

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS.

## CHRISTIAN ORIGINS.

THE BEGINNINGS OF CHRISTIANITY. Part I: *The Acts of the Apostles*. Vol. III: the Text, edited by J. H. Roper. London: *Macmillan & Co.*, 1926. Price 30s. Pp. cccxx, 464.

This superb volume is one that will exercise scholars for many a day. It is, however, owing to the nature of the book, impossible to review it with any approach to adequacy, for it deals with some of the most complicated and delicate matters of textual criticism; and N.T. criticism to-day is one of the exact sciences, and can be dealt with only by specialists. Yet the intricate researches of scholars, though at times they seem to bring small results, are important; without a careful history of the text the determination of that text remains insecure, as Prof. Roper says; and an insecure text is of all things an unsatisfactory basis for scientific and thoroughgoing exegesis. Years ago there was, perhaps, a tendency to think that Hort had spoken the last word on the subject of N.T. textual criticism, though there were some—notably that doughty opponent of Hort's theory, the late Dean Burgon—who were dissatisfied. Since the publication of Hort's famous Introduction, more than forty years ago, a great deal of time and trouble has been spent on investigating the critical problems involved in any attempt to establish a true text; quite recently Canon Streeter, in his work on the Gospels, has dealt with the matter in a highly interesting and original fashion. And now comes Prof. Roper, with a book which is crammed full of information—some of it, we must admit, of a most intricate and recondite character. As far as the text of *Acts* is concerned, his conclusion is that the "western" form of it is inferior to that of the great Uncials (like B). This, as everybody knows, has been the "orthodox" view for many years past, though a century ago the "orthodox" view was that the *Textus Receptus* was the text to be followed. But one orthodoxy succeeds a former, as Amurath to Amurath succeeds. If it be true that the Great Uncials do really preserve the original text, how is that the "Western" text ever came into such prominence? Prof. Roper has a most interesting suggestion to make, and that is that the preparation of this "Western" text (in the second century) was incidental to the work of forming the collection of Christian writings for general Church use, which ultimately—somewhat enlarged—became the N.T., in a word that "this text" was the text of the primitive "canon," and was expressly created for that purpose. Hence its wide circulation.

What does the volume before us contain? First, we have a long introductory essay on the Text of Acts. This is divided into two major sections. (1) The Sources of Knowledge for the Text; The

Criticism and History of the Text. These sections are split into subsections: thus, for (1) we have about 70 pages on Greek MSS—all the chief ones being dealt with in detail; this portion is followed by elaborate notes on the versions (old Latin texts, the Vulgate, versions derived from the Latin, together with discussions on the Egyptian, Ethiopic, Syrian, and other versions); next follows a number of pages (clxxxv—cc) on the Greek Fathers. The second section of the Introduction (which we may call "2") contains first, remarks on the papyri; and subsequently notes on the Western Text, the old Uncial Text, the Antiochian Text, and the history of the Text. With this the Introduction closes.

Then comes the Text proper: on one side of an opening we have the text of Cod. Vaticanus, on the other that of the Bezan Codex. The convenience of such an arrangement will be obvious. In the footnotes are given those Westcott-Hort readings and the readings of von Soden which depart from B; the second section of the *apparatus* records the variants from B of the group of codices  $\aleph$  AC 81. There is also a section of the *apparatus criticus* which gives the readings of the Antiochian text where it varies from B. And a great deal more there is, too, which need not be specified here; but one must not overlook the carefully sifted quotations from Cyprian, Tertullian, Augustine and Irenæus. Why so much prominence should be given to von Soden, we do not understand: one recalls what Streeter says on p. 34 of *The Four Gospels*.

Immediately following on the double-text are printed five "detached notes," a series of appendices (mostly on the versions), and—lastly—the commentary of Ephrem on Acts. This is the work of the late Dr. F. C. Conybeare; the translation of the Armenian version was prepared by him not long before his death in 1924. The volume closes with a fairly complete index.

What are we to say of such a work as Prof. Roper's? Mainly this: it is written by a specialist for specialists, and only specialists are capable of passing any true judgment upon it. The learning, the research, the infinite care, displayed throughout the book are immense: that is evident. Whether Prof. Roper's theory of the "Western" text is properly based, we would not presume to say; one thing is clear—it will have to be considered by all future editors.

E. H. B.

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#### RESERVATION.

RESERVATION: REPORT OF A CONFERENCE HELD AT FARNHAM CASTLE, OCTOBER, 1925. S.P.C.K. 5s.

