only accompanied by, note and comment. That is not the method which the translator has chosen. He has, in much too large measure, been ambitious to understand his text and to teach his understanding of it; and his version does not deserve the name of a faithful one. Nor can it always be called accurate. There are oversights and bits of carelessness on every page, with now and then a more serious blunder. Instances could easily be given; but here is hardly the place for them, and the points are mostly such as would only be appreciated by special scholars. Considering that these Upanishad-versions are the editor's sole contribution to the series, we might have expected him to take more pains to make them worthy of his reputation. That they are more accurate than their predecessors may be conceded without difficulty. The earliest translations were of extreme worthlessness, giving hardly a glimmer even of that sense which the originals contain. But with the public it seems to have been a matter of small consequence; one who was born to love and admire the Upanishads could do it, even in their worst disguises: witness the boundlessly enthusiastic words of Schopenhauer respecting them, reported by Müller in the Introduction to his first volume.

## Reviews

### "The Sacred Books of the East." *

THE last two volumes of the now well-known series of 'The Sacred Books of the East,' edited by Professor Max Müller, deal both of them with India, but with very different, or even highly contrasted, phases of Hindu religious life: the one with the beginnings of Brahmanic theosophic and philosophic thought, the other with a late aspect of Buddhistic theology. The latter is the translation of a treatise called 'The Lotus of the Good Law,' as its new translator, Professor Kern, of Leyden, gives it; it was already well known as 'Le Lotus de la Bonne Loi,' in the version of Burnouf, published nearly thirty years ago. Whether its place might not better have been filled with some other and less accessible treatise will seem doubtful to many. It is in the most expanded and stilted style of Buddhist composition—and most of the Buddhist literature excels in those qualities: its solid contents would seem compressible, if repetition and absurd exaggeration were removed, into a few pages. The editor's notes are sometimes of a very naïve character.

The other volume is one of Upanishads, in continuation of a former one, the first of the whole series, and to be followed by yet another of the same character. The translation is by Müller himself. The Upanishads also have been already a number of times translated, in part and entire, by scholars of more or less competence. If a new version was to be brought out, it should very clearly, in our opinion, have been of a particular character: namely, a strictly literal and accurate one, showing precisely what, according to a natural interpretation of their language, those oracular treatises, in which deep thought, would-be profundity, vexatious paradox, and utter nonsense and drivel, are inextricably mingled together, really contain. This, from a scholar of Müller's presumed competence, would have been accepted as authoritative, as a sort of solid basis, on which then the often forced explanations of the commentators, or such as modern scholars were tempted to add, might be engrafted—indeed, there would be no objection to the translator's himself putting in so much of his own wisdom as he might choose, in parenthesis or in marginal notes. These texts, in short, should have been treated as texts out of our own Scriptures are treated, their translation not including, but

* Oxford: The Clarendon Press.