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## Literature.

### HEBREW RELIGION.

A SCHOLARLY book in English on Hebrew Religion, elaborate but not too elaborate, has for some time been a desideratum, and now we have it. It is a composite work from the competent hands of Professor W. O. E. Oesterley, D.D., of London, and Professor T. H. Robinson, D.D., of Cardiff. The subjects or periods with which they respectively deal are those which their already published works show that they have made peculiarly their own, Dr. Oesterley dealing with such questions as Ancestor Worship, Demonology, and Wisdom, and Dr. Robinson with the Prophets, though there are not a few points at which each enters the domain of the other.

The book, *Hebrew Religion* (S.P.C.K.; 10s. 6d. net), is divided into three parts: (1) The Background, which discusses primitive religion, with such phenomena as animism and totemism; (2) The Israelite Religion, which carries the story from Moses to the Fall of Jerusalem; and (3) Judaism. The method, which is in the main chronological, is a happy blend of the chronological and the topical, and the conclusions, which are nowhere marred by extravagant idiosyncrasies, would in the main command the assent of most Old Testament scholars to-day. We hear, for example, of occasional traces of imitative magic; we are told that there are good grounds for believing that some remnants of totemism and ancestor-worship are to be found in the Old Testament; that the stones within the Ark were perhaps originally stones taken from the sacred mountain; and that the Sabbath was not borrowed from either the Canaanites or the Babylonians but probably originated among the ancient nomadic Arabs. Those who cannot read Gressmann in the original will be glad to have the sketch of his view of Mount Sinai as a volcanic mountain, which satisfactorily explains so many features of the Exodus narrative and helps us to locate the mountain.

There is a brief but excellent account of the canonical prophets, in which Dr. Robinson repeats the view to which he has already given expression, that the prophets were not implacably opposed to the cult (pp. 201 and 299). While affinities between Babylonian and Hebrew religion are frankly admitted, it is contended that no essential doctrine or religious practice of Judaism was the result of Babylonian religious influence. Persian influence,

on the other hand, exercised a real influence, at any rate in the domain of Eschatology and Apocalyptic. The section on Immortality, much as has been written on this subject, is arresting and original. It is interesting to find that the two collaborators do not quite agree in their view of the Servant in Deutero-Isaiah. Dr. Oesterley thinks that the national interpretation is 'quite out of the question'; he takes the Servant to be 'a real, not an idealized man,' who was believed by the prophet to be the Messiah, and who was to rise from the dead to take the part assigned to Him by God.

This statement, like others in the book, as, for example, that 'Yahweh dwelt between the Cherubim' in the early period, will of course be challenged; but the solid learning of the book and its persuasive sketch of the development of Hebrew religion are beyond challenge. The absence of any reference to the universalism of the Book of Jonah is rather surprising; no Old Testament book touches loftier heights than this. There is a curious preference for the word 'forbears' (spelt 'forebears' on p. 63), cf. pp. 47, 82, 92, 119, 317. On p. 80 Is lv. 2-4 should be lxxv. The book effectively meets a real want and ought to receive a wide welcome.

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### CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY.

'The biographical part of literature is what I love most,' so said Samuel Johnson; and what is true of literature is equally true of philosophy. In any case these two handsome volumes, *Contemporary American Philosophy*, ed. by G. P. Adams and W. P. Montague (Allen & Unwin; 16s. net each), containing personal statements by the best known living American philosophers, are full of interest. Some years ago we had 'Contemporary British Philosophers,' and now is the turn of the American. Thirty-four eminent scholars, chosen by the vote of their brethren, give us short accounts of their life and of their philosophical point of view. If any one longs for unanimity of outlook in the philosophic world as represented by these writers, he will be sadly disappointed. We have all the well-known historical schools of philosophy here, from the absolute idealism of Miss Calkins (tinged with just a little pragmatism) to the instrumentalism of Dr. Dewey and the

