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A table of contents for *The Expository Times* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[Issue]_[1st page of article].pdf

papers (if they so find it convenient) on some passage in the books chosen. If possible, the best of these papers will be published in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES. But whether they are published or not, the best ten papers will be chosen at the end of the session, and books will be presented to their writers, selected by themselves out of a list which the publishers will send them.

There is considerable difficulty always in the choice of the portions of Scripture for a new session. Many things have to be taken into account; but perhaps the most important thing is this, that at least one reliable modern commentary should be available for study. Now it is generally recognised that the ablest commentary that has yet been published in English on the *Book of Deuteronomy* is Professor Driver's in 'The International Critical Commentary' series (T. & T. Clark, 12s.). We have used the book daily since its issue, and with ever fresh surprise at its completeness, accuracy, and devotional suggestiveness. It is no doubt somewhat expensive to the working student; but it is worth a library of lesser books. We have accordingly chosen *Deuteronomy* as the Old Testament portion of study for the coming session.

The same consideration has fixed *St. Mark's Gospel* for the New Testament. Professor Gould's commentary in the same series (10s. 6d.) is not the masterpiece Dr. Driver's is. But there is little doubt it is the best in existence in English. To those, however, who wish a less expensive and less exhaustive work, Professor Lindsay's volume in the 'Handbook' series may be recommended. It is published by Messrs. T. & T.

Clark at 2s. 6d., a very small price for an excellent book.

These books are specially recommended. But it must always be understood that any commentary may be used, or even the Concordance alone, provided the portion of Scripture is not merely read, but studied.

NEW MEMBERS ENROLLED.

Rev. W. Dawson Watson, Audley Range, Blackburn.

Rev. Henry Todd de Wolfe, B.A., Fomboro, Mass., U.S.A.

Rev. H. Barraclough, 70 Heneage Street, Grimsby.

Mr. Robert Bruce Boswell, M.A. (Oxon.), 2 Hawkwood Villas, Chingford, Essex.

Rev. H. E. Bayley, B.A., B.D., Millville, New York.

Rev. J. E. Jones, Perranporth, R.S.O., Cornwall.

Mr. Joseph Wood, The Uplands, Wilmslow, Cheshire.

Rev. T. W. Ketchlee, Wymynswold, Canterbury.

Rev. W. Hawes Dyer, Gwaelodygarth, Merthyr Tydvil.

Mr. R. C. Forsyth, English Baptist Mission, Shantung, China.

Rev. W. H. Gillespie, M.A., Kwanchengtzu, Manchuria.

Rev. Frank Corany, Beaminster, Dorset.

Mrs. B. Hoare, 54 Willesden Lane, Brondesbury, London, N.W.

Rev. F. W. Reade, M.A. (Oxon.), Salthill, Slough, Bucks.

New Books for the Children.

NEW books for the children are needed all the year round. But the publishers of children's books have a habit of publishing them all at once. Every book has its season; but the season for the children's book is a very few weeks in winter, and one wonders what their publishers do throughout the rest of the year. This is the last of the children's books for this season.

Published by the Religious Tract Society.

Most editors and some publishers have to mourn the loss of faithful friends and contribu-

tors. But we should think that few have been missed so utterly as Talbot Baines Reed. His work seemed only begun. It was so fine already and so full of promise, we do not wonder that every story he left has been gathered and given to us. This is now the last, we fear. It is a volume of *Short Stories*, some of which are humorously illustrated, and all are delightfully written.

The Rev. R. G. Soans, who writes *The First False Step*, is not so very well known and scarcely so very welcome yet. But this is a stirring school-boy's story, with a very good lesson throughout it.

Hester Lavenham is sent to girls who have grown a bit, and begun to feel for their footing. It is school life mainly, to be sure, but then it is life at a school in France; and that means much to those who have spent it.

To the younger girls comes *Manor Coombe*, a very tender story of a very sweet maiden, not to be missed by any means.

Dwell Deep (which, by the way, comes from the author of 'Probable Sons') touches the old and ever uprising difficulty of amusement. It is not so much 'to do, or not to do,' it is where to get the courage to refuse, and to refuse with proper spirit.

But now a history pure and true. It is the history of the *Men of the Mayflower*, the whole wonderful movement which made the Pilgrim Fathers, and made them so like God.

Nor is *The Way of the World at Sea* a tale. It is a well-informed account of the life and conduct of those that go down to the sea in ships, and it is pleasantly and artistically illustrated. An excellent book to give to boys or place in the library.

In *Our Feathery Folk*, Margaret Haycraft holds some pleasant chat with the children about the birds. And in *Teddy's Button*, the author of 'Probable Sons' gives us the most enjoyable book of them all. It is the smallest book besides, for we have worked that way, and its price is insignificant.

Five Annuals are left. Each has its special audience, and each is admirable in its sphere. Glancing through them, one finds *Our Little Dots*, *Light in the Home*, *The Child's Companion*, *Friendly Greetings*, and *The Cottager and Artisan* more attractive even than they used to be. For the illustrations are steadily improving as the instruments that make them are perfected, and the taste that demands them is raised. This improvement is particularly manifest in *The Cottager and Artisan*, 'the people's own paper,' as it rightly claims to be.

Last of all, and in one word, notice this *Scripture Pocket Book* for 1897. It is meant for those who though not of the world have to be in it, and it will help to keep them unspotted.

Published by Gardner, Darton, & Co.

Minstrel Dick, by Christabel Coleridge, is a tale of the fourteenth century. A well-told tale, for

Christabel Coleridge has the historical gift beyond most of her rivals. Historical tales, when they are good, are very good, and this is certainly one of the best.

