

THE PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED REVIEW

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I.

THE BEGINNING AND GROWTH OF THE CANON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

OUR LORD and His apostles were accustomed to refer to the Jewish Scriptures as to a well-known, definite body of sacred writings that had been handed down from past ages. They assumed that there was agreement among the people of the Jews as to the particular books that constituted these Scriptures; and they actually quoted from the great majority of them as of unquestionable authority in matters of doctrine and duty. It could not occur to any reader of the New Testament that in the time of Christ the Canon of the Old Testament had not yet been determined, or that it was still an open question whether certain books should be received into it, or should be excluded from it. It is inconceivable, too, that Josephus could have written as he has done of the books which he describes as "justly believed to be divine" and held to be most sacred by all Jews,* if the rabbis of his time had felt themselves at liberty to add to, or to take away from the number of these sacred books. When Strack wrote his article on the Canon of the Old Testament,† he could affirm that there was then unanimity among critics of opposite schools in regarding the Canon of Josephus as embracing neither more nor less than the thirty-nine books of our present Hebrew Bible. He attached no importance, as bearing on the extent of the Canon, to the discussions which rabbis of the first century engaged in with respect to

* *Contra Apion*, i, 8.

† Herzog's *Real-Encyk.*, 2d ed., vii, p. 428.

the preceding paragraph. He is already in possession of the essential facts. The cited literature adds nothing, and it is repetitious. Part has already been brought to notice in the course of the definition. Especially is the citation of Jensen vain repetition; for that scholar is not attempting a contribution to Assyriology, but is simply referring his readers to literature, and that literature the compiler of the dictionary has cited specifically before reaching Jensen's name. Of course, when a valuable suggestion as to meaning or etymology has been published, a reference to it is both appropriate in a lexicon and welcome to its scholarly users. But the citation of ridiculous, obsolete or obsolescent opinions is not wanted. The admission of crudities, such, *e. g.*, as may be found soberly quoted in the literature at the end of *abubu* (p. 5), lessens the value and lowers the rank of a lexicon. It is the office of the lexicographer to winnow the wheat from the chaff.

A few misprints remain in the revised edition. Readers of Assyrian will be apt to notice *a-bu-bam-ma* for *a-bu-ba-am-ma* (last quotation under *abubu*, p. 5); and *la a-di-ru-ti-šu-nu* for *la a-di ru-ti šu-nu* (p. 23, line 16 from top). On p. 11, top line, for *nakirišunu* read *nakirešu*.

In this work, Dr. Muss-Arnolt is publishing a very complete and conveniently arranged vocabulary, issuing in fact a "concise" and useful dictionary. But in these first pages he is not the careful and discriminating editor which we and his numerous other well-wishers hope that he will be in the subsequent fascicles.

Princeton.

JOHN D. DAVIS.

VII.—GENERAL LITERATURE.

THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW. Issued Quarterly. Vol. i, No. 1, October, 1895. New York and London: Macmillan & Co. Subscription, \$3 per year.

We extend a hearty greeting to *The American Historical Review* which begins what we hope will prove a long and successful existence with the number for October, 1895. It is conducted by a Board of Editors consisting of Prof. J. F. Jameson, of Brown University, as Managing Editor, and Profs. G. B. Adams, of Yale; A. B. Hart, of Harvard; H. P. Judson, of Chicago; W. M. Sloane, of Princeton; J. B. McMaster, of Pennsylvania, and H. M. Stephens, of Cornell. It is to be published quarterly by Messrs. Macmillan & Co. The first number is a substantial volume of over 200 pages, containing five articles, and departments of "Documents," "Reviews of Books," and "Notes and News," all of which are from competent hands and make a very strong first number. The opening article, on "History and Democracy," is by Prof. William M. Sloane, and it is followed by contributions from Moses Coit Tyler, Henry C. Lea, Henry Adams and Frederick G. Turner, all of them able and scholarly, well representing the breadth and vigor of contemporary American historical work. We have long needed such a magazine—one in which broad and catholic scholarship could find scope and recognition, in which reliable reviews of historical literature could be found, and which would represent the growing interest in historical studies. We hope that this Review will meet with the support and recognition which it promises to deserve, and that it will exercise a large and permanent influence upon our historical literature and research.

Lafayette College.

ETHELBERT D. WARFIELD.