naturalism of Cohen, as well as the picturesque æstheticism of Santayana. From this kaleidoscopic variety it might almost appear as if philosophy's progress was nothing more than the periodicity of eternal recurrence, for it would not be difficult to place most of these thinkers without undue violence into the framework of the philosophic schools of Greece. And yet there is a difference—a difference of wider horizons, of chastened expectations and of scientific method. The most interesting contribution is perhaps that of the venerable Dr. Palmer, the doyen of philosophic thinkers in America now that William James, Josiah Royce, and Borden Bowne are gone. It is intimately personal and biographical, and, for a philosopher, seriously religious and Christian. From it and from other papers in these volumes we can learn how stimulating and bracing the influence of James and Royce was. This we have found the most interesting of all the papers, and next to it is that of Hartley Burr Alexander, of whose concluding sentences we would simply quote this: 'My courage is little from myself, but much from the sign, upreared on a hill loftier than Acropolis, where through suffering came not the wisdom of the Greeks, but the hope of all mankind.'

On the whole it is heartening to find that so many of the writers, and these among the best, have a religious philosophy of life. In some cases the religion is more a mystical kind of animism or revived Stoicism than positive Christianity, as, for example, in the case of Everett and Leighton (who is surely rather pessimistic as to the present state of education in America). But this is better than naturalism, and of this there is very little, and even it is tinged with an agnosticism which is not far from the Kingdom of God. One or two are frankly materialistic and hostile to Christianity, and a few more are indifferent. But perhaps their indifference is due to restraint and the feeling that philosophy as a discipline had better keep away from religion—for which, methodologically, something may be said.

While it would be unfair to these thinkers to judge them wholly on the meagre pronouncements of these limited chapters, on the other hand a reading of this book will serve as the best introduction to their larger works and as an excellent orientation for the reader who, with little time at his disposal, desires to know what those who are called philosophers think of life and its problems. One general impression abides from the reading of these composite volumes. It is the Socratic longing for a sure word from heaven, a yearning for

revelation. It would be invidious to name those whom we think most inspiring, but the chapters by Urban, Tufts, and Perry strike us as above the average. We thank Dr. Muirhead, the Editor of the Library of Philosophy, for this additional obligation to the many others which we owe to his selective and organizing industry.

#### BEYOND PHYSICS.

*Beyond Physics*, by Sir Oliver Lodge (Allen & Unwin; 5s. net), is a work which deserves, and will doubtless command, the attention and careful study of all who are interested in the philosophic interpretation of the new physics. The mental attitude of the writer is indicated in the preface. 'If it could be recognized that no one statement can be comprehensive enough to exhaust the whole truth about anything, many of our semi-scientific semi-theological controversies would evaporate into thin air.' While finding himself in general agreement with Professors Eddington and Whitehead, Sir Oliver has some acute criticisms to offer of certain widely accepted theories. He is not satisfied with the theory that simultaneity is conditioned by the speed of light; he is dubious about the paradoxical observations of the hypothetical high-speed observers beloved of relativists; and he is bold enough to hope, in spite of the Michelson-Morley experiment, that some means may yet be found of measuring absolute velocity through the ether.

His main thesis deals with the relation of mind and matter. Physics has by successive steps pushed its analysis of matter to the point where it has reached the electron and found it to be not something material in the old sense, but an energy-knot. The electron itself is now in process of being analysed, and according to some theories, for example Schrödinger's, it is conceived as something in the nature of a group-wave which has a motion and an energy of its own though it is constantly influenced by its constituent waves. Sir Oliver Lodge sees in this a possible solution of an old philosophical difficulty, the difficulty, namely, that if mind influence matter it must needs communicate energy to it, whereas physical analysis can detect no such energy thus communicated. Here, he argues, we have purely physical analysis suggesting that sub-physical entities influence a physical without imparting energy. 'The group waves follow a path determined by the constituent waves, which therefore act as a guiding and directing agent, elusive in itself, but important as exercising control. The present idea is that certain

etheric group-waves constitute matter, and that this is a form of energy capable of being guided by something other than energy, something which acts as a guiding or directing principle.' How far this hypothesis meets the philosophic difficulty it would be difficult to say, but there can be no doubt that the theory is a distinct contribution to a profoundly interesting and mysterious subject.

