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It had that hall-mark of greatness that is never absent, a childlike humility, a complete unawaredness of his own size. Who of us realized that this man slipping in and out among us, and with whom the plainest member felt no diffidence nor shyness, possessed a name known everywhere? His nature was made of a fine material; was enviably clean, removed from every grossness, loyal and lovable and kindly. Not a few have told me that always when they looked at him they thought of Jesus Christ. Nor have I ever known a worshipper more obviously in earnest, and lost in the service. The man's whole being was entirely concentrated on it and absorbed in it. So much so that, even

in this worshipful congregation, when I felt that the sermon was bad, I used to look hopefully to see if he were present, feeling that if he were—and he was always with us night and morning—there were two of us in it, and together we might pull it through.

His was a fine life finely used. And it must have been with His face lit with pleasure that the Master greeted him, and cried out, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.' And among all the services he rendered, and all for which we owe him thanks, would we not put that first—that he pleased Jesus Christ, whom we so often disappoint, and gave a full and loyal service to Him, whom most of us treat in soiggardly a fashion?

Recent Foreign Theology.

German Theology.

DR. DITLEF NIELSEN is Assistant Librarian in the University of Copenhagen. Attracted by the study of ancient Arabian inscriptions recently discovered, he has devoted himself to profound investigation of the oldest Semitic culture and the history of Semitic religion. Those inscriptions, he remarks, have revealed astonishing and unexpected things, which he proceeds to set forth in a large volume¹ richly illustrated and written in delightful style. He groups the results of his investigation round the conception of Trinity, which he finds to be very old and very wide-spread. This volume deals only with the *Three Divine Persons*. Another is to follow on the *Three Nature-Divinities*.

Let us say at once of the present volume that it gives evidence on every page of diligent study, patient research and reading of amazing range. It is a book of which account will have to be taken. One may doubt—we do doubt—the validity of many of its conclusions. But we accept it as a storehouse of facts, many of them curious and not a few of them startling.

The author rightly emphasizes the need there is for a study of Semitic religion as a whole, so as to arrive at some just notion of what that religion was

¹ *Der Dreieinige Gott in religionshistor. Beleuchtung*, pp. 472. Copenhagen, 1922.

like in its primitive stages, and 'along what' lines it developed. Too often has the mistake been made of fixing upon some highly developed form such as the Babylonian, and taking it as the norm from which the others more or less deviate. That is to forget that the Semitic race and religion were old long before Babylonian religion, as we see it fully evolved, arose.

The author's task is to show that away back in primitive Semitic religion was a Trinity, and he traces this out in all its manifold ramifications. His conclusion, we think, will not command general agreement, if any agreement at all. It is that Christianity is largely just a going back to the primitive ideas which, despite Judaism, lingered on among the common people in certain regions. There it found its Trinity, its Sacraments, its Incarnation, its Virgin Birth, its atoning Death, its Resurrection; all, in short, that is characteristic of Christianity was lying there for ages, needing only to be 'refined.' Jesus, in fact, was unnecessary. The New Testament is thus in a real sense far older than the Old Testament. It is a total mistake to think of it being a development of the Old Testament, for Judaism had banished Trinity in favour of Unity. In the N.T. we have Trinity, but no Unity; that came into Christianity only with the definitions by General Councils. We do not believe this. We do not accept this as a tenable view at all. It is a valuable book, we think, from the view-

point of Comparative Religion. As a history of religion it appears to be desperately weak. It proceeds on the easy but fallacious assumption that where you find some measure of resemblance you not only may, but must, infer some real connexion. America was discovered long before Columbus was born, yet, for all that matters in the history of mankind, Columbus was not only quite independent and ignorant of his predecessors, he was the real discoverer. Christianity is not to be explained by discovering something in a very ancient world that bears a dim resemblance to its fundamental doctrines.

Dr. A. Baumgarten of Bonn has published a history of Syrian literature (*Geschichte d. syr. Literatur*, pp. viii + 378; Bonn, 1922). It is the kind of work which only a German Professor can accomplish, a monument of industry devoted to a subject little known and of little general interest. This work is no doubt painfully accurate and complete, but it will not increase the interest in Syrian literature. It is an annotated catalogue rather than a history, so full of contractions and references by means of initials and numbers that pages of it seem at first glance to contain curious chemical formulæ.

In *Analekten zur Text-kritik d. A.T., neue Folge* (pp. 131; Leipzig, 1922), Felix Perles indicates in

how many ways errors were apt to creep into the Hebrew text. In many passages he seems to prove his point.

On the perennial problem of the Fourth Gospel, Dr. G. Bert writes, *D. Evan.-d. Johannes* (pp. 144; Gutersloh, 1922). He comes to the 'orthodox' conclusion. He does not solve, nor even face, the real difficulties of a Son-of-Zebedee authorship. His work is valuable, however, for its careful study of the Logos-doctrine in Greek philosophy, and for its collocation of passages from the Odes of Solomon.

The *Palästina-Jahrbuch* for 1921 is as interesting and informative as any of its predecessors. We have a good description and historical account of Tekoa by W. Sütterlin, and a careful study of Jewish and Roman military organization in New Testament times by F. Lundgreen. Dalman demolishes the myth, published in 'Adventist' journals, that manna had become once more the food of the people of Palestine, and was so abundant that it was being exported: 'It is wonderful,' said *The Bible Advocate*, 'what the Lord is doing in our days.' Unfortunately, nobody on the spot where the manna was alleged to be falling in such abundance knew anything about it.

W. D. NIVEN.

Aberdeen.

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

Getting rid of the Dross.

'I will turn my hand upon thee, and thoroughly purge away thy dross.'—Is 1²⁵.

A minister was once taken over the famous Kimberley diamond mines. He was shown the blasting, the loads of blue ground coming up from the mine, the great floors on which the blue ground is spread out and left to crumble, then the crushing and washing through which it is made to pass. But what interested him most was the final stages. The ground had been washed down to a gravel in which lay the diamonds. This gravel was then placed on a machine like a table, which was slightly

tilted forward and smeared with a kind of grease. Then this table was set a-shaking and over the shaking surface a stream of water came pouring. Everything that was worthless, all the pebbles and the useless stones were carried away in the stream. But the diamonds remained. You saw them before you when the table had ceased to move, studded over the surface, shining and precious.

Not long ago I had an opportunity of talking with the head of a large school for boys who had not had the advantages that belong to a good home. I could see that his plan was to try to find whatever was good in these boys. He looked for diamonds amongst them. And he went on the same lines as that adopted at Kimberley. The