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the injunction addressed to Daniel: 'But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end' (Dn 12⁴). If our interpretation of the command that came to the Christian Seer be correct, it would seem to suggest that it owes its peculiar form to a desire to bring out the contrast between it and the injunction addressed to Daniel. Daniel is to seal up his words—but only for a time; the events depicted in them will one

day actually come to pass. The Christian Seer, too, is to seal up the utterances of the thunders—but in this case the sealing is not just for a season. The things uttered by the seven thunders are not to be written down at all! No record of them is needed, for they will never at any time come to pass. God is not merely postponing them, He is obliterating them! He is blotting them out of His plan!

Recent Foreign Theology.

The History of Religions.

IN the January number of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES attention was called to the publication of the fourth and thoroughly revised edition of the *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*,¹ founded by Dr. Chantepie de la Saussaye, who, in the Preface to the third edition, announced that his place would be taken by Professor Edvard Lehmann of Lund, one of his most distinguished collaborators. In 1910 this Swedish scholar was appointed Professor of the History of Religions and the Philosophy of Religion in the University of Berlin; he has written on the Religions of Primitive Peoples and on Buddhism, and contributed important articles to THE ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF RELIGION AND ETHICS (Primitive, Persian, and Parsi Religions). The co-editor of the *Lehrbuch* is Dr. A. Bertholet, Old Testament Professor in the University of Basle, and the author of many learned works, including commentaries on several Old Testament books.

Biblical religions are not included in the syllabus of this work, but there are occasional references both to Judaism and Christianity. For example, Lehmann (i. 120 f.) distinguishes between religions of external and internal redemption, instancing Paul and Luther as the classical exponents of the former. External redemption is held to be a familiar conception, not only in the Jewish prophets and in Christianity, but also in later Judaism and in

Hellenistic sects. The typical example of what is called internal redemption is Brahmanism, which teaches that salvation does not depend on the grace of God or any external gift, but on ascetic practices, self-improvement being achieved by renunciation and self-mastery. This extension of the connotation of the term 'redemption' has obvious disadvantages; it leads to the assertion, though with qualifications, that 'Buddha may be called a redeemer in so far as by his example he showed the way of salvation.' More helpful is the statement that Christian Mysticism affords evidence 'how easily external and internal redemption may blend, the inner self appropriating and using the external gifts of grace.'

The plan adopted by the editors is not to complete the first volume and then to issue the parts of the second volume, but alternately to publish the parts of the two volumes. But all the articles for which the editor-in-chief is responsible are found in the parts that have already appeared. The first volume contains two introductory articles which are of special interest, and in the second volume is his historical sketch of the Persian religion.

The object of the first article is to show that the History of Religions has a history of its own ('Zur Geschichte der Religionsgeschichte'); it begins, however, by pointing out that the History of Religions is really as old as History itself. For example, Herodotus gave as much attention to the religious ideas and customs of strange peoples as to their political life. Regret is expressed that works which make the History of Religions their special theme have been lost, notably the eighth

¹ *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*, begründet von Chantepie de la Saussaye. Vierte, vollständig neubearbeitete Auflage. In zwei Bänden. 4 Swiss francs each part. Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tübingen.

book of the *Φιλίππικὰ* of Theopompos. There is a rich storehouse of information in this admirable survey which is much more than a Bibliography. As remarkable for their comprehensiveness as for their terseness are the lucid summaries and shrewd estimates of the contributions made by ancient and modern writers on the various religions of the world. The problem which in divers ways they help us to solve is the determination of the extent of 'the influence of the worship, the philosophy, and the personal religion of the ancients on the shaping of early Christianity.'

Dr. Lehmann's second article, entitled 'Religious Phenomena and Ideas' (i. 23-130), is divided into ten sections with such topical headings as 'Nature and Spirits,' 'Deities and Divinity,' 'Worship,' 'Piety.' From many angles each subject is surveyed, the author's aim being to show what conceptions of the *summum bonum* have been held by the various races in successive ages, for 'instead of relegating religion to the realm of the illusory, we ought rather to raise the question as to whether it is not the expression and embodiment of the profoundest human need.' Because religion is a great educator of the human race we may learn from the History of Religions more quickly than from profane history what is essential to the well-being of the race and of the individual.

A most instructive discussion of the relations between Mythology and Theology leads to the conclusion that 'it is a sign of the decay of the higher religions when the mythical element in their faith and doctrine comes to the surface again.' The natural affinity of mythology is with polytheism: 'the endless genealogies of which complaint is made in 1 Tim i. 4 are the offshoots of polytheistic heathenism, for a homogeneous conception of the Divine on which a real theology may be built is impossible to Polytheism; it can but indicate where monistic tendencies appear, as in the Avesta, in the latest phases of Egyptian and Greek paganism, and in the Puranas of Hinduism. . . . It was the faith in God of the Jews and of the Christians that first created a genuine theology.' In this connexion it is pointed out that whilst Babylonians, Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans had scriptures in abundance, none of them had a single Scripture giving comprehensive and exhaustive expression to their faith. 'It is not the system but the religion that makes the Bible,'

and only when the religion has a universal value has the book a universal significance. Each of the three world-religions has its Holy Scripture, namely, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam, 'but the New Testament is the purest religious creation of these sacred writings; throughout it is permeated by religious ideals to which its historical, ethical, and liturgical elements are alike subservient.'

