

(Home Rule) ; but the path of duty is the way to glory, and the path of impatient defiance of present tutelage and of inordinate yearnings after premature independence leads only to disillusionment and bitterness. It is because Mr. Clark's opening paragraphs tend to the rasher instead of the more sober of these counsels that I have addressed to you these words of protest.

AN ENGLISHMAN IN INDIA.



## Notices of Books.

THE PERSON OF CHRIST IN MODERN THOUGHT: DONNELLAN LECTURES, 1912. By Rev. E. Digges La Touche, Litt.D. London: *James Clarke*. Price 6s. net.

"The supreme question for Christians is not whether Christianity is true or false—they know from their personal experience that the Son of God has come—but whether it can be so stated in terms of the thought of the age as to win men intellectually as well as morally." So writes the author, and his book is an attempt to answer the question. The subject is of such vast importance that even a small contribution to a successful answer deserves to reach the hand of every Christian student, and we are grateful to Dr. La Touche for his accounts of modern teaching. But in these days of many books and of strenuous life it is impossible enthusiastically to commend a book if, for all the good it gives us, it makes too large a demand upon our time and temper. We have no time in the twentieth century to search for a needle in a bundle of hay. There are many needles here, and some of them well pointed, but we should have preferred to find them more easily. The book is verbose and heavy, so that it becomes dull and difficult to read. We can easily illustrate. In his introductory pages the writer discusses his method. He calls it "methodology," and right through the book it is always his method metaphorically to extend to five syllables that which could be as well expressed in two. He speaks of "my learned and able friend," and when he desires to refer to Farrar, Geikie, Edersheim, and Bernard Weiss, we have "the eloquent Farrar," "the learned and sober Geikie," "the profound Edersheim," and "the venerable Bernard Weiss." Little wonder that his second Lecture, that on the negative criticism of the age, extends to 175 pages, and we hope, for his hearers' sake, was not all delivered. The book is overloaded with quotations and references to authorities of very unequal value. Dr. La Touche has evidently read widely, but we cannot feel that his reading has always been discriminating. For instance, in dealing with the criticism of the Old Testament, he speaks of the unbelieving scholars "from whose pens almost every creative contribution has come." Can he really mean that? Either "unbelieving" or "creative" has lost half its meaning if this is so. The whole question of our Lord's relationship to the Old Testament is dealt with in very scrappy fashion. It is not fair to speak of the "kenotic vagaries of Bishop Gore," and then to evade the issue oneself. It is not fair to spend but a couple of pages over a difficult question,

and then to speak of the folly which "rejects the testimony of Him to whom we have committed our all in favour of the testimony of the dominant school of Old Testament critics of an age decadent in criticism, in religious fervour, and in moral earnestness."

Dr. La Touche evidently writes from a standpoint towards which we are sympathetic—a fact which makes us loath to criticize—but much of the value of the book is lost in the verbosity of its style and the hastiness with which its conclusions appear to have been arrived at. As an indication of haste, we notice that the Greek quotations are sometimes provided with breathings, but never with accents—a phenomenon in a book which makes pretensions to scholarship hardly reflecting credit on author or publisher.

The book is a general review of the Christological controversy of the past 200 years. It brings out the essentially supernatural character of our Lord's Personality, and deals lightly with the various theories as to His Personality which modern criticism has presented. As a *rechauffé* of the literature of the subject it doubtless made an interesting series of lectures, and will find readers amongst the class which likes to have a cursory acquaintance with current controversy; but as a contribution to the study of the subject it will not bear comparison with the Rev. C. F. Nolloth's excellent book, "The Person of Our Lord in Recent Thought."

We are sorry to give so scant a welcome to these Donnellan Lectures, for there is much that is good and valuable in them, and there is plenty of room for another book on the subject. There are always pitfalls in the publication of prize essays and University lectures. Dr. La Touche has not escaped them; in a later edition of these lectures, and in the second series, we hope that he will.

JOHNSONIAN GLEANINGS. Part II.: FRANCIS BARBER. By Aleyn Lyell Reade. London: *Arden Press*, Norfolk Street, Strand.

The student and lover of Johnson will be delighted with this charming book. With infinite pains and excellent taste Mr. Reade has pieced together and made a continuous story of all that he can discover concerning Johnson's negro servant, Francis Barber. It is a fit continuation of Mr. Reade's previous work, and a real addition to our Johnson literature. We are grateful to the author for all the care that he has given to his labour of love, for that, it is clear, it must have been to him.

THE INTERNATIONAL CRITICAL COMMENTARY: MICAH, ZEPHANIAH, NAHUM, HABAKKUK, OBADIAH, AND JOEL. By Dr. J. M. Powis Smith, Dr. Hayes Ward, and Dr. Bewer. London: *T. and T. Clark*. Price 12s. 6d.

