

to the no less important rejoinder of Professor Ed. König, entitled *Bibel und Babel* (Berlin: M. Warneck, 80 pfennigs). As Delitzsch's work is typical of a tendency that prevails at present in some quarters, we may be pardoned for returning to the subject, and for giving some account of an important review of *Babel und Bibel*, which is equally typical of the objections which the book has called forth. Delitzsch not only shows how much light has been thrown upon O.T. history by the cuneiform inscriptions, but seeks to trace many of the customs, laws, and institutions, nay some of the most essential religious notions of Israel, to Babylonian influence. His work is criticised in the *Theol. Literaturzeitung* (13th September 1902) by Dr. Volz, who compliments the author on the clearness of his exposition, and the fine get-up of his book, but takes exception to some points alike in its method and its results. To begin with; in order to impress the circle of readers to whom he appeals, Delitzsch is almost compelled to speak at times with a confidence that is scarcely justified by strict science. It appears, moreover, to Volz to be a radically mistaken procedure to seek to enlist support for Oriental studies by always approaching these Bible in hand. This is at once disparaging to the great nations of antiquity, and unfair to the O.T. itself. These

ancient peoples lived a life of their own, which has quite enough of independent interest, without having to fall back on the Bible for any charm or value. And the sooner this is learned by the popular mind the better. On the other hand, the plan followed by Delitzsch can hardly fail to be detrimental to Scripture. The meagreness of our sources readily gives rise to exaggerations like this: 'In Babylon as in the Bible, the notion of sin is the all-controlling influence.' Or we hear high-sounding words about the one God, the goal of the human heart, and are told that 'monotheism' had already its home in ancient Babylon. So, again, Volz reproaches Delitzsch with writing as if we had to do with absolute identity of religious conceptions, forgetting that not infrequently Israel borrowed only the *form* and filled this with *wholly different contents*. The latter would be the case, for instance, even if it should prove that the well-known cylinder, with its figures of a serpent, a tree, and two human figures, was intended to portray the Fall. 'That the religion of Israel grew upon the soil of Babylonian culture we are told afresh in this book; yet that religion remains an independent, and in many respects an inexplicable growth, quite as much as does Greek art.'

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Miracles and the Supernatural Character of the Gospels.¹

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IT may conduce to clearness if I begin by stating summarily the points to which I propose to address myself in this paper.

i. I would at the outset lay down the proposition that miracles, or what were thought to be miracles, certainly happened. The proof of this seems to me decisive.

ii. It does not, however, follow that what were thought to be miracles in the first century of our era would also be thought to be miracles in the strict sense now.

¹ A paper read at the Church Congress, Northampton, October 1902.

My next step will therefore be to compare the attitude of the ancient and of the modern mind towards miracles.

iii. This will lead on to the third point: How far is it possible to reconcile, or harmonize, these two different attitudes? In other words, What are the chief problems for research and thought in regard to miracles at the present moment?

iv. And lastly, I propose to ask, What would appear to be the place of miracles in the Divine Plan?

i. I start, then, from the proposition that

miracles, or what were thought to be miracles, certainly happened.

You will observe that I qualify the statement by saying 'miracles, or what were thought to be miracles.' I do not for the moment distinguish between the two things. I will come to the distinction later; but for the present I disregard it, or hold it in suspense. For the statement, thus qualified, I conceive that the evidence is nothing short of stringent.

1. I must ask leave for a few seconds to step outside the Gospels. From the point of view of historical attestation the best evidence lies outside them. But though it lies outside, it has a direct bearing upon them, because it bears upon the Dispensation of which they form part.

The Epistles of St. Paul are the best kind of evidence conceivable; because those of which I shall make use are without doubt absolutely genuine, and they bear testimony immediately to the feelings both of an actor and of spectators in the events that are called miraculous.

Take, for instance, the following: 'For I will not dare to speak of any things save those which Christ wrought through me, for the obedience of the Gentiles, by word or deed, *in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Holy Ghost*'; so that from Jerusalem, and round about even unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ' (Ro 15^{18, 19}). 'Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, *by signs and wonders and mighty works*' (2 Co 12¹²).

'There are diversities of workings, but the same God, who worketh all things in all. . . . For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom . . . to another *gifts of healings*, in the one Spirit; and to another *workings of miracles*; and to another *prophecy*; and to another *discernings of spirits*: to another [divers] *kinds of tongues*; and to another *the interpretation of tongues*' (1 Co 12^{6, 8-10}).