The extensive range of Lehmann's article on 'The Persians' (ii. 199-279) may be indicated by giving the titles of its twelve chapters: the Medo-Persian people, the Locale and the Founder of the Religion, Religious Literature, the Iranic Religion before Zarathustra, a general survey of the Zarathustrian Religion is followed by sections on the Doctrine of God in the Gathas, the Pantheism of the later Avesta, the realm of evil, Worship, Purifications and Customs, the last things, Parsism from Alexander to the present day, and Manichæism.

The Bibliography includes a reference to the relevant articles 'by various Iranists' in THE ENCYCLOPÆDIA OF RELIGION AND ETHICS, and to the works of Darmesteter, J. H. Moulton, L. H. Mills, E. West, etc. Parsism to-day is said to be 'a survival, insignificant in Persia, but somewhat more vigorous in India,' where 90,000 out of the 100,000 Parsis live. 'The prosperity and respect which they enjoy is, to a large extent, due to the principles of their Zoroastrian faith, which inculcate the ancient virtues of honesty and sincerity.' Fire-worship and many of the old customs are retained, as, for example, the exposure of dead bodies to the vultures; on the other hand, 'their theology, influenced by its modern environment and revised, has become an ethical monotheism' which, however, their scholars claim to find in the Avesta.

Quotations from the Pehlevi writings are given to show that they are a distinct advance upon the rigid and formal Ethics of the Avesta. Though they are not free from Dualism, there is a spiritualizing of the virtues and a deeper understanding of the principles of morality. Purity is not, as in the Avesta, the highest good, but 'to be thankful to all, and to desire the good of all.' The laudation of riches gives place to a recognition of the fact that they do not always bring happiness: 'The poor man who is content is rich, but the rich man who is discontented is poor.' Again it is written, 'to live without fear is the true riches.'

In recent years great advance has been made in specialized study of the History of Religions; students will find that this invaluable *Lehrbuch* gives the results of scholarly research during the last decade as well as a judicial estimate of

earlier contributions to the subject. High appreciation of the new is combined with due valuing of the old.

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Contributions and Comments.

The People's Coming Question: A Note.

MR. H. G. WELLS in his *Outline of History* states in a sentence not only perhaps the most real problem of to-day, but what popular opinion may very easily fasten on as crucial, when he says: 'What will be clear to any one who reads the Epistles side by side with the Gospels is that his (Paul's) mind was saturated by an idea that does not appear prominently in the reported sayings and teachings of Jesus—the idea of a sacrificial person who is offered up to God as an atonement for sin. What Jesus preached was a new birth of a human soul; what Paul preached was the ancient religion of priest and altar and propitiatory bloodshed.' Mr. Wells may be making the popular mistake of thinking the loose and misleading phraseology and ideas of revival hymns and Anglo-Catholic sermons are Pauline, or for that matter Scriptural; and, if he is, we have only ourselves to blame. In speaking of priest and altar he must have, moreover, in his mind the Epistle to the Hebrews, which is not Pauline, and even there forgets that the aim of the Epistle is to use familiar and significant ideas merely as stepping-stones to the personal relationship which does away with intermediary forms. At the same time, when we have elucidated meanings and cleared away popular misunderstandings, there remains the solid fact of the change of atmosphere when one passes from the Synoptic Gospels to the Epistles, the change of emphasis, and in some ways the actual change of substance. Things are made central and essential in relationship which are at most only touched on by Jesus. It is idle to pretend otherwise, and the man next door is beginning to ask about it. Some honest hard thinking will be required, but

the contributions of scholars who are not themselves apprehended of Christ are really worthless, except as preliminary inquiry, in a question which is of all questions essentially a religious and experimental one. But apart from what New Testament scholars who are also religious men will have to say—and we shall be increasingly asking guidance from them—there are one or two elementary facts to be kept in mind.

The Evangelical faith appears as soon as anything appears in the history of Christianity. After the Resurrection there is in Scripture no record of any other which is supplanted. This Christian faith of the New Testament is moving in the communities well within the lifetime of the friends and disciples of Jesus, and it is their faith too. It is universal and, so far as documents go, it is primitive in Christianity. No more to us than to them is the place given to Christ incongruous with Himself in the Gospels. It would be incongruous with what we know of Socrates or Mahomet, or Livingstone or Florence Nightingale, or Paul or Bernard of Clairvaux, or Francis Xavier or William Carey, or John Wesley or Alexander Whyte; or the reader's father or brother or mother; or any character in fact or fiction known to us. We may have great argument about the text, or over what He did or did not say, or claim to be. I am not entering into these problems, but into the one raised: the relation of the Jesus of the Gospels as our Bibles show Him—sinless, forgiving sins, full of grace and truth—to the Jesus of His interpreters after He was gone—as our Bibles show them—which is what Mr. Wells and the public are concerned with. There they are, Gospels and Epistles, all growing up in the same household entirely unaware of any breach one between the other. In those circumstances, to believe that the influence of pagan religions, which had been pegging