

Requests and Replies.

What would be the best edition of Plato's *Republic*?—
E. K. J.

THE best edition of the *Republic* in English is Jowett & Campbell's (3 vols., Clar. Press, 1894). Stallbaum (Latin Notes) is still the best foreign edition. I assume that an edition of the whole book is in question. There exist editions of parts of the work suited for various stages of scholarship.

JOHN HARROWER.

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Under the heading 'The Great Text Commentary,' the text selected this month is John i. 29, the great saying of the Baptist: 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' I notice with great regret that neither Dr. van Dyke nor Dr. W. M. Taylor, each of whom gives us a 'method of treatment,' even notices that which is the only but at the same time as it seems to me the overwhelming difficulty of the text, viz. the last clause, 'which taketh away the sin of the world.' Nor does any one of the learned contributors from whom you quote even attempt to throw any light upon it. *What is the meaning of the expression?* That, as it seems to me, is the one important question connected with this passage; and on that neither of your sermonette writers has a single word to say; nor does anything appear in your quotations from the other authorities to elucidate this particular point, whether they have said anything or not. And yet I venture to think that any pretended elucidation of the passage which leaves this out is little better than a mockery. It is just this kind of thing, in my opinion, which leads men of the world to think that ministers of the gospel are not quite sincere; because, while they can repeat platitudes for ever, real difficulties they refuse or are unable to grapple with. I should be very glad to see some attempt on the part of a competent authority to give a plain, unstrained, and satisfactory exposition of this expression.—Aleph.

Your correspondent, 'Aleph,' does not indicate very precisely what is the difficulty, that seems to him so overwhelming, in the last clause of John i. 29; but I will endeavour to give a plain and unstrained exposition, which I hope may prove satisfactory.

The extracts from Bishop Westcott given in your last number point out that 'taketh away' is

more probably the meaning of *αἴρων* here than 'beareth' (margin of A.V. and R.V.), and also that the notion of a lamb taking away sin may have been derived from the picture of the suffering Servant of Jehovah in Isa. liii.; or from the use of lambs in sacrifice, and especially in the Passover. In what sense Jesus was to take away sin may be gathered from the words of the Baptist's father, in Luke i. 77: 'To give knowledge of salvation to His people in the remission of their sins,' and the more comprehensive statement in Matt. i. 21: 'He shall save His people from their sins.' It is further explained by Jesus' saying: 'The Son of Man came . . . to give His life a ransom for (*i.e.* instead of) many' (Matt. xx. 28 and Mark x. 45), and 'My blood of the covenant shed for many unto remission of sins' (Matt. xxvi. 28). So in the law of the sin-offering, the effect of the death of the victim was the forgiveness of the sinner (Lev. iv. 20, 26, 31, 35); and the suffering Servant of Jehovah is to justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities (Isa. liii. 11). The rationale of this great redemption is indicated by Paul, when he says that God set forth Christ as a propitiation, in His blood, to show His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus (Rom. iii. 24-26); and John declares that the blood of Jesus cleanseth us from all sin, and that our sins are forgiven as for His name's sake (1 John i. 7, ii. 12).

From these and other inspired statements it appears that Christ takes away sin by His freely giving His life, according to the will of the Father, to the death of the cross, whereby God's holy and righteous judgment upon the world's sin is executed, so that all who accept Jesus as their Saviour and Lord are forgiven, in such a way that they see and feel the infinite evil of sin and the wonderful love of God, and are moved by penitence and gratitude to forsake sin and to give themselves to God; while, at the same time, the promises and resurrection of Jesus give them the sure hope of eternal life; His example guides and animates them to imitate Him; and the Holy Spirit, whom the Father can send to a guilty world for Christ's sake, renews their souls, and enables them to perfect holiness. These various blessings have flowed, and are continually flowing, from the life and

death of Jesus; and so He is ever taking away sin, removing the guilt of it from the conscience, the love of it from the heart, and the paralysing power of it from the will. Some theologians have erred by exclusive recognition of one or other of these aspects of our Saviour's work; but Scripture presents them all to us; and when we combine them, many of the difficulties that each present when viewed apart will be found to

disappear. All these ideas may not have been distinctly present to the Baptist's mind when he uttered his great saying; but it is a seed truth, which in the light of the life and death of Jesus, and the experience and reflection of His disciples, expands into the full conception of the wonderful many-sided redemption wrought by Him as the Lamb of God.

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At the Literary Table.

THE BOOKS OF THE MONTH.

THE BEATITUDES. BY ALEXANDER MACLAREN, B.A., D.D. (*Alexander & Shephard*. Crown 8vo, pp. viii + 313. 5s.) This volume comes without one word of preface. For it is one of a family which it 'features,' and we need no introduction. It is a considerable family now, but every addition is welcome, for there is no evidence that this preacher's eye is dim or his natural force abated.

SOCIAL CHANGES IN ENGLAND IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY. BY EDWARD P. CHEYNEY, A.M. (*Arnold*. 8vo, pp. 114.) A series of monographs in Philology, Literature, and Archæology, of which this is one, are under publication by the University of Pennsylvania. The object is to disregard prepossession and obtain truth. Professor Cheyney has worked industriously among the literature of the period, and among the literature that has been written on that literature. His book is scientific both in aim and accomplishment.

SOME AFFINITIES OF THE HEBREW TONGUE. BY ARTHUR HALL. (*Asher*. 8vo, pp. 10 + 40. 1s.) *Some* affinities? They are endless. Right or wrong, Mr. Hall has convictions, and the courage of them. The Hebrew word comes first (because it was spoken in Paradise?), and the English last, while, between, Accadian, Egyptian, Syriac, Sanscrit, Greek, Latin, Welsh, German, and all the rest, are found in order; and all these languages are shown to be kith and kin. Thus: Hebrew, *Khur*, free; the Kurds; Latin, *curro*, to run; German, *herr*, and

English *herring*, are all of one. And if you have thoughts of proving they are not, be sure you know your subject, for this author has given his time to it, and has time to give to you.

ONE HUNDRED AND TEN BIBLE READINGS FROM GENESIS. BY T. W. PEILE. (*Bemrose*. 8vo, pp. 315. 6s.) Mr. Peile had a happy inspiration, but he has not been able to use it to the full. To break up any book of the Bible into sections and make them alive for this day and for ever by lucid interpretation, is to render a very real service. Mr. Peile has just missed rendering it. He had the inspiration; he lacked the scholarship, and especially the gift of writing. He lifts a laborious pen, and lays a burden upon our shoulders too heavy to be borne. Yet the book has merit. Most of all that Mr. Peile has gone to good sources for his illustrations. Evetts' *New Light*, for example, is a very fine book, but it is almost wholly unknown yet, because it was published at an impossible price. There is also the considerable merit of good printing—if the publishers had only been furnished with easier matter to print.

THE OLD TESTAMENT AND ITS CONTENTS. BY JAMES ROBERTSON, D.D. (*Black*. Crown 8vo, pp. 186. 1s. 6d. net.) This is the larger edition of Professor Robertson's able book. In the smaller form it has sold to the number of seventeen thousand. What commendation is in place after that? We have simply nothing like it.