'I thank God, *I speak with tongues more than you all*: howbeit in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue' (1 Co 14^{18, 19}).

'He therefore that *supplieth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you*, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?' (Gal 3⁵).

It is simply impossible that evidence of this kind for the special purpose for which it is adduced should be otherwise than true. It is given quite incidentally; it is not didactic, *i.e.* it is no part of an argument the object of which is to produce a belief in miracles; it refers to notorious matter of fact, to fact equally notorious for St. Paul himself and for those to whom he is writing; it shows that he himself was conscious of the power of working miracles, and that he had actually wrought them; and it shows that he assumed the existence of the same power in others besides himself, and that he could appeal to it without the fear of being challenged.

[I digress for one moment. I may be told, from the last volume of *Encyclopædia Biblica*, that Professor van Manen of Leyden denies the genuineness of all St. Paul's Epistles. My reply is, in brief, that Professor van Manen of Leyden does not count. It is true that there is a small school in Holland and in Switzerland who do question the genuineness of all St. Paul's Epistles. But they have been demolished again and again; by none more effectively than by critics whom we perhaps should think extreme, such as H. J. Holtzmann, P. W. Schmiedel, and Jülicher. I believe that I should be right in saying that Professor van Manen stands alone among the contributors to the *Encyclopædia Biblica* in questioning the Epistles from which I have quoted. I need not say more.]

2. There can be no real doubt as to St. Paul, and the time of St. Paul. I might go on to urge that the presence of miracles in the middle of the movement pre-supposed miracles at the beginning of the movement, to give it the impulse which it had. But we do not need to fall back upon inferences. There is evidence as to our Lord Himself that is also, I conceive, quite stringent. This applies specially to the Temptation. The argument might be stated thus. No one could possibly have invented the story of the Temptation. At the time when it was first told and first written, no one possessed that degree of insight into the nature of our Lord's mission and ministry which would have enabled him to invent it. It must have come from our Lord Himself, and from none other. But the story of the Temptation all turns on the assumption of the power of working miracles. All three temptations have for their object to induce Him to work

miracles for purposes other than those for which He was prepared to work them. The story would be null and void if He worked no miracles at all.

3. The proof in this case I believe to be stringent, as stringent as a proposition of Euclid. But besides this there is a great amount of evidence which, without being exactly stringent, is exceedingly good; and that on thoroughly critical grounds and by thoroughly critical methods. A writer at the present day who desires to proceed critically would not speak, as most of us would speak, of the first three Gospels; he would speak rather of the three documents, or main authorities, out of which those Gospels are composed. He would speak, that is to say, of the Petrine tradition, embodied substantially in our St. Mark; of the Matthæan *Logia*, or collection of discourses, which gave its name to our present St. Matthew; and of the 'Special Source,' in addition to these, which has been incorporated into, and gives its distinctive character to, the Gospel of St. Luke.

Now each of these fundamental documents contained not only a number of incidental allusions to miracles, but also express narratives of miracles. Even the Matthæan discourses, in addition to the important reply to the inquiry of John's disciples, and the discourse on the casting out of demons through Beelzebub, contained a full account of the healing of the centurion's servant. And the Special Source of St. Luke included the miraculous draught of fishes (Lk 5¹⁻¹¹), the healing of the crippled woman (13¹⁰⁻¹⁷), and the raising of the widow's son at Nain (7¹¹⁻¹⁷). In other words, all the best and oldest strata of the evangelical tradition bear direct witness to miracle. To this we have to add the evidence of the Fourth Gospel, which I myself firmly believe to be the work of an eye-witness and an apostle, though this is questioned with a somewhat greater show of reason.