This is a document of great importance. We confess that we are rather surprised at its appearance in view of the request of the Archbishop of Canterbury that advice should cease to be offered to the Bishops during their deliberations on Revision. But we gather that this book is intended more for the Clergy and people than for the Bishops, and we may assume that it would not have

been published unless the line it advocates had not commended itself to the Bishops. Seven Diocesan Bishops attended the Conference as well as Anglo-Catholic, Grey Book and Evangelical champions. We miss, however, anyone who may be considered a representative of the attitude adopted by Bishop Knox and his friends. Dr. Tait, in his striking speech and in his interventions, came nearer to that position than any of the other speakers. We do not understand why the Conference should have had as its member so prominent and unbending an Anglo-Catholic of the advanced type as Dr. Darwell Stone, and should have given no place to those who are recognized throughout the Church to be representative of a very large number of Churchmen who are definitely loyal to the Book of Common Prayer.

No findings are reached. The arguments of the debaters speak for themselves, and we find that the general consensus seemed to be that Reservation for the Sick and others who are unable to attend Holy Communion should be allowed, but that extra-Liturgical devotions should be prohibited. This is very like what we have been led to believe is the official policy of the Bishops, and if so, the book must be considered a manifesto in support of this position. It is true that Dr. Stone and Mr. Selwyn held a different view-point, and that Dr. Tait is evidently in disagreement with much that was said. The Bishop of Chelmsford and Canon Streeter have also made remarks that are hard to reconcile with the arguments by which the revival of Reservation is supported. But the weight of the argument in this book is as we have indicated. The Bishop of Winchester, in his Preface, hopes that the enthusiasm of the World Call will remove the "opinions, fears, hopes and even suspicions" that centre round the Revision movement. We do not think this will be the case, for everything revolves on the message the Missionaries will preach, and much more depends on this than even Dr. Woods imagines. He also says: "I hope that we have heard the last of such phrases as 'magic' and 'fetish' and 'idolatry.' They are not merely irrelevant, but they are provocative; their use tends to create the kind of atmosphere which in any discussion like this, which has to do with the most sacred things imaginable, is deplorable." Dr. Headlam has put the case much more accurately: "We have definitely refused to use such question-begging accusations as that of fetishism. The term 'fetish' is, in any case, inappropriate on the present occasion, for the fundamental idea of fetishism is to obtain power by magical means. There have probably been occasions in the history of the Church when a magical use has been made of the sacrament, but there is nothing of that sort in any of the customs which we are considering at present. Lastly, we have avoided all such terms as 'idolatry' or 'superstitions.' We know that in the case of the promoters of the particular devotions before us, such terms are inapplicable. At the same time, there are some of us who are afraid that these extra-Liturgical uses, if they were widely extended and became common, might lead to a great deal of misuse, to which such epithets

might not unreasonably be applied." We do not urge the use of strong epithets, and are well aware of the line of thought adopted by Dr. Stone and his friends. We humbly submit, however, that the language used—some of which is quoted in this book—warrants the application of plain speaking on the part of those who see how foreign to the mind of Christ and His Apostles the practices are.

We can only add that there is much subtlety in the discussion of the Nature of the Presence and what transubstantiation and the doctrine of the Greek Church imply. We cannot, however, get away from the fact that many hold that at the Consecration of the Elements our Lord is attached to the Elements in one way or another—independent of the Faith of the receiving communicant. That is not the doctrine of the Church of England or its Formularies. Hold that view, sanction Reservation, and the extra-Liturgical and Liturgical adoration follows. To us under these circumstances good (not bad) logic, and human nature, involve adoration, and the consequences of such adoration cannot be withdrawn from notice by attention to the World Call. We again express our deep regret that the Bishop of Winchester should contend that the centripetal forces of organisation should in any way divert men's thoughts from the great question of the truth or falseness of the doctrine that lies behind Reservation. Unity can never be permanent unless based on truth, and while we all seek truth, we cannot be false to the truth God has revealed to us in Holy Scripture.

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### OUR PRAYER BOOK.

THE STORY OF THE ENGLISH PRAYER BOOK. By Dyson Hague, D.D. *Longmans*. 5s.

It was fitting that a Canadian should write the history of the Prayer Book. The Canadian Church has completed the Revision of its Prayer Book, and its sons are familiar with the history from the practical point of view. How can we adapt the Book to present needs without altering its doctrine? They have answered the question, and while still fresh from the discussions, Dr. Dyson Hague, Lecturer in Liturgics and Ecclesiastical History, Wycliffe College, Toronto, wrote the work before us. His language is at times unconventional, his style is breezy and, as far as we can judge, language and style are the expression of a personality that has impressed itself even on cold print. Of his competence for the work we have no doubt. He has firmly grasped essential characteristics of the Book of Common Prayer as contrasted with the Roman Service Books. He does not look upon the Reformation as a minor incident in the History of the Church, but considers it an epoch marking period, and this enables him to have a true perspective of the changes made and to value their doctrinal significance.

