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a philosophical but a very simple and practical question. He asks, 'If there *is* a revelation of a world beyond, has it any power to change the world in which we live?' Those are the two burning questions which, in the present state of affairs, are asked of theology. I should like to point out that dialectic theology, which we have to thank for so much, leaves us wanting an answer to both questions and that for this reason it was necessary to seek other ways. Let us consider the *first* question: the problem of the transcendental as it is formulated by modern secularism. Dialectic theology deals with it as if it were an unimportant preliminary question of no importance to theology. Barth's pamphlet entitled 'No,' in reply to Brunner's little book *Nature and Grace*, is characteristic of his whole attitude to the questions raised by the philosophy of religion. Brunner's book raised anew the old question which all philosophy of religion asks—If God is a reality, what is the relation between the omnipresent and all-creating power of the Almighty God and the responsible will of man? Looking more deeply into the matter we see that behind this question lies the last question which the modern man asks: is it in any way possible to speak of an absolute power? Such power alone must be effective. Nothing could take place without it. With it there can be no decisions of human will. The ultimate problem must then be considered; in what relation does the absolute power of God stand to the will of a relative being. As yet it is not possible to consider the special problem of whether the Roman Catholic or the Protestant way to salvation is the truer. There is a problem which precedes all discussion of predestination and synergism, or of the differences between the two churches. Brunner's solution is

fairly simple. He says: our eternal fate is wholly God's work. I live entirely by the grace of God, but still I possess, as a creature of God, two capacities, which in the terms of orthodox dogmatics would be the two indestructible remnants of the image of God, namely, that I am able to hear God's word, and that I have the consciousness of responsibility.

That Barth refused to agree with Brunner's solution did not astonish me, but the way in which he did so. Barth does not hear the question asked by the man of to-day who is absolutely disinterested in confessional discussions; who only questions the whole meaning of transcendence. Barth does not take the question seriously. For Barth there exists only one question; he reduces all problems violently and arbitrarily to the one, namely, that of the reformers who asked whether justification was by deeds or faith alone. For him every philosophical objection must be a hidden or masked form of righteousness by works. He, therefore, does not pay attention to Brunner's question and explanation. Brunner has ascribed to the human ego a rôle in the journey along the path to salvation. Barth blindly attacks this heresy with fanatical rage.

The way in which Barth argued has proved to me that he is an excellent critic of the Christian Church, an incomparable critic of that group, or in his own words 'a corrective,' 'a pinch of cinnamon.' But he is not a missionary who understands the attitude of the modern secularists. We expect no help from him in the solution of the problem of transcendence. He can appeal only to the believing congregation, and is unable to move the unbeliever. He is not an effective leader in the Church's conflict with the world of unbelief.

(*To be continued.*)

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## Literature.

### FAITH AND SCIENCE.

THE bearings of current scientific theory on the Christian view of God, man, and the world is a subject that needs re-examination for almost every generation. There are two weaknesses to which the minister is prone who in the pulpit or in the Bible Class deals with this topic or series of topics.

One is to speak without sufficiently clear knowledge or understanding of what current scientific theory really is; the other is to surrender, in a desire to be abreast of the times in his theology, whatever a perhaps baseless assertion of some reputed scientific authority represents as untenable. Hence there is need in every successive age for the work of some who have competent understanding both of current

science and of theology to show just what, if any, the bearing of the former on the latter may be.

We have before us one such book as we desiderate in *Christian Faith and the Science of To-day*, by the Rev. J. H. Morrison, M.A. (Hodder & Stoughton; 7s. 6d. net). We congratulate Mr. Morrison, a valued contributor to our columns, on his appointment to deliver the Cunningham Lectures last winter, and on their appearance in expanded form in this volume. It is written throughout with that lucidity and sparkling style which we expect from the author; some very abstruse questions are handled, but there is not a paragraph which the ordinary reader will fail to understand.