It would be ungrateful not to recognize that this book is a solid mass of painstaking scholarship. It is impossible not to admire the *finesse* with which words and phrases, texts and versions, have been treated, and the patience with which the conclusions of other scholars have been sifted, weighed, and commented on. But we cannot express the same admiration for the critical methods pursued, or for the results which those methods yield. We must confess that we put the book aside with a feeling of brainwhirl, with the disappointing experience that our perception of the message of these prophets was not enriched to the extent that we had hoped.

The work of the authors is for the most part influenced by the fantasies of the extremer school of German critics, and proceeds on their lines. We are faced with the same provoking army of redactors and interpolators and revisers. Their contribution is represented as so considerable that it is at times difficult to dig out the original nucleus from the mass of disjointed fragments in which it lies buried. Again, the process of shaping every prophecy to make it fit a precise metrical system is overdone. True, the authors are loud in their insistence that "metrical considerations unsupported by other evidences do not warrant extreme measures in textual criticism"; but, unfortunately, times and again they violate their own dictum, though the "other evidences" are so slight as to be negligible. A phrase has only to be labelled a "prosaic gloss," or regarded as "lying outside the poetic form"; that is sufficient ground of offence to demand its excision! But is it really fair to expect to find in the impassioned speeches of an aggrieved yeoman farmer like Micah absolute conformity to a hard-and-fast metrical scheme? And yet, again, the text is sadly mutilated by the frequency with which a verse is cut out as gloss or interpolation, if it happens to break the connection of thought or to repeat the thought of a verse in its immediate neighbourhood. One is tempted to ask what would be the ultimate form of the Pauline Epistles if these same canons of criticism were applied to them? But seeing that only fragments of prophetic utterances have come down to us, it is surely reasonable to expect these abrupt transitions, which are so disturbing to critics with rigid ideas of oratorical sequence and style. And while it is easy to understand a redactor, supplying a connecting link to bridge an awkward break, it is not flattering to his skill to charge him with introducing foreign and irrelevant matter which disturbs the original flow of thought.

Directing our attention more closely to the specific books treated of, we were prepared to find the unity of Micah disputed. But Dr. Powis Smith (who is responsible also for the editing of Zephaniah and Nahum) metes out drastic treatment to chapters iv. and v. and chapters vi. and vii. He regards both these sections as miscellaneous collections of fragments, the former having as a common bond the hopeful outlook upon the future; the latter possessing no logical unity at all, and being the work of at least four different authors of widely scattered periods. The eschatological ideas of chapters iv. and v. are responsible for their relegation to the post-exilic age. We are told that "early prophecy did not contemplate the conversion of the world to Jahweh, hence did not denounce the nations for disobedience to Jahweh." Such a sweeping statement could only be made good by a skilful manipulation of pre-exilic prophecies. No doubt the interpolator could perform the trick. But it would be interesting to see how the writer of the above would deal with the universalism of the earliest of prophetic writers, Amos. We fully agree with him when he says that it is "psychologically and religiously impossible that Micah should have had no hopes for Israel's future"; but we cannot accept the conclusion which follows—viz., that "no word of Micah's is preserved for us concerning those hopes." Was Dr. Smith thinking of these unrecorded hopes when, in his preface to Zephaniah, he speaks of "the *ideals* exalted by prophets like Isaiah and Micah"? He must have been, because he has plucked every ideal clean out of the Book of

Micah. There is not one left in the meagre original fragment of it which survives his dissection.

We find the same eschatological prepossessions influencing the rejection of the closing section of Zephaniah, chapter iii. 6-20, with its ideal pictures of Jerusalem's deliverance and coming world-wide glory. On the same grounds, presumably, those great passages treating of Israel's future spiritual destiny must be torn from the pages of Jeremiah, Zephaniah's contemporary! But, apart from that, here is a strange contradiction: On the one hand Dr. Smith insists on our recognizing that these pre-exilic prophets had the *pen* of the poet, and were punctilious in regard to the external form of their message; on the other hand he fetters their poetic *power* and *passion*, and makes no allowance for inspired imagination—to say nothing of revelation—as a factor in the internal moulding of their message, assisting in the creation of an ideal picture of the future. The introduction to Zephaniah is an interesting piece of reading. It is not a little disturbing, however, to find a tinge of uncertainty in the author's mind as to Zephaniah's monotheism. That the prophet viewed Jahweh as the Lord of Lords and the only God he sets down as “a probability,” though he does go on to say that “the probability is reinforced by the fact that the religious writings of his contemporaries—*e.g.*, Jeremiah and Deuteronomy—reflect a monotheistic theology.” Surely the contents of the book itself are sufficient to lift the question above probability on to the plane of certainty! Amongst many illuminating notes on the text, Dr. Smith has an interesting comment to make on that obscure phrase, “I will punish everyone who leaps over the threshold” (i. 9). He suggests that the object of the prophet's attack was some superstitious custom in vogue amongst the rich, which arose from a belief, prevalent amongst many races, that the threshold was the favourite abode of demons and spirits.