### THE JEWS AND THE ASHANTI.

It seems a far cry from the Jews to the Ashanti, but Mr. Joseph J. Williams, Ph.D., Litt.D., has written an extraordinarily interesting book, with the rather unhappy title *Hebraisms of West Africa* (Allen & Unwin; 30s. net), to prove that there is a real connexion between the two, or, to be more exact, that 'Hebrew culture found its way, long centuries ago, from the Nile to the Niger.' The sub-title, *From Nile to Niger with the Jews*, gives a better idea than the title of the thesis which the book is written to support, namely, that Jewish colonists in Upper Egypt found their way along the valley of the Nile, profoundly affected Abyssinian culture, in course of time moved across the plains of Central Africa by Lake Chad, and finally reached and left their mark upon the tribes of West Africa. All this, of course, was the work of centuries. But there was another stream of influence from the North. Colonies of Jews studied the African shores of the Mediterranean, and from an early date 'there was a strong Hebraic influence in the North of Africa which through infiltration and commerce had left its mark on the Sahara, and even southward to the neighbourhood of the River Niger.' Indeed there was, south of the Sahara, a Jewish kingdom of Ghana, which had flourished for several centuries and then been so entirely obliterated that its very existence was long questioned, and the site of its capital has only quite recently been located.

Dr. Williams claims that there are remarkable affinities between Jewish and Ashanti ideas, customs, and even languages. No possible claim, of course, could be made that they belong to the same linguistic group, but 'not a few Hebrew words and possibly certain distinctive Hebrew constructions have been ingrafted on the native language of the Ashanti'—and illustrations are given. He compares the Ashanti Yame with the Hebrew Yahweh, and emphasizes the 'truly remarkable similarity' not only in the words themselves but in the conceptions attached to them. He further enumerates scores of cultural and religious elements

which the two peoples have in common; for example, the patriarchal system, uncleanness after childbirth, purification ceremonies, sterility a curse, the 'out-drink,' expectation of a Messiah, Sabbath rest, Levirate marriages, bloody sacrifices with the sprinkling of blood upon altar and doorposts, etc.; and he finds in the phrase, to 'make old,' which has come to Jamaica through the old Ashanti slaves, an exact parallel to *לַעֲשֶׂה זָקֵן* in 2 K 21<sup>9</sup>. While fully recognizing that many of the features he mentions can be paralleled in the religions and cultures of other peoples, he believes that, in their cumulative effect, they can be most satisfactorily explained by assuming that 'in the dim past, a wave, or more probably a series of waves, of Hebraic influence swept over Negro Africa, leaving unmistakable traces among the various tribes, where they have endured even to the present day.' Dr. Williams offers it as his personal conviction, after eleven years of research, that, 'explain it as you will, a Jewish element is to be found in the parent-stock of the Ashanti.' He modestly adds, 'We cannot postulate any degree of certitude for this theory,' but he has spared no pains to substantiate it. His interesting pages are crowded with excerpts from the works of scholars, travellers, and anthropologists, and his bibliography runs to over one thousand names. His argument—if, as he thinks, 'time will strengthen its credibility'—will compel us to enlarge our idea of 'the Dispersion.'

### INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY.

Vienna seems to be the seed-plot of new psychologies. It produced Freud, did it not? And it has sheltered Dr. Alfred Adler, whose system goes under the name 'Individual Psychology.' This is, like Freudism, a psychotherapy and also a pedagogy (is it necessary to have quite such hideous names for these processes?), but there is systematic thinking behind it, and Dr. Erwin Wexberg, a co-worker of Adler's, has set himself to expound this system in his book *Individual Psychology* (Allen & Unwin; 15s. net). The book is translated by Dr. W. Béran Wolfe, and reads fairly easily, or at least naturally. Not that the matter is easy. There is a sort of ponderous vagueness which makes it difficult for the English reader to grasp exactly where individual psychology differs from any other psychology. The central point seems to be that every living organism is a purposive or conative unity 'whose goal is the maintenance of its own existence.' The evolution of this personality is traced, and the factors, social

and economic, sexual, family, pedagogic, which contribute to its existence and growth, are handled in a series of chapters.