In his first chapters Mr. Morrison deals with the sub-microscopical and the ultra-telescopic universe. Here the achievements of modern scientific research have been amazing, and a tremendous revolution of thought, perhaps chiefly in the former sphere, has been wrought. Readers will find sure guidance as to present-day conceptions—and conceptions is the right word—of the structure of matter and of the universe. He will gain some truer notion of what the 'blessed' words 'relativity' and 'indeterminacy' mean, and will be warned of the risk of so misunderstanding the latter as to believe that 'Nature is loose-jointed.' The bearing of scientific theory as to 'matter' and 'law' just is that the thought-background is vastly more favourable to a spiritual view or interpretation of Nature than was the rigid mechanistic view of some years ago.

In 'Nature and Supernature' we are given a suggestive and satisfying 'apologetic' for Providence, miracle, and inferentially prayer. Then in a very fine chapter on 'Evolution' we learn how the latest science is far less dogmatic and certain of itself than the older scientists were. This leads naturally to a discussion of the 'Ascent and Fall of Man.' In our opinion this is one of the best sections in a book which is all good.

Finally, in 'Scientist and Christian' Mr. Morrison argues persuasively for the supreme importance for Christian Faith of the Revelation in Jesus Christ. The testimonies of some modern scientists have their value; but they no more than the beautiful thoughts of the believing poets can afford a sure basis for faith in the love of God. 'That faith can be confidently built only on the basis of the historical revelation given in Jesus Christ.' 'Science cannot help us here, and it is a mistake to look for help in that direction, or greedily, as some do,

to snatch up the crumbs which fall from the scientist's table.'

#### PROFESSOR PATON ON KANT.

While the so-called 'Scottish' Philosophy has more direct relations with France than with Germany, it is surely striking that so many of our Scottish Professors of Philosophy have made notable contributions to literature expository of Kant. In the early eighties of last century we had Hutchison Stirling, and in the late 'eighties Edward Caird, thirty years later Professor Kemp Smith, and now Professor H. J. Paton of Glasgow University.

Professor Paton's work is entitled *Kant's Metaphysic of Experience: A Commentary on the First Half of the 'Kritik der reinen Vernunft'* (Allen & Unwin; 2 vols., 30s. net the set). Let us state baldly and boldly that this is a work which no student of Kant can be without. There is a forbidding mass of literature on Kant, some of it good, some of it an almost complete misunderstanding of the master. Some criticisms of Kant have been so often repeated that they have almost acquired unquestionable authority. It is one of the great merits of this work that it goes back directly to Kant himself. Professor Paton finds Kant to be his own best interpreter. In this way it appears that some of the familiar criticisms of Kant are perfectly baseless, and to Professor Paton it appears that Kant's doctrine contains far more truth than is commonly believed, and, as he suspects, more truth than many modern philosophies. The work is professedly a commentary, but there are commentaries and commentaries. This one reads connectedly like an independent work. The student will do well to have a text at hand, not to discover what the commentary is dealing with sentence by sentence, but only to see if he can agree with Professor Paton's interpretation.

The main criticisms of Kant which the book shows to be baseless are that which asserts the *Kritik* to be a patchwork of fragments very loosely thrown together, so that in Professor Kemp Smith's words, 'Kant flatly contradicts himself in almost every chapter,' and that Kant followed very uncritically the traditional schematism of formal logic and spun the Categories out of nothing to fit into it. Professor Paton is not prepared to justify everything that Kant said; when he differs from, or fails to understand, Kant he frankly tells us; but he is surely right in holding that one who finds Kant quite unintelligible has no business to attempt to expound him.

The work is written in charming literary style. Altogether it is a noble contribution to our national philosophical literature, and we have no doubt will enhance the credit of British philosophy abroad.

