

Reviews.

Heth and Moab. Explorations in Syria in 1881 and 1882. By CLAUD REIGNIER CONDER, R.E. Author of "Tent Work in Palestine," "A Hand-Book to the Bible," etc. Published for the Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund. Richard Bentley and Son, 1883.

NOT the least regrettable of the consequences of the troubles in Egypt was the compulsory cessation of the Survey of Palestine East of the Jordan, which was commenced in 1881 under the auspices of the Palestine Exploration Fund. Still, that the expedition was by no means fruitless in results is, pending the publication of the detailed Memoirs, abundantly shown by the present volume, in which Captain Conder relates very vividly the dangers and difficulties with which his party had to contend, and indicates what they accomplished in spite of these obstacles. It was in April, 1881, that Captain Conder arrived in Syria, and his first work in the field was a reconnaissance, in company with Lieutenant Mantell, of a tract of Northern Syria, in the hope of finding the site of the great Hittite capital—Kadesh on Orontes. This preliminary tour, it must suffice for us to say here, was conspicuously successful. It will be remembered that Egyptologists have fixed Kadesh at such various sites as Antioch, Homs, and on the island in the lake now called Baheiret Koteineh, situated near the latter town. Captain Conder, however, rejects all these suggestions, and fixes Kadesh at Neby Mendeh, a dark mound a little west of Kussir. He found the name Kades still well known, as applying to the ruins on the south slope of the hill, and this must certainly be regarded as a remarkable coincidence. Interesting fragments of pillars and statues are to be seen here; but there are no antiquities that can be called Hittite. The recovery of Kadesh is a noteworthy contribution to the study of this interesting tribe, the eldest of the sons of Canaan. But we cannot linger over these pages, although they tell us much that is new of the land of the Hittites. Very interesting, for instance, is the account of Homs, the ancient Emesa, the Hemesa of Pliny, and Hamatz of the Talmud, and said to have been the city of the Zemarites (Gen. x. 18), although this is a purely conjectural identification. Captain Conder's account of the performances of the Dancing Dervishes at Tripoli is, too, peculiarly graphic. We must also pass over the journey from Tripoli to Beyrout, through the Land of Purple.

At the very outset of their journeyings the explorers found that their task must either be wholly abandoned, or accomplished, so far as might be, in the teeth of the categorical refusal of the authorities to permit either survey or any kind of exploration. The Porte affected to attach political significance to the presence of two British officers upon its territory at such a time, and had already taken steps to stop the progress of the Expedition. It was soon apparent that there was no hope whatever of penetrating into the Hauran; and Captain Conder accordingly endeavoured to outwit the authorities by making a sudden descent into Moab. Very graphic and amusing is the account of the game of "hide and seek" which he somewhat rashly played with the bodies of soldiery sent to see him out of the country. Securing the services of an Arab chief named Goblan, of very shady character, but in his allegiance to his employers a worthy type of the traditional Arab, as guide, he suc-

ceeded in surveying five hundred square miles of country before he was obliged to retire from the field. The tract explored lies due east of Jericho and Jerusalem, and the work done includes surveys of Heshbon, Elealah, Madeba, Beth-Meon, Nebo, Pisgah, the hot springs of Calirrhoe, and Rabbath Ammon. At the same time 600 names have been obtained, 200 ruins examined, 700 rude stone monuments discovered, and many of them sketched, a number of Arab traditions have been collected and identifications proposed for the Field of Zophim, and the Ascent of Luhith, Jazer, Sibmah, and Minnith. Of these, perhaps the fixing of the Field of Zophim at the plateau of arable land which stretches along the south side of Mount Nebo is of the greatest interest to the Biblical student. It was discovered by the Survey party that even the name has been preserved—the modern Arabic Tal'at es Sufa being radically identical with the Hebrew Zuph, whence Zophim. But the whole ridge of Jebel Neba is full of interest. As the place whence Moses viewed the Promised Land it has always attracted travellers in Palestine. Captain Conder has a suggestion to offer with regard to the Biblical account of the view which lay before Moses, which we give in his own words :

“ When we turn to the account of the death of Moses (Deut. xxxiv. 1-3) we find a description which answers well to that given above. “ The land of Naphthali (extending to Tabor) can be seen, and the “ mountains of Gilead, the land of Ephraim and of Manasseh, of Judah, “ with the Negeb (the dry or south country), are seen for more than a “ hundred miles. Jericho, the city of palm-trees, and its plain, is at our “ feet unto Zoar, which lies at the foot of the Moab chain. If we make “ the simple change of reading ‘ towards ’ instead of ‘ unto,’ in the cases “ of Dan and ‘ the western sea,’—a change not forbidden by the meaning of “ the Hebrew particle—the whole account reads as correctly as that of an “ eye-witness ; but it is certain that Dan (if the site near Bâniâs be in- “ tended) and the utmost, or ‘ hinder,’ or most western sea, cannot be “ visible from Nebo to any mortal eye.”

