

PROFESSOR RUDWIN ON THE "BOS ET ASINUS."

To the Editor of *The Open Court*:

In the January number of *The Open Court* appears a brief paper by Professor Rudwin which is likely to cause astonishment to students of Biblical archeology. The writer traces the legend of the "Bos et Asinus" to the Itala version of the Bible, where the reading "in medio duorum animalium" is attributed to the Prophet Habakkuk. As he does not find it in the Hebrew or the Latin Vulgate, he concludes that it is due to "wilful corruption or ignorance."

As a matter of fact the reading is found in the Septuagint version which antedates the Itala by some five hundred years. It is undoubtedly erroneous; but there is no reason to blame either St. Jerome or the compilers of the Breviary. The Jewish rabbis who made the Septuagint version were by no means ignorant or wilful corrupters of the Hebrew text. They probably remembered the prophecy of Isaiah (i. 3) and were quite sincere in bringing the unpointed text into harmony with the Messianic allusion: "The ox and the ass know the crib of their master, but Israel etc." The "Bos et Asinus" is certainly five centuries older than Dr. Rudwin supposes.

The medieval mystery playwright knew both the Hebrew rendering from their reading of the Vulgate and also the Septuagint rendering from the homilies of the Greek fathers, which were then, as now, read in the churches east and west.

H. J. HEUSER.

OVERBROOK SEMINARY.

 BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.

OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD AS A FIELD FOR SCIENTIFIC METHOD IN PHILOSOPHY. By *Bertrand Russell*. Chicago and London: The Open Court Publishing Company. Pp. 242. Cloth, \$2.00.

These eight "Lowell Lectures," delivered at Boston, Mass., in March and April, 1914, attempt to show by means of examples, the nature, capacity and limitations of the logico-analytical method in philosophy, which in the author's opinion yields whatever scientific knowledge it is possible to obtain in philosophy. "The central problem," says the author, "by which I have sought to illustrate method, is the problem of the relation between the crude data of sense and the space, time and matter of mathematical physics." Many of the difficulties between the views advocated here and those of *The Problems of Philosophy* are due to Dr. A. N. Whitehead; and much of these lectures is a rough and preliminary statement of what Dr. Whitehead will say in the fourth volume of *Principia Mathematica*. The author's chief debts are to G. Frege, on logic, and G. Cantor, on the mathematical infinite.

ELEMENTI DI ETICA. Di *Giovanni Vidari*. Milan: Hoepli, 1911. Pp. 379. Price 3l.

This is the third edition, revised and enlarged, of Professor Vidari's compendium on ethics. Part I treats of the sociological bases of ethics from the historical and psychological point of view, while Part II discusses ethical ideals and their application to the life of the individual and of society. In his list of bibliographical references he gives credit to Wundt, Spencer, Durkheim,