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*THE APOSTOLIC AGE—THREE  
DISTINCT PERIODS.*

*The Apostolic Age and the New Testament* (Milford ; 7s. net) is composed of the Bohlen Lectures for 1935. The author is that distinguished veteran among Biblical scholars, Professor George A. Barton, Ph.D., S.T.D., LL.D., now of the Divinity School of the Protestant Episcopal Church, Philadelphia. His purpose in these pages is to give an outline of the formative ideas and influences of the Apostolic Age, and their effect upon the New Testament books produced in it ; an outline, moreover, that shall be sufficiently brief and clear to be understood by the layman and non-technical scholar. Dr. Barton has succeeded well in his purpose, and his expositions have the additional merit of being up to date.

The scheme of contents is largely determined by the author's tripartite division of the history of the Apostolic Age. The first of the three periods begins with the Day of Pentecost (A.D. 30) and extends to the commencement of St. Paul's mission in Antioch (A.D. 42 or 43). During this period the Church was groping for its mission. The effort of its leaders was to convince Jews that Jesus was the Messiah, and the net result of their labours was to establish Christianity as a small Jewish sect.

The second period begins at A.D. 42 or 43 and ends with St. Paul's death (A.D. 64), or, more conveniently, with the destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70). It was the period of the beginning of conscious missionary enterprise, and was characterized by fierce controversy between the particularists, who virtually looked upon Christianity as a Jewish sect, and the universalists, who interpreted Christianity as a religion for all the world. The result was the spread of Christianity through Asia Minor, around the Ægean, to the islands of the Mediterranean, to Rome, and, perhaps, to Alexandria.

The third period begins at A.D. 70 and closes with the composition of the last book of the Canon about A.D. 150. It was the period of the institutionalizing of Christianity. 'During this period Christians had to face the problems created by syncretistic thought in the form of gnosticism, open opposition of the Jews, the insidious competition

of the mystery religions, and, because no longer a Jewish sect, the persecution visited upon an illegal religion by Roman government.'

Each of these periods, as Dr. Barton maintains, left its mark on the literature or traditions produced in it, and thus the recognition of them becomes 'a helpful instrument of criticism.' He adds that it is difficult to see how, unless Christianity had been institutionalized, it could have survived to this day. Sometimes, no doubt, the Church has had a baneful effect upon social and individual life. 'On the other hand, an institution that conserves the best aspiration and teaching that the past has achieved, fosters high aspiration, ethical endeavour, and personal consecration in the present, and helps to keep the mind open to the leading of the Spirit into new fields of thought, of service, and of sacrifice for the future, is indispensable to the best life of man.'

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*THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS:  
SOURCES AND MESSAGE.*

Dr. V. Burch, who was for a time Cathedral Lecturer in Divinity at Liverpool, has made a suggestive contribution to the study of *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Williams & Norgate ; 5s. net). His two main conclusions are, that the Epistle is throughout Hebrew in ideas, being uninfluenced by Alexandrine Judaism ; and that its aim and purpose is to confirm the faith of Hebrew Christians inclined to yield to the spell of the 'silent voices of the dead' and 'the lowland ways behind.' He would name the Epistle 'A Letter against the Lure of the Lowland Ways,' and he describes it as 'a triumph of the highest order of craftsmanship.' The author, who had been schooled in the ancient Semitic world and in the new world of Jesus Christ, must have been a man of the type of Barnabas ; and he wrote the Epistle, it is more specifically concluded, to those in Antioch who, in the period near to the destruction of the Temple, were turning themselves to the wizardry of the 'silent voices' and 'the lowland ways' (Dr. Burch never lets these metaphors go).

We must leave it to experts to examine Dr. Burch's work in detail. His judgments are often provocative and may not always be truly founded, but he displays in this book an uncommon power of subtle and searching analysis and a mastery of the expositor's art. The book would have gained much had it presented, if only in summary form, a detailed statement of conclusions reached with regard to the sources of the Epistle.

