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## Literature.

### THE APOCRYPHA.

THE Rev. W. O. E. Oesterley, D.D., Litt.D., has long been known as our leading British authority on the post-exilic period in Jewish history, and his earlier book on the Apocrypha has been the standard work for twenty years. He has also shown us the quality of his work as a writer of an Introduction, and his new book—*An Introduction to the Books of the Apocrypha* (S.P.C.K.; 10s. 6d. net)—is, therefore, doubly welcome. It is, however, much more than an Introduction in the narrow sense; it falls into two parts, of which the former deals with 'Prolegomena,' and covers such matters as the historical background, the literary quality, and the doctrinal teaching of the Apocrypha. This section illustrates Dr. Oesterley's close familiarity with the subject, and is marked by insight and sympathetic appreciation. It makes us wish that we were better acquainted than we are with the Apocrypha, and will drive not a few readers back to the text of the books themselves. It goes without saying that some will be a little surprised by Dr. Oesterley's judgments, as when, for instance, he seems to rate *Ecclesiasticus* higher than the *Wisdom of Solomon*. But he always has good grounds for his views, and we feel that it is his critics who are more likely to be in the wrong. We may note as especially valuable the fine chapter on the importance of the Apocrypha for New Testament study. Here we have the answer to many puzzling questions, for the Judaism presented in the Gospels is in so many ways an advance on anything we find in the Old Testament.

The second part of the book contains the Introduction in the narrow sense. Here Dr. Oesterley has followed fairly exactly the model of the 'Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament.' This part of the book exhibits that sober independence which we have learnt to ascribe to its author elsewhere. Views which cannot be accepted are fairly stated, and, though limits of space forbid detailed argument, we feel that Dr. Oesterley always has very good reasons for the opinions he adopts. Altogether we may say that we have here one of the most important contributions made to Biblical study in recent years, and it is likely to hold the field for many years as the best work on the subject for the general reader.

### WILLIAM COWPER.

In *William Cowper and the Eighteenth Century* (Nicholson & Watson; 15s. net), Mr. Gilbert Thomas, poet, essayist, and critic, has added another to the numerous commentaries on the poet's life and work. The *raison d'être* of his book is his claim to show Cowper on the background of his time, especially the social and religious background. Indeed, he goes so far as to say, 'without immodesty or exaggeration,' that this is the first attempt to survey in adequate detail this dominating influence in the poet's life. It was certainly a wonderful age. We are accustomed to think of its religious hardness and superficiality, and to forget that it was the age of Pope, Bishop Butler, Berkeley, of Wesley, Samuel Johnson, Chatham, of Handel, Fielding, Reynolds, of David Hume, Burke, and Goldsmith, to mention only a few names.

It can hardly be said that Cowper stands out as a giant in this company. He is a homely figure, though the twin traditions of his 'effeminacy' and his physical infirmity receive their quietus at the hands of Mr. Thomas. Yet, homely or not, Cowper has qualities that place him high in the hierarchy of letters. In that artificial age he brought men back to Nature. Indeed, Mr. Thomas holds that, if he looked at Nature 'over clipped hedges,' he was 'the first eighteenth-century writer, and, if we except Shakespeare and Milton in certain moods, the first in the whole succession of English poets to look at Nature simply and unaffectedly at all.' He was not, it is true, a creative artist. He was not creative at all. He was a commentator, a critic. And probably he will survive, apart from his hymns, more as a letter-writer than a poet. He may be said to be, with the exception of Horace Walpole, the most attractive letter-writer of that writing century.

Perhaps, however, the main interest of Cowper's life is his own personality. He was very fortunate in many ways, in his friendships, his occupation, his fame. And he needed all the good fortune that came to him, because of the shadows that clouded his soul. His intermittent madness receives a large amount of attention in this book, and the various theories that have been advanced as to its nature and origin are carefully examined. The most reasonable explanation seems to be Mr.

