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OLD TESTAMENT NOTES.

Revue Biblique, July, 1905. Van Hoonacker, commenting upon the text of; Jonah ii. 6, suggests for הריים the somewhat novel reading הריים, in which he would recognize the Greek ἄδης; he translates accordingly: "I have descended the precipices of Hades." J. Dissard, in the same number, gives an interesting account of the movements of the tribe 'Amr or Banu 'Aqabah in the last century from the neighbourhood of Mecca to South Palestine, and thence to the occupation of the land of Moab. The vivid description of tribal conflicts and clan jealousies, the motives and plan of migrations, and the characteristics of Bedouin life, present a picture which is not without some value for the Old Testament student. The writer remarks that the Arab nomad is neither a mere highwayman nor is he the simple man adorned with all the virtues with which some writers have depicted him. It is difficult for him to adapt himself to the ideas of other peoples, and almost impossible for him to endure foreign domination. Work is not honourable; and if the district where he settles will not suffice for his needs, he seeks other pasturage, to give battle to the weak or to make alliance with the strong. M. Dissard observes further that in the history of this migration religion or religious acts scarcely find a place; the Bedouin of to-day (as he remarks), like his ancestors of the time of Gideon, have no religion. This interesting record is a useful corrective to the not uncommon view that the idealized pictures which Israelite tradition drew of the patriarchal age are literally true representations of Hebrew nomad life. Cp. the valuable remarks of Robertson Smith, in the *English Historical Review*, 1888, p. 129.

A discussion of the oft-debated phrase "a land flowing

with milk and honey," by Dalman and Bauer in the *Mitteil. und Nachrichten d. deutschen Palästina-Vereins*, 1905, pp. 27 sqq., 65 sqq., has produced much interesting information on the fertility of Palestine both in the past and present; and whilst the former scholar approves of the explanation of a native that the words are a comprehensive phrase for the production of "all things that are sweet and tasteful," the latter argues strenuously for a literal interpretation. It is at least certain, Professor Dalman observes, that the phrase could never have been used from the point of view of (Israelite) immigrants from the desert; the usage points to its having been a customary Palestinian saying. Professor Guthe, in the same journal (p. 49 sqq.) has an interesting investigation of the sacrificial-place at Petra; he discovers the table at which the participants ate the sacrificial meal, and notes that the cult at Petra is reminiscent of Canaanite or Israelite high-places rather than of Arabian ritual.

Zeitschrift f. d. alttest. Wissenschaft, 1905: I. A. Büchler discusses exhaustively the account of the celebration of the Passover, especially in regard to the burnt-offering, in the days of Hezekiah and Josiah (2 Chron. xxx. 15, xxxv. 12, 14-16) in the light of the rival views of the schools of Hillel and Shammai, the evidence of the Book of Jubilees and Old Testament post-exilic references. Büchler's study, with its proof of traces of later redaction, should be a stimulus to deeper criticism of the work of the so-called "Chronicler" in Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, which, as the Levitical genealogies alone show, cannot be from one hand.

Heft II. Hans Schmidt gives an account of past literary-critical work upon the book of Jonah, with particular attention to Böhme's study in that journal (1887). This

is a supplement to his own theory, which he works out with considerable skill : (I.) It is generally admitted that Jonah's prayer (ch. ii.) may be ignored as a later interpolation due to a hand which missed the words which "Jonah prayed" (*v.* 1). (II.) In ch. iii. two proclamations are unnecessary, and the royal command to clothe man and beast in sackcloth ignores the circumstance that the inhabitants had already attired themselves in mourning garb. Hence *vv.* 6-9 (marked by distinctive linguistic peculiarities) are regarded as an addition to emphasize the penitence of Nineveh. (III.) Further, in ch. i. many inconcinnities are to be found : e.g., *v.* 16 (where the men apparently begin to call upon the Lord) compared with *v.* 14 (where they are already God-fearing) ; Schmidt suggests that *v.* 13 seq. is an interpolation. Also, he finds it difficult to understand *v.* 5 seq. ; and asks, why did Jonah lie down to sleep ? The most contradictory explanations have been given. Pointing out the use of different words for "ship" and "storm," he proceeds to argue that traces of a distinct source are to be found in *vv.* 4*a*, 5 (*a* and *c*), 6 . . . 8, 9, 10 (first clause). . . . Since it is unlikely that *v.* 9 can belong to the story of a disobedient prophet, it is conjectured that this source contained an entirely different view, and that the storm was not sent, as the present narrative suggests, on account of Jonah's refusal. It is possible, therefore, in his opinion, that in the original story from which this fragment was derived Jonah was an ordinary sailor, whose prayers to his God were more successful than those of his heathen companions.

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