He looks upon the Prayer Book as the outcome of the Reformation. It is not a mediating document between extremes of doctrine.

It gives to the English Church the fundamental thoughts of the Reformers, and makes clear that Rome and Reform represented entirely different conceptions of Christianity. The Bible made the Reformation, and the Prayer Book is a return to Scriptural teaching from the excrescences of mediævalism. But the Book was not the creation of a day. It came into being by stages and those stages are described with accuracy. We have a full account of the brief Order of Communion which was the preliminary effort of the Reformers to deal with the conversion of the unscriptural Mass into the Scriptural Communion. Then there came the First Prayer Book, and it is well that attention should be paid to this remarkable volume, for it is taken by many Churchmen to-day as the real representation of the mind of the English Reformers. It certainly was preceded by the great debate in which Cranmer showed that he had abandoned Roman doctrine. "Transubstantiation is now exploded." The Prayer Book retained many expressions and practices that might be defended as compatible with the essential Protestantism of a book which removed Transubstantiation from the services, swept away the Sacrifice of the Mass, gave no place to the invocation of the Saints, and forbade the elevation of the Host. But its critics found in it some remnants of the past compatible with the teaching of the unreformed Church, and Cranmer revised the Book. The Second Prayer Book is the basis of the Book that is now authorized in our Church. The story of this Revision and of subsequent Revisions is told vividly and carefully by Dr. Hague.

Dr. Hague shows that the Book of Common Prayer is the source of the service books of the Anglican Communion, and he briefly gives us the histories of the Revisions that have taken place in other parts of the Communion. The study of these changes is illuminating, for they have not all proceeded on the same lines. The Church of England is by far the strongest—intellectually and numerically—of the Churches that compose our Communion, and any changes made by it will of necessity find a reflection in other parts of the Communion. They may make for peace or for discord. In addition to the chapters of the History we have at the close of each a series of questions that will lead the student to further study, and put him on right lines. Now that the concluding stage of Revision is being reached, we hope that Churchmen will read this volume and have it by them for reference when they are in doubt as to the meaning of changes proposed to be made. On the next twelve months the future character of our Church depends, and we have no fear of the results of the Revision that will be presented to the Church Assembly if Churchmen know their history and are loyal to their past.

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## AN ADVOCATE OF ANGLO-CATHOLICISM AND SOCIALISM.

STEWART HEADLAM; A BIOGRAPHY. By F. G. Bettany. *John Murray*. 10s. 6d. net.

There is no doubt that Stewart Headlam attracted considerable notice during his lifetime and specially during the earlier portion of it. This, it must be recognized, was due more to the nature of the causes he espoused, than to any qualities of intellect or to any marked ability other than perseverance in the pursuit of his aims and obstinacy in the methods adopted to achieve them, as well as a disregard for authority which as is usual brought with it a temporary notoriety. His connection with the Drury Lane area brought him into touch with the theatre, and more particularly with the dancers of the ballet, whose employment was at that time looked down upon by respectable and church-going people. Headlam set himself to bring the stage into close association with the Church. His efforts were of a character that alienated some of the better type of artists, and many of the leaders of the profession. They secured for him the condemnation of more than one Bishop of London, but this to one of Headlam's temperament simply added zest to his endeavours. Great changes have taken place in the attitude of the Church to the Stage, but whether these are due to his work or to developments which would have taken place in any case is a question open to discussion. His life in the East End of London brought him into contact with conditions of life which led him to adopt socialistic theories. Here again great changes have taken place. Something is probably due to Headlam and his organization for the increased interest taken in social problems, but again it is questionable whether Headlam's work was of great value and did not retard as much as advance the aims which he had at heart. In his later years he devoted himself to the work of education in connection with the School Board and the London County Council Committees. Due praise must be given to his strenuous efforts for the ideals which he cherished, but he must have been a difficult colleague, and he never seems to have acquired the gift of team work. In churchmanship he was of the advanced Anglo-Catholic school, and one of his favourite maxims, if not of his own coinage, was "It is the Mass that matters."