Scarcely less interesting is the story of Nebo in its connection with Balaam and Balak. The three high places to which the prophet was brought by the king of Moab, that he might thence see and curse Israel, have all been identified. Of these, the first was Bamoth Baal, which lies south of Nebo ; the second was the Field of Zophim ; and the third was “ the cliff of Peor,” whence apparently the whole host of Israel was visible in the plains of Abel Shittim. This last summit has been identified with a ridge immediately south of Bamoth Baal, in the narrow spur which runs out to Minyeh, and which answers the necessary conditions in regard to prospect. But a discovery of still greater interest was to be made here. On the edge of the cliff were found “ a line of seven monuments of large stones, concerning which nothing could be learned from the Arabs, save that they were very ancient.” Viewed in connection with the Biblical account, which tells us how at each site seven altars were raised, this fact is of engrossing interest. May not these be identical with the stones which still stand here as mute monuments of the dead past ?

“ Here, then,” says Captain Conder, “ we may picture Balaam standing “ on the lofty knoll just south of the seven circles, setting his face to the “ wilderness of Judah, beyond the Salt Sea (Numbers xxiv.). Hence he “ saw the twelve black camps of Israel abiding according to his tribe, “ spread out like the black groves which fringe the Jordan’s tributary “ streams. Hence, Moab, Edom, and David’s city could alike be seen. “ Here the rocky nest of the Kenite, never to be wasted till Assyria “ carried him captive, appeared as a peak on the south-western horizon, “ at the ruin of Yekin, where, later, monks showed men the grave of

"Cain. Here was pronounced the doom of those children of Sheth who adored, in Peor and Nebo, but other forms of the 'pillar' Set, so sacred to the Hittites, and to the early Egyptians also."

It is perhaps in the light that it throws upon the stone monuments that the chief claim of the present volume to permanent value lies. And here again the value of the inquiry, as illustrating the Bible, cannot be over-estimated. We find these stones just where we should expect to find them if we followed merely the sacred record. The Israelites carried out the Divine command wherever they had the power. There is not a single example of these altars in Judea, only one doubtful circle in Samaria, one dolmen in Lower, and four in Upper Galilee. In Moab, on the other hand, the surveyors found 700 examples in 1881. It is long since the travels of Caupon Tristram made the existence of stone monuments in Moab so widely known; but they have never hitherto been satisfactorily examined. With regard to the dolmens, Captain Conder is decidedly of the opinion that they were altars, and in support of this theory he points to the hollows in the top stones. Again, the menhirs, or standing stones, are probably memorial pillars, and as such are found in nearly every country. There are abundant instances of such stones mentioned in the Bible. Thus, the witness-pillar, of Mizpeh; the memorial-pillar over Rachel's grave; Joshua's pillar under the oak at Shechem, in memory of the oath taken to serve Jehovah; the stones of Bethshemesh, Ezel, and Ebenezer, are familiar instances of memorial menhirs among the Israelites. But we must refer the student who is interested in this inquiry to the volume.

We have no space to give any of Captain Conder's illustrations of Syrian superstitions and contributions to Arab folk-lore. But it will readily be believed that these chapters, although somewhat fragmentary, are interesting. The paper on "The Future of Syria," which appeared in the *Fortnightly Review* a few months since, is also given in the volume, and in the Appendices is included, amongst other things, a very powerful protest against the Jordan Valley Canal, on account of its impracticability. The volume must certainly be regarded as an important addition to the literature of the Holy Land.

Glimpses through the Veil; or, Some Natural Analogies and Bible Types.

By the Rev. JAMES WARING BARDSLEY, M.A., Vicar of Christ Church, Surbiton. London: James Nisbet and Co.

This is a very interesting volume; and the last pages are the best. It is not so brilliantly written or so highly scientific as Henry Drummond's "Natural Law in the Spiritual World." But it is a much easier book to read; and, somehow, it inspires more confidence. Mr. Bardsley's processes can be followed, and his results easily verified, throughout. Mr. Drummond, on the contrary, makes such demands on our logical faculty and our knowledge of science, that, while our sympathies are with him, we feel as if we were travelling for the first time on wings, and are never quite sure, for many minutes together, that the fall of Dædalus will not be our lot—

Expertus vacuum Dædalus aëra
Pennis non homini datis.

Mr. Drummond's conclusions are almost too good to be true.

Mr. Bardsley, on the other hand, never takes up a position without immediately entrenching himself by the use of other pens, men, and dates (of course there is no allusion to Horace here); in other words, he quotes from standard authorities. Writers who not only read but condescend to quote, instead of always airing their own lucubrations (expertus vacuum

aëra), lay us under a peculiar obligation. So many books—even good books—are published in these days, which we really cannot find time to read (or even to review)! A self-denying writer, who will collect valuable paragraphs, and exhibit them in their proper places in an argument, deserves the thanks of his whole generation; especially of those among his contemporaries who are blessed—or cursed—with what they are pleased to call originality. Ordinary originality is only a compound of clever thieving and quick digestion. Quotation at least means industry. Apt quotation means industry and perception combined. There is one Bardsley who deserves to be immortalized as “Quotation Bardsley,” for his marvellous power of giving page and paragraph, at a moment’s notice, in the very nick of controversy. There is more than one Bardsley who reads, and gives other readers the direct benefit of his reading.

