

chance to show that this or that element in the morality of the Old Testament must be supernaturally revealed, whereas, he would have been far more effective, if he had allowed the facts to speak for themselves and had summed up the inevitable inferences at the close of his volume. As it is, this apologetic purpose has made him altogether too sweeping in his depreciation of non-Jewish ethics and of the progress of extra-Israelitish peoples in developing moral principles. Perhaps the most satisfactory point about the book is a detailed treatment of the Decalogue. But we shall still have to wait for what the author had a splendid opportunity to give, viz., a scientific treatment of the development of moral principles among the Hebrews, based upon a critical arrangement and study of Old Testament documents.

G. S. G.

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**Central Truths and Side Issues.** By the REV. R. G. BALFOUR. New York : Imported by Charles Scribner's Sons. 1895. \$1.40.

Mr. Balfour is a theologian of the old school, but well-read and with open eye. He discusses such central subjects as the Incarnation and the Atonement, and such side issues as Baptism, the Covenant at Sinai, and Resurrection of the body. We admire the frankness and candor of the treatment. His discussion of the theories of the atonement is summed up in this sentence: "All that we claim is that the doctrine of substitution shall have the first and fundamental place, and then all the others will group themselves naturally around it." The weakest discussion is that on the Covenant of Sinai, in which he shows clearly that he is still struggling in the gulf and mire of the theories about the "covenants." He regards God as carrying on a great experiment with the two great divisions of the human race. "The Gentiles were left to the light of nature, suffered to walk in their own ways, in order to test the question: 'Can man, in the exercise of his own unaided reason and conscience, find out God and raise himself to a higher and better life?' The result of the experiment was a negative answer. The Jews, the chosen people of God, to whom he had by direct revelation made known his character and will, were put under a covenant of law with a view of testing this further question: 'Can man, even when placed in the most favorable circumstances, win eternal life by any doings of his own?' And the answer to that question furnished by the history of Israel was an emphatic negative." We have passed the era in which God was looked upon as the Great Experimenter.

G. S. G.

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**The Parables by the Lake.** By W. H. THOMSON, M.D., LL.D. New York : Harper & Brothers. 1895. Pp. 159.

Among the many books upon parables, this modest little volume has a merit peculiar to itself. It is written by a physician, who, as the son of Rev. William M. Thomson, D.D., author of *The Land and the Book*, was born and lived for many years in Palestine. Sometimes, it is true, the author is led off

into an historical discussion of the exegesis or some other phase of his subject, and at times he introduces illustrations from the realm of psychology and medicine, but the chief purpose of the book is to let the land interpret the parables of Jesus. Taken altogether, therefore, the work is unique. It cannot, of course, replace such works as those of Trench and Bruce, but it is a most valuable supplement for those works, and one is continually surprised and interested by the amount of fresh material of all sorts which is here brought together as a background against which the parables are thrown, and by means of which one is enabled better to interpret them. S. M.

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#### LITERARY NOTES.

REV. DAVID GREGG, D.D., has gathered into the little volume *The Testimony of the Land to the Book*, three entertaining and earnest addresses delivered at the New England Chautauqua. They are full of facts, and although the author may be a little too eager in some of his conclusions, we heartily agree with him in his confidence in the influence of exploration and excavation upon belief in the Scriptures. The volume has considerable value as a book to put into the hands of those who are desirous of knowing the main facts in regard to Palestine and recent discoveries there. (New York: E. B. Treat. 35c.).

THE OXFORD PRESS (New York: Macmillan, \$7.00. Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co.) has just issued the works of Bishop Butler, edited by W. E. Gladstone, in two noble volumes. The work of the editor has consisted in breaking the *Analogy*, and most of the other works into well marked sections, in the addition of an index to each volume, as well as explanatory notes, and an appendix containing works by Butler or associated with his name. Each of these features will aid greatly in the study of Butler's works. Mr. Gladstone promises in his preface that he will immediately issue a volume of essays in which he will give the reasons for this attempt to make the works of Butler more accessible to students.

We have read *How to Study the Bible for Greatest Profit*, by R. A. Torrey, Superintendent of the Chicago Bible Institute (Chicago, Fleming H. Revell Co. 75c.) with interest. Especially would we commend Part I., "The Method of the Most Profitable Bible Study," as a good accommodation of scientific method to popular work. In fact the entire book is full of good suggestions. It is gratifying to find so many warnings against forced and fanciful interpretations, but one fears that these may be somewhat weakened by the advice (p. 118) "In all your Bible study look for Christ in the passage under examination." The same spirit is seen in the chapter on the "Study of Types." But the book is to be commended, especially to students in theological schools, and to others who may be in danger of studying the Bible in an undevotional frame of mind.