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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

the hand. And, besides, the Eversley is the only annotated edition.

Complete your set of *The Keswick Week*. The volume for 1908 is just out (Marshall Brothers; 2s. net). It is unbound, which is a pity, for it contains addresses which will last; but then it would be costly if it were bound, and the desire of the publishers is that it should reach the million. There are no new names this year, but we do not think the old were ever more manifestly endued with power.

Messrs. Morgan & Scott have published another edition of Miss Wilson-Carmichael's *Overweights of Joy* (2s. 6d. net).

The best survey of missionary enterprise we have seen has been made by the Rev. W. T. Whitley, M.A., LL.D. Its title is *Missionary Achievement*

(Morgan & Scott; 2s. 6d. net). Its chief merit lies in what we must call its impartial spirit. That is to say, there is no twisting or ignoring of facts to make a case, and the one sect or Church gets as impartial treatment as the other. Then it is most readable. To say that it is trustworthy is not to suggest that it is crammed with tables of statistics. The facts are part of the narrative, and the narrative is the work of a literary artist.

We have had our Lord considered as a Poet before, but never so scientifically as by Dr. Otto Frommel of Karlsruhe. His book has been translated into English by Amelia Gurney, with the title *The Poetry of the Gospel of Jesus* (Nutt; 2s. 6d. net). We say scientifically, for first of all Dr. Frommel builds his book on a critical foundation, and secondly he limits himself to one aspect of the mind of Christ, His æsthetic enjoyment of the works of God's hand.

Recent Biblical and Oriental Archaeology.

BY PROFESSOR A. H. SAYCE, LITT.D., LL.D., OXFORD.

AMERICA is beginning to take a foremost place in Oriental research. One of the best books that have ever appeared upon Assyrian history is a little volume by Dr. A. T. Olmstead, entitled *Western Asia in the Days of Sargon of Assyria* (New York: H. Holt & Co., 1908). It is really a critical examination of the historical records of the Assyrian king, Sargon, in which the minute scholarship of the German is combined with the common sense of the Anglo-Saxon. For the first time the annals of the Assyrian conqueror are subjected to a searching criticism, and all available sources of information bearing upon them are laid under contribution. Even the Greek inscriptions of Asia Minor have been examined, and modern Assyriological literature has been pretty thoroughly ransacked. Papers hidden away in obscure periodicals have been consulted, and Dr. Olmstead has not forgotten, like so many of the younger Assyriologists, that there were scholars before himself and his friends. To every student of Oriental history and geography, and more especially of the Old Testament, his book will be found indispensable.

It is so crowded with matter that it is difficult to select any single portion of it for special notice within the limits of a review. Attention, however, must be drawn to the author's careful examination of the theory which places the kingdom of Muzri in Arabia and transports to it the Mizraim of the Old Testament. Archæologically and Assyriologically alike the theory is shown to be untenable, and the unprejudiced reader can come to no other conclusion than that in which Dr. Olmstead sums up the result of his discussion that 'we may very properly refuse to accept an independent Muzri in the Negeb.' The Negeb, it is true, is covered with the relics of a former civilization; but they all belong to the Roman period; no pottery has been met with that can be assigned to an earlier date, and none of the architectural remains is older than the age of the rise of the Nabathean kingdom in the third century B.C.

The contents of the book are well arranged. The sources of our knowledge of the history of Sargon are first examined; then come chapters on his accession, on his policy towards Babylonia and

Syria, on his defence of his north-west frontier, on his Armenian, Median, and Elamite wars, on the last years of his reign, and finally on what Dr. Olmstead somewhat awkwardly calls 'the Culture Life.' It will be seen that the whole of the ancient civilized Orient, with the exception of Egypt, is embraced, and new light is thrown on its history and geography. The pages devoted to the Assyrian campaigns in Asia Minor are especially noteworthy, though I am not convinced that the author is right in his identifications of some of the Cappadocian towns, more particularly Uesi, or in placing the victory of Sargon over Midas 'near the mouth of the Calycadnus.' The geography of Asia Minor in the age of the Second Assyrian Empire still needs a considerable amount of 'threshing out.'