Mr. Bettany has paid a disciple's homage to his master in this biography. He brings together the testimony of many other friends and admirers. Stewart Headlam is fortunate in the devotion of his associates, as this panegyric in his honour shows. It leads us to wish that some of those who have devoted themselves to the cause of Evangelical churchmanship were equally fortunate. There are several who in recent years dedicated their gifts of intellect and heart to the protection of the Church from the inroads of error whose lives remain unrecorded in any adequate manner. Headlam was a socialist, but he was also an Etonian. He possessed sufficient private means, inherited from an Evangelical father, to indulge

his idiosyncrasies in his own fashion. We are led at times to reflect as to how a man brought up in such surroundings as Headlam was with his love for things artistic, and the possessor of the delightful drawing-room so artistically arranged as is described for us in this volume, would find himself in a really socialistic State. We also are led to wonder if Headlam's anti-Puritanism had had its full success and, for example, our English Sunday were transformed into the Continental Sunday as some of the Anglo-Catholic party seem to desire to-day, would he have been really satisfied with the result. It is significant that some of the Roman Catholic authorities seem to be developing great uneasiness on the subject of Sunday observance, and that a movement is on foot among them to secure a more rigid observance of the day.

The use of the word "sacramentarian" in this volume raises again the question as to its correct application, a matter which ought to be settled once for all. It is well known that the word was used to indicate those Puritans who laid little stress upon the sacraments and indeed in some cases objected to their use. A practice has grown up in the present century of using the word in quite the opposite sense—to indicate one who is a "sacramentalist." It is used in this sense by Mr. Bettany, although he also uses the word "sacramentalism" in speaking of Headlam's views on the Holy Communion. It ought not to be difficult to arrive at some standard use, and so avoid the present diversity in the application of the word.

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### CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY.

SOME POSTULATES OF A CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY. By H. Maurice Relton, D.D. *S.P.C.K.* 7s. 6d.

Once upon a time it was comparatively easy to build a Christian philosophy on the current philosophical conceptions. Thomas Aquinas did this, and his work lives as an example of what might be done were there a universally accepted philosophy. There are almost as many systems of philosophy in the twentieth century as there are major sects in the Christian Church, and it is as impossible to synthesize them as it is to bring into one, Reformed and Unreformed Ecclesiastical views. The Christian philosopher must sadly admit that whatever main philosophical system he himself may adopt, if he endeavours to work out a theology on its lines he will of necessity antagonize a number of thinkers who are equally well entitled to be considered philosophers. But that ought not to stand in the way of a man who accepts fundamental Christian facts making for himself a philosophical conception of the Universe and the relation of God and man to it. Dr. Relton has laid down in this valuable book a number of postulates demanded by a Christian philosophy. Christianity has a definite contribution to make to philosophy, and it is the task of our author to show us what that contribution is.

We cannot discuss his book in detail. He holds the fun-

damental facts of revelation to be true. He believes in eternal life, in a Personal God and in the Incarnation. He accepts at once Divine Transcendence and Divine Immanence. At the back of all his thought lies the premise "it is the essential feature of the Christian conception of the world that it regards the person and the relations of persons to one another as the essence of reality." We entirely agree and it is only on these lines that we can hope to win acceptance from Christians who are loyal to Christ and His work for any philosophy that is put forward. In his chapter on the "Omnipotence of Love" he argues in support of the conception "God is love, and to say that He is omnipotent is not to give Him an added attribute: it is equivalent to saying that love is omnipotent." Dr. Relton reviews the objections to the Christian view. With him we feel the strength of the argument of the late Dr. McTeggart, but we are by no means confounded because we must choose between hypotheses that are irreconcilable and present perplexities. Life consists in making choices of this character, and in religion it is not strange that we are confronted with similar problems.

We have passed from the tyranny of materialism and we shall soon be out of the attractive snares of pragmatism. We are working steadily towards a philosophy that will make plain the objectivity of that which is outside our thought and will insist on the objectivity of God as a Person, and not as a value judgment which is of essential importance to right thinking and living. It is the task of the Christian philosopher to start from the revealed facts of History that finds its fullness of Revelation in the Fact of Christ, and it will be found that the acceptance of Christ as God solves more hard questions than any other ruling idea. Reason cannot travel where it will. It is limited and cannot comprehend God. If it did then human reason would be greater than Divine Reason. And no Christian can hold this. We have no grounds to distrust the verdict of reason founded upon true contents of our syllogisms, but no syllogism can contain more in its conclusions than it has in its terms. This is the obstacle to the full rationalization of Christian dogma. There comes a point when we all have to say, "I cannot understand, I love."

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### RELIGION AND PSYCHOLOGY.

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE: ITS NATURE AND TRUTH. By K. Edwards, Ph.D. *T. & T. Clark.* 8s.

