

a journey, though the author never grows uninteresting nor fails to inform.

The illustrations are of high quality.

W. O. CARVER.

The Land of the Gods.

By Alice Mabel Bacon. Published by Houghton Mifflin & Company, 1905. Pp. 267. Price \$1.50.

This volume is made up of ten stories setting forth characteristic Japanese superstitions. The legends of folk-lore and superstition are full of interest in themselves and are told with great charm and skill. No explanations are given and no theorizing—just the plain tales woven about living characters with all the thrill, and sometimes horror, of the utmost reality. It might readily be supposed that the author believes every word of the wierd stories with a faith surpassing that of the Japanese.

One would err if he inferred that belief in the superstitions here set forth is universal in Japan, but an intelligent reader will find delight and learning in the volume.

W. O. CARVER.

VIII. OLD TESTAMENT.

The Priestly Element in the Old Testament.

By William Rainey Harper. Revised and enlarged edition, 1905. Pages 292, 8vo. cloth; postpaid \$1.25. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and New York.

This book is a delight to the eye in its orderly arrangement of general topics and sub-heads, its paragraphing, the use of different fonts of type, the employment of bold-face type, italics and all other devices known to the printer's art. The pages have wide margins, on which the biblical references find a suitable place opposite the paragraphs to which they are related. Three valuable appendixes present lists of the more important words in the vocabulary of worship, classified lists of important books and a conspectus of the newer literature (since 1901) on

the priestly element. A fairly good index adds to the value of the volume.

The results of a quarter of a century of critical study of the Old Testament by a keenly analytic mind are embodied in this book. The author's skill in arrangement appears in every chapter. He is a past master in the art of making a dry subject interesting.

There are copious references to the literature on the various topics, the books and articles being arranged chronologically, and the literature in languages other than English being placed by itself. Practically all the best works of the radical school receive constant mention, and many books and articles by mediating critics; the conservative literature does not meet with equal favor, though on some topics it is given satisfactory citation.

In the preface the author indicates the foundation on which he builds his book: "The general results of modern historical criticism have been taken as a basis for the work, since it is only from the point of view of history that these subjects may now be considered intelligently. Each special topic connected with the general subject of the Priestly Element furnishes a beautiful illustration of the growth and development of Israelitish and Jewish thought under the controlling influence of a conception of God which became more and more pure with the advancing centuries." By "the general results of modern historical criticism" our author means substantially the views propagated by the Kuenen-Wellhausen-Stade school. Books and articles by scholars of the radical school receive most frequent mention in the literature on the various topics. In a good many details, however, Dr. Harper sides with the mediating critics, standing with Driver as against Cheyne, or with Dillmann as against Wellhausen.

It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader that the views of the radical critics are thoroughly anti-biblical. Kuenen had no hesitation in saying that his understanding of the Old Testament history differed widely from the

views entertained and enforced by the Old Testament writers. They united in the view that Moses was the great lawgiver through whom Jehovah gave not only the Ten Commandments but hundreds of precepts and regulations for the conduct of the sons of Israel. Modern divisive critics are largely agnostic with respect to the famous lawgiver; "as for this Moses we wot not what is become of him." Our author ascribes to Moses most practical use of the tent, or tabernacle; as to his part in announcing laws to Israel he has little to say. He holds that laws regulating worship and life were largely formulated, as well as executed, by the priests. "Legislation, therefore, in its stricter sense, was the function of the priests, rather than of the prophets or sages." The sacred writers in both the Old Testament and the New held that the law was given by Moses, one of the greatest of the prophets.

It is important for the Christian reader to note at the outset of any examination of the book under review that Dr. Harper does not take his stand beside the organs of revelation, the great religious leaders through whom God spoke to the Israelites; but rather among the masses of the people with their superstition and slowness of heart to apprehend the messages of the prophets. He seems to have as his center of interest the unspiritual masses; he will not leave them to breathe the purer air of the mountain tops on which the prophets stand. He wishes to write a history of the priestly element in Israel, regarded as one of the nations of antiquity. He tries to trace the history of Israel's religion as evolved from primitive semitic life and worship, and as influenced by the religious beliefs and customs of all the peoples with which at different periods Israel came into contact. The average Israelite with all his weaknesses and sins is the man whose evolution Dr. Harper seeks to describe. In the past, Christian writers have usually tried to trace the history of God's self-revelation through the religious leaders whom he raised up to guide the nation into higher knowledge of his

will. Dr. Harper does not confine his attention to the history of worship as approved by Jehovah, but describes the worship as practiced by the masses of the people. This explains the presence of paragraphs on sorcery and witchcraft in close connection with purer and approved modes of worship. It would seem that the author ought to have made it plain to the general reader that the Old Testament writers are in no wise responsible for the failure of the masses to surrender crass notions in exchange for the higher faith everywhere taught by the organs of revelation. It means little to us now that even as late as the days of Manasseh of Judah human sacrifices were offered in sight of Jehovah's temple; it would mean much for us to discover that Moses or Isaiah approved the horrid practice.

The plain reader of the Bible will probably feel a shock of surprise to find that the early Old Testament period closes shortly before 621 B. C., the middle period with the visit of Ezra to Jerusalem about the middle of the fifth century B. C., while the late period includes the early Maccabean history. The modern critical theory almost ignores the patriarchs, knows little of Moses, gets mere glimpses of the judges, and begins to reach historic ground only with Samuel and Saul.

