

REVIEWS AND NOTICES OF PUBLICATIONS.

Nile and Jordan.—An Archaeological History of the Inter-relations between Egypt and Palestine. By Rev. G. A. Frank Knight, M.A., F.R.S.E. James Clarke. London, 1921. 36s. net.

This is in many respects a remarkable book. It takes up a definite subject, covers the whole history from the earliest times to the Fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and aims at entire completeness. The author has travelled in Egypt and Palestine; he has taken really astonishing pains to make his work comprehensive, and he has produced an almost exhaustive volume which roams over an endless array of subjects. Politics, military matters, religious ideas, morals, commerce, trade, law, society, agriculture, art—so one may go on; and we can well believe the “prospectus” which states that the author in preparing his work has made references to over 1700 different books and journals. *Nile and Jordan* thus claims to be “as complete a summary as is possible of all that is known up to date relative to the close inter-relations of these two famous lands.” When we say that the book runs to 572 pages octavo, that it has five maps, and that, besides additional notes and an appendix on biblical chronology, it has elaborate indexes (bibliography, scripture references and general index, 50 pages in all), we have we trust given some fair idea of the massiveness and almost encyclopaedic character of the volume.

The book is well and interestingly written, and is as adapted to the conscientious reader as to the student who will welcome this handy collection of data. If the writer is at times rather wordy and prolix, piling up quotations and references, we must at least admit that nothing could equal his patience and industry, and his painstaking attempt to be complete at all costs. Moreover, he has taken up an independent attitude towards many of the problems that arise in Egyptian-Palestinian history, and the fact that he dates the Golden Age of Egypt (XIIth Dynasty) in the latter half of the fourth millennium B.C., not to mention other—more than difficult—views is a warning that a distinction must be drawn between his admirable collection of material and the use to which he puts it or the inferences he draws from it. And especially as

regards the history of Israel, Mr. Knight argues for views which are far from simplifying the problems of biblical history. It is here and elsewhere that we could wish he had been a little more explicit; for what avails it to dally with the old suggestion that Judaeans are mentioned in the Amarna Letters, when it is admitted that all the editors read not *Ia-u-du* but *Su-u-du*, so that the reading "Judah" is definitely excluded. But Mr. Knight merely says "the question must still be left open and undecided," which, it may be objected, gives the ordinary reader an entirely misleading impression of the situation.

Absence of criticism in such cases as these, where it is most needed, gives the volume an unevenness, although doubtless it can always be maintained that the wealth of information to be gained from it atones for blemishes of this sort. One must so cordially recognise the author's zeal and industry, and appreciate the general picture which the layman will gain from his description of history, that one must content oneself with emphasizing the fact that over some points of fundamental importance—as, *e.g.*, those already mentioned—a more informed and critical reader will constantly find himself pulled up short, and wish that to so much patience and energy there had been added a little more discrimination.

S. A. C.

The Oldest Laws in the World. Chilperic Edwards. Watts. 5s.—This little book now in its third edition deals with the famous code of Hammurabi, the discovery of which in 1902 attracted widespread attention, partly because of the relationship between its contents and the Pentateuchal legislation and the problems aroused thereby, and partly because of the light the code threw upon Babylonian conditions in and about 2100 B.C. A great deal has been ascertained since the first edition of this book seventeen years ago, and Mr. Edwards has rewritten his work and added a number of excurses and essays. If he has not availed himself of all the accessible studies so fully as he might, he has rather preferred to give a short readable statement and discussion which may serve to introduce readers to the more detailed or technical works. A specially important feature is the inclusion among various valuable appendixes of fragments of earlier Sumerian law codes which prove that Hammurabi's great code had predecessors, and these not Semitic but Sumerian. In point of fact the age of Hammurabi,

the Golden Age of Babylonia, came after a long period of relatively advanced and specialised culture, when elaborate laws would already be needed. The great Babylonian king was in no sense an inventor or originator, and the question of the indebtedness of his code to non-Semitic legislation now stands upon another footing from that when the present writer published his comparative study of Semitic legislation.¹

