

the reader to traditio-historical criticism. The volume under review consists of four articles which had originally appeared in the *Dansk Teologisk Tidsskrift*. That they are now accessible to English readers is due very largely to the thoughtfulness of Professor H. H. Rowley who has spent much time and labor in smoothing out the English style. Anyone who realizes the importance of the new school will also readily recognize that Rowley has performed a service that has placed all Old Testament scholars in his debt, for here, at last, is a clearly written guide which will serve to introduce the English reader to the modern school.

Nielsen traces the rise and progress of the traditio-historical school as follows. In his "pioneering and epoch making work", *Studien zum Hoseabuche* (1935), H. S. Nyberg called attention to the importance of oral tradition. Birkeland (1938) then discussed the supposed oral tradition which lay behind the prophetic books. Like Nyberg he pointed out that oral tradition is "primary, creative, sustaining and shaping" whereas writing was secondary, serving the purpose of preserving the oral message from destruction. In 1943 Mowinckel stressed the fact that the prophets were men of the spoken word (of course Gunkel had said the same thing as early as 1917) and that the prophetic books were based upon oral tradition. In 1945 the first part of Engnell's *Gamla Testamentet* was published in which considerable space was devoted to the subject. Widengren (1948) presented the view that oral and written tradition had gone hand in hand with each other. Nielsen gives brief and worthwhile comments on the various works which he mentions and thus furnishes the reader with a satisfying orientation.

In the second article the author discusses four themes: 1) the value which was attributed to oral tradition in antiquity, 2) the use made of oral tradition in antiquity, 3) the interplay between oral and written tradition, and 4) the difference between the two.

The third article is devoted to a substantiation of Nyberg's thesis, "The written Old Testament is a creation of the post-exilic Jewish community; of what existed earlier undoubtedly only a small part was in fixed written form" (p. 39). To demonstrate this position the author first seeks to show that writing played a subordinate role in pre-exilic Israel and then endeavors to trace the oral transmission of the Old Testament itself.

Perhaps the most useful and instructive chapter is the last, in which several examples of the application of the traditio-historical method are given. This section should clear away misunderstandings once for all. It should convince conservatives that the new school is not their ally. Thus, we are told, and told correctly, that "the traditio-historical method is