There are a good many misprints in the book which will require to be corrected in a second edition. Thus we have 'Ađar' for 'Adad,' 'ishkum' for 'ishkun' (p. 18), 'Melesian' for 'Miletian' (p. 78), 'Pamphilia' for 'Pamphylia' (p. 88), 'Helita' for 'Melita' (p. 91), 'Deoikes' for 'Deiokes' (p. 109), 'Urz an ashe' for 'Urzanash' or rather 'Urzanas' (p. 113), 'Sargartioi' for 'Sagartioi' (p. 123), 'Kekha' for 'Kerkha' (p. 130), 'Mar' for 'Nar' (p. 143). The land of Elli should be Ellip, the supposition that the final *p* is the Elamite suffix *-pi* being devoid of foundation. And the pronominal 'his' is twice used in an ambiguous sense (pp. 82 and 106); in fact, in the first passage it does not refer to Sargon, as Dr. Olmstead's grammar would necessitate, but to Midas. The misprints are doubtless due to Dr. Olmstead's absence from America; he was Thayer Fellow at the American School for Oriental Studies at Jerusalem, and part of his time was occupied in visiting the sites of the cities mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions. No better preparation for his historical researches could be imagined; his- torical criticism is always questionable where the critic is not personally acquainted with the geo- graphy of his texts. To his travels we owe, amongst other things, a note which clears up the difficulties connected with the Biblical expression 'entrance of Hamath.' 'The Septuagint on Jud. 3³,' says Dr. Olmstead, 'Labo Emath, gives the clue. Libo is not a verbal form, but a proper noun, the Libo of the Antonine Itinerary, 198. 3, and the modern Lebweh, which we visited July 1904.'

There is only one thing wanting in Dr. Olmstead's book, and that is an index.

Yet another volume of the *Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania* has appeared, this time from the capable pen of Dr. Radau.¹ It contains facsimiles of the letters addressed to the later kings of the Kassite dynasty of Babylonia, as well as to their higher officials. I have used the term 'facsimiles' deliberately, for the copies of the tablets are more than mere copies, and in accordance with the example first set by Professor Hilprecht, reproduce exactly all the characteristics of the originals. The difficulty of the task can be appreciated only by those who have attempted to copy the inscriptions of the Kassite period, with their badly-formed characters, careless writing, and crumbling clay. The Introduction to the volume is unusually long, and philologically interesting. Transliterations and translations of many of the tablets are given, with copious notes, which discuss, explain, and illustrate the words employed in them. The Introduction has thus been made a valuable contribution to our knowledge of Assyrian grammar, and still more of the Assyrian lexicon; and, in view of the importance of the letters and the relation the language of them bears to that of the Tel el-Amarna tablets, it is a welcome feature in the book. I hope it is a feature that will be imitated in future publications; for, as I said years ago, the first duty of the Assyriologist is to translate his texts, and until he does so we are justified in being somewhat sceptical as to his Assyriological attainments.

The letters extend over the period between the reigns of Burna-buryas II. and Kastilias II., and what I may call the first and fourth chapters of the volume are occupied with an attempt to settle the genealogy and chronology of the kings who represented it. The subject is an exceedingly difficult one, and the materials for definitely settling it are not yet in our possession; but Dr. Radau is certainly on the right track in not rejecting or correct- ing the chronological statements of Nabonidus. It will be time enough to do that when we know a quarter as much about the matter as did the royal antiquary of Babylonia.

Another chapter of the Introduction deals with a subject which has excited a good deal of unnecessary controversy in America, and shows that the archive chambers of Nippur were as much a library as the famous library of Assur-bani-pal at

¹ *Letters to Kassite Kings from the Temple Archives of Nippur* (vol. xvii. part i.), Philadelphia, 1908.