There are not a few points at which an acute difference of opinion will arise. Dr. Wexberg is so impressed by the faults of parents and the defects of family life that he thinks the education of children should be a communal affair. It is, however, in the chapter on education that one feels most disposed to question some conclusions. 'Any one,' says the author, 'who investigates the matter objectively must be convinced of the fact that religious concepts cannot be taught to children . . . no child can understand the spiritual content of religion. Any one who desires to educate his children to be religious men and women would do well never to mention a religious concept to them before they are fourteen or fifteen years old. . . , Religious education of children can have but one consequence: the inhibition of the free development of the child's sense of personal self-esteem.' It would be disrespectful to say what we think of this extraordinary opinion. But, no doubt, a practical teacher who knows anything about children will be able to supply the missing words.

These points are not, however, vital to the general thesis. And it is only fair to say that the development of the organism is traced with great ability, and the treatment of its ills, defects, and faults, medically and otherwise, is expounded from the point of view of this system clearly and fully. Those who wish to know what Adler's standpoint and technique are will find an authoritative statement in this large and competent volume.

### PRAYER.

*Prayer*, by Mario Puglisi (Macmillan; 10s. 6d. net), is interesting as exhibiting the international solidarity of the study of religion. The author is an Italian liberal modernist who has already some thirteen books to his credit. Here he deals with the fascinating theme of prayer, on which so much has been written of recent years that one can read this book in the light of Heiler and Hastings and others. The standpoint is that of a modified mystical pragmatism, and the method is the historical and comparative one so much in vogue through the comparative study of religion.

The writer traces the manifestations and methods of the prayer life from the hazy dawn of magic right down to the philosophic and pantheistic theory of acquiescence of soul in the world process, so that there is danger that we cannot see the wood

for the trees. There is much information and thought in this excellent work, besides the value and imperative need of prayer both in its individual and communal aspects.

We welcome the book for it helps us to answer what in our opinion is the real problem of prayer for us to-day. Behind the problem of prayer is our view of God. Is He and is His will an unalterable law in the scientific view of law, or can He act personally in response to His children's needs? Is prayer just a cable or boat-hook which we project to draw our feeble bark to the immovable Rock of Ages, or can He come to our help in our necessities, or can these two views be harmonized? The writer helps us to answer this, and he writes with an earnest practical purposiveness and a broad cultured outlook. As we read we feel like saying, 'Lord, teach us to pray.' The translator, Dr. Allen, has done his work well, for the book reads as smoothly as if it had been written directly in English. But why is there no index?

### A NEW TRANSLATION OF THE PSALMS.

Professor Herbert H. Gowen, D.D., of Washington, offers *A New Transcription and Translation of the Psalms* (S.C.M.; 7s. 6d. net). This he prefaces by a well-written Introduction which deals, among other things, with the Principles of Hebrew Poetry, the Poetry of the Psalms and the Use of the Psalter. The main object of the book, however, is to recover, so far as possible, the original text and to present it in the form of a translation which will do something like justice to its literary values. The innumerable textual problems have been frankly faced, and verses, such as 49<sup>15</sup>, which are for metrical or other reasons believed to be glosses, are excluded from the text and relegated to the notes. Often drastic, but reasonable, emendations are accepted and incorporated in the translation; cf. 45<sup>6</sup>, where an original יהיה ('shall be'), as it seems, has become first יהיה, and then אלהים ('O God'); similarly 84<sup>7</sup>, 'From rampart to rampart they go: *El Elohim in Zion is seen.*' On this principle, however, instead of 'Truly God to Israel is good: To the pure in heart' (73<sup>1</sup>), we should have expected Dr. Gowen to give us 'Truly God is good to the upright, even Elohim (or Yahweh?), to the pure in heart.'

