

by some remarks on the controversy as to the value of Sunday-schools. They will be worth quoting, as giving the deliberate judgment of one who has had so large and successful experience :

To those of us who have long been engaged in Sunday-school teaching, nothing can sound more strange and startling than such expressions and statements as have of late been uttered concerning this blessed work. To hear professing Christians ask, "Are Sunday-schools of any use?" is a question we should never have expected.

Well may we ask, What do these opponents of Sunday-schools expect? Do they look for Sunday-schools bringing *all* the children belonging to them to be true and living Christians? What ground have they for expecting such a result? If the ministry of the Gospel itself has but in general such feeble results, why should the Sunday-school be condemned because it is not more successful?

The proper question to be asked surely is this: Are Sunday-schools, *when properly organized and worked*, producing that amount of good which may fairly be considered a compensation for the labour bestowed on them? Are they doing a work—a really beneficial work—for the masses of the population, which no other instrumentality attempts to do?

We might easily multiply these quotations did space allow; but we have given enough to indicate the general character of this interesting collection of reminiscences, and to secure for them the notice which from their unpretending form they might have failed to win. The narrative form and the lessons which they convey would render some of them suitable for distribution as tracts. C.

Short Notices.

The Prophecies of Jeremiah. Expounded by Dr. C. VON ORELLI. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark.

With this new volume of Messrs. Clark's "Foreign Theological Library" we are much pleased. It is quite as valuable as the learned commentator's work on Isaiah, lately commended in these pages.

A Catechism on the Church Catechism, the Order of Morning and Evening Prayer and the Litany. With illustrations taken from Holy Scripture. By Rev. John THORNTON, M.A., Vicar of Ewell. Elliot Stock, 1889.

This book, so far as we know, is unique. The questions are printed on one page, and the Scripture illustrations on the other. The questions and answers are simple, and, as a rule, very clear.

The Rectory Children. By Mrs. MOLESWORTH. With illustrations by Walter Crane. Macmillan and Co.

A charming book for children; delightful in every way.

New Zealand. The Dioceses of Auckland, Christ Church, Dunedin, Nelson, Waipu, Wellington and Melanesia. By the Very Rev. H. JACOBS, D.D., Dean of Christchurch, New Zealand. S.P.C.K.

The "Colonial Church Histories" series, to which the interesting book before us belongs, will prove really useful. The Dean of Christchurch has done his work right well. He gives (1) the Missionary Period; (2) the Period of Organization; (3) the Period of subsequent growth and development.

A Winter on the Nile, in Egypt and in Nubia. By the Rev. CHARLES D. BELL, D.D. Revised edition. Hodder and Stoughton.

This very interesting work was reviewed in a recent CHURCHMAN, and we are glad to invite attention to a new edition. Among bright and pleasantly-written books of travel, it must rank high. Canon Bell is a Biblicist and poet, a shrewd observer, too, with much literary grace and power. The volume has a handsome cover and a good map.

Lilian's Hope. By CATHARINE SHAW, author of "Alick's Hero," "Only a Cousin," etc. John F. Shaw and Co.

Several of Mrs. Shaw's stories have been commended in these pages, and are probably well known to many of our readers. This is one of the best gift-books for girls.

Exiles of Fortune. A Tale of a Far North Land. By GORDON STABLES, C.M., M.D., R.N. Shaw and Co.

This is a capital Tale. Boys who remember Dr. Stables' "From Squire to Squatter," and "In the Dashing Days of Old," will be glad to add to their store another of his Tales, quite as good.

Blown to Bits. The Lonely Man of Rakata. A Tale of the Malay Archipelago. By R. M. BALLANTYNE. With illustrations by the author. James Nisbet and Co.

One characteristic of this popular writer's Tales is that a good deal of information is given. The story always goes with a swing; hardly a passage could by anybody be called dry; but with all his incidents, amusing passages, and so forth, he cleverly and wisely teaches. "Blown to Bits" is in this respect among the best of his many admirable books.

Dick Delver. A story of the Peasant Revolt of the Fourteenth Century. By the author of "Count Renneberg's Treason," etc. The Religious Tract Society.

An informing and interesting Tale.

Ways and Means. Voices from the Highways and Hedges. By ISABELLA FYVIE MAYO. With illustrations. The Religious Tract Society.

The papers in this book were originally written for the *Leisure Hour*, and deal with such social questions as "What is to become of the Girls?" "The Problems of Play," and "The Spirit of Hospitality." This is a handsome volume.