## DALE LECTURES.

*Man and Revelation* (Hodder & Stoughton ; 8s. 6d. net), by Professor Günther Dehn, late of Halle, consists of the Dale Lectures given at Mansfield College, Oxford, in 1935. There are eight lectures in all, and in them the author deals with certain questions of Christian thought and life, 'not as a free scholar but as a theologian bound by the Church.' What he means by this phrase is not altogether clear. In the lectures there are things both old and new. What is new in them is chiefly the affirmation of Reformation principles on the lines of the teaching of Karl Barth. Thus they support Barth as against 'his one-time theological friend' Emil Brunner on the question of the image of God in man after the Fall. Even after Adam's fall, says Brunner, man is still a responsible being endowed with reason and, accordingly, with the faculty of accepting revelation. But Barth will have none of this, and Dr. Dehn says that without doubt Barth is right : 'Any assertion of an existing affinity between man and God is a denial of the principal concern of Scripture, namely, that God's honour should truly be given Him.' 'In faith,' he adds, 'man is once more the image of God, as Adam was in Paradise ; without faith, he stands in darkness and in death.'

The theological reader, acquainted with the present-day Lutheran emphasis in Continental dogmatics, will know the kind of teaching to expect when he turns to the other subjects treated in this volume, such as Justification by Faith, the Word of God, the Church, the Hidden God.

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The author of *Christianity in America : A Crisis* (Abingdon Press ; \$2.00) has some hard things to say of the Church over there. He seems to think that secularism has eaten into its soul. He foresees a crisis, and not so very far away, when the Lord will test His Church with severity. Will its rather flabby theology and its materialism stand the fire ? The writer is the Rev. E. G. Homrighausen, Th.D., D.D., a Lecturer on Church History in Butler University. His book is an earnest summons to the Church to face Reality, to give up attempts to 'whoop up' church life by 'drives' for men and money. He is not a Fundamentalist or a Modernist, but a loyal Christian. And he sees clearly, and proclaims definitely, that what we all need is to come up against the fact of Christ, and

decide what He is to us. That is central and urgent.

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Mr. Mortimer Taube is a research student in the University of California, which last year awarded him a Ph.D. degree. He has published what we take to be his thesis under the title *Causation, Freedom and Determinism* (Allen & Unwin ; 10s. net). In brief, the book is a refutation of determinism, and a very cogent one. The writer shows that between causation and freedom there is no antagonism if we carefully define our terms ; on the contrary, a cause must be more or less 'free.' We have an excellent account of determinism as it was held by philosophical writers of the seventeenth century ; and Dr. Taube's interesting view is that they were determinists in the interest of their predestinarian theology. Science emancipated itself from theology, but quite baselessly on assumed scientific grounds continued to be deterministic. As many modern men of science maintain, there is no scientific evidence to support, still less necessitate, a deterministic view of the world. Here Dr. Taube frequently and effectively quotes Whitehead. As to the theological problem of Divine fore-ordination he has nothing to say.

In view of Dr. Taube's age—he is only twenty-five—the book is a remarkable one ; and if we are not mistaken, we shall hear of him again.

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We welcome the second instalment of Dr. W. K. Jordan's important work on *The Development of Religious Toleration in England* (Allen & Unwin ; 21s. net). The first volume appeared in 1932 and was concerned with the Elizabethan Age ; the present volume deals with the important period 1603-1640. As in the previous work we find here evidence of exhaustive consultation of contemporary documents. So thorough is this, so many all but forgotten sources of information are laid under contribution, that one is disposed to say that Dr. Jordan's work is final.

There are five long chapters with convenient sub-headings dealing with the dominant groups, first from 1603 to 1625, and then 1625 to 1640 ; the minority groups ; the laymen and the moderates ; Roman Catholic thought with reference to toleration. Every chapter is of great interest, and Dr. Jordan has put us deeply in his debt.