4. Not only so; the evidence of these convergent documents is again from a historical point of view peculiarly good in quality. There are features in it which mark it off from the great mass of other evidence for miracle. When we look into it, we see, not obtrusively or quite upon the surface, but again running through all our authorities, a remarkable self-restraint in the exercise of miraculous powers, corresponding to the self-restraint brought out by the narrative of

the Temptation. The outcome of the whole is a picture of miraculous working of the full significance of which the writers of the Gospels were only partially aware, but yet which is in itself very coherent and striking. As historical portraiture, it has a strong claim to acceptance.

ii. There is then, I conceive, practically no doubt that at the time when the miracles are said to have been wrought, there really were phenomena which those concerned in them with one consent believed to be miraculous. It would be another thing to say in what sense they were miraculous, or in what precise way we should describe them. We may lay down broadly that remarkable phenomena accompanied the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He called them miracles; His disciples called them miracles; the crowds before whom they were wrought and the patients on whom they were wrought called them miracles. What should we call them now? The common idea of miracle is that it is an interruption of the order of nature. I do not say that this is a true definition or the best definition. That is just what we are in search of. When we have found the best definition of miracle, that which most exactly expresses its true essence or *rationale*, we shall have gone a long way to solve the whole problem. We are not quite in a position to do this at present. But although what I have just given may not be the true definition of miracle, it is a very convenient one from which to start, as it brings out into sharp contrast the difference between ancient and modern ways of looking at the subject; and this difference is the real seat of the difficulty.

Starting, then, from the idea that a miracle is an interruption of the order of nature, we are at once confronted by the fact that the ancients and the moderns have a different conception of the order of nature. The ancients as well as the moderns believed that there was an order of nature; if they had not had this belief, they would not have attached the importance they did to miracle. The difference between them and the moderns lies mainly in this, that it was more easy for them to think of the order of nature as interrupted. Wherever there was any great intervention, as we call it, of God in the affairs of the world, they expected to see the regular order of things interrupted. They expected to see some

special 'sign' of the Divine Presence. The modern man of science does not find it so easy to believe in these interruptions. The uniformity of nature has been so driven into his mind by a multitude of particulars not known to or not contemplated by the ancients, that he finds it difficult to conceive of it as in any way broken. If he is a Christian, what he would say would be not that God *cannot* interrupt the order which He Himself has created, but that the presumption is very considerable against His will to do so. This presumption rests on an immense induction, covering wide tracts of space and time, to the effect that God does as a fact confine His action within regular channels.

It is, however, important to note that this induction fails just at the crucial point, because we have no experience of His extraordinary action, such as it would be according to the hypothesis. We have no induction to preclude His use of exceptional means under such exceptional conditions. If the Son of God did assume human flesh for man's redemption, that alone is an event so unique and stupendous that we cannot wonder if its accessories were also in a manner unique. Still the minds of the present generation are dominated by this fact of the regularity of nature, and it no doubt does give rise to a reluctance to believe what is really inconsistent with it.

iii. This, then, is the problem that lies before us more particularly at the present time, how we are to bring into harmony these two apparently conflicting sets of data and mental attitudes: on the one hand, the definite proof that our Lord and His apostles, not to speak of others of His disciples, did in point of fact work what were fully believed to be miracles; and, on the other hand, the strong conviction, which has become yet stronger through the scientific advance of the last century, that God does act by general and uniform laws. One thing we may say with confidence. All revelation is adapted, closely and accurately adapted, to the particular age to which it is given. We therefore cannot doubt that if it had been so ordained that the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ should have occurred in our own time, the whole surroundings of it would have been different. We must be careful not to apply to the time at which He actually came, measures and standards that are not appropriate to it.

That is our first lesson, which should not be lost sight of. But it still leaves room for some attempt to harmonize the two orders of conception; that of our Lord's contemporaries, who expected miracles, and to whom, as we have seen, miracles in some form were certainly given, and our own conception of natural law, which also has not been formed lightly or without reason.

We could conceive it possible that the miracles of the Gospels should have been so constituted as to show two sides, one to the contemporaries and the other to our own day; I mean, so that to contemporaries they might come with the force of miracle, and that to us, with our wider knowledge and improved insight into the order of nature, they might be seen to be really embraced within that order. That we should be able to see law where the ancients could not see law; and that what to them seemed contrary to nature, to us should only seem due to the operation of some higher cause within the enlarged limits of nature.

I ought perhaps to say that I have tried this to some extent in my own experience as a working hypothesis, and I am afraid that though it may carry us some way it certainly will not carry us the whole way; it may explain some of the things that meet us in the Gospels, but it will not by any means explain all.

Let us make an attempt in another direction.