The historical origin of a psalm is frequently suggested, though obviously this must be in most, if not in all, cases conjectural: for example, Ps 46 is assigned to the reign of Hezekiah or Josiah; Ps 110 to the second century B.C., with Simon for

its theme; Ps 74 to the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadrezzar—this last psalm being adapted by a Maccabean editor to his own times. Good use is made of the ancient versions; for example, the LXX is followed in 90<sup>3</sup>, 'O turn not man back into dust.' While exception could be fairly taken to occasional phrases—we do not, for example, admire 'He shall not drowse' in 121<sup>4</sup>—the translation on the whole is both dignified and musical, and is certainly a very honest and not unsuccessful attempt to penetrate beneath later accretions and glosses to the original text. These few lines from Ps 39 will illustrate the style and quality of the translation:

I said: I will look to my ways:  
Lest I sin with my lips.  
I was dumb and kept silence from good:  
Though sore was my pain.  
Hot within was my heart in my musing:  
Smouldered the fire.  
Then I spake with my tongue: Let me know,  
O Yahweh, mine end!

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*Creative Preaching*, edited by Mr. G. Bromley Oxnam (Abingdon Press; \$2.50), is a rich, stimulating volume on preaching, entrancing in its variety. We began it in a listless mood, for books on preaching are often dull, but we ended with a feeling of elation. From the first lecture by Dr. James Moffatt, emphasizing the majesty and mystery of great preaching, to the last, which deals with the contribution of the dramatist to the preacher's material, every paper is distinctive and notable. The literary qualities of the book are worthy even of traditional Boston, and yet, deeper than the literary flavour, and more impressive, are the unflinching touch with reality, the consciousness of the preacher's high vocation, and the conviction, to use the words of Newman, that 'the supreme motive of the preacher is the salvation of the hearer.'

The modern situation, with its changed atmosphere and outlook, is here poignantly portrayed, as in Dr. Sockman's contribution and elsewhere, but over against it all there is the vivid realization of the power of Christ to save and uplift men. The most moving paper, in many respects, is that by Mr. Poling, reminding us of 'Down in Water Street.' It is a transcript from life, preaching Methodism in action at its best.

It is refreshing to find a working minister not

only with a comprehensive knowledge of literature and an acute perception of its various values, but also with the power to communicate to his readers his own cultured enthusiasm. We can safely say all this, and more, of Dr. Lynn H. Hough, minister of the American Presbyterian Church at Montreal. His book, *The Artist and the Critic* (Abingdon Press; \$1.50), is delightful from beginning to end. It is written with relish and almost abandon, as if Dr. Hough immensely enjoyed the job, and this enjoyment is infectious. Briefly stated, the content of the book is as follows: Euripides is taken as the typical artist. We are told all about him and his environment, and we are led on to consider the perspective and spirit of the artist in many other great works. Lucian is taken as the typical critic, and, when he is sufficiently expounded, we have the main points illuminated similarly by other writers. Finally, the fusion of artist and critic is found in Dante, and all lovers of Dante will thank Dr. Hough for his chapters on the conditions that limited him and the use he made of them.

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There has been of late a good deal of excellent writing on the ministry of the Holy Spirit, so much so that one wonders at the complaint made by the Rev. Raymond Calkins in his book, *The Holy Spirit* (Abingdon Press; \$1.50), that the subject has been greatly neglected. Perhaps he is thinking of his own country. In any case Mr. Calkins has done his best to supply the lack, and it is a good best. His book is not theology; nor is it simply devotion. There is a great deal of sound thinking in it, and there is also an earnestness which amounts sometimes to passion. The writer is convinced that what the Church needs, and what the individual needs, is a baptism of the Spirit, and few will question his conviction. But this point is pressed on us in this book in so practical a fashion and with such a flame of urgency that it becomes a challenge to our faith.

