver's article 'Son of Man' is pronounced 'extremely careful, as one is accustomed to expect from this author.' The reviewer agrees with Mason, in article 'Power of the Keys,' that *bind and loose = forbid and permit*.

Passing to another category, Dr. Schürer passes a very warm eulogium on White's article 'Vulgate.' He adds that there are many other articles of the same kind (*e.g.* Strack's 'Text of the O.T.,' Nestle's 'Septuagint,' 'Text of the N.T.,' and 'Syriac Versions'), in which an admirable summary of the present condition of research is given by experts who have been for long familiar with their subject. Nestle's article on 'Sirach' is awarded the palm for interest among those dealing with the apocryphal books. It is especially in the articles belonging to the sphere of New Testament Introduction that Dr. Schürer finds the conservatism he deprecates. As instances he adduces Lock's articles on the Pastoral Epistles, and Plummer's 'Quirinius.' A notable and praiseworthy exception to the tendency he finds in Porter's 'Revelation.' Professor Ramsay's geographical articles receive the praise due to their author's knowledge of his subject. Dr. Schürer notes an interesting coincidence between his own conclusion (*G.J.V.*³ i. 559, 589f.) and that of Professor Ramsay (art. 'Pontus,' p. 16b), regarding the date of the marriage of Polemon II. with Berenice.

The articles on Archæology are pronounced 'careful and admirably informing.' As notable amongst these the following are selected: 'Poor' (Driver), 'Pottery' (Bliss), 'Priests and Levites' (Baudissin), 'Sabbath' (Driver), 'Sacrifice' (Pater-son), 'Sanhedrin' (Bacher), 'Scribes' (Eaton), 'Servant, Slave, Slavery' (Whitehouse), 'Shewbread' (Kennedy), 'Synagogue' (Bacher), 'Tabernacle' (Kennedy), 'Temple' (Davies), 'Time' (Abrahams), 'Unclean, Uncleaness' (Peake), 'Urim and Thummim' and 'Weights and Measures' (Kennedy), 'Writing' (Kenyon, 'at present one of the first authorities on the subject'). Special praise is bestowed upon the article 'Synagogue,' whose author, Professor Bacher, 'combines with historical sense and scientific training a rare acquaintance with the ocean of Rabbinical writings, so that he has been able to bring forward many new details even on this subject.'

Babylon and the Bible.

In the July number (p. 454 f.) we had occasion to refer to the interesting work recently published by Professor Frd. Delitzsch, under the title *Babel und Bibel* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, M. 2), and

to the no less important rejoinder of Professor Ed. König, entitled *Bibel und Babel* (Berlin: M. Warneck, 80 pfennigs). As Delitzsch's work is typical of a tendency that prevails at present in some quarters, we may be pardoned for returning to the subject, and for giving some account of an important review of *Babel und Bibel*, which is equally typical of the objections which the book has called forth. Delitzsch not only shows how much light has been thrown upon O.T. history by the cuneiform inscriptions, but seeks to trace many of the customs, laws, and institutions, nay some of the most essential religious notions of Israel, to Babylonian influence. His work is criticised in the *Theol. Literaturzeitung* (13th September 1902) by Dr. Volz, who compliments the author on the clearness of his exposition, and the fine get-up of his book, but takes exception to some points alike in its method and its results. To begin with; in order to impress the circle of readers to whom he appeals, Delitzsch is almost compelled to speak at times with a confidence that is scarcely justified by strict science. It appears, moreover, to Volz to be a radically mistaken procedure to seek to enlist support for Oriental studies by always approaching these Bible in hand. This is at once disparaging to the great nations of antiquity, and unfair to the O.T. itself. These

ancient peoples lived a life of their own, which has quite enough of independent interest, without having to fall back on the Bible for any charm or value. And the sooner this is learned by the popular mind the better. On the other hand, the plan followed by Delitzsch can hardly fail to be detrimental to Scripture. The meagreness of our sources readily gives rise to exaggerations like this: 'In Babylon as in the Bible, the notion of sin is the all-controlling influence.' Or we hear high-sounding words about the one God, the goal of the human heart, and are told that 'monotheism' had already its home in ancient Babylon. So, again, Volz reproaches Delitzsch with writing as if we had to do with absolute identity of religious conceptions, forgetting that not infrequently Israel borrowed only the *form* and filled this with *wholly different contents*. The latter would be the case, for instance, even if it should prove that the well-known cylinder, with its figures of a serpent, a tree, and two human figures, was intended to portray the Fall. 'That the religion of Israel grew upon the soil of Babylonian culture we are told afresh in this book; yet that religion remains an independent, and in many respects an inexplicable growth, quite as much as does Greek art.'

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Miracles and the Supernatural Character of the Gospels.¹

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IT may conduce to clearness if I begin by stating summarily the points to which I propose to address myself in this paper.

i. I would at the outset lay down the proposition that miracles, or what were thought to be miracles, certainly happened. The proof of this seems to me decisive.

ii. It does not, however, follow that what were thought to be miracles in the first century of our era would also be thought to be miracles in the strict sense now.

¹ A paper read at the Church Congress, Northampton, October 1902.

My next step will therefore be to compare the attitude of the ancient and of the modern mind towards miracles.

iii. This will lead on to the third point: How far is it possible to reconcile, or harmonize, these two different attitudes? In other words, What are the chief problems for research and thought in regard to miracles at the present moment?

iv. And lastly, I propose to ask, What would appear to be the place of miracles in the Divine Plan?

i. I start, then, from the proposition that