Dr. Harper accepts the late dates commonly assigned by the Wellhausen school to the Old Testament writings; in two or three instances he would put a book half a century earlier than Wellhausen and Stade. The analysis into documents as formulated by our author is substantially that promulgated by the leading German and Dutch critics of the last thirty years. If the modern critical view of the Old Testament is true, the credit for the discovery must be given to avowed naturalistic scholars like Kuenen and Wellhausen; all that mediating scholars can hope to do is to improve the literary analysis in details, check up the historical criticism in the interest of a modified and somewhat more reverent view of the value of the sacred writings, and especially to preach the new view

to the Christian public, which is always tempted to rate the Old Testament as highly as Jesus and his apostles rated it.

The Constructive Bible Studies, edited by Professors Harper and Burton, of which the volume under review forms a part, are designed for use in Bible classes in colleges and theological seminaries. In the preface to a companion volume, *Constructive Studies in the Prophetic Element in the Old Testament*, President Harper says: "These studies are intended primarily for students in college and those in the theological seminary, but they will not be found too technical for more intelligent Bible classes in our best Sunday schools." On almost every page of both these manuals by Dr. Harper are questions that will put the feet of the average theological student into the air, to say nothing of the advanced pupils in the Sunday school. In order to find light on the difficult questions thrust into his face, the young theologian must turn to books and articles filled with the most radical speculations in the study of Comparative Religion; books that he is scarcely prepared to understand, and can by no means *test* in their fundamental assumptions; books that manufacture from an ounce of supposed fact a pound of unverifiable theory. Such books often overawe the honest student in his earlier researches and make him imagine that such erudite thinkers must be right, even when his heart protests against their conclusions and his judgment is not satisfied as to the cogency of the arguments brought forward. Before the sacred writers are subjected to a merciless cross-examination, they ought to be allowed to tell their story in their own way, and be treated as honest and intelligent witnesses. Most of the students in college and theological seminary have imperfect knowledge of the Bible story; they ought to hear the direct testimony of the historians and biographers, and read the prophetic and wisdom books as they have been preserved to us, before listening to searching and scathing cross-examination on the part of able ad-

vocates who believe that the witnesses are in a holy conspiracy to cover up some of the most important facts.

Of the many difficult speculative questions thrust upon the college student, take a few samples: "Note (1) the distinction between clean and unclean animals made in the narrative of the deluge, and consider (2) whether the words *unclean* and *sacred* may not be used synonymously; that is, was not the *unclean thing* (whether animal or person or object) something in connection with which 'a superhuman agency of a dangerous kind' was supposed to be acting, and which, therefore, was, from one point of view, sacred, from another, unclean? (3) whether this is not to be closely associated with the usage existing among many nations and called *taboo*." The student is sent for an answer to an article in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and to W. R. Smith's difficult book on the Religion of the Semites.

The key to the critical position is the Book of Deuteronomy; if the addresses ascribed to Moses were really made by that great leader of Israel, the whole modern critical theory is on a foundation of sand; if Deuteronomy was composed shortly before 621 B. C., the so-called traditional view falls to the ground. Dr. Harper accepts the late date for Deuteronomy, and faces the question, Is not the book a forgery and fraud, if not written by Moses? In his able discussion of this question (pp. 164f.) the author raises some difficult questions: "(7) Whether Hilkiah in permitting the belief in the Mosaic authorship was really guilty of *delusion*; was it not rather *illusion*? (8) Whether the principle of illusion is not (a) necessary in all educational work; (b) practiced in the Old and New Testaments; (c) one of the greatest elements in the teaching of Jesus himself."

Did Jesus practice *illusion*? The only proof-text given for such a startling view is John 16:12, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." Arithmetic first, then Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Analytical Geometry, Calculus; we are familiar

in all educational work with progress from lower to higher things, but where is the *illusion*? The Century Dictionary defines illusion as follows: "1. That which illudes or deceives; an unreal vision presented to the bodily or mental eye; deceptive appearance; false show." "2. In *psychol.*, a false perception due to the modification of a true perception by the imagination; distinguished from false appearances due to the imperfection of the bodily organs of sense, such as irradiation, and from hallucinations, into which no true perception enters." "3. The act of deceiving or imposing upon any one; deception; delusion; mockery."

If the Century is right in its definition, Jesus did not practice *illusion*, and it has no place in a sound educational method. Jesus said concerning the hope of a blessed immortality in God's house, "if it were not so, I would have told you." He was the most candid, genuine, fearless teacher the world ever saw.

JOHN R. SAMPEY.

Constructive Studies in the Prophetic Element in the Old Testament.

By William Rainey Harper. Pages 142, 8vo, cloth; postpaid \$1.00. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and New York. 1905.

This book is a companion to the *Priestly Element in the Old Testament* by the same author. Dr. Harper says in the preface: "The plan rests upon two vital principles: (1) That the student, guided by the suggestions made, shall do his own thinking and reach results which at least in a measure may be called his own. No conscious effort has been put forth to control the exact development of his thought. (2) That the student shall do his own work upon the basis of the Scripture material; in other words, that he shall study the Bible, and not merely read what others have said concerning it." These are fine words; we cannot withhold our hearty indorsement of both these vital principles. But the program of work as here outlined does not put the Bible as it is in the hands of the