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The 'St. Louis Post-Dispatch' is an American journal which has celebrated its jubilee by the publication of a number of essays by well-known writers representative of all nations and all points of view. These have been collected and published under the title *The Drift of Civilization* (Allen & Unwin; 7s. 6d. net). The list of contributors includes Maxime Gorky, Bertrand Russell, J. B. S. Haldane, Dr. Einstein, Sir Philip Gibbs, Dean Inge, H. G. Wells, and Stephen Leacock, to name only the most familiar. Their papers are supposed to

summarize what (as they believe) is the drift of things in various regions of thought and activity. Some of the writers take their task seriously, like Dr. Einstein, who gives us a glimpse of 'The New Physics,' and M. M. A. Nexö, an ardent Communist who already sees Satan (the bourgeois society) fallen as lightning from heaven. Others, like Dean Inge, ramble along pleasantly about things in general, or, like Gorky, apparently ignore their instructions and write reminiscently. One of the most interesting essays is that by Sir Philip Gibbs, who reveals the fact that just before the Armistice Britain and America had got ready a form of attack which would have practically blotted out the German armies and made Hell of some of their towns. On the whole the essays in this book are interesting, and even, in a few cases, of considerable value.

What is the aim of education? This question is as old as man, at least as old as Solomon and Plato, and this is the question which Professor William C. Bower attempts to answer in *Character through Creative Experience* (Cambridge University Press; 11s. 6d. net). In America, with its mixture of races and cultures, the question is poignant and pressing, and any attempt to answer it seriously is praiseworthy. On a superficial reading one might think that the present author had delivered himself over to the hands of the Behaviourists, for we read about the necessity of knowing everything about the pupil, from his simple reflexes to the condition of his endocrine glands. Undoubtedly all this is important, as the old tag '*mens sana in corpore sano*' recognized long ago, but the writer well reminds us, both in the title and in the body of his volume, that the development of character is the aim of the educationist and, indeed, of all good men, and that character is more than these. The writer's behaviourism is not mechanistic but voluntaristic. If we might pass a mild judgment on the method of the writer it would be to the effect that he delights too much in distinctions, and the multiplying of points, like the old Puritan preachers, though he is far from being a Puritan.

What, then, is character? Can we get our ideals simply by analysing the actualities of experience, or do we need to bring them to bear upon experience in a creative and purifying way? Where is this place of ideals, as Plato would call it? The author tells us of the force of environment, and at times gives the impression that all experience is due to that, but just at this very point he is in danger of forgetting his own aim. Personalities

are greater than their environment and act teleologically on their surroundings.

His chapter on Religion is somewhat disappointing, nor is it easy for us to believe, in spite of his long historical disquisition on the development of religion, that religion is just the resultant of climate and soil. Surely the writer here is unduly under the influence of the Historicism and Comparative Religionism now associated with the University of Chicago. This *cuius regio eius religio* point of view must be transcended, and at times, though not steadily and wholly, the author does this, and it is just at these points that he is most persuasive.

*Life's Greatest Victory*, by the Rev. H. W. Morrow, D.D. (James Clarke; 5s. net), contains a series of twenty-one addresses to young men and women. They are brief and pointed, the titles in many cases are happily chosen, and there is a considerable wealth of illustration.

*The Outcast Christ*, by the Rev. E. H. Phillips, M.A. (James Clarke; 5s. net), is a careful and detailed study of the records dealing with the trial, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The author, who was a chaplain in Palestine during the War, has used his local knowledge to good account, and has supplemented it by a thoughtful reading of the relevant literature, including the Apocryphal writings. He lays stress on the hypothesis that Jesus, in consequence of excommunication by the Sanhedrin, became One whom it was unlawful to name. 'We comprehend the complete silence of the Jewish historians of His own day. When He became finally excommunicate, the closing words of His condemnation would be uttered by all present: "There is no Jesus of Nazareth. There never was. There never will be."' This is a book which is full of interesting suggestions, especially in regard to the Resurrection, and it will repay the attentive reader.

*Mercy and Faithfulness: Studies in the Gospel according to St. John*, by the Rev. Thomas Gregory, D.D., Minister-emeritus of St. Columba Church, Kilmacollm (James Clarke; 5s. net), is a charming and uplifting book. The author is a clergyman of the Church of Scotland who was known to a previous generation much better than to this. He was a noted scholar, with a cultured and delicate mind, and it is pleasant to have this fruit of his ministry. The book is really an exposition of the Fourth Gospel, paragraph by paragraph, but in a broad and suggestive fashion. The main truth in

each section is disentangled and illustrated, and in the treatment there is an unctious of the true kind.