Thomas's own, that it was constitutional, but that it was 'fixed' and aggravated by the Calvinistic Evangelicalism under which and to which Cowper was 'converted.' The Evangelical Revival bulks largely in the background sketched by Mr. Thomas, and there can be no doubt that the hyper-Calvinism which dominated Cowper's mind, and prostrated him with the conviction that he was 'lost,' was largely to blame for the dark and miserable moods that afflicted the poet.

It must be remembered, however, that the insanity *was* intermittent. In the intervals he enjoyed much peace, and even the high spirits that produced 'John Gilpin' and that appear in many of his letters. And one reflects sadly that this side of his personality might have overcome the shadows if Cowper had been 'converted' through the Wesleyan and Arminian side of the Evangelical Revival, and not through the Calvinistic. It only remains to be added that this delightful book, which keeps us pleasantly in the company of Cowper and his friends and his age, is handsomely produced.

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#### METHODISM IN AMERICA.

Under the not very attractive title *Men of Zeal* (Abingdon Press; \$2.00), Dr. W. W. Sweet has written a book of absorbing interest in which he tells the story of American Methodist Beginnings. Dr. Sweet is Professor of the History of American Christianity in the University of Chicago, and is the writer of several works on Methodist history. The present book is a masterly piece of descriptive writing, well-documented, and marked by ripe powers of selection and of historical insight. First, Dr. Sweet tells the story of the forerunners of the Methodist movement, giving special attention to the devoted labours of Devereux Jarratt. He then describes the Irish local-preacher immigrants, especially Philip Embury and Robert Strawbridge, and Wesley's first missionaries. A discussion of events connected with the American Revolution follows, and an account is given of the work of Francis Asbury and Dr. Coke. It is interesting to a British reader to note the comparatively slight attention given to the problems connected with the ordinations of John Wesley. This, however, is a topic on which much has been written, especially of late, and it is better that Dr. Sweet should devote his space to an account of native-born American preachers, and an important discussion of 'Religion in the New Republic.' This last topic occupies the last chapter, undoubtedly the most interesting,

and in some respects the most important, chapter in the book. Dr. Sweet's volume occupies a place of its own. Most of the books read on this side of the Atlantic on the subject of American Methodism are written by British writers, the most notable being the late Dr. John S. Simon's 'John Wesley: The Last Phase.' Valuable as such works are, there are obviously special advantages in reading the story as it can be told with the knowledge, sympathy, and understanding of an American scholar. Dr. Sweet has given to us just that book, and it can be heartily recommended. The reader whose interests are wider will find the description of the post-war religious situation, after the War of Independence, extremely suggestive, and will be forcibly reminded of some parallels in the European religious circumstances of to-day.

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Our generation is witnessing a movement which might be described as 'Back to Paul,' comparable to that of a previous generation whose slogan was 'Back to Jesus.' At any rate Paul is beginning to be estimated at something of his true value for the spiritual life. And this process will be materially furthered by a new book on the Apostle—*Paul's Secret of Power*, by Rollin H. Walker, Professor of the English Bible, Ohio (Abingdon Press; \$1.00). The aim of the book is to state in modern terms Paul's technique for vital living. The writer rejoices in the processes and conclusions of the critical movement, but he wisely points out that its danger is to leave no adequate gospel for man's need after it has done its work. He himself seeks to penetrate behind the forms and moulds of Paul's thought to the religious reality they express. And he shows us that, while Paul stated his experience in terms of the ideas of his own day, we have to use our own forms and not slavishly repeat the metaphors he employs. In this broad spirit, and with a thoroughly evangelical loyalty, the writer deals with the main secrets of Paul's own spiritual power.

*Christ for Us and In Us*, by the Rev. Campbell N. Moody, D.D. (Allen & Unwin; 3s. 6d. net), is a simple but very thoughtful exposition of the saving work of Christ. Dr. Moody finds that there is apt to be a certain opposition between the work of Christ *for us* and His work *in us*, leading to different types of doctrine. This dualism he seeks to overcome. 'We lose much when we reduce the manifold grace of God to uniformity. One of the

facts that startle us and put us to confusion is that while we love to comprise all truth in one mode of thought, such as Imitation of Christ, Justification by Faith, Fatherhood of God, the New Testament, both in Gospels and Epistles, delights in variety.' Dr. Moody's treatment of the subject is marked by fine sanity, ripe experience, and deep religious feeling. It is a genuine eirenicon and should prove most helpful.

