

## Book Reviews

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### THE EARLY DAYS OF JUDAISM

This is the general subject of the fourth volume of Professor Kent's "Historical Bible,"<sup>1</sup> which, in turn, is a popular abridgment of his "Student's Old Testament." The present book follows the course of Jewish history from the fall of Jerusalem in 586 to the death of Herod the Great in 4 B.C. Various phases in the life and history of the people are selected as captions under which to cite excerpts from the contemporary literature, and these are followed by explanatory notes of a historical, literary, or interpretative character. These explanatory paragraphs are designed to furnish a general acquaintance with the outlines of Jewish history as recorded in the later parts of the Old Testament literature, the apocryphal books, and some sections of Josephus' narratives. One may question whether it would not have been more helpful to dwell less upon mere events, and to tell the reader more of the real inner life of Judaism and more of the actual religious world in which the Jewish religion of the time was shaped. This volume, however, contains much valuable information presented in a form convenient for use in the study of an important period about which the ordinary Bible reader is not apt to be at all well informed.

SHIRLEY JACKSON CASE

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### THE HEBREW PROPHETS

In a graded curriculum of Bible-study it has long been a question where the prophets should be placed. Some have sought to include them among the heroes of Israel at about the sixth grade of the public school. But it is impossible to ask such young students to read the difficult prophetic writings. The dominantly political and social character of the work of the prophets accords with the interest of students of the later high-school years. But for them also the material is exceedingly difficult to read. The composite character of the writings rendering large critical discrimination necessary, the want of chronological arrangement requiring a reordering of the various utterances of a given prophet,

<sup>1</sup> *The Makers and Teachers of Judaism, from the Fall of Jerusalem to the Death of Herod the Great.* By C. F. Kent. New York: Scribner, 1911. Pp. xiii+323. \$1.00.

and particularly the highly symbolic character of the great utterances, have precluded the general use of this most significant portion of the Old Testament.

There has been greatly needed a popular textbook that should make the prophetic writings accessible and intelligible. From the mass of prophecies those which are most significant must be selected, arranged in chronological order, and given their historical setting. And this cannot be done by giving the student references to his Bible. Any scheme of arrangement that would be scientific would be too complicated to follow. And there would be loss of the sense of literary unity and power. The only possible method is to reprint such portions of the significant prophecies as are suitable, and in such a way that the literary form may be clear. And it is very desirable that the translation should be occasionally amended.

Such a textbook<sup>1</sup> for the prophets has at last appeared in the "Constructive Bible Studies" series. In Miss Chamberlin's *Hebrew Prophets*, the arrangement of the material, the succinct introductions, the excellent footnotes, the illustrations, make the prophetic writings as available for high-school students as this difficult literature can be. And doubtless when the promised *Teacher's Manual* is published, an intelligent Sunday-school teacher will be able to conduct the course with great satisfaction. The thorough scholarship of the book, including the correctness of the new translations and of the strophic arrangements, is insured, as the author and editor point out, by the criticism of Professor J. M. P. Smith.

THEODORE GERALD SOARES

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### THE GOSPEL OF MARK

The value for the pulpit of the great texts of the Bible is scarcely open to argument, and a volume<sup>2</sup> whose expressed purpose is to call the attention of the pulpit to the value of some of these great texts "and to offer a full exposition of them, illustrated throughout," awakens interest. The name of Dr. James Hastings upon the title-page serves to heighten this interest. Dr. Hastings does not propose to give a series of expository sermons ready made for the preacher, but to supply him with

<sup>1</sup> *The Hebrew Prophets, or Patriots and Leaders of Israel*. A textbook for students in secondary schools and for popular study. By Georgia Louise Chamberlin. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1911. Pp. xviii+237. \$1.00 net.

<sup>2</sup> *The Great Texts of the Bible. St. Mark*. Edited by REV. JAMES HASTINGS, D.D. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark. New York: Scribners, 1910. Pp. viii+515.