This is the best work we have read on the relation of the new psychology to fundamental religious problems. Dr. Edwards has read widely, has thought deeply, and has given us a volume that will inspire confidence among his readers. He is not unintelligible, and that is a great advantage, for he deals with the depths of human nature in its striving after God. But he demands careful study if his lessons are to be learned. He starts with the definition that



the religious experience "is an experience of God and our relationship with Him." It is more than feeling. It has thought and will united with feeling. It is based on a belief in a more-than-human order. It endeavours to establish harmonious relation with this more-than-human order. It reaches forth to God and finds in God the satisfaction of its aspiration. He discusses the place of emotion in religion and in the course of his remarks he lays stress on the conservative element in it. "Religion is a social phenomenon simply because human life is social life. But religion is also one of the greatest influences tending to liberate the powers of the individual spirit."

One of the most illuminating sections of the book is the chapter devoted to "The Category of the Numinous." Otto has been pressed into the service of superstition, and his arguments have been pressed beyond his limitations of their scope. We cannot render in concepts either the fundamental category of aesthetics or religion. They are inexpressible and incommunicable. But there is the greatest difference between the super-rational and the irrational, and men are always tending to confuse the two. We have a sense of the Numinous which we cannot rationalize, but we attain to it by the use of our reason, and acknowledging its limitation we surrender ourselves to that which is outside ourselves—a real object. "This 'object' is none other than the 'numinous,' and we are to mark that while the numinous experience is of a highly emotional character it contains a definitely cognitive element. It contains an objective *datum*. It is, therefore, a form of perception. The numen is felt as objective and outside the self. In claiming that the divine may be revealed in human experience, that those hints and intimations of 'something there,' of a reality beyond ourselves, and different in nature from the communications of sense, do reveal a world, we ask only that a definite experience of the human mind be seriously taken for what it presents itself as being." We who hold that the Revelation of God in Christ is final and complete, and as knowledge advances becomes capable of fuller interpretation, must bring all our religious conceptions to the touchstone of His Mind, Life and Teaching. We have the Object of the *other* given us, and He satisfies all the yearnings of our being.

We cannot discuss the admirable dissection of the fallacies that lie at the root of much of the new psychology. Dr. Edwards supplies us with thoughts that steady, and arguments that are irresistible in their force against the pure subjectivism that is so widely held. On the other hand we do not go as far as Dr. Edwards in making experience the source and test of theology. There is a sense in which this is true, but Christianity is a Revelation of God finding its completion in the historic Christ. His Person is its centre, and to that Person, as we have said, we must bring all our experience and test it by what we know of Him. Otherwise we shall wander in a world of pitfalls. "Experience itself displays an irrepressible impulse to seek a reasonable faith." This is true and Christ is the final test of its reasonableness. We cannot consider

Scripture to be a mere record of experience. Our Lord thought it more than that, and we cannot think less of it than He thought.

### TRUE FUNDAMENTALISM.

WHAT IS FAITH? By J. Gresham Machen. *Hodder & Stoughton.*  
7s. 6d.

This book has called forth a flood of criticism in the United States and in England. It is an effort to get behind the shibboleths of Fundamentalism in order to ascertain the real character of the Christian religion. Its main object is to prove that religion has to do with objective existences and facts, and that intellect is not sent on a holiday when religion is discussed. It would appear from what Dr. Machen has written, that in the United States popularity in the pulpit rests rather with the power of the preacher to say pleasant things in a pleasant way, than with his devotion to truth. We have nothing to say on the local characteristics of a work which challenges attention, for its primary object is of first-rate importance to all who profess and call themselves Christians, wherever they may be found.

When men are asked to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved, what is the content of the word "believe"? Is it an emotional state divorced from an intellectual judgment on the truth of the person in whom belief is centred, or is it an assent so that mind and feeling will, by the surrender of the entire personality, find peace in One who is God? Dr. Machen leads his readers to consider Faith in its relation to God, Christ, Human Need, the Gospel, Salvation, Works and Hope. On all these matters he has much to say that is worth attention, and we are sure that he has made an unanswerable case for the objectivity of Him in Whom our Faith rests. He holds "the Bible as a whole, taking prophecy and fulfilment together, is the supreme Text-book on the subject of faith. The study of that Text-book may lead us to as clear an understanding of our subject as could be attained by any more general investigation; we can learn what faith is best of all by studying it in its highest manifestation." He keeps this before him in all he writes, and his conclusions are based on a firm foundation of Scripture when he deals with the great problems. On occasion he dogmatizes on secondary matters in a way we cannot endorse. But his main outlook is, to our minds, incontrovertible and gains our assent.

We are with him in his insistence on the Personality of God as free and active. God is sufficient for all our needs. "He alone is righteous; His presence will make us spotless as the light. He is loving, and His love will cast out fear." Truly we can say with St. Paul: "If such a God be for us, who can be against us?" There is a ringing note of certainty about all he writes on God and Christ, which is a welcome change from the balanced arguments with which we are so familiar in other works. The Christian is a

man who has found the centre and moves from it to the circumference. He is not a man who starts forth on an adventure, and is always seeking, but without any anchorage for his soul. He has staked his all on God Whom he has found, and then makes his life a God-guided life in the adventure of living.