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The Halley Stewart Trust, founded in 1924, 'for research towards the Christian ideal in all social life,' has promoted a course of lectures annually dealing in the main with topics connected with

social and moral advance. The course of lectures for 1935 was assigned to six distinguished scientists, each of whom delivered one lecture on his own subject. These lectures are now published under the title of *Scientific Progress* (Allen & Unwin; 7s. 6d. net). The obvious criticism suggests itself that while the individual lectures are in the highest degree excellent, and in their own sphere authoritative, the whole book lacks unity, and there seems to be no reason why these particular branches of science should be selected for treatment in preference to others. Professor Appleton deals with Electricity in the Atmosphere, Professor Mellanby gives a résumé of Progress in Medical Science, while Professor Julian Huxley treats of Science and its Relation to Social Needs. Professor J. B. S. Haldane in dealing with Human Genetics devotes considerable space to the question of sterilization and shows the very grave difficulties connected with it. Sir James Jeans and Sir William Bragg, discussing their own topics of Astronomy and Physics, raise their voices against the rigid determinism fostered by nineteenth-century science. The former says, 'We still may or may not be automata; present-day physics certainly cannot prove that we are not, but it gives no shadow of a reason for thinking that we are.' The latter concludes his lecture, 'Do not let us, therefore, be oppressed by unnecessary fears that we are but helpless cogs in a machine, but let us throw ourselves eagerly into the task of trying to interpret and live in the world in which we find ourselves.'

A small paper book that costs 10 cents is sent out by the Biblical Seminary in New York. It might well have come in a more permanent form, for it is on a great subject, and it has a good deal to say that is important. The title is *Why Read the Bible? How to Read the Bible: What to Read and Why*. The author is the Rev. Wilbert W. White, D.D., Ph.D., who has no difficulty in answering any of his own questions. The pamphlet is really worth having if only for the quotations from great men—from Huxley to Goethe—on the value of Bible reading.

Professor C. H. Dodd's Inaugural Lecture on *The Present Task in New Testament Studies*, delivered at the Divinity School, Cambridge (Cambridge University Press; 2s. net), is a very interesting survey of the special fields covered by present-day New Testament research, in respect of Textual Criticism, the Fourth Gospel and Form-

Criticism. On all these questions Professor Dodd expresses wise and discriminating judgments. He does not think that the eschatological element in the New Testament can be written off as temporary. 'The ideal interpreter would be one who has entered into that strange first-century world, has felt its whole strangeness, has sojourned in it until he has lived himself into it, thinking and feeling as one of those to whom the gospel first came; and who will then return into our world, and give to the truth he has discerned a body out of the stuff of our own thought. If there are other qualifications of which it is less fitting to speak in an academic lecture, I may be allowed to hint at them in a phrase familiar to theologians—*testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum*.' This he recognizes is an ideal which it may not be possible to realize fully, but it is here he is convinced that our task lies.

*The Whispering Gallery*, by the Rev. Sidney H. Price (T. & T. Clark; 2s. net), contains a series of talks to boys and girls. They are brief, original, and suggestive. They are indeed just the right length for a 'children's address,' and may therefore even in that matter present a good example to many preachers. But they will help hard-pressed ministers also by giving them at least seeds for their own sowing.

North of Nineveh, in the Taurus range of mountains, there are still Aramaic tribes belonging to the Christian faith, the descendants of the ancient Assyrians. They have preserved the customs of their ancestors, and their literature consists almost entirely of the Bible and other sacred writings. In *Gospel Light: Comments on the Teachings of Jesus from Aramaic and Unchanged Eastern Customs* (A. J. Holman Company, Philadelphia; \$2.75), by Mr. George M. Lamsa, B.A., who was born and brought up among these people, and who is known as an ethnologist and Aramaic scholar, we have four hundred pages of excellent comments on the teachings of Jesus as illustrated by Aramaic and unchanged Eastern customs. The book is interesting, not merely because it is the only commentary on the Gospels by a native Easterner who speaks both Aramaic and English, but because it portrays the Gospel scenes and events in a vivid manner and simplifies some passages hitherto obscure. Many Bible readers may find some of the utterances of Christ difficult to understand, principally because they are unfamiliar with Eastern languages and temperament. This work explains such utterances

as they have always been understood by the people of the East who still speak the Aramaic language as used by Jesus and His disciples. Mr. Lamsa believes in the healing power of Jesus, and places much importance on those works of His which tended to eliminate human suffering. His comments throw flashes of light on these by pointing to the correct interpretation of words and phrases, thus giving a proper understanding of their purpose and solving many mysteries. There is an excellent index of subjects, and a Foreword by Dr. Harrington, an ethnologist of the Smithsonian Institute, Washington. The book, being written by an Assyrian reared in Aramaic surroundings, is of a unique kind, and will be found useful to ministers, teachers, and others in their Biblical expositions and addresses.