Nineveh. The so-called Temple Library was really a royal library, the temple revenues being administered under the king, who accordingly bore the title of *sakkanakku*, or 'treasurer' (literally, 'he of the sealing') 'of Ellil.' Dr. Radau proves conclusively that 'the lord' to whom so many of the letters are addressed was, as in the Tel el-Amarna correspondence, the king.

Among the proper names found in the letters is one which will be interesting to Old Testament scholars. This is Arad-Yau, 'the servant of Yau' or Yahweh, formed on the model of Arad-Marduk, 'the servant of Merodach.' Other West Semitic or Amorite names are also met with:—Bail-Marduk, Pan-Bali, Aziru, and E-Saggil-zuria ('E-Saggil is my rock'). Some of the letters were probably written

by West Semites or else by Kassites who were not well acquainted with the Babylonian language; at all events, both grammar and spelling are at times very defective. Naturally, therefore, there is now and then room for differences of opinion as to the translation of the texts. In a letter to the king, for example, from the General Nimgi-sar-ili, I should translate lines 22-24: 'The five chariots which I have made ready that they should defend the fortress are gone on the road ordered by (my) lord,' the verb *sabātu* signifying 'to bring to a head,' or 'make ready.' *Ummāni raksāti* (p. 109), again, is 'apprentices' rather than 'stipulated workmen,' the verb *rakašu* being used in a similar sense in the Cappadocian tablets, and *asbaku* (p. 138) is 'I am camping' rather than 'campaigning.'

Contributions and Comments.

Joseph's 'Coat of many Colours.'

It is generally held that we owe Joseph's 'coat of many colours' to a mistranslation by the LXX of the Hebrew *Kethoneth pasim* (Gn 37⁸). Preference is given to the rendering 'a long garment with sleeves,' such as would be worn by persons of distinction who did not engage in active labour requiring freedom of hands and legs. Such a long tunic 'of palms and soles' (כַּפְתָּר) (as Driver well puts it) was worn in David's time by princesses (2 S 13¹⁸), in contrast to the ordinary tunic which reached only to the knees and was sleeveless.

Now, in Peiser's *Orientalistische Litteratur-Zeitung* for August, Dr. Robert Eisler enters a plea in favour of the popular rendering. The Mishnah (*Negaim*, xi, 7) knows a many-coloured summer garment described as a coat of *paspasim*, and the word, according to Dr. Eisler, underlies the *pasim* of the Hebrew text. This arose from the belief that in כַּפְתָּר we have an initial dittography, and thus the first syllable was struck off under this belief. But the Assyrian *p-as-pa-su* means a bird of bright or many-coloured plumage (Delitzsch, *Assyr. Studien*, 1874, i. p. 105). A coat of many colours would be worn by astrologers; according to Dr. Eisler it is the robe of Tamuz-Attis-Endymion, as he proposes to show in an important forthcoming work on

Weltenmantel und Himmelszelt. In support of this he cites Joseph's dream of the sun, moon, and stars, which falls in with the theory admirably. Dr. Eisler thinks further that the alteration from *paspasim* to *pasim* was made intentionally by scribes who wished to eliminate such astrological association from the story of Joseph. But this is not necessary for the point at issue: namely, that after all the old versions were right which saw in Joseph's robe a 'coat of many colours.'

Cambridge.

I. ABRAHAMS.

A Certificate of Poverty from the Greek Papyri.

THE existence of a poor-rate (*μερισμός ἀπόρων*) in Roman Egypt, by means of which the well-to-do (*εὐπόροι*) contributed to the relief of the poor (*ἀπόροι*), conjectured by Wilcken on the evidence of an Ostrakon of 143 A.D., was pronounced by Mommsen 'too good to be true' (see Wilcken, *Griechische Ostraka*, i. p. 161). It has since, however, been supported by various tax-receipts from the Fayūm (see *Fayūm Towns and their Papyri*, Nos. 53, 54, 256), and is now strikingly confirmed by the following document published by Dr. F. G. Kenyon and Mr. H. I. Bell in the new volume of