The highest cause with which we are familiar, within the range of our common experience, is the human personality and will. And the nearest analogy that we possess for what is called miracle is the action of the human will. We see every moment of the day how the natural sequence of causation is interrupted, checked, diverted by the act of volition. If I lift my hand, there is something within me that counteracts for the moment the law of gravitation. That is a simple case; but the action of the will is very subtle and complex, and some of the phenomena connected with it are as yet very imperfectly explored, and are more like miracle than anything we know. At the same time the will, as we have experience of it, is subject to certain conditions and operates within certain limits. The main question is whether a higher personality, and a higher will, than ours would not transcend these conditions and limitations. Nothing would seem more natural than to suppose that it would. And that is just what on the Christian hypothesis we have. It would not

follow that even this higher Personality and Will would be without its limitations; but they would be at least different from and not so circumscribed as ours.

I do not doubt that it is in this direction that we are to seek for the true *rationale* (if so we may call it) of miracle. The miracles of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in pre-eminent degree, and the miracles of His apostles in a lesser degree, were a result of the contact of personalities filled with the Spirit of God with the conditions of the outer world. That is the key to their nature, so far as we can understand it. We may apply that key to the different instances of miracle. It will help us to explain some better than others. We shall be able to understand best those which appear to be a direct extension or heightened illustration of phenomena that come within our cognisance. Such would be more particularly the healing of disease.

Of course any such explanation can be only partial. The lower cannot supply an adequate measure of the higher. And, by the hypothesis, we are dealing with causes which stretch away beyond our ken. We should therefore be prepared to exercise much caution and reserve in judging. It is natural and right that we should dwell most upon those instances which are to us most 'intelligible,' and from which we can draw the most instruction. It is also natural and right that we should read the Gospels critically, that is, with attention to the different degrees of evidence in different parts. But it would be wrong to leap hastily to the conclusion that whatever we fail to understand did not therefore happen. It is probable that our successors will be better equipped and more finely trained than we are:

and just as in the world of nature many things that once seemed incredible are now seen to be both credible and true, so also it may be in the sphere of revelation.

iv. If we thus take the Personality of our Lord Jesus Christ as the clue that we are to follow, many things will be clear to us that would not be clear otherwise. The Old Testament and the New together form a whole; the one prepares the way for, or runs up into, the other. The central point in the Old Testament revelation was that God is a *living God*; that the world is not a dead world, but instinct with life, which is all derived from Him. The New Testament takes up this, and tells us that Christ the Word was the Light and Life of man.

Life is of all forms of energy the most plastic, the most creative. When, therefore, we think of our Lord Jesus Christ as impersonated or incarnate Life, it is no surprise to us to find in Him the creative and formative properties of life reach their culmination.

There is a peculiar fitness in the fact that His career on earth should issue in the Resurrection. All other lesser manifestations are consummated in this. And that is why the early Christians, with St. Paul at their head, clung to the belief in the Resurrection so passionately. The conception of Christ as the Life seems to me central in relation to miracles. In proportion as we get away from it our difficulties increase. But if we keep in mind the broad considerations that I have stated, we shall not trouble much, and I do not think that it is wise to trouble too much about the details of particular miracles that we cannot weave exactly into our own scheme.

Recent Literature in Comparative Religion.

THERE is no branch of study that has made greater progress in popular esteem within recent years than the study of Comparative Religion. One reason for this is the recognition that the propagation of Christianity is to be slower than had been anticipated, especially in countries which cling to an ancient and elaborate religious cult. The missionary must understand the worship

he seeks to supplant. One of the most valuable documents in existence relating to the spread of the gospel among the northern nations of Europe, is a letter written by Bishop Daniel of Winchester about the year 720, and addressed to Boniface, giving him advice regarding his mission work in central Germany. The bishop admonishes Boniface that the preaching should not be at

haphazard, but that the missionary should give evidence that he is acquainted with the cult and legends of the heathen. The wisdom of that advice is now beginning to be recognized. It is even beginning to be suggested, that before missionaries are sent out to their field of labour they should receive some instruction, not only in the language, but also in the religion of the people among whom they are to labour.

But there is another reason, and it is more fundamental. There has taken place within recent years a revolution in men's minds regarding the meaning of religion. It is not very long since the name of religion was grudged, it is not very long since it was passionately denied, to any form of faith or practice outside Christianity. The study of other religions was merely a branch of Christian Apologetic; it had no significance for its own sake. All that is altered. That which used to be denounced as superstition is now dignified with the name of religion. It is admitted that religion is inseparable from mankind, no tribe being without some form of it, no human creature being able to divest himself of the sense of it. The study of religion has thus taken its place among other scientific disciplines relating to man. And although by some it is still denied the august title of science, it has now the independent interest of a most absorbing scientific pursuit.