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Two Lectures delivered in Harvard University under the William Belden Noble Foundation by the Archbishop of York are published with the title *The Church and its Teaching To-day* (Macmillan; 4s. 6d. net). The first is on the 'Nature and Task of the Christian Church.' Dr. Temple emphasizes that primarily the Church is the fellowship of the redeemed united in worship of the Redeemer. If the Church forgets that, she will be no more than one society among many seeking to promote this or that good cause. The Church exists first and foremost to be the fellowship of those who worship God in Christ. But it is a God of Love whom we worship; and if we open our hearts to Him this must issue in loving activities. So the Church when it is true to itself becomes the agency through which the love of God is active in works of mercy and service in the world.

The second is on 'Christian Theology and Modern Thought.' About modern thought there are certain qualities of temper, such as insistence upon verification in experience of what is commended for acceptance, and a certain form of the doctrine of relativity especially in the study of the history of religions. Dr. Temple grants whatever of value there exists in those tendencies, and is prepared for the need of a very substantial rethinking of a great deal that has been traditional in theology. But Faith will stand if it is of the kind that willingly submits itself to three tests: Does it appeal directly to heart and conscience? Is it producing fruit? Does it help us to understand and solve in some measure the problems of life?

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With a volume on *Deuteronomy*, the Chief Rabbi

brings to a close his Commentary on the *Pentateuch and Haftorahs* (Milford; cloth, 7s. 6d.; Persian Morocco, 20s.; Venetian Rutland, 21s.), and includes lists of the Haftorahs (lessons from the historical and prophetic books to be read with the Pentateuchal sections) and an index to the whole series. All that has been said in approbation of the earlier parts of the work applies with equal, or even greater, force to this final section. The Hebrew text and the English R.V. are printed on opposite pages, with notes at the foot. The latter are based on the English text, and Hebrew words are explained where necessary, though the ordinary reader who has been trained in a Christian theological college may have some difficulty in recognizing the Hebrew words occasionally cited, since they are phonetic representations of the Ashkenazi pronunciation. The notes themselves are simple and straightforward, and deal with most of the difficulties (though not all) presented by the text. They are clearly the product of a strong desire to bring out and to make generally available the spiritual value of the text, and every class of reader will find them helpful from this point of view. The book also gains from the presence of several more extended notes on points which cannot be adequately handled in a brief footnote. Free use is made, not only of Rabbinic scholarship, but also of Christian authors, and while the standpoint is necessarily that of orthodox Judaism, the book will be found most useful by Gentiles. Dr. Hertz (and with him the whole of British Jewry) is to be congratulated warmly on the successful conclusion of this fine undertaking.

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Lord Conway of Allington has had a many-sided life as an explorer, an M.P., a Slade Professor of Art at Cambridge. Moreover, he has some dozens of books to his name which have been highly praised. And now comes what one fancies he himself would put first among them—*A Pilgrim's Quest for the Divine* (Muller; 10s. 6d. net). It is the record of another and more adventurous exploration into things spiritual, and of a long search for God, begun at Cambridge, and continued through the years. It has, so we are told, been five times written and rewritten, and into it one feels the author has put all his strength and soul. No doubt it will win a response from its own circle—but for most readers it is a disappointing book. The authentic note of a real spiritual classic is absent. The seeker seems so very meagrely equipped with the requisite spiritual organs, and some of those from whom he seeks guidance, and

whose crude findings he quotes with bated breath, are so unusually shallow; and the results achieved at last so elementary and platitudinous, that it all seems much ado about very little. One is reminded of Rousseau's ugly revelations of his life coupled to his complacent assurance that no one will deny him the title of a good man by his amateur and somewhat dilettante seeker's protestations of his own hard breathing efforts; or of Wilde's 'De Profundis' with its very shallow deeps of his curiously superficial quest. But apparently the author is entirely satisfied with the merest shadow of the spiritual knowledge and riches which innumerable humble souls about him have achieved by the simple device of consulting the experts in these matters.

