for all Christians. The painful irony is that in the struggle for Christological correctness and the elevation of Jesus to God, the urgent message and reality of Jesus himself was lost. Charisma became dogma.

This book is rightly directed at a general, educated readership, too often addressed by authors who seek sensation by recasting Jesus and early Christianity in bizarre forms. Vermes is solid, informed, secure in his scholarship and vast knowledge, and a reliable guide. He cuts through the jungle of scholarly judgements to delineate his own, born of a lifetime of carefully beating a trail. There is even something prophetic in what he himself is doing. Radically, Vermes ends by anticipating a new ‘reformation’ of people who find themselves driven to ‘reach back to the pure religious vision and enthusiasm of Jesus, the Jewish charismatic messenger of God’ (p. 242). On a personal note, as a (unitarian) Quaker myself, it is immensely refreshing to read such a clarion call, and I only hope this book is read very widely.

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If ever an exception proved the rule, it is this big book, which so far from being a mega kakon (Callimachus ‘great evil’), is not only a magnificent addition to any library, but also a source of sheer delight. In research, it has already proved its worth many times over to this reviewer as a first port of call, providing up-to-date orientation, clear and well-selected information, fair and intelligent judgement, and helpful bibliography, all with efficiency and elegance. Beyond that, within these covers lie endless opportunities for pleasurable browsing. A wide range of users and readers will undoubtedly benefit, running the gamut from the interested lay public through students to scholars in numerous fields, both within and outside Jewish studies. It is not often that one can write so unequivocally about a reference work: dictionaries, companions and guides of every kind proliferate nowadays, apparently much favoured by publishers, and many of a high standard. To my mind, this one stands out, in terms of almost all the criteria by which one judges a work of reference.

In the first place, the volume should supply a need, filling a real rather than a manufactured gap. Second, a dictionary must have a broad enough range not to disappoint the seeker after knowledge more than occasionally, which means that good editors need both a deep and wide grasp of the field and a sympathetic understanding. Third, the contributors must be authoritative, well-informed and up to the minute, ideally leaders in their field or (sometimes better!) young talent. Fourth, contributors should be scrupulous, especially in assessing current controversies and debates, where their own views and prejudices need to take a back seat. Entries need to strike a balance between reporting on recent trends, even fashions, and keeping an eye on what is fundamental and permanent, both in the
text and in the selected bibliographies. The editors need to balance the length of entries. They need to impose a degree of consistency of treatment, and yet to give enough scope to the individuality of approach and style that makes for interesting reading. Some consistency in length and type of bibliography and use of illustration is also desirable.

Collins and Harlow score high on all counts. The sources and scholarship of Second Temple Judaism are today so extensive as to merit their own reference work. Taking into account the entirety of the Qumran material, there can be no room for doubt; and this Dictionary does more than justice to Qumran in its separate entries for individual works, and under different topics. It is billed as the first ever, and indeed I cannot think of a rival resource of this kind dedicated to the field; the complement to the Dictionary for the serious scholar will surely be the New English Edition of Schürer’s History, by Vermes, Millar and Goodman. Of course Collins’s volume has been able to be significantly more up-to-date.