Mr. Abraham I. Schechter, Ph.D., offers a series of learned *Studies in Jewish Liturgy* (Dropsie College, Philadelphia; \$2.00) based on a unique MS. entitled 'Seder H̄ibbur Berakot' (Order of a Collection of Benedictions), which contains scores of very old prayers, *piyyutim* and *seliḥot*, whose authors are unknown. In the first part Dr. Schechter discusses the origin of this Seder and comes to the conclusion that it was compiled by Menaḥem b. Solomon in the first half of the twelfth century, and that it represents in the main the Palestinian Ritual which had become the fixed ritual of the Italian Jews. An Italian atmosphere pervades the MS. throughout: till the latter part of the ninth century, Palestinian influence upon Italy was strong, and the Italian Jews looked towards Palestine for spiritual comfort and instruction. Despite the preponderatingly Palestinian nature of the Italian rite, however, the Seder not unnaturally reveals traces of Babylonian elements, introduced doubtless by Babylonian Jews who had migrated to Palestine and who naturally influenced the usages of the synagogue. The second part of the book contains the text of and notes on some of the prayers, for example, morning and evening prayers, grace after meals; and there are several photographs of facsimile pages of the MS.

In connexion with the fifteen hundredth anniversary of St. Augustine's death, the mind of Christendom naturally turns to the teachings and spiritual experiences of one who is confessedly the greatest Christian thinker since St. Paul. A book which in the circumstances is very opportune and which deserves a warm welcome is *St. Augustine's Conversion*, by the Rev. W. J. Sparrow Simpson, D.D. (S.P.C.K.; 10s. 6d. net). The term 'conversion' is here used in a somewhat wide sense to include the whole of Augustine's spiritual development to the time of his ordination. This development 'has not only a historic and a human value, but is also at the same time a very real guide and encouragement amid the perplexities of the modern mind. It reminds us how ancient many a problem is which our century has a curious habit of regarding as something quite original and new.' Dr. Sparrow Simpson is evidently a close and sympathetic student of St. Augustine's works. He traces with great patience and insight the various steps by which Augustine passed through Manichæism and

scepticism to Neo-Platonism and thence to a settled Christian faith. Bearing in mind that the 'Confessions' were not written till thirteen years after the spiritual crisis, Dr. Simpson has gathered from Augustine's earlier works all references bearing upon his spiritual history, and from these more nearly contemporary sources has supplemented and to some extent corrected the 'Confessions.' The author is to be congratulated on a fine piece of work which combines in a rare degree sound scholarship with warm Christian feeling.

For the ordinary reader *Christian Dhyāna* is a confusing little book, and, worse than that, he has the feeling that it is made so quite unnecessarily. Yet there are reasons that explain this. The little volume (S.P.C.K.; 2s. 6d. net) arose thus. Mr. Verrier Elwin at the close of a lecture on Christian Mysticism heard the Brahmin chairman remark that 'he was delighted to find *even in Christianity* an interest in the method and philosophy of prayer.' This stung him; and as a result he has issued, chiefly for Indian minds, his study of that fine old mystic classic, 'The Cloud of Unknowing.' One wishes it all success in its primary object. But it is not likely to have a large welcome in the West. For one thing, the Cloud is not meant for every one; there are those who would find its atmosphere, its conception and practice of prayer, stuffy and unaired beyond bearing—a hot-house kind of place. For another, in the attempt to reach the Indian mind the pages are thickly bestrewn with Indian terms—quite simple for any one with any knowledge in those fields, but irritating and repelling to those who have not. And, indeed, even keeping that first end in view, the thing is overdone, a little childishly. And for a third, things are so overlaid by continual Indian parallels and similarities, and so on, that what the Cloud itself stands for is not always easily followed.

The very title is not likely to lure Western readers. *Dhyāna* is defined by Bālādeva as 'thinking on one subject continuously, without the inrush of ideas incongruous with the subject and thought.' 'Christian Dhyāna therefore,' says Mr. Elwin, 'will be the steady flow of loving attention to God of a soul which is "in Christ," whose environment and life is Christ.'