Leading Strings is sent to the wee, wee ones, who scarce can come to the infant class. Its cover is almost as fine as the cover of *Sunday*, and, like *Sunday*, it goes by illustrations largely.

Three Annuals, and wholly distinct from those of any other publisher. *Sunday* is a big book, with reading for many quiet evenings, and solace for many weary sick-rooms. Its illustrations are extremely many, and the one on the cover is the most successful we have yet received. *The Young Standard Bearer* is thinner and cheaper, with smaller type and fewer illustrations. But it is very strong in anecdotes. The lover of animals will find it specially delightful.

Published by Blackie & Son.

Messrs. Blackie & Son are the publishers for boys. They almost ignore the existence of girls, and they have no great fancy for little children. Of the six fine volumes before us four are boys' books out and out, and they scarce need any introduction, their titles being all-sufficient. Perhaps it had best be stated that two of them are by Mr. G. A. Henty, two of the biggest, and, of course, the best. These are *At Agincourt*, and *On the Irrawaddy*, a judicious choice of the historical and the romantic. The other two are equally arresting by their titles, and equally stirring in their contents. And again one is historical, *Wulfric the Weapon-Thane*, by Charles W. Whistler; the other romantic, *Through Swamp and Glade: a Tale of the Seminole War*, by Kirk Munroe. All four are bound and illustrated in Messrs. Blackie's well-known manner, the olive edges being found on all but *Wulfric the Weapon-Thane*.

The girls' book is by Frances Armstrong, and it is a thoroughly good book. Not meant to be given to the little ones, it will find a grateful welcome at the hands of any growing girl; and it is not necessary that she should be a devourer of books to appreciate this one. The course of true love, which runs the usual way, will itself be enough to maintain the interest.

The last of the six is for children. It is a fairy tale, by Sheila Braine, and it is illustrated by Alice Woodward. Its title is *To tell the King the Sky* is

Falling. If Messrs. Blackie have given but one book for the little ones, they have given that one handsomely.

Published by Nelson & Sons.

When you have a style, keep it. Long ago, as long ago as we can remember, Messrs. Nelson had found a style of publishing that was most attractive, and they have kept it ever since. Hard boards and bevelled edges (at least for the best of them), with plenty of gold and other harmonious colouring—these were the bindings that lay all around the tables, and these bindings lie there still. And they were books as well as bindings, books which no mother was ashamed to see on her tables, and they are the same unmistakably 'good' books still.

The first this year is a sailor's book, *Every*

Inch a Sailor. Its author is Gordon Stables. The next is a tale of Old London, a tale of London when London was a terror to live in, as it is not even now. Its title is *The Sign of the Red Cross*, and its author is Evelyn Everett Green. The third is also by Evelyn Everett Green, but very different from the second. It is altogether modern, and altogether a delightful story of 'the odd one,' Squib, the funny and lonely member of the family: *Squib and His Friends* is the title. The fourth is a smaller book, *Frank's First Term*, plainly a tale of the school, quite after the well-known manner, whose author is Harold Avery. The fifth is smaller still, and meant for the smaller folk, *A Child of the Mews*, by M. B. Synge. And the last this season is our dear old friend *The Children's Treasury*, with some most curious illustrations this year, but just as welcome as ever.

Contributions and Comments.

Surety.

AND shall the hand that brings the rose to bloom

Out of the barren bough of winter brown,
Leave the fine soul for ever in the tomb

Where the spent body to its rest lies down?

And shall the might that fixed the whirling star

And the strong sun to light our darkness here,
Give never ray of light to guide afar

Aught journeying beyond this little sphere?

And shall the love that gave the bird its wings

And moves the sweetness of its song unsought,
Provide no pinion for the soul that sings

Oft with the rapture of its heavenward thought?

Life's river flows, and the immortal hears

Calmly the passing flood, with feet secure
Upon the stepping-stones of mortal years,

Each stand the surety that the rest is sure.

SARAH ROBERTSON MATHESON.

The Last Word of the Bible.

SEVERAL years ago I collected materials for an essay on the first and the last words of the Bible,

Bereshitt and *Amen*. Rev. H. W. Hogg has made my notes on 'Amen' superfluous by his elaborate article on this word, published in the *Jewish Quarterly Review* (October 1896), and described in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES (December 1896). But some additions to his statements may be allowed.

1. First, as to his paragraph on 'Amen' in the Bible Versions. Besides the three passages mentioned by Hogg, where the Septuagint discovered an 'Amen' in the O.T. not to be found in the Massoretic text, we may perhaps adduce 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, where **אמן** **דור** is twice given **πιστος** **Δαυιδ**, thus presupposing either the transposition **אמן** or the addition of a letter **אמן**. The Syriac version found an 'Amen' in 1 Sam. xv. 32; for it translates **אמן** by **שׁריראית**, i.e. truly, verily = **אמן**.

2. On the use of **ἀμήν** in the MSS. of the Greek Testament see Bengel in the *Apparatus Criticus* on Matt. xxviii. 30; Rom. xv. 33, xvi. 27. Bar-Hebræus quotes an 'Amen' 'from the Gospel' in Luke ii. 14, where neither our Greek MSS. nor the printed editions of the Syriac Bible have it; see his larger Grammar (p. 170, 2). In his metrical Grammar he devotes to this word the verses 714-716 (p. 71 of *Bertheau*), and distinguishes almost like Hogg, an initial, final, and liturgical 'Amen.'