

Abstract of Books Reprinted

Three major book concerns in America today are busily engaged in reprinting old Conservative classics and all three of them are located in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Their names are Baker's, Eerdman's, and Zondervan. We owe these book houses a profound debt of gratitude for making available again some of the finest interpretive writing ever to have been done on the Scriptures. It is the purpose of this present review to list some of these volumes in order that you might take advantage of their present accessibility and procure some of them for your libraries. All the following books are conservative in nature and approach the Scripture with a kneeling heart as well as with an honest and keen mind.

Probably the most popular series being reprinted is Barnes' *Notes on the Old and New Testaments*, more commonly known as *Barnes' Notes*. Only three of the volumes have reached our desk as yet but these are convincing in their popular, conservative, and thorough coverage of the Biblical books with which they deal. In the volume on Genesis, done by Leopold, there is a cursory summarization of literary problems so that one may have knowledge both of the problems and of the conservative attitudes toward them. This summarization is by no means adequate for one who wants to give a thorough study to the problems, but it is sufficient for the minister who needs only some general statements on them. The method of the *Notes* is to take the Biblical book, verse by verse, work carefully over every verse that its full meaning might be brought out, and that all probable interpretations might be stated. I have read through the *Notes* on Genesis and think it very fine. I find myself not accepting some of the conclusions concerning the meaning of certain numbers, although one must admit that the constant recurrence of certain numbers demands an explanation of some

sort. Appeal is made throughout the study to the original languages so that one has the benefit of the scholar's gleanings over years of faithful search in the original languages of the Bible. The volume on Genesis is very fair to the Hebrew, neither enlarging nor diminishing the import of the meaning of the words. The book is non-technical and studded with practical interpretations and insights for the preacher of the Gospel. As of now, only three volumes of the total twenty have appeared, one volume on Genesis, one on Job, and one on I Corinthians. It would be wise for the minister to purchase these volumes and then buy each forthcoming volume as it appears. The cost will be about \$3.00 per volume.

Baker is also putting out other classics. Trench's volume on the *Notes on the Parables of our Lord* has been finished and is an excellent book on the parables. Dean Trench was a prolific writer and a very dependable one. This present edition is a popular one for the foreign language passages (fully one-third was originally written in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, or German) have been translated so that one might benefit despite a lack of knowledge of foreign language. Some of these detailed notes have been omitted in this edition to make the book more usable to the minister. One could wish that the notes included had been placed at the foot of the page to which they refer rather than in a section in the back of the book, where they are awkward to use in connection with the text. You who have seen Trench on the *Parables* or have read through his book on the miracles know that his exposition is among the best, and you know why this reviewer recommends this book to our readers. Besides thirty chapters on the thirty parables of our Lord, the book includes some introductory remarks, covering definitions of parables, on teaching by par-

ables, on interpreting parables, and on other parables besides those found in the Scriptures themselves.

Baker's has also reprinted Sir William Ramsay's volume, *St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen*. This Scotch archaeologist and professor at Oxford needs little introduction to the conservative world. The book is still an authority on St. Paul and his times although it was originally written in 1895. The book is a result of thorough archaeological research in Asiatic Turkey and Bible lands; throughout it all is the author's high and reverent regard for the Scriptures as the Word of God. The book begins by pointing out the trustworthiness of the book of Acts, deals next with Paul's origin, and then launches into a sparkling discussion of the founding of the early Church through Paul's missionary efforts. In the main this volume is written to establish the historicity and the value of Acts. It is an excellent volume to help elucidate and give scholastic support to the life of Paul and the origin and early growth of the apostolic church.

Zondervan makes its contribution to the reprinting of conservative works by giving us John Lange's *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*. Four volumes of the twenty-four volume set are even now ready and the other volumes will be printed one a month until all twenty-four are ready. The volumes already prepared are Genesis, and the four Gospels. Dr. Lange was an eminent German theologian, born in 1802, and has been considered one of the most fertile and original authors and scholars of his generation. Lange's *Commentary* has yet to be superseded by another conservative commentary on the Holy Scriptures. It still leads the field as being the most thorough and scholarly of all our commentaries.

