

THE NESTORIAN MONUMENT IN ROME.

Our readers will be interested to learn that the replica of the famous Nestorian monument which Dr. Frits Holm procured in his expedition of 1908 to Sian-fu and brought to this country, has finally found a fitting permanent home in the Vatican museum. It was purchased from Dr. Holm by Mrs. George Leary of New York, in order that she might present it as the earliest Christian monument in China to Pope Benedict XV. Dr. Holm went to Rome to make the presentation in Mrs. Leary's behalf and took occasion, in the audience granted by the Pope on November 26, to acknowledge the honor conferred on him last spring when he was made Knight Commander of the Order of St. Sylvester. The Pope accepted the monument which had already reached Genoa and has probably found its place in the Vatican collections by this time. Dr. Holm gave two illustrated lectures in Rome during December on the monument itself and his Chinese expedition, one at the palace of Cardinal Gasquet and the other under the auspices of the American Academy at Rome.

BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.

DAS WEIB IM ALTINDISCHEN EPOS. Ein Beitrag zur indischen und zur vergleichenden Kulturgeschichte. Von *Johann Jakob Meyer*, Leipsic: Heims, 1915. Pp. 440.

Unknown to the world at large there lives in Chicago a scholar of great learning, the son of a Michigan farmer, modest and without pretensions but filled with knowledge of Indian antiquity, language and literature. He is a Sanskritist by profession, but his name is not so well known, perhaps, as his extraordinary scholarship deserves. It is Johann Jakob Meyer, and the best evidence of his scholarship lies in this, his latest work.

Dr. Meyer's book treats of woman as she is represented in the ancient Indian epics, and the work is a contribution to the comparative history of civilization. For his motto the author writes on the fly leaf preceding the preface a verse which King Nala addresses to Damayanti in the Mahâbhârata. It reads in a poor English translation thus:

"As long, O woman brightly smiling,
As my breath in my body liveth,
So long will my being center in thee,
To thee I swear it, oh pearl of womankind."

The book makes very entertaining reading, but it is first of all a serious scientific work and will be valuable to Indianists. It is not a collection of glittering generalities, but consists of chapters containing results of our author's study portrayed in many incidents cited from the Mahâbhârata and the Râmâyana. This method, to be sure, expands the work to great length, but it is the only one that could successfully be employed, for the reader would scarcely be satisfied with general summaries. He naturally prefers to meet the real characters, the Hindu women themselves, and to become acquainted with them in their native surroundings in the warm southern climate of India and amid the strange conditions of Indian culture and Indian religion. In these portrayals we observe side by side the contrasting elements of a sensuous fire

of passion and the calm resignation of a marvelous world-flight. Since the two great epics of India in their present shape represent the work of many hands in many periods of time, it is not strange that the passages here gathered together should represent many conflicting views.

The score of chapters deal with every possible phase of woman in ancient India: as maiden, as bride, as wife, as mother, as courtesan, as consort, as housewife, as widow, as property, as the ideal of womanhood; chapters are also devoted to woman's position in the home and the state, and to her character and influence.

In the first chapter, dealing with girlhood, Mr. Meyer illustrates how unwelcome girl babies were in the families of epic times, and on the other hand how they soon won a welcome for themselves. He gives incidents of good daughters and unruly ones and shows how highly chastity was regarded and how sorry was the lot of the one who violated its law. Incidents are also told from the epics to show in what case it was allowable for girls to make advances in matters of love. The next chapter tells whom the girl may marry and how, citing her father's privileges and obligations with regard to her, and enumerating the four kinds of marriage, by capture, by purchase, the orthodox so-called Gandharva marriage and that in which the girl herself may make her choice. Caste-regulations with regard to marriage, the systems of polyandry and hetaerism are discussed and the rule that younger brothers and sisters must not be married before the older ones. Then we have a brief chapter on marriage ceremonies and customs followed by one devoted to family life in general.

We are also told of the dignity and important position of the mother in the family and the beautiful relation between the mother and her children as well as relative positions of mother and father, when the child's duties to both are conflicting. The next four chapters deal with the laws and customs that controlled all phases of sexual intercourse in the time of the great epics, while one long chapter recounts the tales and lyrics devoted to the noble conception of love and romance, and the following one deals with the dignity and rewards of a faithful wife. Chapter twelve collects the passages referring to the physiological and metaphysical aspects of the origin of man.

Mr. Meyer devotes another chapter to the comparatively few incidents in the great epics in which the mistress of the house appears as a dispenser of hospitality, and in her domestic aspect generally. He mentions here the beautiful relation that obtains between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. We also see woman as the epics portray her in times of sorrow and suffering and especially in widowhood which with its hard restrictions is the greatest grief the Indian woman is called upon to bear. In the seventeenth chapter Mr. Meyer puts together for us a composite picture of the ideal woman, with respect both to character and physical perfections, as regarded by the poets of ancient India.

In a further chapter dealing with the position of woman and the esteem in which she is held we learn that she often exerted great influence in important matters. Some laws permitted the government of kingdoms to descend to female heirs in default of male, although this is declared to be a misfortune for the state. In many instances wives accompanied their husbands to battle, to the hunt, etc. Polygamy was regarded as perfectly allowable (though no woman could have more than one husband), and Mr. Meyer gives illustrative

incidents of the enmities and heart burnings arising from the custom. Nevertheless there are very specific regulations to the effect that the wife must be affectionately cared for and considerably treated. It is clear from the passages cited in the twentieth chapter that woman in those days was looked upon as the sum and substance of everything evil, full of falsehood and deceit, insatiable in love and always unchaste, fickle, quarrelsome, imprudent and curious,—in short the creation of bad women could be accounted for only by the necessity of preventing heaven from being overpopulated. The Indian poets of old admitted to woman's credit only that she is compassionate, at least sometimes, and she is not regarded as beyond salvation.

