

“Biblical Libraries,” as used by

Dr. Ernest Cushing Richardson
in his book thus entitled, does

not mean collections of bibles, or libraries mentioned in the Bible, but book-collections worthy of the name of library “in Biblical places in Biblical times”; and, quite unlike the snakes of Ireland, they were, he believes, very numerous—“thousands or even tens of thousands, containing millions of written books or documents.” As in his immediately preceding book, “The Beginnings of Libraries,” the author gives to the name “library,” perhaps wisely, a more inclusive meaning than, for example, the Assyriologists might be inclined to allow. “Archives” might well enough be the term used by them instead of “libraries,” he admits, if they were writing only for one another; “but their case is a little different in this matter from the case of metaphysicians or cryptographers [cryptographers?], for the books of these men, unlike those of metaphysicians and mathematicians, are keenly desired to be read by ordinary mortals, the field is one of general interest and the works of these men the very best work done in the field.” This keen desire on the part of ordinary mortals to read the writings of Assyriologists has not before been generally noted; its existence is a hopeful sign in the world of letters. Mr. Richardson’s diligence has gathered material from the works of archæologists, epigraphists, Egyptologists, and others, to fill a book of more than two hundred

pages, and a score and a half of helpful illustrations are interspersed. The work is well done, and one is the more willing to commend it because of the author's modest preliminary remark concerning his necessarily somewhat desultory chapters, that "such value as they have lies chiefly in the fact that those who could do the work better do not do it at all." As is already known to many, Dr. Richardson is librarian of Princeton University; and so it naturally follows that the Princeton University Press issues his book.

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