Biblical chronology has a curious fascination for certain minds, and the Rev. A. T. Richardson has fallen under the spell of it. Accepting the accuracy of the Biblical statements, he fills the pages of his

*Bible Chronology* (E. & F. N. Spon ; 12s. 6d. net) with dated events—the recorded dates, which occupy the left-hand column, ranging from 1880 B.C. to 513 B.C. By reckoning 100 moon-shanahs (as he calls them) as = 8.085 tropical years, he reduces the years of Abraham's predecessors to reasonable dimensions. Methuselah, for example, dies, aged 78, in 1695 B.C.; Noah dies, aged 77, in 1666. From Gn 11<sup>27</sup> the ages are given in 'season-shanahs.' On this scheme, Abram, who was born in 1485, 'reigned' from 1448 to 1398 B.C. The book displays much ingenuity, which, we fear, will not greatly advance the cause of Biblical chronology.

Fundamentalism in this country is neither so rare nor so negligible as many people imagine. Those who are in touch with youth know that it is quite common among those who might be supposed to be opposed to its standpoint. In all probability this is due partly to misunderstanding and partly to ignorance. In either case the need of enlightenment is urgent. And this could hardly be more effectively given than it is in *Letters to a Fundamentalist*, by Mr. Percy Austin, B.A., with a foreword by Principal Garvie (S.C.M. ; 6s. net). Mr. Austin writes to a friend who is a fundamentalist, and in his letters discusses all sorts of points that arise from his friend's position and that are at issue between the two attitudes. The whole gamut is here—science and the Bible, 'apparent contradictions,' the nature of prophecy, inspiration and authority. The author is not a modernist in the extreme sense. He claims to be both a fundamentalist (in the true sense) and a modernist (in the better sense), and he is always reasonable, reverent, and pointed. There is hardly a difficulty that has been raised in connexion with the Bible that is not faced and discussed here. And we could not well imagine anything better calculated to disarm and to instruct any one who is suspicious of the modern attitude to the Bible, and yet has anything of an open mind.

Among Christian people there is to-day a strong desire to see Christian standards applied in business and in industrial organization. There are many who will roundly say (as one speaker did say at a

conference on the subject), 'You cannot live a Christian life within the [present] system.' Is that true? And if so, are Christian standards to go? Or is the present system to go? The Christian Social Council, in its Research Section, has been investigating the subject, and the result of its provisional inquiries has been published in a volume, *The Just Price*, containing essays by various writers, and edited by Mr. V. A. Demant, B.Litt., B.Sc. (S.C.M. ; 4s. 6d. net). The starting-point of the inquiry was the mediæval doctrine of the 'Just Price' and its application in that age, and the goal was the possibility of an equivalent to-day. It is obvious that the simpler conditions of mediæval life made the fixing of a just price comparatively simple. The conditions to-day are totally different, more complicated, and made specially formidable by the altered value of money and the whole financial organization. So that the problem is really whether the conception of justice behind the mediæval 'Just Price' can be translated into a modern equivalent. The whole situation is discussed in these essays with immense ability by writers who not only have the Christian standpoint, but who face their problem in a sane spirit and with a wide knowledge of what it implies.

*St. Augustine*, by Eleanor McDougall, D.Litt. (S.C.M. ; 3s. 6d. net), while it gives a sufficient outline of the great Christian thinker, is mainly a study of his personal religion. This is done with great reverence and sympathy. It is perhaps natural that the writer, whose life-work is in Madras, should have Indian thought constantly present to her mind. At the same time it seems unfortunate that she should have made such large use of the term *bhakti* in speaking of Augustine's devotion to God. To many readers the term will be meaningless, and in itself it is open to objection from its association with pantheism. Augustine was no pantheist any more than St. Paul, and it is not helpful to speak of the one as 'the Bhakta of Christ,' or of the other as 'that chief of bhaktas.' The book, however, is extremely readable, and, besides painting a sketch of Augustine's time, it succeeds in bringing the lovable and Christian side of the man into clear view.