

away from sheer terror; even madness was not unheard of; and whilst there was little to eat, famine and misery stalked unchecked.

## SHORTER REVIEWS

*The Pictorial Key to the Tarot.* By A. E. WAITE. With Seventy-eight Plates. (William Rider and Son. 5s. net.)

ABOUT the occult there is no disputing. There is an arbitrariness in the dogma of the mystic before which the layman is powerless to do aught but confess himself of the "outer circle," apart from the elect minority. Happily, however, the *profanum vulgus*, the Smith of Mr. Waite's scorn, may enjoy the "Paradiso" of Dante without seeking authority for his disposition of the planets or the arrangement of his celestial spheres, while it is possible to embrace the more vital portion of the theosophic philosophy apart from certain of its dogmatic tenets. In the same way we are content to class ourselves among those who have received no part of the secret tradition pertaining to the mystic Tarot cards of the early fourteenth century, and to enjoy merely the picturesque and decorative quality of the symbolic interpretation of universal ideas by means of universal types to be found in Mr. Waite's "Pictorial Key to the Tarot." Though the author is careful to insist on his indifference to the history of playing-cards in general and to declare himself concerned with the Tarot merely as an instrument of divination and a keystone to the occult sciences, his book will prove of considerable service to the student of the Middle Ages by reason of its kinship with the literatures of Alchemy and Kabalism and the mysteries of Rosicrucianism and Craft Masonry.

Mr. Waite appears to have spared no pains in compiling a comprehensive synoptic account of the Tarot, and defining its archaeological position. With his symbolic interpretation of the cards themselves, and the divination proper to their various combinations and juxtapositions we are not concerned here, nor is our philosophic calm impaired by the controversy which has raged over the Tarot cards as to their claims in relation to the Mystic Quest in connection with Witchcraft and the Black Magic as a means of obtaining oracles, and lastly, as a medium for the humble fortune-teller. Nevertheless, we welcome Mr. Waite's book as a valuable addition to the literature of cartomancy, and a proof of the existence in our midst of something of the true medieval spirit. The set of seventy-eight Tarot cards prepared by Miss Pamela Colman Smith, and illustrating the Greater and Lesser Arcana, are for the most part happy in their design and appropriately simple in composition, although the effect is occasionally marred by a certain weakness of drawing. If they do not invariably succeed in conveying the whole of the mystic meaning attributed to them, her task has certainly not been an easy one.

*Legends of our Lord and the Holy Family.* By MRS. ARTHUR BELL. Illustrated. (Kegan Paul and Co. 6s. net.)

MRS. ARTHUR BELL has made a typical selection from the wonderful and romantic cycle of legends which in the course of many centuries has grown round the simple Gospel story of the Life of Christ. Some are drawn from the Apocryphal Gospels, a good many from French, others from German sources. Interspersed are accounts of various national and local rites and customs, which celebrate the events of certain legends. Although the book is illustrated with some photographs from the great Masters, it does not follow the lines of Mrs. Jameson's work of showing the legends as repre-

sented in Art. The stories are given in their own picturesque setting, very well told, with many charming references to sacred traditions, floral folk-lore, and special cults, with some occasional notes on pictures inspired by the legends. The growth of legend far from the Holy Land is curiously illustrated by the remarkable claim of the Bretons that St. Anna was their fellow-countrywoman. In Brittany "Il n'y a que Ste. Anne" is a favourite saying of the simple peasants, and it is to her shrines that they flock for help and comfort in all their difficulties and sorrows." We can hardly follow Mrs. Bell when she says that the Romance of the Holy Grail "belongs rather to secular than to sacred legend, for it is to a great extent a transformation of ancient Keltic folklore into a Christian allegory. . . ." The same might be alleged of a considerable body of legendary stories. For those who appreciate the old saying, "φουαντα ουνεροισιν," the chief value of these often very beautiful legends is their deeply humanistic element. Such readers will delight in Mrs. Bell's admirable collection.

*The Fauna of British India, including Ceylon and Burma.* Rhyncota. Vol. V.—Heteroptera: Appendix. By W. L. DISTANT. (Taylor and Francis. 10s.)

WE lately noticed the volume in this series—now being published under the authority of the Secretary of State—on the Coleoptera Lamellicornia. This volume, also edited by Dr. Shipley and Mr. Guy Marshall, contains—to use popular language—more beetles, of all sorts and shapes, with their antennæ, and legs, bodies, and other members and portions, in all sizes, dimensions, and attitudes. It is perfectly wonderful that there should be so many grotesque varieties, and it would be most interesting and valuable to know what is the real bed-rock meaning of so many deviations in Nature from, say, a normal type. From the numerous references to Vol. II., this would appear to be a supplementary work, as the author is said to have described a large number of forms which have been collected in various localities in British India since the previous volumes were published. Absolute finality is probably unattainable, but the enumeration of the Indian Rhyncota will, with certain exceptions, be completed in another volume. As to the family Lygeidæ, there has been some question of nomenclature, as it was suggested by an expert that a family name should be founded on the oldest genus it embraced, and should be changed accordingly. Some confusion has naturally resulted. The question of nomenclature is a thorny one. We were lately informed by a scientist that scientific names are mere names, and that their meaning is not worth investigating. Certainly many of those in this volume are repellent, and obscure to the uninitiated. They do not all appear in the ordinary reference-books. McNicoll and Stormont are out of date. Some new comprehensive work, to explain all scientific terms, is much wanted. The Indian names in this book are, on the whole, quite well reproduced; but certain of them should be Parasnath, Pondicherry, and Rajshahi, as printed in the recent "Imperial Gazetteer," and not as printed in this volume. Dr. Nelson Annandale is evidently making his mark in scientific observation and collection.

*The Church and the Empire. Being an Outline of the History of the Church from A.D. 1003 to A.D. 1304.* By D. J. MEDLEY, M.A., Professor of History in the University of Glasgow. (Rivingtons. 4s. 6d. net.)

CHRONOLOGICALLY this is the fourth volume in a series of eight brief histories of the Church Universal admirably