In the study of Comparative Religion one ought logically to begin with the study of each religion by itself. Not until the religions have been separately examined, is it possible to make a comparison of them. But the logical order is not always the best order for the student, and in any case others have made that separate study for us, and it is now in our power to enter into their labours. The following article touches upon some of the literature of Comparative Religion. Suggestions for the fuller study of the various religions separately may follow after.

I.

POPULAR INTRODUCTIONS.

1. *The Story of Religions.* By the Rev. E. D. Price, F.G.S. Newnes, 1901. 1s. net.
2. *Studies of Non-Christian Religions.* By Eliot Howard. S.P.C.K., 1900. 2s. 6d.
3. *The Religions of the World.* By G. M. Grant, D.D., LL.D. A. & C. Black, new edition, 1901. 1s. 6d. net.

4. *Four Great Religions.* By Annie Besant. Theos. Pub. Co., 1897. 2s. net.

5. *Studies in Comparative Religion.* By Alfred S. Geden, M.A. Kelly, 1901. 2s. 6d.

Mr. Price's book belongs to Messrs. Newnes' very elementary 'Library of Useful Stories.' No knowledge of Comparative Religion is presupposed in it; nothing is presupposed but a little love of the truth. More than half the space is occupied with Christianity, each branch of which, whether Greek Church, Anglican Church, Wesleyan Methodism, or Swedenborgianism—is treated as entitled to the distinct name of religion, like Taoism or Jainism. There is no theology. That is to say, in the author's words, 'the facts connected with the religions of the world are set forth as clearly as possible, but the inferences to be drawn from such facts are left to the judgment of each reader.'

Mr. Howard's *Studies of Non-Christian Religions* is Mr. Price's book on a slightly enlarged scale, but with the significant difference that all religions are regarded as in contrast to Christianity. This apologetic interest is, however, never very obtrusive and rarely hurtful. It does for us what the other book asks us to do for ourselves, that is all. The greater space makes room for deeper interest, especially biographical interest. The story of Buddha is told in some detail, and with a sympathy that is open and unashamed.

Principal Grant of Canada (whose recent death was a felt loss to scholarship and the cause of education) is the author of the book which has done more than any other to make this study popular. It has appeared in two forms, one for pupils and one for teachers; and between them they have already reached a circulation of thirty thousand. A better elementary guide has not been and perhaps could not be written. No doubt each of the four religions described—Mohammedanism, Confucianism, Hinduism, and Buddhism—is regarded in the light of 'Israel' and 'Jesus' (to use the titles of the last two chapters), but there is none of that fear that casteth out fairness. No nicknames are given. Every form of religion is found to have been a blessing to the people who professed it.

In Mrs. Besant there is no Christian apologetic nor the suspicion of it. She too describes four religions—Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Christianity,—and as she believes that 'each religion has its own mission in the world, is suited

to the nations to whom it is given, and to the type of civilization it is to permeate, bringing it into line with the general evolution of the human family,' there is given to each a free field and no favour whatever. But there is another thing. Each of these four religions is looked at 'in the light of occult knowledge,' both as regards its history and its teachings. And Mrs. Besant knows that thus her book is thrown out of touch with the science of Comparative Religion: she knows it and does not care. She did not hesitate, in preparing her lectures, to fling aside the work of European scholars when it conflicted with occult knowledge, and she does not hesitate now to say that 'touching Hinduism and Zoroastrianism modern scholarship is ludicrously astray.'

This section ends well with Mr. Geden's *Studies*. The title is modest: the book is capable and up to date. But the desire to draw the uninterested and ignorant into the love of this study is so constantly kept in view that one is entitled to place it among the popular introductions. Four religions—the Egyptian, the Babylonian, Zoroastrianism, Mohammedanism—are introduced by a well-ordered chapter on 'Origins.' Mr. Geden has to wrestle with the classification of religions, and rests content at last with a purely external one, 'according to the nations or groups of nationalities by whom they have been accepted.' Such a classification cannot be final. It will come up again.

II.

LECTURES AND ESSAYS.

1. *The Faiths of the World*. Blackwood. 5s.
2. *Non-Biblical Systems of Religion*. Nisbet, 1887. 6s.
3. *Great Religions of the World*. Harpers, 1901. 7s. 6d.
4. *Religious Systems of the World*. Sonnenschein, new edition, 1901. 10s. 6d.
5. *The World's Parliament of Religions*. 'Review of Reviews' Office, 1893. Two vols.