Passing on to Nahum, we are met with an attack on the unity of the prophecy, on the ground that i. 2-10 is an acrostic poem whose artificiality and abstract style do not harmonize with the fresh and vivid portraiture of the rest of the book. A most astounding theory is put forward to account for its presence. We are told that this poem “was found ready to hand and forced into service by some editor who failed to appreciate its acrostic form.” Fancy a Jew being unable to appreciate one of the favourite literary devices of his people! Fancy him patching—and patching badly, too—an artificial fragment on to a poem of singularly striking movement and colour! It is beyond fancy. It is impossible to conceive of a Jewish editor being guilty of such glaringly bad literary taste. But an examination of the Hebrew reveals that this acrostic of fifteen lines can only be made out by clumsy—one had almost used a stronger word—juggling with the text. For instance, these are the methods of getting the required initial letter: In line 4 initial **N** is unwarrantably changed to **T**; in line 7 the first two words are interchanged; in line 10 initial **V** is cut off; the sequence of initials in lines 12 and 13 is obtained by transposing their Massoretic position; line 14 is formed of a fragment of Massoretic text wrenched from its original position after line 1; in line 15 the first two words are omitted to give the desired letter. In addition, two of the lines of this spurious acrostic are left unfinished, and a further piece of Massoretic text after line 1 has to be cut

out. We look for some explanation of these violent expedients, and here it is: "The writer of the acrostic is quoting from memory." We always thought that one of the purposes of the acrostic was to aid the memory. It is akin to jesting to ask us to believe that this fabulous editor had forgotten the order of the letters of his own alphabet.

We presume that on p. 276, line 15, 525 B.C. is a mistake for 625 B.C. We could wish that these strange statements a few pages later were a mistake too: "Nahum and Jeremiah belonged to different religions and political parties. If Nahum was not in actual opposition to Jeremiah, he was at least indifferent to his efforts. . . . His point of view is essentially one with that of such men as Hananiah (Jer. xxviii.), the four hundred prophets in opposition to Micaiah-ben-Imlah (1 Kings xxii.), and the so-called 'false prophets' in general. For such prophets the relation between Jahweh and His nation was indissoluble. Jahweh might become angered at His people and give them over temporarily into the power of the foe. But He could no more wholly abandon them than a mother could desert her child." It seems to us monstrous that Nahum should be thrust into such company and on such shallow evidence. There is no logic in the whole position. Are we honestly to believe that Nahum's message was prompted by the "evil spirit" which dictated the counsel of Micaiah's opponents? And ought he then to come under the ban of the strong indictments against false prophecy of Micah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel? Where is the proof that he was guilty of the selfish aim and the moral taint which called out those indictments? And is it fair to say that, because Nahum, in his prophetic and patriotic exuberance, shuts his eyes for a moment to national sin, he was therefore indifferent to it, and even hostile to measures of internal reform? Moreover, it is hardly necessary to point out how misleading it is to represent the idea of the indissoluble relationship between Jahweh and His people as a peculiar doctrine of the false prophets. It is woven into the fabric of all prophetic doctrine, and the assurance of Jahweh's everlasting love runs like a thread of light even through Jeremiah's darkest prophecies. However, these inconsistencies pale before this flat contradiction. In his introduction Dr. Smith writes: "Nahum was an enthusiastic, optimistic patriot. . . . For Israel the dawn of a new day was discernible upon the horizon." Now, the only verses in the prophecy which could warrant this statement are i. 12, 13, 15; ii. 2. But we turn to the commentary, and, lo, they are not allowed to Nahum! The incipient dawn is postponed, and the inspiration of Nahum's optimism rudely crushed by the following note: "The fall of Nineveh, to which Nahum confidently looked forward, can hardly have occasioned such vivid and certain confidence of immediate relief to Israel; for at that time Assyrian power had long come to an end, and Judah was under the heel of Egypt." Where, then, is the hope of dawn in his prophecy? and where the cause of his optimism?

The prophecy of Habakkuk is treated by Dr. Hayes Ward—treated scantily and inadequately in barely twenty-six pages, of which less than five pages form the introduction. It strikes one as being a hurried stopgap. The commentary lacks the freshness and suggestiveness of exegesis which are a consoling feature of the work on the other prophets. Even in ii. 4, used by St. Paul as one of the two Old Testament pillars on which to base

the doctrine of justification by faith, there is no attempt at all at exegesis. We are simply told that "the first member of the verse gives no sense, but must have a sense like that of the second member," and that "the Hebrew should probably be corrected after the LXX." In the introduction Dr. Ward would have us believe that Habakkuk was an editor of Maccabean times. To him chapters i. and ii. owe their final compilation. He may have actually written ii. 9-20 himself! Of the rest, i. 1-11 belongs to Jehoiakim's days, i. 12 to ii. 8 is a post-Captivity relic, and chapter iii. is an appendix culled from a liturgical collection.