We heartily recommend *The Crew of the Water Wagtail*, a story about Newfoundland in the sixteenth century, by Mr. Ballantyne (Nisbet). How many years is it since we first reviewed one of his excellent Tales? All his writings are good, and likely to do good.

We are pleased to give a hearty good word for the Annuals of these capital Magazines: *Cottager and Artizan*, *Friendly Greetings*, *The Child's Companion*, and *Our Little Dots* (R.T.S.). The volumes are very cheap.

From Life, by Phoebe Allen, is one of the S.P.C.K.'s new volumes, well adapted for prizes or presents, or parish library.

Miss Holt's *Behind the Veil*, a Tale of the Days of William the Conqueror, is not unworthy of her reputation (Shaw).

To *The Aborigines of Australia*, a little book published by the S.P.C.K., we gladly invite attention. Written by Bishop Hale, it tells us about the Institution for the education of the aborigines, founded in 1850 at Poonindie, South Australia, by Archdeacon Hale, a missionary of the S.P.G.

Our Darlings (Shaw and Co.) is as bright and attractive as usual.

The December number of the *Art Journal* (Virtue and Co.) has a delightful etching of Harrow Church, and a very interesting paper, with illustrations, on Harrow School.

From Messrs. S. W. Partridge and Co. we have received the Annuals of the *Family Friend*, the *Infant's Magazine*, the *Friendly Visitor*, and the *Children's Friend*. All are good and cheap.

From Messrs. Nisbet and Co. we have received a number of really good Tales. At present we can merely mention *Laurel Crowns*, a story for brothers and sisters, by Mrs. Marshall; *The Earl's Yacht*, by Jessie Saxby, author of that delightful Shetland story, "The Lads of Lunda;" *Yours and Mine*, by Anna B. Warner; and *Where the Dew Falls*, by Sarah Doudney. Each book is tastefully got up.

One of the best little books in the biographical line, to our knowledge, is Miss Rigden's *By a Way they knew not*, or "Memorials of blind Fanny Winton." Like all Miss Rigden's works, it is spiritual and suggestive. A fourth edition has just been published. (G. Stoneman: 67, Pater-noster Row.)

The eighth volume of that useful Magazine, *The Church Worker*, merits hearty commendation. (Church Sunday-school Institute.)

The Langham Street Conference (Occasional paper No. 17) has been published by Messrs. W. Wells Gardner, Darton, and Co., and at the office of the Home Reunion Society (7, Dean's Yard, Westminster). The Preface to this paper gives (1) Origin of the Conference; (2) Constitution; (3) Methods; (4) Results. Then follow the resolutions agreed upon by the Conference. We quote the opening resolution as to the Christian Faith,

We agree: "I. In recognising the Bible as of Divine authority, and as the sole ultimate test of doctrine in matters of faith, as is expressed in the sixth article of the Church of England.¹ II. In accepting the general teaching of the Apostles' Creed, and the Nicene Creed, including of necessity the doctrines of the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Atonement.² III. In recognising a substantial connection between the Resurrection body and the present 'body of humiliation.'

¹ See Appendix A.

² See Appendix A.

“IV. That saving faith in Christ is that self-surrender to Him¹ which leads a man to believe what He teaches, and to do what He bids, so far as he has opportunities of knowledge.”

As to the origin of the Conference, we quote as follows :

“The Conference may be said to have taken its rise from a very wide-spread conviction, that the disunion and discord prevailing at the present time throughout Christendom are in opposition to the intention and the precepts of the Divine Head of the Church. As it is for the state of things in their own country chiefly that Englishmen are responsible, it is natural that their attention should be especially directed to the want of friendliness and sympathy, and in some cases even the hostility, existing here between bodies alike professing faith in, and allegiance to, the one Lord. Whoever is responsible for the actual want of unity, fellowship, and co-operation, it is felt by very many English Christians, both within and without the Anglican Church, that efforts should be made, and should be accompanied by earnest and continued prayer, with a view to the removal as far as practicable of the present misunderstandings and suspicions which separate Christian communities, and to the establishment of a more than nominal brotherhood in the worship and service of the One Father, whom all alike approach through the One Mediator, by the gracious aid of the One Spirit.

“The infidelity and irreligion existing among all classes of our fellow-subjects, occasioning deep sorrow and searching of heart to many Christians, are felt by many who love truth and holiness, as a summons urging them to draw together, to seek to realize their substantial unity, to present an unbroken front to the error and sin of the world, and to enter upon combined efforts to bring the Divine remedy of religion to bear upon the ills which afflict mankind.

