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I.

THE AMERICAN SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

ONE of our old shipmasters of the pre-steamer days tells of a naïve but perhaps not unaccountable exclamation of one of his passengers. From the day they left Liverpool until they passed the banks of Newfoundland the voyage had been foggy and cloudy, and as on a certain other voyage of a better known traveller, “neither sun nor stars in many days appeared.” At last, in the early evening, the sky cleared. The young lady in question, coming from below, found a soft clear light silvering the ship’s deck. As one who has discovered a new planet, she rushed back to the cabin, crying with enthusiasm, “Oh, come right up and see the American moon !”

Now, to speak of the “American Sunday-school” might seem, at first view, as indefensible as to speak of the “American moon.” The world is now belted with Sunday-schools, and it might appear as if the phrase meant nothing more than the Sunday-schools in America. But much more than that is intended by it. It is the function of America to Americanize. All our national ease of mind is based on a firm conviction of this national tendency. Democracy is no new thing. Greece knew it well. Rome tried it. Small European communities have made it answer. But when it crossed the Atlantic, that which failed under Greece and Rome got itself Americanized. The republic took on a new form and developed new virtues. Accordingly, it is with hopeful equanimity that we have stood by and seen immigration dilute our citizenship. The stalwart population, intelligent, God-fearing, sober and industrious, which filled the earlier borders of the country, has not multiplied

XI.

REVIEWS OF

RECENT THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE.

I.—EXEGETICAL THEOLOGY.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, with Analyses and Illustrative Literature. By O. S. STEARNS, D.D., Professor of Biblical Interpretation in Newton Theological Seminary.

EINFUEHRUNG IN DIE HEILIGE SCHRIFT ALTEN UND NEUEN TESTAMENTS. Vorträge von GEORG BEHRMANN, Hauptpastor zu St. Michaelis in Hamburg. New York : B. Westermann & Co. 1888.

The former of these books, as might be expected from its modest dimensions, contains an outline rather than a detailed presentation of the subject of which it treats. It is evidently intended to meet the popular demand of our day, which calls for brief compendiums rather than elaborate treatises. An introduction is here furnished to each of the 39 books of the Old Testament, including an analysis or summary of contents, suggestions in regard to interpretation, mention of difficulties to be examined, references to the more important illustrative literature, and all within the compass of 148 duodecimo pages. The volume gives evidence of having been prepared carefully ; what the author has attempted to do he has done well, and his little work will be found a valuable help in Bible-class instruction and to Bible readers generally.

Of similar title, but constructed on a different pattern, is the second work named above. In this volume we have a series of popular lectures, 14 in number, intended to serve as a guide to the profitable study of the Scriptures, Old Testament and New. The lectures are given to the public substantially as they were prepared for oral delivery, and are followed by an appendix of 85 pages containing notes and illustrative quotations. Critical discussions are introduced but sparingly as the nature of the work has required ; but the author everywhere manifests a thoroughly conservative position, reverence for the Bible as the Word of God, and full sympathy with evangelical doctrine.

W. H. JEFFERS.

KURZGEFASSTER COMMENTAR ZU DEN HEILIGEN SCHRIFTEN ALTEN UND NEUEN TESTAMENTS, SOWIE ZU DEN APOCRYPHEN. Herausgegeben von D. HERMANN STRACK und D. OTTO ZÖCKLER. Altes Testament. Sechste Abtheilung : DIE PSALMEN UND DIE SPRUECHE SALOMOS. Ausgelegt von D. FR. W. SCHULTZ und D. HERMANN STRACK. Nördlingen, 1888. Verlag der C. H. Beck'schen Buchhandlung. New York : B. Westermann & Co.

In the recent debate between Professors Schürer and Zöckler, as the representatives in Germany of liberal and conservative theology, the charge was

brought by the former against some commentaries of this series, and especially against those prepared by Zöckler himself, that the results of modern exegesis had been disregarded in the interest of orthodoxy. This charge, whether just or unjust in the case referred to, is certainly not applicable to the work lying before us. Apart from the reverential tone preserved throughout and the laudable absence of that hypercritical tendency, which will at times find its way even into commentaries, the theological position of the authors has but slightly influenced their historical and exegetical views; and many things could be pointed out to which a person of an orthodox turn of mind might take exception. The fact is significant as indicative of the relative meaning of the term orthodox, and as showing that a view considered rather advanced here may be classified as conservative in Germany. With reference to the Psalms Hupfeld's definition of them as "memorials of subjective religiousness" is unconditionally accepted at the outset, and it is more or less owing to this that the objections, which especially from a N. T. standpoint are urged against certain prominent ideas concerning the Psalter, have not been as successfully met as would be desirable. The same conception has also interfered with doing full justice to the Messianic element. Pss. 2d and 110th, it is admitted, are directly prophetic; Pss. 45, 72, 22, 69 typically prophetic; and the typically prophetic character of a third class is made dependent on the permanent validity of certain truths or general laws that apply equally to the situation of type and antitype. There can be no objection to the principle of typology, which is everywhere recognized in the N. T. itself; but we cannot, by transferring the prophetic element from the words to the facts that underlie them, avoid the necessity of recognizing it when plainly present. This rule has not always been observed, and in regard to the third class of Messianic Psalms, we may justly question the right of N. T. authors to quote them as such, if the connection between their subject and the Messiah is as loose and vague as indicated above. We cannot admit that in Ps. xxii. 19, the words, or rather the facts described by the words, were not intended as a prophecy and type from the beginning, and that only afterward the fate of Christ was providentially shaped in complete accordance with them. This must seem to every unprejudiced mind a perversion of the natural order that considers the antitypical facts as the logical prius of the typical, and conceives of the latter as framed with a view to the former and not the reverse. Nor can we concede that, with reference to the 110th Ps., Christ's argument drawn from it remains intact and valid, if the Davidic authorship be surrendered. In this case an apologetic interest has driven to a position that is far less consistent and scientific than the rigidly orthodox one.