We specially direct attention to the chapter on "Faith and Salvation." "It is not as a quality of the soul that faith saves a man, but only as the establishment of contact with a real object of the faith." "Faith is, indeed, nowadays being exalted to the skies; but the sad fact is that this very exaltation of faith is leading logically and inevitably to a bottomless scepticism which is the precursor of despair." These are striking words, but are they true? We feel that they are. The whole tendency of psychology is towards a subjectivism that has either individual feeling or mass consciousness as the final appeal in the search for truth and rest. That can never satisfy the reason which is God given. Truth is not a matter of feeling. It must centre in reality—that which is—and the Revelation of God in Christ comes from and through One who said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." We cannot get away from this if Christianity has a message to men who need a Saviour, and professes to have that Saviour in our Lord Jesus Christ. This book must be reckoned with as a summons to serious thought.

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#### THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

THE FOURTH GOSPEL: ITS HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE. By the Rev. P. V. Smith, M.A., LL.D. London: S.P.C.K. 3s. 6d.

Dr. P. V. Smith is not only a well-known and much-respected ecclesiastical lawyer, he is also a first-rate Greek scholar. Many of the clergy are much indebted to him for the Greek Testament Classes he held in London, for he invited them not only to study with him the Sacred Text, but also prepared with as much care as a Chancellor's judgement the passages under discussion. We may not agree with all that he has written on the Fourth Gospel, and may think that some of his arguments on displaced sections are overstrained. We, however, feel that we are in the presence of a mind that is fearless in its working and is only anxious to discover what is true. This adds to the importance of his conclusion: "The Fourth Gospel is a treatise of supreme historical value primarily, as a substantially accurate account of doings and sayings of our Lord while He was on earth, and, in a secondary sense, as an evidence of the views concerning His Divine Person and Mission which were held in the Church at the close of the first century." We cannot seriously quarrel with one who holds this conviction, especially when we find him maintaining the historicity of the raising of Lazarus.

We are well aware of the strength of the argument in favour of some one other than John, the son of Zebedee, being the author of the Gospel. It is fashionable to hold this view, and Dr. Smith

argues strongly in its favour. We detect, however, a number of weak points in the case presented by our author. On page 16 he seems to imply that at the Last Supper the author was a boy of sixteen, and dwells on the silence of the synoptists on his presence at the Sepulchre with Peter, as well as their silence on John entering with Peter into the High Priest's palace. We see no difficulty arising from the silence, as the narrative specially dwells on Peter, and there was no need to mention his companion. No support for an historical contention can be derived from silence, unless there is a strong reason why that silence should not exist. Again we are told that the younger son of Zebedee was never in Asia Minor, and that he died a martyr's death between A.D. 64-79. Archbishop Barnard discussed the whole subject in *Studia Sacra*, and draws precisely the opposite conclusions from those drawn by Dr. Smith. He sums up: "It may be said, I believe, that for reasonable suspicion that John, the son of Zebedee, came to a violent end there is no ground whatever, and that this idea, at any rate, cannot be permitted to supply serious argument against his authorship of the Fourth Gospel."

We are by no means convinced by the argument that it is impossible to believe that a young fisherman could have command of the flexible Greek used in the Gospel, or that he would have a close connexion with the chief priest. Improbabilities are not evidence of facts that are hypothetical, and we feel sure that it is most unwise to draw conclusions of a definite character from supposed deficiencies of bilingual persons, or to assert that because a man owns fishing boats in Galilee he cannot have influential friends in Jerusalem. Let it not be thought that we do not value Dr. Smith's book because we criticize one of its characteristics. It is an excellent piece of honest work and well deserves the close attention of students of the New Testament.

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#### A GREAT PATRISTIC WORK.

ANTE-NICENE EXEGESIS OF THE GOSPELS, Vol. ii. By Harold Smith, D.D. *S.P.C.K.* 7s. 6d.