“Special circumstances have been the means, under Divine Providence, of drawing together some of those who have met in this Conference. The Home Reunion Society has for some years past made it its aim and endeavour to bring together members of the Anglican Church and Christians outside her pale, with a view to a better realization of the many important points of doctrine and practice happily held by them in common. An opportunity occurred, of which the Chairman of the Council of this Society availed himself, to gather in friendly and fraternal conference several ministers of the Congregational body who were most willing to meet a few clergymen and laymen of the Episcopal Church. Two members of the Conference, one a Nonconformist, the other a Churchman, had been brought into personal acquaintance through their common interest in the condition of the Coptic Christians in Egypt. Another Nonconformist member had corresponded with the Archbishop of Canterbury; having been led to do so by the published report of the Primate’s sermon at the opening of the Cathedral of Truro; and his letter, advocating the giving of prominence to truths held by Christians in common, had been forwarded to the Chairman of the Council of the Home Reunion Society. The zeal of the Dean of Worcester in the cause of Christian unity exercised an important influence in bringing together Christian men who for the most part had previously been personally unacquainted with one another, but who have found satisfaction in giving expression to their common attachment to the Christian faith, and their common endeavours after the Christian life.”

¹ Dr. Paton adds after “self-surrender to Him” these words: “which secures the grace which He bestows, and—”

The Bishop of Liverpool has published the address delivered at the opening of his Diocesan Conference. (W. Hunt and Co.) We earnestly hope it will be widely read and duly considered. We quote a passage from the portion which is headed, "Loose Views of Doctrine and Practice." The Bishop says :

"The other black cloud, or rather fog, which seems sweeping over our heavens, is the increasing laxity of opinion both about doctrine and practice among all professing Christians, which is a most painful sign of the times. As to *doctrinal* religion, multitudes all over England appear to see no difference between truth and error, and not to care what a minister holds or teaches, about the Inspiration of Scripture, or the Work of Christ, or the Atonement, or the Personality of the Holy Ghost, or the world to come, provided he is clever and earnest. Everybody is right, and nobody is wrong ; everything is true, and nothing is false ! A leading speaker at the recent Cardiff Congress spoke of the Thirty-nine Articles and Pearson 'On the Creed' as 'old-fashioned' books, which he supposed it would raise a smile to mention as standards.' And I cannot see from the report that anyone objected to this statement. The popular sermon in this day is far too often a mere exhibition of intellectual fireworks, very pleasant to the many hearers who only like temporary excitement, and dislike any preaching which pricks their consciences and makes them uncomfortable, but utterly destitute of distinct doctrine, and powerless to move hearts or affect lives. In short, a 'downgrade' theology is spreading and is popular everywhere, and earnestness and cleverness are the idols of the day. As to *practical* religion, the Ten Commandments seem forgotten, except the sixth and the eighth. The shocking indifference constantly exhibited about fornication and adultery, and the total disregard of the Sabbath among myriads of all classes, both rich and poor, are melancholy evidences that I speak the truth. All this is very sad. There is a God in heaven who sees all that is going on, and takes account. There is a judgment-day, and a world behind the grave. What will the end be ?

"Let me entreat my brethren in the ministry, both as their Bishop and an elder brother, to understand the times, and to be bold and faithful witnesses for God's truth. Yes ! witnesses. You cannot convert men, and give them eyes to see or hearts to feel. The Holy Ghost alone can do that. But you can be witnesses. Stand fast, both in public and in private, even if you stand alone. But you will not stand alone. I thank God there are hundreds of godly lay Churchmen who will stand by you to the last.

"Stand fast in the old belief that the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation was given by inspiration of God, and that the historical facts recorded in the Old Testament are all credible and true. Do not be shaken by the vague assertions and big swelling words of those who sneer at everything supernatural, and talk about 'the laws of nature, the discoveries of science, and the results of modern criticism.'

"(a) As to the *facts mentioned in Genesis*, we may be content to stand by the side of Christ and the Apostles. They, at any rate, repeatedly refer to them in the New Testament, as real, genuine, authentic, true history. Were they likely to be deceived ? Did not they know ? The very supposition is blasphemy. I think we may rest satisfied with our old-fashioned views. We may safely continue to believe that Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were real persons, and that the events mentioned in Genesis were not myths, or pleasing romances, but really "took place."