The Faiths of the World and *Non-Biblical Systems of Religion* were both published some years ago. But even then they were conceived on right lines, and they belong to the modern study of the subject. The former was delivered as a series of lectures in Edinburgh; the latter appeared first as a succession of articles in a magazine. In *The Faiths of the World* there is a deliberate comparison between Christianity and other religions. But it is made by Professor Flint, and every sentence tells in favour both of Chris-

tianity and of science. In other lectures the apologetic does obtrude a little. The lecture on Judaism, though some of its positions would now be disputed, is an original and permanently valuable contribution to its subject.

Some of the writers in the *Non-Biblical Systems* are so closely identified with their special topic, that the book cannot easily be superseded—we refer especially to Sir William Muir who writes on Islam, and Professor Rhys Davids who writes on Buddhism.

The writers for the volume entitled *Great Religions of the World* have all been well chosen. We can scarcely suggest an improvement. Who, for instance, can write on Confucianism like Professor Giles, on Brahminism like Sir Alfred Lyall, on Positivism like Mr. Frederic Harrison? And here also Professor Rhys Davids writes on Buddhism, as if there were no other when he is available.

Far more elaborate than any of the books yet mentioned is the volume entitled *Religious Systems of the World*. There are fifty-eight religions described, and by nearly as many lecturers—for the contents of the volume first appeared as a series of lectures in London. As an instance of its thoroughness, notice that Mithraism occupies twenty-two closely-printed pages: in the 9th edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* it is dismissed in half a page. The book is divided into two parts. The first part describes the Pre-Christian and Non-Christian Religions; the second the Christian, Theistic, and Philosophic Religions. The utmost liberty of speech is granted to each lecturer. The Rev. Charles Voysey argues for Theism as if it were the last word on Religion. Mrs. Besant, however, has a word after him on Theosophy, which also is the latest and fairest flower of religious thought. Even Scepticism itself is treated as a religion, and the Rev. John Owen, M.A., would persuade all men to believe nothing.

Yet bulkier is the work which goes by the name of *The World's Parliament of Religions*. It is elaboration and specialization carried to their furthest bounds. There is no attempt at order, and since among the religions are mixed up all sorts of philosophical addresses, it is hard to find what one wants—perhaps harder when found to find anything in it. The thought in the mind of the promoters of this gigantic scheme seems to

have been that if every form of religion had a free field for its expression, God would take care of His own; and it is a true thought. But why Professor Momerie was called to speak on the Moral Evidence for God, or the Hon. T. J. Semmes on International Arbitration, it is hard to say. If some one would sit down and make a single small volume out of these two immense volumes, we might find what we wanted, or find that it was not there.

III.

STUDENTS' MANUALS.

1. *The Study of Religion.* By Morris Jastrow, jun., Ph.D. Scott, 1901. 6s.
2. *Religions of Primitive Peoples.* By Daniel G. Brinton, A.M., M.D., LL.D., Sc.D. Putnams, 1898. 6s.
3. *History of Religion.* By Allan Menzies, D.D. Murray, 1895. 5s.
4. *Manual of the Science of Religion.* By P. D. Chantepie de la Saussaye. Longmans, 1891.
5. *An Introduction to the History of Religion.* By F. B. Jevons, M.A., Litt.D. Methuen, 1896. 10s. 6d.

One of the first questions which we have to face when we pass from the primer in Comparative Religion is, How are the religions of the world to be classified? To that question Professor Morris Jastrow has devoted seventy pages of his book. The old classification was simple if not scientific. There were two kinds of religion, the true and the false, and the false were not religions at all. Professor Jastrow is merciful, and finds some good in all classifications, but he does not adopt that one. Neither does he adopt Hartmann's classification into naturalistic and supranaturalistic, nor Kuenen's into national and universal, nor Tiele's into nature religions and ethical religions, nor Réville's into polytheistic and monotheistic. He works out a classification of his own. What does religion do for life,—how much of life does it cover? The savage is religious only when he is afraid (like the traditional atheist); so we will place his religion lowest: it is available only for the moments of peril in his life. There are religions which cover the whole of life—Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam are such religions,—there is no act but is or may be religious. These are the highest. There are two grades of religion between. It is not a final classification. It shows how difficult a thing classification of religions is. The part of Professor

Jastrow's book which classifies religion is called the general part. It is followed by the special part, which explains how religion stands to ethics, psychology, and the like. The last part is the practical. It encourages the founding of museums and other means for prosecuting the study of religions. The scope of the book is wide. For the whole subject of Comparative Religion it is the latest and best we have.

