

REVIEWS.

The Quest of the Historical Jesus. A Critical Study of its Progress from Reimarus to Wrede. By Albert Schweitzer, Privatdocent in New Testament Studies in the University of Strassburg. Translated by W. Montgomery, B.A., B.D. With a Preface by F. C. Burkitt, M.A., D.D., Norrisian Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge. (London: Adam and Chas. Black, 1910, pp. x. x 410, 12s.)

TEN years ago there appeared in Germany a little book bearing the title, "The Secret of the Messiahship and the Passion: a Sketch of the Life of Jesus," by Albert Schweitzer. The author of this very remarkable treatise, published five years later the work which has recently appeared in English bearing the title, "The Quest of the Historical Jesus." The German original bore the somewhat enigmatic title, "From Reimarus to Wrede," and we owe it to Dr. Sanday that very shortly after its publication this truly remarkable work was brought before the notice of the English-reading public. It is probably not too much to say that since the appearance, in 1907, of Dr. Sanday's book, "The Life of Christ in Modern Research," in which he devotes much attention to Schweitzer's work, many have eagerly looked forward to the appearance of a translation.

This labour has been undertaken and carried through with remarkable success by Mr. Montgomery. Indeed it is difficult to praise too highly the excellence of the translation which he has given us. In reading the book we are scarcely conscious that we are reading a translation, and we feel that to Mr. Montgomery is due the very cordial thanks of all Biblical students for the excellent way in which he has fulfilled his somewhat arduous task.

It should be noticed that Dr. Schweitzer's book fulfils two purposes. On the one hand, it provides us with a full and reliable account of most of the work which has been done in Germany and elsewhere on the life of our Lord for more than a century past; and, on the other hand, it presents us, in a clear and distinct form, with the author's own solution of the problems connected with the Gospel history. His theories are set forth in chapter 19, especially pages 347 to 395. Although the whole of the earlier part of the book may be said to lead up to this section, and be an almost necessary prelude to the exposition of Dr. Schweitzer's theory, yet it would be possible for those who desire to do so to obtain a fairly adequate notion of his ideas by studying these pages alone. The chapter in which they are set forth is entitled: "Thorough-going Scepticism and thorough-going Eschatology," and the first section of this chapter is devoted to a description and criticism of Wrede's work, entitled "The Messianic Secret in the Gospels, forming a contribution also to the understanding of the Gospel of Mark," which appeared in the same year as Dr. Schweitzer's sketch of the life of Jesus, and which, in its statement of the problems connected with the Gospel history, is in remarkable agreement with the views of our author. It is, however, only with regard to the statement of literary problems involved that they are in agreement. Schweitzer's solution is altogether different from that of Wrede; he is far from being "a thorough-going sceptic," he describes himself as "a thorough-going eschatologist."

It is impossible in the space at our disposal to give more than a bare outline of Dr. Schweitzer's theory. It would, however, be as unjustifiable to disparage its importance as to accept it without due consideration. The most remarkable feature about the theory is its consistency and the fact that it offers a solution of many vexed problems. In marked contrast to the general tendency of modern German theologians, Dr. Schweitzer does not in any sense regard our Lord as the product of His age or environment. He is not given to us by history, but Himself moulded the history of His time in accordance with the eschatological idea which formed the dominating feature of His life as well as of His teaching. In accordance with this standpoint, the author warns us that we should seek the true Jewish eschatology in the Gospels and in the Pauline Epistles, rather than in the Jewish apocalyptic writings, which give but a fragmentary presentation of ideas which find their culmination in the New Testament. According to Dr. Schweitzer, our Lord accepted the general outline of the "eschatological drama." First of all Elias must come and then must be "let loose the final woes, the confusion and the strife, from which shall issue the Parousia," and this must be accompanied by the outpouring of the Spirit already predicted in Joel. But our Lord, "in the knowledge that he is the coming Son of Man," forces the course of history into an eschatological framework. Thus our Lord was the first to recognize the Baptist as Elias.