Moreover, quite recently, portions of an old Assyrian law code have been discovered and published. This differs in some remarkable particulars from the Babylonian; it reveals different social conditions, and often a different spirit, being rougher and cruder—as one might well expect from what one knows otherwise of the temper of Assyria. Social relations are looser, and the class legislation so characteristic of Hammurabi's code is wanting.² The old problem of the indebtedness of the Mosaic legislation to Hammurabi becomes in consequence far more complicated. Mr. Edwards remarks that three main theories had previously been formulated: (1) the entire independence of both, (2) the independent origin of each from "a presumed body of primitive Semitic custom," and (3) the direct descent of the laws of Moses from those of Babylonia. Rightly rejecting the first, and rather summarily dismissing the second, he considers that any likeness between "the Hebrew and the Babylonian systems must be due to their dependence upon a common Sumerian original, and the only way in which the Hebrews could have derived anything from the Sumerians was through the great Code of Hammurabi."

On the other hand, we have to remember that there were sure to be social-legal customs outside the range of the Sumerian laws. We do not know enough of Semites and Sumerians to dogmatise and say that Hammurabi's code was founded solely upon that of the Sumerians. Neither the Assyrian nor the Mosaic laws are copies of Babylonian or Sumerian laws, and it is simply impossible to suppose that because the Sumerian laws are the oldest we have that Babylonians and Hebrews could have had no other source or influence, apart, of course, from those cases where actual borrowing or direct influence seems obvious or natural. The present writer

¹ *Laws of Moses and the Code of Hammurabi* (A. & C. Black, 1903).

² Prof. Jastrow in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 1921, Feb. The texts are published by O. Schroeder, *Keilschrifttexte aus Assur* (Leipzig, 1920).

in 1903, for his part, perhaps pressed rather unduly some of his arguments against direct Babylonian influence, and has since favoured the more cautious statement of the late Dr. Johns, that the differences and resemblances between Moses and Hammurabi plead for an "independent recension of ancient custom deeply influenced by Babylonian law." It is of course conceivable that the code was known in early Palestine, but we have to explain the differences in spirit and content, just as we have now to do the same as regards Babylonia and Assyria. The question is not what may or must have been known, but what our extant sources contain, and the difference is an important one.

Such, then, is the advance of knowledge that even now Mr. Edwards has not succeeded in "embodying the results of the latest research," through, we hasten to add, no fault whatever of his own; and the latest research, as a matter of fact, forces an entire reconsideration of Moses and Hammurabi, and certainly does not substantiate the view that "the Laws of Moses were in *direct descent* [our italics] from those of Babylonia."

In his second Appendix Mr. Edwards deals with Abraham and Amraphel. His remarks upon "the unedifying story of Abraham's nephew" are strictly pointless, since they ignore the *motifs* of the traditions involved and their very great interest as indicating some old body of tradition entirely distinct from that of Abraham. The Lot-cycle, as it is called, once had nothing to do with Abraham, and his references to certain unsavoury aspects (p. 123) seem out of place in an appendix on the criticism of Gen. xiv. For Mr. Edwards is concerned to show that Gen. xiv is unhistorical and that Amraphel is not Hammurabi, and here we cannot help feeling that different arguments are needlessly confused. There is no reasonable doubt that Gen. xiv cannot be accepted as a piece of history, but to go further and sever Amraphel and Hammurabi is quite unnecessary. We have not *history* but *historical romance*, and there is no reason why the writer should not have regarded the names as identical. This, too, is an important difference. The identity of the names does not make the chapter the more historical; it only means that there may have been a knowledge of good names (though the form "Amraphel" still remains puzzling), and that the writer, or his source, may have thought that the two great heroes lived at the same age and came into contact. In like manner writers may have identified the traditions of Jacob or even

of the Exodus with the age of the Hyksos; but if we grant this, it does not follow that what they related has any value for our ideas of the history of the Hyksos. That is another matter. The important thing is to avoid a rationalism which goes strictly beyond the evidence, and beyond what is required by historical criticism.