Lange's *Commentary* is far more technical than is Barnes' *Notes*. It could be said that Lange's work is more for the scholar—the man interested in intellectual pursuits—while Barnes' work is more for the preacher—the man busily engaged in getting sermons ready. Whereas the procedure in Barnes' *Notes* is to deal with the ma-

terial by means of a verse by verse comment, Lange has a much more extensive procedure. For example, in the *Commentary on Genesis*, the actual text is not arrived at until page 160. Prior to this are all sorts of discussions covering canonization, inspiration, archaeology, chronology, language, texts, etc. Some of this material is understandably not up to date but in the main it is still very helpful. The truth is that the problems in these fields have not been changed too much by additional evidence. When the actual interpretation of the text is begun on page 161ff, one finds a wealth of material offered. This material is classified by Lange under such readings as exegetical, critical, theological, ethical, or homiletical. To read Lange with the fullest appreciation one ought to know Hebrew and Greek and oftentimes Latin and Arabic. This is not necessary, although much of the meaning is hidden in quotations in these other languages. However, whether you know other languages or not, you will find the purchase of these volumes more than worth while. The price is about \$4.00 per volume.

Eerdman Publishers have reprinted Keil and Delitzsch's *Commentaries on the Old Testament*. At present fifteen volumes have appeared covering the Pentateuch, the Psalms, the Minor Prophets, Job, Isaiah, and Daniel. Conservatives have always considered Keil and Delitzsch to be important scholars. One will soon find out that Keil is more conservative than Delitzsch, although Delitzsch appears to be more scholarly in interpreting some facts. Both were professors of Theology in Germany.

Keil and Delitzsch deal largely with literary problems, and here is where one finds the most help on such issues. They cover every problem which had arisen in their day and deal adequately with them. For one who wants a careful, scholarly presentation and defense of the conservative view regarding the Old Testament, he need look no farther than in this *Commentary*. Of course, Keil and Delitzsch cover more material than just the literary problems which have arisen out of a study of the Old Testament; they also deal

at length with theological and doctrinal material. But the main burden of the book is the establishment of the Biblical record as we now have it as the revealed Word of God.

Those interested in the critical problems, and who want to purchase volumes containing theological and doctrinal material as well, will find Keil and Delitzsch an excellent set to buy.

Some general comments ought to be made concerning all the books dealt with in this review. They are all excellently bound, with clear printing, and put out at reasonable prices for such volumes. In respect to Eerdman's printing of Keil and Delitzsch it should be said to their discredit that they were not fair to Delitzsch in the reprinting of his *Isaiah*. Delitzsch, in his latter years, came to believe in two Isaiahs instead of the traditional one. Eerdman, probably for this reason, selected an edition of Delitzsch's *Isaiah* printed before this change of mind and reprinted the earlier volume as Delitzsch's position on Isaiah in the place of the later edition by Delitzsch. Although the reviewer is in sympathy with the one-Isaiah hypothesis, he feels it is not the fairest kind of scholarship to so misrepresent the thinking of Delitzsch simply because we disagree with his conclusion. Eerdman's does this without so much as a note that they are taking an earlier edition of *Isaiah* because of this difference of opinion on the problem of authorship of the whole of Isaiah. This is the sort of thing which invites depreciation of us as scholars.

It ought to be said that all these reprints could afford to put the original dates in these new books. One is not able to find the date of the first printing in any of these reprints. A short biographical sketch could also be included with profit. Since these authors are prior to our generation they are not known to many of us, and many would appreciate a little biography.

We trust that this review of these reprints will help our readers to find some added assurance in their high appreciation of the Scriptures as the Word of God. We need to share again in the thinking of such men as these. We also need to read contemporary literature on our Scriptures, but there is often a spiritual pauperism in much current literature which can be sufficiently corrected by these reprints.

Notes on the Old and New Testament. Barnes. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House. 20 vol. \$3.00 per volume.

Notes on the Parables of our Lord. R. C. Trench. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House. pp. 211. \$2.50.

St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen. Sir William Ramsay. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House. pp. 401. \$3.50.

Commentary on the Holy Scriptures. John Peter Lange. Grand Rapids: Zondervan. 24 vol. c. \$4.00 per volume.

Commentaries on the Old Testament. Keil and Delitzsch. Grand Rapids: Eerdman's. 15 vol. now available. \$3.50 per volume.

ROBERT P. SHULER, JR.