Dr. Harold Smith continues his scholarly and fascinating account of ante-Nicene Gospel exegesis, and by so doing places us under a debt of gratitude, for he enables us to see for ourselves the differences in early patristic interpretations, and sheds light on the history of Christian doctrine. The present volume deals with St. John i. 35 to v. 47, and covers a similar period in the Synoptic Gospels. Its arrangement is excellent, and no one who reads a chapter can fail to see that there was as much diversity of individual views among the ancients as in our own time. Exegesis is governed by outlook, and uniformity is by no means a general trait of the expositions. We come across most acute criticism from Origen, who sheds light on obscurities. "It is certain that the evangelists made no mistake in the names of the Apostles; but as it was customary for Hebrews

to have two or three names, they each put down a different name of one and the same man." Tertullian reads his own ideas into the Gospels, e.g. he says that our Lord denies the Samaritan woman a husband that He may show more than one husband to be an adulterer. The chapter on the Lord's Prayer contains material for many sermons, and this may be said of practically every section of a book which is a credit to the painstaking work of its gifted author, and a monument of Evangelical scholarship. It is not a book to be reviewed, but one to be constantly used by those who wish in their teaching to unite the things, old and new, that are in the treasury of Christian thought on the Gospels. When once so employed it will seldom remain unconsulted in Gospel exposition.

## TWO SCRIPTURAL STUDIES.

WHAT IS YOUR LIFE? (The Scriptural Answer.) *Robert Scott.*  
2s. net.

THE AUTHENTICITY AND AUTHORITY OF THE O.T. *Thynne & Jarvis, Ltd.* 3s. net.

These two books by the Rev. W. C. Procter present just those features that we should expect from their author. He knows that his foundations are secure, for he builds upon the "impregnable rock of Holy Scripture," and whatever views our readers may hold with regard to modern criticism, we are sure they may read both books with interest and profit.

*What is Your Life?* presents human life from many different view-points, using throughout Biblical metaphors, and stress is laid everywhere upon its brevity and importance. Thus life is set before us as "A Battle," "A Building," "A Race," "A Voyage," "A Writing," and in many other aspects. The primary illustrations are scriptural, but secular writings, especially poetry, are freely drawn upon, the authors including such widely diverse writers as Shakespeare, Miss Havergal, Cowper, Heber, Keble, Dryden, Norris, Yates, Trench, to name only a few. This is a little book with a big subject, and will be most helpful to hard-pressed preachers and teachers, for its all-too-few pages are as full of helpful thoughts as an egg is full of meat.

Mr. Procter's second volume—which is wonderfully cheap—is just the book to place in the hands of students who to-day are so sorely pressed by the problems of modern criticism, and who get so little help and sympathy from the leaders of the critical school. Your reviewer remembers being haughtily told by a Bishop with a repute for scholarship, "The future lies with the scholars." That statement is very ably met by Mr. Procter, and his closely reasoned arguments and archæological facts should be well pondered, not only by conservatives who share his standpoint, but by those who hold what are generally called "advanced views" on the Old Testament. In a brief review like this it is impossible to do more than call attention to some of the main headings.

The study opens with a statement of what the Bible itself claims with respect to its inspiration, and then proceeds to set forth the often opposing claims of the Higher Criticism, bringing the searchlight of common-sense to bear on the so-called "assured results" of these theories, which when subjected to this process are stated by the author to "vanish into thin air." The evidence of archæology is used to good purpose, and the "corroborations of the Apocrypha" are very effectively discussed. Then Mr. Procter takes up what is perhaps the central argument, and discusses the "value of our Lord's testimony," a subject which Prebendary Fox (whose loss we so deeply mourn at this time) had made so peculiarly his own. (He told your reviewer not long since that his little book *Our Lord and His Bible* had never, so far as he knew, been replied to by the Higher Critics.) Mr. Procter then proceeds to set forth the teaching of the Apostles and Fathers; and he ends his summary by saying, "We need have no hesitation in giving our verdict—that the case of the Higher Critics is emphatically *not proven*, while that of the conservative Christian is *fully justified*."

The book concludes with a solemn appeal to all students of God's Word to spend more time in *reading* and less time in *rending*, and to remember that "even the *most reverent critical study* of the sacred pages can never be a substitute for its *devotional reading*."

The volume does not profess to be more than a compilation from other writers, but it is an *admirable* compilation, and should find a place on every thoughtful Christian's bookshelf. G. D.

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### A NEW COMMENTARY.

THE STUDENT'S COMMENTARY ON THE HOLY SCRIPTURES. *Thynne & Jarvis, Ltd.* 10s. net.

The issue of a complete Bible Commentary is an event of some importance in the theological world, and as this Commentary is a one-volume book, and is published at the remarkably low price of 10s., it should receive very close attention, especially in view of the fact that conservative books of this type are few and far between, and are usually too expensive for the average student. Throughout the book there is no studied recognition of any critical problem; the Bible is taken at its face value as God's revelation to man; the anonymous author's closing sentences explain his attitude: "The Holy Spirit declares that no scripture is of human origination (2 Peter i. 20), but that on the contrary all scripture is of Divine inspiration (2 Tim. iii. 16); and those who sit where Mary sat (Luke x. 39) know that this double testimony is true."