The people regarded him as only the forerunner of the great Prophet. They also, according to Schweitzer, never realized the Messiahship of our

Lord during His lifetime. Even at the triumphal entry into Jerusalem they only regarded Him as Elias, but our Lord Himself was conscious of His Messiahship. In view of the eschatological notion that tribulations must necessarily precede the Parousia, or appearance of the Son of Man, when He thought that this was at hand, our Lord sent forth His disciples, and delivered to them His famous charge (cf. Matt. 12). But after their return, when it was apparent that neither these tribulations nor the Parousia had taken place, our Lord realized that the Messianic woes must be accomplished in His own Person, and for this reason set His face to go up to Jerusalem, "not to teach but to die."

Thus, in contrast to the German writers, Schweitzer emphasizes the atoning character of our Saviour's death. He protests with great vigour against those who would delete his predictions of His sufferings and Resurrection. Indeed this is perhaps the most valuable feature of his work—viz., his merciless treatment of those who retain just so much of the text as suits their individual theories. It is a remarkable fact that the so-called scientific treatment of the Gospel history has of late years presented us with a detailed account of our Lord's inner consciousness and development at the very moment when it was rejecting as historically untrustworthy the majority of the material on which alone it was possible to base any reasonably trustworthy view. Starting from the Gospel of St. Mark or from such sections of it as they are willing to retain with the aid of psychological analysis and conjecture, they have given us a series of portraits of our Lord which are for the most part as historically valueless as they are aesthetically impossible. Here, at least, we may find ourselves in entire agreement with Dr. Schweitzer. The ruthless scorn which he pours on these methods is no more than they deserve.

We must now give a brief account of the main body of Dr. Schweitzer's book, which consists of a description and criticism of the lives of our Lord which have appeared in Germany and elsewhere from the year 1778 to the present day. As we read the list of books prefixed to each chapter, some of them of immense length, we gain some idea of the magnitude of the task which our author has undertaken. It is only, however, when we have followed his history of this branch of theological literature to the end that we realize how much we owe to him. As a mere chronicle of the work which has been done in this department his book is indispensable to the student of the Gospels, and it is remarkable that Dr. Schweitzer has succeeded in making his book so thoroughly interesting from start to finish. The enthusiasm of the writer makes it possible for him to enlist the interest of his readers from the beginning, and this is fortunate, for pathetic and even revolting as a large number of these attempts to write the life of our Saviour undoubtedly are, yet there is something to be learnt from almost everyone of them. Dr. Schweitzer considers that their chief merit consists in the fact that they present us with "a uniquely great expression of sincerity, one of the most significant events in the whole mental and spiritual life of humanity" (page 397). This is probably saying too much. We prefer what Prof. Burkitt says in the opening words of his preface—viz., that this book has given us "as no other book has ever done, the history of the struggle which the best-equipped intellects of the modern world have gone through in endeavouring to realize for themselves the historical personality of our Lord." Reimarus, from whom Schweitzer starts, was Professor of Oriental Languages at Hamburg in the earlier part of the eighteenth century, and it was Lessing who published, ten years after his death, a short work by him called "The Aims of Jesus and His Disciples." Schweitzer probably does not over-estimate the extraordinary acuteness of the criticisms of this delictic writer, but the most remarkable feature of his work is that he is the first to suggest an eschatological theory, and that more than a century lapsed before this important suggestion received the serious consideration which it deserved. The fourth chapter, entitled "The Earliest Fictitious Lives of Jesus," has features of special interest. It describes the works of Bahrdt and Venturini. The work of the latter, "a non-supernatural history of the great Prophet of Nazareth," is of some interest as being the ultimate source of the fictitious lives of our Lord which are still circulated amongst us. Three chapters are devoted to David Friedrich Strauss and his opponents. Here, as elsewhere, Schweitzer gives us an outline of the biography of the writer whose work he is describing, and this gives an added interest to his account. Bruno Bauer, the fearless sceptic, deserves and receives a chapter to himself. Dr. Schweitzer is very hard on Renan, but not unjustly so. He is conscious of his literary power. Renan "offered his readers a Jesus who was alive, whom he, with his artistic imagination, had met under the blue heaven of Galilee, and whose lineaments

