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Misson's Monograph on Libanius *Recherches sur le Paganisme de Libanios*. Par J. Misson, S.J. Large octavo. Pp. xvi + 60. Louvain: Bureaux du Recueil; or, Paris: Picardet Fils, 1914. Fr. 5.

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MISSON'S MONOGRAPH ON LIBANIUS.

Recherches sur le Paganisme de Libanios.

Par J. MISSON, S.J. Large octavo.
Pp. xvi + 160. Louvain: Bureaux du
Recueil; or, Paris: Picardet Fils,
1914. Fr. 5.

THE Hellenists, who in the fourth Christian century were suddenly confronted with the Emperor Julian's restoration of the pagan cults, had to decide each for himself how far he would follow the lead of that uncompromising fanatic. Theurgists, like Maximus, attached themselves to his person, and were sure of support; a few philosophers, like Themistius, held aloof, whether from caution or intellectual arrogance; and Julian was, of course, at once surrounded by a crowd of flatterers whose zeal was of all shades of sincerity. But there was another group of men who were deeply interested in his religious revival, though they may not have sympathised with all his beliefs or methods. These were the educated conservative pagans who had preserved in their families the traditional worship of the gods. They had not been persecuted by Constantine and Constantius, partly because they were discreet, partly because they were useful for writing panegyrics, and partly because to attack them would not have been a popular move. Such a man was Libanius, the famous rhetorician of Antioch, who possessed the greatest influence in his native city, solely on account of his persuasive eloquence and personal charm. Long after the collapse of Julian's revival he maintained his position and his school, and though he had to suffer many petty annoyances from which Julian would have protected him, he still wrote the imperial panegyrics that no Emperor could do without, adjusted strikes, and taught Greek letters to his Syrian, Armenian, Thracian, and Arab pupils. If he complains it is mainly because, like all Greek professors, he had to see practical studies such as Roman law gradually ousting the study of Greek literature, which meant that the literary declamation and the school of rhetoric would soon cease to exist.

To define the religious convictions of such a man is not easy. M. Misson has carefully tabulated his references to *ὁ θεός* and *οἱ θεοί*, to the solar deities, to prayer, the Mysteries, and so forth. From these it appears that Libanius did not lean to monotheism, and that he means precisely the same thing, whether he refers to the gods in the singular or the plural; that in all the events, good and bad of his own career, he saw the intervention of *Τύχη*, the all-pervading, and though he does not assign to her creative or demiurgic powers, she possesses all the other attributes of the most powerful gods. Though he was free from the grosser superstitions and belief in prodigies that swayed Julian, he had a blind belief in dreams. The poets are for him inspired authors, and he did not trouble himself with physical interpretations of the myths as Julian did. Nor did he, like Julian, make Helios-Mithras the supreme god, though there are numerous invocations to Helios in his speeches. For the evidence of his genuine piety M. Misson relies mainly on the brief invocations to the gods that escape from him in the speeches and letters—if, indeed, anything can be said to escape from so accomplished a rhetorician. But in defining the religion of a literary man who was the slave of the conventions of rhetoric it is easier to say what he was not, and on this head M. Misson might have said more with advantage. Libanius was not a missionary eager to make converts, nor a Neo-Platonic philosopher, a fact which saved him from the temptation to theurgy which dogged the Neo-Platonists of his day. Above all he betrays no sympathy with the impassioned revivalism fostered by Julian. In fact, between his religious faith and Julian's we see all the contrasts that we should expect to find between the convert who cannot rest till he has converted everybody else, and the man who has inherited his religion from his ancestors. Julian does not seem to have been dissatisfied with Libanius on the score of enthusiasm. He knew that the schools of rhetoric

were the real stronghold of paganism, and that men like Libanius, who believed that Greek culture and rhetoric must perish if the Christians should triumph, were his most sincere supporters. Libanius always took for granted that the Christians were barbarians, whose religion shut them out from Hellenic philosophy and culture. This was not true, as was shown by their dismay when Julian issued his edict forbidding the teaching of classical literature by the Christians. The latter, in fact, had never attempted to overthrow the educational tradition, or to train their pupils by means of the Scriptures. They returned to the classics with renewed ardour, when the Christian Valentinian rescinded the edict. Another striking difference between Julian and Libanius is that the latter shows no interest in Julian's earnest attempt to persuade the Hellenists, and especially the priests, that to regain their hold on the common people they must emulate the works of charity and the pure morals of the best Christians. In the old-fashioned sense of the word he was more orthodox than Julian, more

conservative, and he would not have welcomed Jehovah to the company of the gods as Julian hastened to do. He was an intellectual aristocrat, who took no more trouble to understand Christianity than an intellectual to-day would take to understand a new religion. The composition of a declamation embroidered with the proper commonplaces from Greek literature, and the applause of his audience, were more to him than all Julian's moral exhortations and sacrifices to the gods. No doubt he would have preferred, like Ammianus, that his Emperor should be *sacrorum legitimus observator*.

M. Misson's monograph, and the dissertations on Libanius that are beginning to appear, are signs of the renewed interest in his works due to Foerster's edition, which has made Libanius accessible to the student. During the whole nineteenth century he had been unread and practically buried in Reiske's eighteenth-century edition.

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THE GREEK DIMINUTIVE SUFFIX -ισκο- -ισκη-.

The Greek Diminutive Suffix -ισκο- -ισκη-.
By WALTER PETERSEN. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press. 1913.

THE first few pages of this exhaustive investigation deal with the distribution of the suffix -ισκο- in the different Indo-Germanic languages. Whereas it is common in Greek, in Latin there are only three examples. The suffix may be analysed into -is-, weak grade of the comparative suffix -jes- -jos, with the common -ko- suffix as the second element. -ισκο- might originally be used to form both adjectives and nouns; in Greek it has become specialised as a nominal suffix. It is found in all periods of the Greek language, though it is entirely absent from Aeolic (and probably on this account from Homer also). The accent falls regularly on the first

syllable of the suffix, though this has a short *i*; the author ascribes this as being due to the influence of the feminine (-ισκη) and cases of the masculine which end in a long vowel or diphthong. The gender of derivatives in -ισκο- is the same as that of their primitives. We are next introduced to the different meanings of the suffix, (a) similarity or approximate identity, (b) deteriorative, (c) diminutive, (d) hypocoristic, (e) proper names. Each of these classes is again subdivided into 'congeneric groups.' On the whole this subdivision has been well done, though occasionally it would appear to be somewhat fanciful, see especially § 62 and §§ 102, 103. Before dealing with the proper names, the author sums up as follows: 'Apparent cases of all meanings except diminutive uses and the designation of similarity are later than the Classical period, and