The writer gives a very short introduction to each book, and then writes, in an easy and attractive style, a sort of running comment on each chapter, setting forth his own view of the inner meaning and stating his own conclusions. He is nothing if not positive, and much that he writes is strongly provocative both of thought

and discussion ; but there is not space for a detailed review, which would require many pages were justice to be done to the great theme. We must, however, point out that the author's views on such subjects as Holy Communion and Holy Baptism are not those of any section of the Church of England or of orthodox Christianity, and care should therefore be taken when placing the book in the hands of the very young or ill-instructed to call attention to his attitude. But when all allowances have been made, we must recognize that we have before us the work of a most earnest and devout believer, who seeks to compare scripture with scripture, and who does not shrink from telling his readers the full results of his investigations. This much is certain—he has placed the thinking Bible Student under a very real obligation to him for what has evidently been a great labour of love ; the book is a noble one, an enrichment of the great cause of Biblical learning, and its pronouncements on the main fundamental truths are sound and uncompromising. It furnishes fresh evidence of the vitality of the written word.

G. D.

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### A COPTIC VERSION OF ST. JOHN.

THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN ACCORDING TO THE EARLIEST COPTIC MS. Edited with translation by Sir Herbert Thomson. British School of Archæology in Egypt, Gower Street, W.C. 25s.

In 1923 the workers of the British School of Archæology found in Egypt a broken crock containing a little package of papyrus. When brought to England and subjected to careful and prolonged treatment by Sir Flinders Petrie this package was opened and proved to contain a Coptic version of St. John, of which three leaves only were missing at the beginning and end. The original MS. is now in the possession of the Bible Society. Its date has been fixed at about the third quarter of the fourth century—say about A.D. 380.

We have here a facsimile with a transcription of the text on the opposite pages, a minutely full list of its readings and omissions, an equally complete collation of its text with that of Westcott and Hort, a glossary of Coptic words, a list of foreign words and a translation. Exactitude and research could go no further. It is a monument of careful scholarship, well worth doing, for the early date gives the version high authority. The text begins with Ch. ii. 12 and ends at Ch. xx. 20.

Of the omissions the principal are the passage about the woman taken in adultery (vii. 53–viii. 1) ; the angel troubling the water in the pool of Bethesda (v. 4) ; “ he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him. And Jesus said ” (ix. 38) ; “ whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are ” (xvii. 11) ; and “ And he saith unto them, Behold the man ! ” (xix. 5).

J. D. M.

## NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES.

PORTRAITS OF MEN OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. Rev. Thomas E. Miller. *Allenson*. 5s.

The late Rev. T. E. Miller, of Dunfermline, died before this work was through the Press, so that it lacks the last touches which he would have given it. Following his *Portraits of Men of the Old Testament* and *Women of the Old and New Testaments*, he has given a series of twenty-four characters. With much careful study of references to each of them as found in Scripture he has added the background supplied by knowledge of contemporary life and circumstances. These short "lives" vary in quality. In some the author has been too sparing in comment and in the use of that touch of imaginative interpretation which makes a picture live. We do not think he quite visualized Barnabas or Thomas. On the other hand, he does full justice to Gallio. Taken as a whole the book will be found a valuable help to the preacher, the Bible Class leader, and the student.

J. D. M.

## THE WORK OF THE CHURCH.

THE TASK OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH. A World Survey. *World Dominion Press*. 7s. 6d. net.

The value of this thin volume may be judged from the fact that it "surveys" the religious position of Great Britain in three pages, the Church of England not being mentioned except by one line in the statistics. India is allotted a little over two pages, in which mass movements and Anglican missions are not referred to, and more prominence is given to Nationalism than to any other topic. Canada is given the same space, almost entirely occupied with the union of Presbyterians and Methodists: again the Anglican Church appears in the statistics only. In all, some sixty countries or areas are "surveyed" in twice that number of pages. It is difficult to see what good purpose is served by such a publication.

J. D. M.

THE ENCHANTED HIGHWAY. By George H. Charnley. *H. R. Allenson, Ltd.* 5s. net.

These thirty-three tales and parables of Pilgrim Adventure represent allegorical teaching at its best.

Mr. Charnley knows exactly how to do it, and he does it with vigour that never flags, humour that never fails, insight that is always true, and with an aim that is always clear. The situations created and the characterization are most apt. Those who wish to put into the hands of youth something that will stimulate them to high endeavour and encourage them to be faithful in their Christian life would be well advised to buy this book. It is a delight. Preachers, teachers and parents would find it very useful.

H. D.