his inspired pencil had seized" (p. 181). "Men's attention was arrested, and they thought to see Jesus, because Renan had the skill to make them see blue skies . . . and to hear with him in the whispering of the reeds the eternal melody of the Sermon on the Mount. Yet it is Christian art in the worst sense of the term—the art of the wax image. The gentle Jesus, the beautiful Mary, the fair Galileans who formed the retinue of the 'amiable carpenter,' might have been taken over in a body from the shop-window of an ecclesiastical art emporium in the Place St. Sulpice." This is severe criticism, but it is not unmerited; but when we are told that the weakness of the book is due to the fact that "it is written by one to whom the New Testament was to the last something foreign, who had not read it from his youth up in the mother tongue," we are more doubtful. For the reading of Dr. Schweitzer's book will certainly make us doubt whether familiarity with the Gospels in the vernacular is a sufficient safeguard from lapses of taste and judgment as grave as any found in Renan. Thus we can sympathize with the opponents of Strauss when they "took him severely to task" for placing the headings "Sea Stories" and "Fish Stories" for a collection of the nature miracles. Or, to take another instance, "Paulus," in his Life of Jesus, "constantly falls into a style that sets the teeth on edge"—e.g., "geniality of Jesus among sympathetic friends in a hospitable family circle at Bethany. A Messiah with no stiff solemnity about him." It would be easy to multiply examples.

We have no hesitation whatever in commending the earlier part of Dr. Schweitzer's book to our readers.

Many will see in it a deathblow to *a priori* methods of German historical criticism of the Gospels. As to his own theories we are more doubtful. They have aroused a storm of hostile criticism which has exposed alike their defects and their excellencies. They have been, on the one hand, condemned as blasphemous, and, on the other hand, hailed as the solution of problems for which men have been waiting for generations. The truth probably lies somewhere between these two extreme views. We are at least convinced that Dr. Schweitzer's theories are worthy of careful consideration, but this consideration should be as far as possible of a dispassionate character. If it be patiently and prudently exercised, it is at least likely that scholars will gradually come to the conclusion that Dr. Schweitzer has made a valuable and permanent contribution to the study of the great problems connected with the life of our Lord. These problems he has always treated with a reverence which is in striking contrast to the methods of those whose labours he has chronicled. It is not impossible that the day may come when even those who entirely reject Dr. Schweitzer's theory may regard his work as the most important contribution to the study of the Gospels that made its appearance in the early years of the 20th century.

The Ministry of the Holy Ghost: three addresses by Mrs. J. Gow. (Allenson, 1s. net.) Some admirable and needful thoughts on the work of the Holy Spirit are presented in these pages, and they may be read with profit by all. It is a good book to have near one, so that it may be dipped into as occasion serves. Mrs. Gow laments the neglect of teaching on the office and work of the Holy Spirit in the last century, and indeed into our own time. There has been neglect and we have suffered for it, but the curious thing is that a writer who sees this has almost failed to dwell, as she ought to have done, on the importance of Confirmation as the sacrament in which we receive the Holy Spirit as an indwelling power. As with the Tractarian writers, or many of them, Confirmation is here almost a secondary thing, and the regeneration by the Holy Spirit in Baptism made of greater importance, as if the promised gift were made in Baptism. Mrs. Gow should read Fr. Fuller and Dr. Mason on this subject, then she will see how she might strengthen her argument and position.

Church Unity; a criticism and a correspondence, with an introduction by the Dean of Ripon; printed by arrangement with the *Westminster Gazette*. (Nisbet, 1s. 6d. net.) One of the healthiest signs of our own times is the gradual disappearance of the passion for separation which at one time characterised the Protestant mind. This collection of letters and articles is a witness to the change of attitude and, provided men are not too great a hurry, we shall see further steps and developments in good time. We agree with Canon Brooke, who says "either our differences are real and important or they are not." That is the centre of the situation. We want to remember what Mr. Hancock was never tired of proclaiming, that unity is a thing to be maintained, not attained. And it is not maintained by exhibiting envy, hatred and malice, on whichever side, but by all endeavouring to get rid of the obstacles which prevent our knowing the best of each other. Those obstacles are not in "national law," as the Dean

seems to think, but self-righteousness and the impatience which thinks that errors or defects in a religious body can only be overcome by schism. Our business as Churchmen is to keep the Catholic Faith whole and undefiled; we have no right to share in attempts to hoodwink the public into thinking that sacramental truths and other essentials do not matter.