The Rev. Ernest G. Loosley, B.D., has written a little book whose title was suggested by that of one of Mr. A. A. Milne's volumes of nursery rhymes, *When the Church was Very Young* (Allen & Unwin; 3s. 6d. net). He affirms that in the early days the Church possessed no buildings, no denominations, no fixed organization, no New Testament, no vocabulary of its own, no dogmatic system, and no Sabbath rest (in the Gentile world); but that it did possess an experience, a store of teaching from Christ, and a gospel. These last were essential to the Church's life and witness, and they, and they alone, remain so. Mr. Loosley appears to be indebted in particular to the writings of Dr. Streeter, Dr. Raven, and Dr. T. R. Glover. The volume is clearly arranged and lucidly written.

*The Sermon on the Mount*, by Mr. Emmet Fox (Harper; 5s. net), professes to be 'a general introduction to scientific Christianity in the form of a spiritual key to Matthew v., vi. and vii.' After a promiscuous assault on all the churches, named in alphabetical order, and a fling at the great universities, the writer declares that 'the Spiritual Key to the Bible rescues us from all these difficulties, dilemmas and seeming inconsistencies.' What that key is he does not make quite plain, but it appears to open the door to certain strange ideas and practices. 'Suppose that in a street accident you find that a man has severed an artery, and the blood is spurting out. The normal course of things is that unless this bleeding is stopped the victim will die within a few minutes. Now, what is the spiritual attitude to take in such a case? Well, it is perfectly simple. Immediately you perceive what has happened, you must *turn the other cheek* by knowing the Truth of the Omnipresence of God. If you get this clear enough, as Jesus would, for instance, the severed artery will immediately be healed, and there will be nothing more to be done.' By the same 'spiritual' means, if your bank fails you can get all your money back, and more, within a week; you can save a drowning child without going into the water; you can even stop a dog fight. A caveat,

however, is entered to the effect that if your spirituality is not in full vigour you had better tackle the situation in the ordinary way.

Much has been written at one time or another about Christmas Evans, the famous Welsh revivalist preacher. But it is not unfitting, as we approach the centenary of his death (he died in 1838), that his memory should be revived for a new generation. *Christmas Evans*, by Mr. E. Ebrard Rees (Kingsgate Press; 3s. 6d. net), is calculated to do this. It paints a vivid picture of the old revivalist days in Wales, when the Principality was roused from its gross and carnal slumber and began to seethe with a turbulent mixture of religious and political ideas and passions. Through that stormy period the great preacher passed, a rugged and solitary figure, irritable and difficult to deal with, manifesting few of the finer graces of the Christian spirit, but a master of fiery and imaginative oratory, a veritable hammer of God to break stony hearts. Some samples of his sermons are given with the frank confession that they would be impossible in our day. The writer sums up, 'Christmas Evans was in the Golden Age of preaching. More than anyone else he was responsible for that age continuing as long as it did. Others helped to put preaching on the map, but he helped to put the sermon into the soul and blood of Welsh Christians, especially Baptists. The service was of little use to him except as a setting in which the sermon was the precious pearl. . . . Evans did not diminish the devotional parts of the service in order to make more room for a sermon. His sermon was devotional. It made people pray; it helped people to worship; it brought people face to face with God; it made the presence of God real to the congregation.'