In the days of the epics women were treated as chattels. Girls were presented as gifts, and the surrender of daughter or wife to Brahmans was looked upon as a means of acquiring great merit. Women of the household were loaned to guests or friends for their enjoyment—not only slave girls but even the daughter or wife.

But never do the epics of ancient India cast any doubt on the power of woman in war and peace, for weal and woe. This power lay in her beauty, her tears, her smiles, her allurements. She secured the love and devotion of her husband by means of magic charms, pious deeds and her own fidelity.

A translation of this monumental work into English would certainly be very welcome to large circles of people interested in old Indian lore, though the difficulties of the task will prove very great to the average translator, because it presupposes more than common scholarship. κ ρ

THE MYTHOLOGY OF ALL RACES. Edited by *Louis H. Gray, A.M., Ph.D.* Vol. I. Greek and Roman. By *William Sherwood Fox, A.M., Ph.D.* Boston: Marshall Jones Co., 1916. Pages, lxii, 354.

As the first of this excellent series this volume contains a comprehensive preface for the whole edition by the editor, Dr. Gray, and an introductory preface by the consulting editor, Dr. George Foot Moore. We are told that much of the material used appears here in the English language for the first time, especially the Slavic and Finno-Ugric, Oceanic, Armenian and African lore. Then too no survey of American mythology as a whole has hitherto been written, and in other familiar fields new points of view have been presented. Dr. Gray takes this occasion to introduce the subject and author of each volume. The second volume is devoted to Teutonic mythology, consisting almost wholly of the old Icelandic sagas; the third is divided between Celtic and Slavic; the fourth discusses Finno-Ugric and Siberian folk-religion; the fifth, Semitic; the sixth again is divided between Indian and Persian; the seventh between Armenian and African; the eighth is shared by Taoism and Shintoism as representing the chief mythologies of China and Japan. The ninth volume contains the mythology of the Malayo-Polynesian and Australian peoples which form a sharp contrast in primitive types. The tenth volume treats the Indians north of Mexico, and the eleventh those of Latin America, both by the same author. The twelfth volume combines a study of Egyptian and Burman mythology.

Having thus outlined the scope of the series but little space remains in which to do justice to Dr. Fox's excellent treatment of classical mythology in the first volume. It presents a number of typical myths in whose selection religion in its most comprehensive form has been the standard. Contrary to

the usual order, the stories of local heroes here precede the delineation of the divinities whose characters are in most cases composites. Besides reproductions of many familiar subjects of Greek art the volume contains many later discoveries. The frontispiece is a photogravure of the beautiful Aphrodite at Toronto which is not yet as generally known as it deserves to be. p

GOETHE'S POEMS. Selected and annotated with a study of the development of Goethe's art and view of life in his lyrical poetry. By *Martin Schütze*, Ph.D. Ginn and Co., 1916.

Dr. Martin Schütze, professor of German at the University of Chicago, has published in this neat little volume a course of studies which he gave last year to his university classes. It is a collection of Goethe's poems in the original with a helpful introduction of seventy pages for students and a number of illuminating notes. The introduction undertakes to relate Goethe's poems to definite periods of his life and characterizes them in their significance. The footnotes will be specially appreciated for their enumeration of the facts which explain the origin of the poems and the occasions which gave rise to them. It seems to us that the individual student of German literature will derive much profit from its use in his personal study of Goethe while it will also be of great assistance to teachers in the class-room. p

THE FOUNDATIONS OF SCIENCE. By *H. Poincaré*. Translated by *George Bruce Halsted*. New York: The Science Press. Pp. 553.

This stately octavo volume contains the English version of three of Poincaré's latest and best known works on subjects of a general scientific character. The books here translated and combined into one are *Science et hypothèse*, *La valeur de la science* and *Science et méthode*, and Dr. Halsted's name has long been associated with Poincaré as his friend and admirer, as well as his faithful interpreter to the English reading world. A number of the chapters of this work have appeared from time to time in *The Monist*, in fact about half of *Science et méthode*: "The Choice of Facts," April, 1909; "The Future of Mathematics," January, 1910; "Mathematical Creation," July, 1910; "Chance," January, 1912; "The Relativity of Space," April, 1913; "The New Logics," April, 1912; "The Latest Efforts of the Logicians," October, 1912. p

THE GERMAN-AMERICAN HANDBOOK. By *Frederick Franklin Schrader*. Published by author, 315 W. 79th Street, New York. Pages 172. Price, 50 cents.

This handbook is intended for the use and information of "German-Americans and all other Americans who have not forgotten the history and traditions of their country and who believe in the principles of Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln." In small compass it collects the salient points of all historical and current events that bear at all upon the relation of America to Germany or England, and gives brief biographical summaries of the lives of German-Americans prominent in our history. The items are well arranged alphabetically according to the most prominent catchword, but the book's value for reference could be greatly increased by a thorough index. The "Table of Contents" inserted at the end in the form of an index does little more than enumerate the main headings under the same or different catchwords. p