There is a dazzling array of senior scholars among the 270 contributors (from twenty countries, as we learn), and at the same time I was pleased to note that some of the most impressive writing comes from the new generation. With respect to the question of balancing entry length, I applaud the decision to include thirteen extended essays on major topics that cover the whole field, mostly from distinguished figures, while not precluding individual entries of considerable length. The major essays are on the following topics: ‘Early Judaism in Modern Scholarship’ (John J. Collins), ‘Jewish History from Alexander to Hadrian’ (Chris Seeman and Adam Kolman Marshak), ‘Judaism in the Land of Israel’ (James C. VanderKam), ‘Judaism in the Diaspora’ (Erich S. Gruen), ‘The Jewish Scriptures: Texts, Versions, Canons’ (Eugene Ulrich), ‘Early Jewish Biblical Interpretation’ (James L. Kugel), ‘Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha’ (Loren T. Stuckenbruck), ‘Dead Sea Scrolls’ (Eibert Tigchelaar), ‘Early Jewish Literature Written in Greek’ (Katell Berthelot), ‘Archaeology, Papyri and Inscriptions’ (Jürgen K. Zangenberg), ‘Jews among Greeks and Romans’ (Miriam Pucci Ben Zeev), ‘Early Judaism and Christianity’ (Daniel C. Harlow), ‘Early Judaism and Rabbinic Judaism’ (Lawrence Schiffman). All of them are of high quality; while it is invidious to make comparisons, I particularly enjoyed the incisiveness, liveliness and structuring in the reviews provided by Gruen, Berthelot and Ben Zeev. If any topic has perhaps been given slightly short shrift, here and in the rest of the Dictionary, it is the dimension of social and economic history. We are provided with a wealth of information on the wherewithal for attempting to reconstruct this history, both among the major essays, in Zangenberg’s contribution, and in the imaginative choice of topics for individual entries, which range from inscriptions to jewellery, from art through aqueducts to ‘entertainment structures’ (i.e. buildings, by Joseph Patrich). There is indeed a long and sound entry on ‘Economics in Palestine’ (Fabian E. Udoh). But it is perhaps telling that there is none on ‘Demography’. An additional major essay might perhaps have addressed my sense of a slight lack of recognition by concerning itself with the application of theory to Jewish society over place and time, and its results.
It is absurd, however, to spend time reflecting upon what might be missing. In truth, it is extremely hard to discover absences. Rather, the opposite is the truth, that one is constantly surprised by the presence of unexpected bonuses among the 520 alphabetic entries.

Thinking about Hellenistic Judaism, I was delighted to find multiple entries for Philo (the collective achievement of Maren Niehoff, Gregory Sterling, Annewies van den Hoek and David Runia), and then, under such headings as ‘Allegorical Commentary’ or ‘Philosophical Works’, a paragraph for each text. In assessing Qumran, I was impressed by the numerous sizeable individual entries for scrolls of significance. It is of course impossible to find winners and award medals. If I select a handful of impressive entries seemingly at random, this is merely a reflection of the vagaries of recent consultation, from which I came away well satisfied with, among others: ‘festivals and holidays’ (Daniel K. Falk); ‘Jesus and the Jesus movement’ (E.P. Sanders); ‘Jewish Christianity’ (Annette Yoshiko Reed); ‘John, Gospel of’ (Adele Reinhartz); ‘John the Baptist’ (Joan E. Taylor); ‘Josephus’ (Steve Mason); ‘I Maccabees’ (Uriel Rappaport); ‘Midrash’ (Carol Bakhos); and the overview of Jerusalem (Lorenzo DiTommaso).

When it comes to the exercise of the editorial hand, if Collins and Harlow err at all, it is perhaps on the side of generosity in giving authors their head. The justification for the relative length of entries was not always clear to me. And again when it comes to illustrations: to take a specific example, the useful and discursive entry on Herod (Marshak) is equipped with a fair number of maps and architectural drawings, not matched for comparable entries, presumably because this author chose to supply them. Overall, however, a total of 130 illustrations and 24 maps provides a very decent sprinkling. What is more, even these irregularities can be said to have an advantage in the resulting edge and individuality, offering further evidence, if such be needed, of how far is one’s experience here from that of dealing with what might in other hands have emerged as a faceless compilation. Constantly, one is travelling happily, with the best of companions, and learning effortlessly. I thoroughly recommend the journey.

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Leslie Baynes’s book fills a surprising gap in studies of Second Temple Judaism and early Christian apocalyptic literature. The only other monograph to treat the motif of heavenly books is Leo Koep’s *Das himmlische Buch in Antike und Christentum*, which was published in 1952. Given the recent interest in scribes and scribalism, the social practices of reading in antiquity, and the relation between oral and written cultures in early Judaism and Christianity, it is important to have a thorough account of the way in which writers of apocalypses envisioned the