'Imagine a group of students, at the end of a term, sitting for an examination. One of the subjects set before them is "the great writers of the Elizabethan period." When the papers are read by the examiners it is discovered that in none of them is there any reference to Shakespeare, or his name is mentioned but casually. Such a thing would be impossible. Yet it is possible in our time for educated men to write and speak of God, of human life, of the mystery of the Universe, and of human destiny with scarcely a reference to Jesus Christ. If that happened in India or China or Japan, there would be no mystery about it. But that it happens in a country which bears the Christian name is simply astounding.' These words from the prelude to *The Man who holds the*

*Keys*, by the Rev. Frederic C. Spurr (Lutterworth Press; 2s. net), indicate the main thesis of the book. Christ is presented as the One who in His gospel offers the key to the solution of the world problems of to-day. The writer, through his studies and personal contacts, is highly competent to treat of this subject. He writes with sympathy and notable breadth of view, but his criticisms are incisive and thought-provoking. At the same time his exposition of Christian doctrine and policy is very sane and heartening.

Dr. Campbell Morgan has published an exposition of *Great Chapters of the Bible* (Marshall, Morgan & Scott; 10s. 6d. net). Probably no two Bible students would agree as to which are the great chapters. Dr. Campbell Morgan, however, has submitted the matter to the vote. 'The selection was made by lists sent in of Twelve Great Chapters. Hundreds filled in these lists. These were then sorted, and the chapters receiving the highest number of votes were selected.' Forty-nine chapters in all are included, and each is dealt with in a brief running commentary which covers on an average seven pages. Instances occur where more is read into the text than the words seem able legitimately to bear. Precarious deductions are also drawn, as when the first chapter of Genesis is interpreted as giving not simply a record of Creation, but 'of a cataclysm overtaking the earth' subsequent to its creation, 'and of the method by which the earth was restored from the chaos resulting from the cataclysm, into order.' Apart from such points the whole exposition is a field of rich spiritual pasture where many will delight to browse.

Dr. John Watson said that if he had to begin his ministry over again he would preach more comforting sermons. Here is a volume of comforting sermons, *Overcoming Life's Handicaps*, by the Rev. K. M. McRitchie (Marshall, Morgan & Scott; 3s. 6d. net). They make wholesome and interesting reading, being illustrated by an unusual number of encouraging anecdotes. One notes, however, in certain cases a lack of historical accuracy and an undue love for high colour. John Welch was Knox's son-in-law, not his father-in-law, and the story of three of David Livingstone's children being buried with their mother in Africa is quite without foundation, and it is difficult to imagine from what source it could have been derived. The sermons, however, are in general full of plain, wise, and Christian teaching, such as is well fitted

to bring comfort and good cheer to burdened hearts.

*Standing by the Cross*, by Mr. J. T. Mawson (Marshall, Morgan & Scott; 2s. 6d. net), contains twelve gospel addresses. 'Christ and Him crucified is not more popular to-day than when Paul preached his gospel in proud and pleasure-seeking Corinth; but it is just as needful now as it was then if men are to be saved and made to live unto God. Then it was to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness, and to-day it is despised by those who prefer the gospel of evolution and human progress; but as then, so now, it is the power and the wisdom of God to all them that believe. I am one of them that believe. Christ, once crucified but now risen and glorified, is my Saviour, and to Him I bear witness in these reported addresses.' The writer would doubtless rank himself with the Fundamentalists, and some of his methods of reasoning may appear dubious, but every reader must feel the passion of his convictions and the warmth of his devotion. His is real preaching, simple and scriptural, urgent and home-coming. 'He stands as though he pleaded with men,' and one can well understand that his words have been blessed to many.

*The Promise is to You*, 10,000 Miles of Miracle—to Palestine, by Mr. J. Edwin Orr (Marshall, Morgan & Scott; 1s. net), is an account of travel all over Europe by a man who 'hadn't a cent,' and always got enough through prayer for the next stage of the journey. Paris, Switzerland, Turkey, Athens, Rome, Palestine, and Spain all saw him in turn, and heard him, for he found like-minded folk wherever he went, and addressed them, generally with conversions. And the money came for expenses, always in answer to prayer.