Of about one half the Psalms that pass under David's name the claim to Davidic authorship is recognized. This view stands midway between that of Ewald and Hitzig on the one hand and that of Delitzsch on the other. The grounds of discrimination lie partly in an alleged dependence on the Book of Job, which is assigned to the last century before the exile, and on Isaiah xl-lxvi, of which the exilic origin is assumed, while they are partly sought in linguistic evidence and in a discrepancy between the tone and contents of some Psalms and the character of David as it is conceived of, somewhat, perhaps, under the influence of the modern reconstruction of history. It deserves special notice that those Psalms in which such marks of post-exilic origin are said to be traceable, and in which at the same time references are made to a Davidic anointed Prince, are not with Hitzig and others relegated to the times of Syrian supremacy, nor with Delitzsch assigned to some period preceding the exile, but are all transferred to the Persian age subsequent to the captivity. This view has much to recommend it, though it cannot be maintained in the case of Ps. 78, which must have been written before the downfall of the Judean kingdom. Nor can it apply

to Ps. 132, where the Anointed One is clearly spoken of as a regular successor of David and the temple seems to be Solomon's. The idea of Maccabean Psalms and the notion of the school of Reuss, that there are no Davidic, and perhaps no pre-exilic Psalms at all, are positively rejected.

By far the greater part of the volume is devoted to the exposition of the Psalms. Of 392 pages 89 constitute the Commentary on Proverbs. The critical statements here do not differ materially, we presume, from those laid down by the author in his Introduction. Probably during the reign of Jehoshaphat some sage collected chs. x.-xxii. 16 and added as introduction chs. i.-ix., and as an appendix chs. xxii. 17-xxiv. 22 (the latter not by Solomon). The men of Hezekiah made a second collection from Solomon's proverbs—chs. xxv.-xxix. The two collections were afterward combined by some other person, who also inserted ch. xxiv. 23-34. The question of the origin of ch. xxx. is left undecided, the obscure words in *v.* 1 are taken in the appellative sense, and *vs.* 1-6 are considered not as words of Agur, but as the presumptuous language of some scoffer whom he quotes and afterward refutes. Agur (an Israelite) is assigned to the period after Hezekiah. In ch. xxxi. 1, Massa is made with Hitzig and others a proper noun denoting the kingdom of Lemuel, but no explanation is offered as to how *vs.* 1-9, if written by a non-Israelite, came to be incorporated in the Hebrew Chokhma. *Vs.* 10-31 finally are referred to the time of Hezekiah.

Evidently the design of this commentary is not so much to give an exhaustive treatise on all exegetical questions as to serve for a guide in systematic, cursory reading of the Hebrew text. The book undoubtedly satisfies all reasonable demands that, from this point of view, can be made of it. Though offering little that is new or original, it makes a wise selection from what is common property.

In a few instances inaccuracies have crept in. In Ps. ii. 7 the "to-day" refers not to the present time in which the Messianic King speaks, but to the time of the promulgation of the divine decree. In Ps. lxix. 9, "fernstehend" and "fremd" should exchange places. Ps. lxxiii. 4, "bands *until* their death," is, with this rendering, necessary, since bands alone cannot be conceived of as bringing about death; but we would prefer the translation "pangs." In Ps. xci. 1, the constructions of commentary and translation do not agree. In other places the explanatory notes are somewhat too terse or scant, *e.g.*, Ps. xci. 6, 7; Ps. xcii. from *v.* 13 onward. Of typographical errors we notice the failing of a Daghes on page 107, note c, in the reading of Ben-Asher, and the substitution of a Resh for Daleth on page 164, note e.

G. VOS.

THE EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL TO THE COLOSSIANS AND PHILEMON. By ALEXANDER MACLAREN, D.D. London: Hodder & Stoughton; New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son. 8vo, pp. 493.

This volume is one of a series under the general title of "The Expositor's Bible," the object of which is to present the substance of Holy Writ in the form of popular exposition. This method has some advantages even over the popular commentary. The great mass of average Bible-readers do not study commentaries in such a way as to attain the best results, and with many the process is a playing with edged tools. The matter of even the popular commentary needs to be sifted, arranged, and massed for such. This method puts the work of the pulpit into permanent form, and carries it into the household and the study.

Good exposition is the final achievement of the Christian teacher. Biblical exposition has been too generally misconceived as oral comment of a more desultory and superficial character than regular sermonizing. Every one will