Professor Brinton of the University of Pennsylvania has so charming a style, that the severity of the study of religion is again forgotten. Yet Dr. Brinton makes no compromise with indolence. He goes to the root; discusses what religion is, and denies favour to any religion on the globe. What is religion? The promoters of the Parliament of Religions accepted all candidates which believed in a god or gods, in an immortal soul, and in a divine government of the world. But Dr. Brinton shows the absurdity of the definition by remarking that Buddhism, which to-day has more adherents than any other religion, rejects every one of these essential things. He himself calls that man religious in whom there is some sense of the supersensuous. And so he easily concludes that there is no tribe or man on the face of the earth, and never has been, without religion. Professor Brinton's book belongs to the series entitled 'American Lectures on the History of Religions.' Its special topic is *Primitive Religions*, but, as the first of its series, it introduces to religion generally.

The best student's book is the *History of Religion* by Professor Menzies. It was written with examinations in the writer's eye. It was written by an examiner and a setter of examination papers. The essentials are in it, all that is requisite for an easy pass, and all in admirable order and lucidity. Yet it is good reading too. Dr. Menzies has the gift of style also. It is wonderful that so many of the writers on Religion should possess this rare gift—Max Müller and Andrew Lang at the head of them. In a comparatively small book Professor Menzies covers the whole ground, for he wastes no space with minute discussion. He even finds time to name the best available literature at every step. His literature can now be added to, and we hope he will produce a new edition soon and add to it.

De la Saussaye's *Manual* is not so useful. It is but a portion of the work he wrote, the rest

has never been translated, and it is out of date in several particulars now, outdated partly by himself. Yet it is a strong, stirring book, not to be overlooked in a survey such as this. Some men owe their interest in the subject to it, their sense of what the comparative study of Religions means.

If Menzies is for the student getting up an examination, Jevons is for the man who has passed it and now would master the subject for its own sake. Again we find the sense of style. There is order also, first things first; and the awe of the most exalted matter for knowledge, the most momentous occupation of life. And more than that, from the very beginning there is the consciousness that the science of religions is not the explanation of religion. One religion is not compared with another in its entirety, but the things that are found in religions throughout their history—taboo, totemism, fetishism, ancestor-worship, and the rest—are described in order of their development, till the Mysteries and Monotheism are reached.

IV.

FOR FURTHER STUDY.

1. *The Science of Religions*. By Emile Burnouf. Sonnenschein, 1888. 7s. 6d.

2. *Prolegomena of the History of Religions*. By Albert Réville, D.D. Williams & Norgate, 1884. 6s.

3. *The Religion of Philosophy*. By Raymond S. Perrin. Williams & Norgate, 1885. 16s.

As 'introductory' as any are the last three books. They begin by laying down the things that are fundamental. They make their appeal to the natural man—the man unspoilt by bad philosophy and rigid orthodoxy. Yet they must be taken where we have placed them—last. They are none of them milk for babes.

Do they belong to 'recent literature' at all? Not by date of issue perhaps; but by dateless gift of insight, by universal human appeal, they do. And even in the matter of year and month they may claim their place. For there is a dividing line in the history of Comparative Religion, and they are all on this side of it. Beyond the line Comparative Religion is a part of obsolete apologetic; it was Réville, Burnouf, and others who rendered all that apologetic old-fashioned and carried Comparative Religion within at least the possibility of the name of science.

That it is a science indeed is Burnouf's purpose to prove. That is his aim in writing his book, and he boldly calls it *The Science of Religions*. Writing some years later, Brinton considers such a title still 'a little presumptuous, or at least premature,' and says we have no more right to speak of a science of religion yet than we have to speak of a science of jurisprudence, for which the materials are more plentiful. Burnouf knows that he is the first to claim the title, and he defends it. The materials, he says, are abundant; the scientific spirit—the 'liberal mind, free from all prejudice'—is available; and the underlying unity of all religions has been discovered and can be set forth. These are the essentials of science. So his book is no description of individual religions, nor is it much occupied with religious phenomena; it is occupied with the method of studying religions, and the relation of religions to one another and to the religious spirit. Christianity is treated without favour, but it is denied that the strictly scientific attitude is hostile to Christianity; in so far as it is moved by an antagonistic or any other bias, it is not scientific.