The Golden Land; the true story of British Settlers in Canada. By Arthur E. Copping, with twenty-four illustrations in colour by Harold Copping. (Hodder and Stoughton, 6s.) Truly Canada is a golden land if all that Mr. Copping says is true. But men who are afraid to face difficulties and strenuous labour, who want music-halls and a plentiful supply of public-houses, need not think of emigration, either to Canada or anywhere else. The author is loud in his praises of the Salvation Army emigration work, and the impression given is that he has written almost entirely on behalf of the Army. Of Church Army work in emigration, little or nothing is said, but we have an impression that it has done some good work in placing emigrants. The book is worth reading, even by persons who have no intention of going to Canada, as the story of genuine enterprise and splendid perseverance cannot fail to interest thinking men. The illustrations depict Canada as all sunshine and glory. Possibly there are stormy days as well, but they are not depicted.

An Englishwoman's Twenty-five Years in Tropical Africa; being the biography of Mrs. Gwen E. Lewis, Missionary to the Cameroons and the Congo. By the Rev. G. Hawker. With illustrations and map. (Hodder and Stoughton, 6s.) Mrs. Lewis was a Baptist missionary, and the record of her work shows that she gave herself whole-heartedly to the work, persevering amid many discouragements and always ready to see the bright side of things. The story of such undaunted pluck deserved to be told, and Mr. Hawker has told it well. There is nothing of exaggerated praise; failures as well as successes are recorded. We hope that some young readers of this life of devotion and sacrifice may be led to follow Mrs. Lewis's example.

Messrs. Dent and Co. have published, at 6d. a copy, three of the *Temple Bible Handbooks*, *The Twelve Apostles*, by the Rev. G. Milligan; *St. Peter and his training*, by the Rev. J. Davidson; and *The Early Christian Apologists*, by the Rev. W. H. Carlaw. We can recommend all three, and especially the one on the Apologists, because it covers ground little known to most lay students. Bible-class leaders should certainly take these little books into their list.

Their Wedding Day, and other short stories suitable for reading at mothers' meetings, by Adelaide M. Cameron (Allenson, 1s. 6d. net.) It must suffice to say that the dozen stories in this unpretentious little volume are just the thing for mothers' meetings and will be enjoyed for their insight into human nature.

Sinai in Spring, or the Best Desert in the World, by M. J. Rendall, Second Master at Winchester College. Illustrated from photographs by the author. (Dent, 4s. 6d. net.) The author writes "as a plain man on holiday," and his best wish is that other people with sufficient means and time may follow in his footsteps and see for themselves the wonderful beauties of a region which possesses undying interest for all Bible lovers. The author travelled from and returned to the quarantine station at Tor, visiting both Jebel Serbal and Jebel Musa, and staying at the Convent of St. Catherine. He has some amusing things to say of the patients in the hospital at Tor, of camels and their ways, and the Bedouin. Some of the scenery is very grand, and the ruggedness of the hills most striking. The account of the convent, if not flattering, is instructive. Mr. Rendall regards Jebel Musa as the true mountain on which Moses received the Law. Tradition says so, and we now respect tradition more than formerly. The illustrations are capital helps to the reader, and the whole narrative is full of interest.

THE KING'S CORONATION.

ALL Britain's love proclaims him King, whom now
With solemn rite and hallowed prayer we set
Before God's Altar, humbly waiting yet
The Lord's anointing. So shall joy-bells ring
The glad announcement to an Empire vast,
Beyond the large achievements of the past,
That God hath vouched him most undoubted
King.
God, Who hath willed him King, grant us, we pray,
He so rule Britain that our fairest fame
Shine fairer; and there never dawn the day
When Britain covers to the deed of shame.
God give us increase, and such King to lead
As may enshrine in justice and in peace
His Empire's glory. 'Tis for this we plead
Christ's Sacrifice, and all the sacrificing done,
Our loyal hearts shall serve and never cease,
Till death set seal on higher honour won.

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