In this particular book, we rejoice most of all to be thoroughly at one with the writer on the authority of God’s written Word. His last chapter, on “The Heavens and the Word,” contains the substance of four sermons preached at Christ Church, Surbiton, in the spring of 1883. The congregation has, apparently, expressed a wish for their publication; at which we are not surprised. These were sermons on Psalm xix.; concerning which Mr. Bardsley well observes, that “the transition from the natural to the spiritual (in that Psalm) is so abrupt, that this very abruptness implies an analogy in the objects of contemplation.” The heaven of God’s Word is the “tabernacle” for the “Sun of righteousness.” It is Christ, Whose going forth is from the one end of Scripture, and His circuit unto the other end of it.

From the universal prevalence of natural law throughout the heavens and the heavenly bodies, Mr. Bardsley argues, by a most forcible analogy, for the *plenary* inspiration of Scripture. “I believe,” he says, “that the great danger of the Church of Christ in the present day, is not from the denial of revelation, but from the belief in the partial character of its inspiration.” He also insists upon the analogy between our Lord’s sinless humanity and the humanity of the written Word. All this is most important and most valuable. A good quotation is given from Dr. Chalmers at pp. 280, 281, bearing on the same point. The *historical unity* of Holy Scripture is urged as a proof of its divinity. And rightly so. How can there be an *historical human unity* between books of which the production ranges over two families of language and sixteen centuries?

Another interesting line of thought appears in the following passage. The idea is familiar, but we do not remember to have seen it so well expressed anywhere else:

“The river of divine truth ran for a time in a Jewish channel, but even then there was a remnant from the Gentile world who drank of its life-giving streams. When there was an Abraham, there was a Melchisedek” (which, by the way, should be “Melchisedec,” or “Melchizedek” according to the Authorized Version); “when there was a Jacob, there was a Job; when there was a Joshua, there was a Rahab; when there was a Boaz, there was a Ruth; when there was a Solomon, there was a Queen of Sheba; when there was an Elisha, there was a Naaman; when there was a Jeremiah, there was an Ebedmelech; when there were the shepherds, there were the Magi; when there was an Elizabeth and a Mary, there was a mother of Canaan and a woman of Samaria; when there was a John, there was a Roman centurion” (Mr. Bardsley is quite right, gentle reader; but *you* don’t remember to what he refers!); “when there was a Philip, there was an Ethiopian Eunuch; when there was a Peter, there was a Cornelius.”

A similar thought is brought out of the list of “plants” in Solomon’s garden (Cant. iv. 12-14): “Most of the trees named in this passage were

exotics—not indigenous to the soil of Syria." But does the "Rose of Sharon" refer to Christ? What about the dialogue in this passage, and the genders in the Hebrew?

There is one other mistake in the book; but it is a mistake made by nearly every clergyman who preaches on Numbers xx., but cannot read Hebrew. "Hear now, ye rebels: must we fetch you water out of this rock?" is an instance of false emphasis. The emphasis, as all the Hebrew commentators know well enough, is on "*this Rock*," which is called "*Selagh*," not "*Tsur*," in Hebrew. Mr. Bardsley knows so much about "the Rock" already, that we are not going to tell him what the point is that he has missed here. He will find out for himself before long. As it is, he has argued most ably that the "Rock" in Matthew xvi. cannot be Peter, because "Rock" in Old Testament Scripture is a name of God alone.

His chapters on "The Sea" and on "Fading Leaves," on "Dew," on "Golden Bells," on "Evidences Sealed and Evidences Open," are most interesting. He has treated the "fading leaves" a little too kindly, perhaps; for he saves them from the "wind" of "iniquities" that "takes them away." But we are not going to let out any more of his secrets. And if you do not get the book and read it, after this notice, then we fear that there has been a slight waste of pearls in this review.

M. A.

Short Notices.

From Year to Year. Poems and Hymns for all the Sundays and Holy Days of the Church. By the Rev. E. H. BICKERSTETH, M.A., Vicar of Christ Church, Hampstead, and Rural Dean. Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, and Rivington. 1884.

IT is more than half a century since "The Christian Year" was published; and during the last twenty years or so, many, we think, who regard that book as a sober standard of feeling in matters of practical religion, would have gladly welcomed the appearance of another work like it. Many Churchmen, again, while enjoying and duly esteeming Keble's verse, have felt that "The Christian Year" lacks certain qualities of no mean importance. For ourselves, without instituting any comparison between the book which has a history and that which is now published, or discussing the diversities, we must avow that, in some respects, at all events, we give the volume of 1884 a higher rank than that of 1827.

Our present object, however, is not to review at adequate length the really excellent work before us, culling a few of its choicest flowers, but to manifest how heartily we admire the garland which Mr. Bickersteth has woven for the Church. The characteristics of his poems (his "graceful and gracious muse" is the criticism of another poet) are happily well and widely known. His noble poem "Yesterday, to-day, and for ever"