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Principal A. J. Grieve, M.A., D.D., has edited a *Supplement to Peake's Commentary on the Bible* (Nelson; 2s. net). Among his collaborators are J. W. Jack, H. Wheeler Robinson, and others well-known to our readers. The aim is to indicate the principal developments in Biblical study since the Commentary was first published in 1919, and the volume has taken the form of a series of brief surveys of the literature that has appeared between 1919 and the present time. It is a useful volume and will be particularly welcomed by possessors of Peake's Commentary. Its last page supplies a list of corrigenda.

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During the nineteenth century the tone of historical research in regard to the Biblical records was to some extent one of doubt and suspicion. In the present century, however, a new note is being sounded. Thanks to the brilliant achievements of archæology, the historical facts contained in the Old Testament are proving to be wonderfully accurate and trustworthy. It is to be regretted, however, that so many authors, in giving an account of archæological results, fail to interpret them correctly, and draw from them suppositions and hypotheses which are scarcely warranted by the facts. The same writers usually refer to the so-called 'Higher Criticism' under the erroneous idea that it is the avowed enemy of the Bible. These are the thoughts that strike the Biblical scholar on reading *The Bible Triumphant in Twentieth-Century Discovery and Research* (Pickering & Inglis; 2s. 6d. net), by the Rev. C. Urquhart, B.A., Principal of the Perth Bible Institute, Western Australia. The book is a 'review of recent discoveries in Bible lands in their bearing upon the reliability and accuracy of the Old Testament.'

The standpoint is the Fundamentalist one, which many readers no doubt may prefer, but apart from this the volume cannot be regarded as authoritative, for competent scholars will consider many statements inaccurate, and will not be able to accept the chronology adopted. But, putting aside such drawbacks, it contains a brief survey, in popular language, of the discoveries and researches brought to light within recent years. In this connexion, it deals with Old Testament events from the Creation and the Flood down to the end of the Jewish kingdom, and may thus prove of use to Sunday-school teachers and other Bible expositors who have not access to the various original sources of information.

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The Rev. J. Garrow Duncan, D.D., has long been known as an expert archæologist, who has rendered the cause of Biblical studies valuable service by his excavations, especially in ancient Jerusalem. He has also played his part in the defence of the more conservative views of the Bible, and in *New Light on Hebrew Origins* (S.P.C.K.; 5s. net) he seeks to combine these two aspects of his work. The book is divided into three main sections: the Babylonian narratives of Genesis, the Egyptian narratives in Genesis and Exodus, and the Canaanite influence on Hebrew religion. The material is arranged in short sections, each dealing with a particular point; there are more than a hundred of them, and, especially in the first two sections, the plan and cohesion of the work are not obvious. In Part I. Dr. Duncan relies mainly on Sir Leonard Woolley, and in Part II. on Dr. Yahuda, with frequent reference to Sir Flinders Petrie; other archæologists, Assyriologists, and Egyptologists are almost entirely neglected. In Part I. Dr. Duncan occasionally shows signs of independent judgment, as when, for instance, he recognizes that Abraham need not necessarily have lived actually in the city of Ur. In Part II. he follows Dr. Yahuda very closely, though there also we have once or twice a free expression of opinion. Part III. is by far the best. Here Dr. Duncan sometimes makes use of other scholars, but most of the matter is based on his own archæological work, and it is this section which justifies the publication of the book, for, though he has given the substance of it elsewhere, it is here presented in a concise and readable form.