On the 'jacket' of *The Prophetic Character of the Psalms*, by Mr. E. Bendor Samuel (Pickering & Inglis; 2s. 6d. net), the publishers remark, 'The sidelights of interpretation, the references to the Hebrew original, the wisely chosen quotations, the illuminating footnotes, and apt references are of very special value to Bible Students.' Their judgment (be it noted that the author himself makes no such claims) is not borne out by the contents of the book. The title is misleading, for less than twenty psalms are discussed, some of them somewhat briefly—a fact for which the author gives his reasons. The Psalms chosen are those which Mr. Samuel can interpret in a Messianic

sense. The references to the Hebrew original involve a confusing phonetic transliteration, and show little sign of the very great advance which has been made in Hebrew philology during the last seventy years. The quotations and references are wise and apt only when seen from a special point of view (Perowne and Hengstenberg, both admirable in their day, are the commentators most often quoted), and the work generally is valueless for Bible students as such.

'Bible students,' however, form only a minor element in the Christian community, and can be trusted to find what they need elsewhere. If we turn from the publishers to the author himself, we shall form a very different opinion of his work from that which is suggested above. Mr. Samuel is a man of high Jewish descent, who can justly claim, like St. Paul, that it is his heart's desire that Israel should be saved. As addressed to Jews, particularly conservative Jews, his appeal and his reasoning should be valuable. He knows their mind, and he has seen the glory of the Crucified and Risen Christ. His aim is to interpret this supreme spiritual experience in terms of the Old Testament, treating the Scriptures along lines with which his particular audience is familiar. Further, though many readers will disagree on a number of points, the whole conception of prophecy among them, they cannot be blind to the deep spirituality and the intense Christian experience often indicated. We may not endorse all that we read in this volume, but not a few of us will lay it down with the feeling that we have been for a time in the company of a man who knows God.

*The Purpose of the Old Testament*, by Mr. W. J. Ferrar, M.A. (S.P.C.K.; 1s. net), contains 'the substance of lectures delivered to Day-School Teachers in the Diocese of Winchester,' and covers a wide field in a short space. It deals with the general character and place of the Old Testament, and gives in outline some of the more important critical conclusions generally accepted among modern scholars. It gives a fair summary of the prophetic teaching, and concludes with a section on the permanent value of the Old Testament to which the whole of the rest of the book leads. While Mr. Ferrar is not a professional student of the Old Testament, and from time to time introduces details which further knowledge or consideration would lead him to modify (his remarks on the relation of Deuteronomy to the temple at Shiloh are a case in point), he has read widely in the current literature of the subject, and has produced

a useful little sketch which might serve as an introduction for readers who know little or nothing about the scientific study of the Bible. The opening section and the conclusion seem to be especially valuable.

*Advent in India*, by Mr. Maxwell S. Leigh (S.P.C.K.; 1s. 6d. net), consists of four lectures originally delivered in Winchester Cathedral under the auspices of the Diocesan Religious Studies Committee. These lectures are most admirably clear and instructive. They deal with the religious history of India, its sacred scriptures, its priesthoods, all with the intention of helping Christian missionaries and Christian people to appreciate and approach with sympathy. It is, in the writer's opinion, 'absurd to maintain that the Indian Empire has, for the past hundred years, been held by the sword. It has been held because the best mind of India has believed that British rule would lead India on to new levels of achievement. It has been held because many of those who bore the sword regarded themselves as ministers and stewards, ever willing to serve those whom they led. . . . It has been held because alongside of those who bore the sword have been the judges and administrators, the teachers and the doctors, the builders of bridges and the designers of canals, and not least, the men who brought a message of love and hope to the out-caste and poor.' 'The youth of both sexes in India are at the present moment full of zeal—they are eager to learn from anybody who will teach them, and they are eager to turn their lessons to practical account, for the good of the country as a whole.' The book though brief is singularly illuminating, and gives evidence of wide knowledge and profound reflection.