We have mentioned this because it has seemed that Mr. Edwards' treatment of Gen. xiv went beyond reasonable criticism, and like his view of the indebtedness of Moses to Hammurabi and the Sumerians has taken up a position which one could hardly defend. The authors of the Mosaic legislation like the author of Gen. xiv *might* have been familiar with ancient laws and ancient historical records; there are indeed resemblances and points of contact, but the differences are more significant, and upon the latter our treatment of the questions must depend.

We have commented upon these relatively minor points in an excellent little book, which, none the less, for its fund of information will be welcome to all who are interested in ancient laws and customs and in the study of the relations between Hebrew and neighbouring conditions.

S. A. C.

Die Palästina-Literatur. III. By Peter Thomsen. Leipzig, 1916. —In this the third volume of his bibliography Dr. Peter Thomsen continues his exhaustive register of maps, books, articles, reviews, etc., relating directly or indirectly to Palestine. The first volume in 1908 comprised the literature of 1895—1904, the second, three years later, brought the index down to 1909, while the present volume ceases with the year of the War. This great work is one of international importance, it is a systematic classification of literature and arranged to facilitate easy reference. Thus we pass from a list of general works (pp. 1–35) to history (classified according to periods, pp. 36–113), archaeology (pp. 114–171), historical geography and topography (pp. 172–198), physical geography (pp. 199–234) and modern Palestine (pp. 235–332). The index of names and topics alone runs to over 40 pages of three columns each, and such is the scope of the work that it appeals to a diversity of interests, biblical, archaeological, Zionist, industrial, etc. Needless to say, the author has not been able to accomplish his task without co-operation and subvention, and he appeals, as before, for any assistance which publishers, writers and reviewers can give him in correcting

mistakes, amplifying his lists, and in adding to the completeness of the work. Such a work as this is so helpful for all who are interested in Palestine, and is so international in its scope and utility that we unreservedly support the appeal of the author, whose address is Dresden—A. 19, Kügelgenstrasse, 11.

S. A. C.

Palästinajahrbuch, 1920. By Prof. D. Gustaf Dalman. Berlin, 1921.—The sixteenth annual of the Jerusalem German Evangelical Institute for the Archaeological Study of the Holy Land opens with a paper by the editor on the society's interests in Palestine, followed by archaeological notes of the rock of Golgotha. He also writes on the model of the Church of the Sepulchre as evidence for its earlier form. The late Prof. Max van Berchem discusses some Arabic inscriptions from Jerusalem, and Pastor Wilhelm Möller describes a trip in the Jordan Valley in February, 1914. A short note by Prof. Dalman on the Jewish inscription from 'Arāk el-Emīr, 9 miles N.W. of Heshbon, is connected by him with Dan. xi, 14. The reading had long been disputed, but for some time past it has been known that Clermont-Ganneau and De Vogüé were right in reading "Tobiah" (טוביה), although the photographs and reproductions had clearly read some such otherwise unknown name as Arabiah (ערביה). All this will be found in Driver's admirable introduction to his commentary on the Hebrew Text of the books of Samuel in the course of his account of the origin and development of the Hebrew and Jewish scripts (2nd ed., p. xix *seq.*). Now, it was at 'Arāk el-Emīr" that Hyrcanus, the grandson of Tobias, and great-nephew of Onias II, the High-Priest, took refuge from his brothers and built his fort (183-176 B.C.); and the probability is that his native name was Tobiah itself, like that of his grandfather. Dalman comments upon the Aramaic form of the letters of the little inscription, and the gallery of lion-sculptures indicative of Oriental rather than of Greek influence; this Tobiah-Hyrcanus was no Maccabee but a Jewish nationalist with hopes of founding some ambitious state, and he suggests that it is he whom the writer of Dan. xi, 14 has in view when he speaks of the fall of the violent ones who exalt themselves and establish the vision. "This is what both the Lion-sculptures and the Tobiah-inscription tell us in 'Arāk el-Emīr."