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An interesting book on Christian giving has been published by the S.P.C.K.—*Almsgiving: A Handbook*, by the Rev. W. K. Lowther Clarke, D.D.

(2s. net). Dr. Clarke first traces the customs of the Jews, the early Christians, and the successive generations of church people till the present. He then, in his second part, deals with the subject in its own nature and claims: the present situation, earning and spending, motives, competing claims, wills and endowments, a plea for simplicity, clerical problems. He adds some suggestive outlines for sermons on the subject. The book is, for its size, very thorough, and there is a mixture of shrewd sense and spirituality which is attractive. Clergymen will be interested to learn that 'Priests are not at liberty to marry merely for "love," irrespective of whether the woman will make a good clergyman's wife.' Even here there is a characteristically sensible point.

There is to be a Conference of the Churches at Oxford in 1937, and an International Christian Youth Conference will meet in 1939. In preparation for these Conferences, Mr. H. W. Fox, Hon. Secretary of the British Council of the World Alliance for International Friendship through the Churches, has prepared two books. One, already published, was called 'Loyalties to Church and State.' The second one has just appeared, *The Kingship of Christ*, in Education, History, Economics and International Relations. The object of the Conferences is to state the Christian values in view of attacks made upon them to-day by Communism, Paganism, and Materialism. And it is of grave importance that Christian people should rightly understand the issues, and the claims of such issues. Mr. Fox has written this book to promote discussion, and each of its four chapters, on the subjects above mentioned, has questions added to provoke thought. The whole matter is dealt with briefly but in an earnest, challenging, and intelligent fashion in these chapters (S.C.M.; 1s. net).

School 'Prayers,' in other words, the opening service with which most schools begin the day,

presents a real problem to the teacher. However willing the spirit is, the flesh is sometimes weak. The teacher is shy of conducting such a service on his own. Well, for one part at least of this task the Student Christian Movement Press has just given some assistance in a new book—*Readings from the Bible for School Prayers*, compiled by Miss M. E. Jarvis, M.A., Headmistress of the Girls' County School, Brecon (3s. 6d. net). The compiler has chosen for each week a subject, and five brief readings reveal its main aspects. The readings are simple and practical. A few illuminating notes are added which may enable the teacher to give in a sentence something that will make the passage intelligible and interesting. Little that has importance for the life of youth has been overlooked. The great truths and the great virtues (and the small) are all here. This is a book that many teachers will hail with gratitude.

Still another series of popular apologetic books at a cheap rate, but written by eminent theologians, is being issued. Canon Barry, the Very Rev. S. C. Carpenter, the Rev. F. A. Cockin, and Dom Bernard Clements are among the writers, and the subjects are 'Our Faith in God,' 'The Person of Christ,' 'The Holy Spirit and the Church,' 'Worship,' and, finally, 'Ethics.' The first volume, *Our Faith in God*, is by the Dean of St. Paul's, Dr. W. R. Matthews (S.C.M.; 3s. 6d. net). It bears on every page the characteristic stamp of the Dean's mind. It is interesting. It is massive. It is simple. And it is persuasive. The special topics in this first volume are: Religion and Belief in God; The Hebrew Conception of God; The Revelation of God in Christ; Personality in God; The Trinity and Human Thought; The Love of God; The Love of God and Evil. It would be superfluous to praise the book. It may, however, be hoped that the book will circulate largely, because it possesses a quality invaluable in such literature—a direct sincerity which is disarming to all cavillers.

## The Best Books on the Life of Christ.

BY PROFESSOR J. A. ROBERTSON, D.D., ABERDEEN.

EXCEPT for the Apocryphal lives, almost all the biographies of Christ are modern. The Gospels are not lives of our Lord, but rather records of impressions which the man Jesus made upon His con-

temporaries. They are testimonies rather than histories, 'pure crude fact secreted from men's lives when hearts beat hard.' They are characterized by an extraordinary parsimony. A life is