

Book Reviews.

The Life of Jesus of Nazareth. A Study. By RUSH RHEES, Professor of New Testament Interpretation in the Newton Theological Institution. With map. ("Historical Series for Bible Students.") New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1900. Pp. xvii + 320. \$1.25.

The excellent contribution made by the present series to the understanding of the Old Testament predisposes the reader in favor of the volumes dealing with the New. At one point, it is true, he will be somewhat surprised: neither of the two New Testament volumes can be classed with those of Professor Kent as regards critical boldness. In the case of Professor Purves this contrast amounts to a rejection of every suggestion made by critical scholarship, but in that of Professor Rhees it discovers itself less in an undervaluation of recent investigations as to the gospels than in a disregard of their results in the actual reconstruction of the biography of Jesus. The volume is written out from the gospels and not from the sources of the gospels.

Professor Rhees has adopted a general method altogether advisable in a small volume. The main object of any life of Jesus must always be biographical rather than archæological or critical. It must present a person, not a discussion. This object Professor Rhees has sought to accomplish by dividing his work into three main parts: "The Preparation," "The Ministry," and "The Minister." It is in the latter, and by no means least valuable, portion of this work that he most carefully presents those elements that justify the description of his work as a study rather than as a history.

In what may be called the technical questions of the gospel narrative Professor Rhees is at once conservative and independent. While admitting the possibility that the tri-paschal chronology of the public ministry may prevail, he favors the quadri-paschal, thus lengthening the ministry to over three years—a position in our opinion untenable upon critical grounds. Closely allied with this is his decision in favor of John's position for the cleansing of the temple, with which he most properly identifies that recorded in the synoptists. Although such a location has weighty names for its support, to our mind it obscures

the real significance of the act, and is irreconcilable both with the words of Jesus as recorded in John, with the subsequent work of Jesus, and with a fair criticism of both John and the synoptists. The disregard of probable disarrangement and editorial rearrangement and comment in the fourth gospel results also in the interpretation of Jesus' return to Galilee (John 4 : 44) as a search for the retirement accorded a prophet without honor in his own country, and in a leaning away from the synoptists' unmistakable statements as to the date of Jesus' death. In this latter matter, it is true, Professor Rhees can plead Sanday's authority, but Sanday himself seems too dependent upon his critical position as to the fourth gospel and Chwolson's *ex parte* argument against the synoptists. The discussion of the terms "Son of God" and "Son of man" gives evidence of wide reading; and although it is hard to believe Professor Rhees has given quite sufficient weight to the influence of Daniel upon the use made by Jesus of the latter term, there is no criticism possible upon his sympathetic treatment of "Son of God" and "my Father." He has admirably recognized the fact that, whereas the realization of his messianic office came upon Jesus at the baptism, the sense of divine sonship was already his.

Before passing from these technical matters, one must not neglect commending the wisdom of not attempting minute chronological accuracy in the treatment of the details of Jesus' life. Professor Rhees has grouped them in their proper period, and has been content to allow them there to rest. Had he been equally uncertain as to the chronological implications of Mark 2 : 18—3 : 6, it is not inconceivable he might have less favored the three-year ministry.

But, after all, these matters are of secondary importance. The vital question is as to whether the author has made Jesus live again in his pages. If we except chaps. vi and vii, in which Professor Rhees, perhaps unavoidably, has felt obliged to substitute discussions about the history for the history itself, the answer must be cordially affirmative. Details have been subordinated to the general impression; archæology has been so introduced as to illumine rather than confuse. The interpretation of the self-consciousness of Jesus has been sympathetic and wholesome, although one is tempted to ask why the account of the baptism (and possibly that of the transfiguration) might not be interpreted as "parabolic" and "pictorial of an intensely real inner experience," quite as safely as that of the temptation. It is also gratifying to discover a steady regard for the historical rather than the theological Jesus. While fully recognizing sacrifice as an essential

element in Jesus' conception of messiahship, Professor Rhees properly refuses to draw the thought of Paul back into the words of Jesus. It would be difficult to improve the chapters dealing with the early Galilean ministry, while the discussion of the early messianic career of Jesus, though of necessity not exhaustive, is characterized by due regard for the fourth gospel, and as a result does not lose the key to the interpretation of the relations of Jesus with his disciples and the people at large.

A word should also be said in appreciation of the literary quality of the volume. In this it outranks most theological writings and greatly aids the deep religious purpose of the author.

It would be advisable to reëdit the map as regards political boundaries.

S. M.

The Apostolic Age. Its Life, Doctrine, Worship, and Polity. By JAMES VERNON BARTLET, M.A., sometime Scholar of Exeter College, Oxford, and Senior University Greek Testament Prizeman; Lecturer in Church History in Mansfield College. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899. Pp. xlv + 542.

Of making many books upon the early history of the Christian church there is no end. It is with a feeling of weariness that one whose duty it is to maintain acquaintance with this literature takes in hand a new volume, fearing that it may prove to be a mere repetition of what has been said many times before, or a polemic aimed at some other recent author. Whoever, with this expectation, opens this book of Mr. Bartlet's will experience a very pleasant surprise. He will find himself introduced to an author who recognizes the historical, as well as the religious, value of the remains of early Christian literature, both those within and those without the canonical New Testament, but who is not in bondage to a theory of their origin or their inerrancy; who shows adequate acquaintance with recent investigations in this realm of knowledge, but who preserves his own clearness of vision and his power to form, and states his own conclusions.

The book forms the first volume in "a series of popular monographs" edited by John Fulton, D.D., LL.D., and is especially well adapted to instruct the large and increasing number of intelligent people who desire to learn the results of modern scholarship without being compelled to traverse all its processes. At the same time a