The publication of broadcast talks on various subjects is providing us with a number of excellent handbooks which deserve to be popular. *The Way to God* (S.C.M.; 3s. 6d. net) contains a second series of talks on the Christian religion. It follows an earlier volume published last spring under the same title. The present volume contains talks by the Rev. Father C. C. Martindale, Professor C. E. Raven, and the Rev. G. F. Macleod. The first named is a Roman Catholic, the second an Episcopalian, the third a Presbyterian, and the harmony of their presentation of Christian faith and life may be taken as an evidence of the agreement on fundamentals which really exists among Christian people despite their differences. Father Martindale gave three talks on Jesus Christ, Canon Raven gave three on

Christ's power in history, while the Rev. G. F. Macleod dealt in two talks with the Abundant Life. Each speaker in conclusion gave a talk in which questions sent in by listeners were dealt with.

These perhaps form the freshest part of the book, but the whole is admirably done in a clear, straightforward, and persuasive way. They are well fitted to commend the faith.

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## An Armistice Sermon: The Church and Peace.

BY THE REVEREND JAMES REID, D.D., EASTBOURNE.

'Look to yourselves, that ye lose not the things which we have wrought, but that ye receive a reward.'—2 Jn 8 (R.V.).

THERE are some things in life we dare not forget, and one of them is the fact that seventeen years ago the nations of the world emerged from the greatest war in history. To-day, in the presence of God, we recall the fact, and listen to what God is saying to us as we look back and forward. November 11th used to be known as Armistice Day. There is a suggestion that it should be known as Remembrance Day. Those of us who had reached manhood and womanhood at that time can never forget the emotions of relief and joy that swept over our souls that day. But there is a generation growing up to which the word Armistice means little or nothing. Yet we must still keep the day, and I hope shall ever keep it, till one day—please God—the nations keeping this day will celebrate it, not as the ending of that War but as the ending of all war—the day on which it was finally banished from the world.

If that hour is to come, it will come as we force ourselves to remember before God that disastrous time, and take to ourselves the message that comes to our souls from God in the hour of solemn recollection.

This text has nothing to do with the subject. John is not thinking of world peace as one of the things which Christ brought. If he had lived to-day he would have thought of it. He was thinking of such things as a clean life and the faith in Christ as Lord, and the hope of immortality. But we can apply it to the lessons of war—the fruits of war. For the War did teach us something—then. Seventeen years ago the message of it shone out crystal clear against the smoke of battle, and as the years went by, it was printed deep on some of our hearts. The danger is that as time passes, for some of us, and perhaps more especially for the younger generation, these lessons tend to be for-

gotten, and because they are forgotten there is peril. We begin to talk about war, to think about war, to plan our national policy in terms of possible war, to doubt the possibility of getting rid of it, and the effectiveness of the League of Nations. And so, bit by bit, the defences of our souls against the catastrophe of war are worn down, and we are once more at the mercy of primitive fears and passions. That is the danger to-day. It is that we forget the past and let its message slip. The man who forgets the past and all we learned in those dark and shuddering days is not fit to meet the future. When one hears some people talk about war, one wonders if God can teach them anything. We are thinking to-day of the men who died. Every name means a grave in some heart or hearts, a scar that will never fade. If we could hear them speak to us this morning, the unanimous voice of millions from the battlefields of Europe and beyond would be this: 'Look to yourselves that ye lose not that which we have wrought, but that ye receive a full reward.'

What is it that to-day should rise into our minds as we think of the lessons of the War?

I. First of all there is the horror of war. We need not dwell on that, for to dwell on the horror of war and the fear of what it means is not the best way to get rid of it. Fear of evil is never the best of motives. There are young people to-day, and all honour to them, to whom danger and adventure and even sacrifice is a positive attraction, especially in a world where millions of able-bodied men are enduring the boredom of unemployment. That is why it is questionable whether war plays, even such plays as *Journey's End*, are useful as peace propaganda. I sat one day in a picture-house and watched a film showing some aspects of fighting in the air. It was a ghastly film in many ways, as one after another went out and came back no more. But after each exploit in which bombs were dropped on the enemy depots, and houses and men went