Réville is historical. Religion may be a science and it may not; it is a most interesting product of the human mind, and a most potent influence in human life. He defines it; discovers its origin; traces its development; describes its most outstanding manifestations, as the Myth, the Symbol, the Sacrifice, the Priest, the Prophet; and finally estimates its influence on morality and its contribution to the civilization of the world. In the course of this history of religion and religious phenomena, Réville classifies religions into polytheistic and monotheistic: the monotheistic religions being Judaism, Islamism, and Christianity. And although the classification is open to the criticism that Buddhism, which recognizes no god at all, is called a polytheistic religion, yet there is none that is simpler or freer from scientific offence.

It is only the third part of Mr. Perrin's book that immediately concerns us. The first two parts are philosophical. The title of the third part is the 'Religion of Philosophy,' but it is occupied with an examination of the chief religions of the world from the standpoint of an ethical writer and reformer. Mr. Perrin allows himself the utmost liberty of expression in criticizing both Judaism

and Christianity, and sometimes it would have been well had he used more endeavour to make his statements good. Thus: 'In order to distinguish Jesus from others of the same name, he was called the son of Mary. His widowed mother, soon after her husband's death, moved to Cana, a small town about eight miles from Nazareth. Here Jesus plied the trade of carpenter during his youth, and gradually developed that character which afterwards made him one of the greatest of moral reformers; great because his teachings have influenced a vast civilization, although they contain nothing either purer or higher than had been taught before.' The statements that may be

challenged are not a few. But the value of the book lies in its earnestness of ethical purpose. Mr. Perrin does not care about a science of religions; it is the practice of religion that he wants. And he is bold enough to pass all the great religions of the world before him, while he criticizes them in respect of the gulf that lies between their profession and their practice. His book closes this survey fitly. Science that deals with religions as mere natural phenomena, classifying them but pronouncing no judgment on them, is not the last word we must listen to. The last word is, 'This do, and thou shalt live.' Mr. Perrin brings us back to that.

Jeremy Taylor and Richard Baxter: A Comparison and a Contrast.

BY THE REV. MARTIN LEWIS, B.A., FELLOW OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON.

II.

IN natural disposition the Anglican possessed a sweetness of blood and a happiness of temper denied to the Puritan. Dean Rust said most truly, in his funeral panegyric, 'Nature had befriended him much in constitution; his soul was made up of harmony; he was a person of a most sweet and obliging humour; his cadences were musical.'

Baxter's temperament was not thus finely balanced and tuned. His figure was indeed tall and slender; his voice rich and full; he could smile with dignity and sweetness; but there were in his nature discordant elements of peevishness, asperity, and disputatious stubbornness. And yet beneath a rugged and thorny surface there were fountains of passionate tenderness, courageous cheerfulness, and large-hearted charity, deeper than the streams which sparkled through the flowery meads of the more winsome nature.

The tender humanity of Baxter's heart of hearts wells up in the almost ideal love which united him to his noble wife.

Jeremy Taylor was twice married, but from his writings we should scarcely guess that either of his wives had ever existed. His flowing periods and delicate compliments were reserved for his

lady friends of high rank, the matchless Orinda and the rest. Baxter's wedded life was a romance from first to last. After he had become homeless and almost penniless, on black St. Bartholomew's Day, for conscience' sake; when he was beginning a life of perpetual martyrdom, — 'in prisons frequent, in deaths oft, in labours more abundant,' an exile and a wanderer in his own dear native land, then it was that a noble woman took that sad, brave heart to her tender bosom. Margaret Charlton was a lady of gentle birth and breeding. She was young, only twenty-three, and he was growing old, nearing fifty. She was rich, and he was poor. But true love laughs at all barriers and overleaps all gulfs. The two lives flowed into one, and were joined in perfect unity.

When they were first engaged, Baxter, with the absolute disinterestedness of his character, stipulated two things: that he should have none of her money, and that she should not ask from him any of the time which belonged to the duties of his sacred calling. The compact was faithfully kept. Baxter's helpmeet became his second-self, and for nineteen years her heroic and gracious figure stood like a good angel by her husband's side, befriending him in prison and in sickness;