Dr. Bewer says many things in his treatment of Obadiah and Joel from which we dissent, but he deserves a word of praise for the commentary portions of both books, which are rich in pithy exposition, and for the picturesque and fascinating introduction to Obadiah. His view of the authorship of the latter does justice to the three different methods of interpretation of it. It is a poetic narrative of *past* events, because it is an echo and adaptation of an older oracle against Edom, delivered shortly after the sack of Jerusalem. It is a prophetic estimate of *present* events, for it was Edom's disaster in the Nabatean invasion which recalled to the fifth-century prophet Obadiah the oracle of his predecessor. It is a prediction of *future* events, for a fourth-century patriot-prophet sees approaching a crisis which will be uplift to the house of Jacob and downfall to the house of Esau. And his convictions take shape in the appendix to this little book (verses 15-21). That the prophecy of Joel is a unity Dr. Bewer will not admit. He splits the book roughly into two sections, chapters i. and ii. and chapter iii. True, in this he disagrees with even advanced critics like Nowack and Marti, who uphold its unity on the ground that the idea of "the day of Jahweh" runs through both these sections. But Dr. Bewer has an ingenious theory to support his contention. It is this—that the references to "the day of Jahweh" in the early part of the book are the work of an interpolator! We are told, further, that this interpolator—who was an individual with a second-hand style, borrowing thoughts and phrases from other prophets—was responsible for much of the second part of the book. The author claims by this discovery to have solved the vexed problem of the interpretation of the locust plague. Was the plague literal or allegorical? The question would never have been raised but for this interpolator. He was a man steeped in eschatological ideas. He regarded the locust-swarm as allegorical—as the great Northern foe, Jahweh's instrument of judgment, predicted by former prophets. That was why he interpolated the eschatological phraseology which links up the two portions of the book. And yet, in the face of these ideas, the writer calmly tells us that the great passage of ii. 28-32, "I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh," etc. (which he allows to Joel), is a direct reference to the great day of Jahweh. Why, then, is it necessary to invent theories to prove that the eschatological phrases of this earlier part of the book are not original, but imported? In dealing with that same passage (ii. 28-32) in the commentary, we do not think that Dr. Bewer is particularly happy. He will not allow it to refer to "moral transformation, or to inner renewal, or to deeper and more intimate knowledge of God." He regards it as descriptive of "the ecstasy caused by the tremendous excitement which takes hold of people under the stress of terrible fear of the

approach of a great catastrophe." That is watering down its meaning to a very thin consistency. We also fail to see why the lines that follow "Before the great and terrible day of Jehovah comes" are ruled out as an editorial note. Is it another of those offending eschatological interpolations? But, then, Dr. Bewer has already admitted that Joel meant the passage to have an eschatological significance. Why should he not, then, be credited with a phrase which brings out its significance more clearly?

We glance at an exegetical note as our final comment. It is interesting to notice the author's interpretation of the phrase "Jehoshaphat's Valley." He regards it as not strictly a geographical, but a symbolical term, used to symbolize the place of which Jehovah says, "I will contend in judgment with them," and called in verse 14 "the Valley of Decision."

In conclusion, we may say that the exegetical notes, with the exception of those on Habakkuk, are the part of the book which appeals to us most. The critical theories are damaged by serious contradictions to be found in the writers' own handling of them, and by statements which will not stand before sober investigation. And there is only one simile which is applicable to their methods of textual criticism—that of a surgeon trying to perform a delicate surgical operation with very blunt instruments. W. E. BECK.

Received: DANGEROUS DECREITS: AN EXAMINATION OF THE TEACHING OF OUR ARTICLE XXXI. By the Rev. N. Dimock, M.A. London: *Longmans, Green and Co.* Price 1s. net. A new and valuable volume in the new edition of Mr. Dimock's books. SOME NOTES ON THE BISHOPS OF FOUR WELSH DIOCESES. By W. Arthur Westley, B.A. Manchester: *Christian Knowledge and National Society.* Price 4d. net. History has been manipulated of late in the interests of politics; here is some that is not manipulated, and it is valuable. BROWNLOW NORTH: THE STORY OF HIS LIFE AND WORK. By the Rev. Kenneth Moody-Stuart. London: *Chas. J. Thynne.* Price 2s. net. THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS. By Two Clerks. *Cambridge University Press.* Price 2s. 6d. net. An experiment in conservative revision. THE PASSOVER, THE COMMUNION, AND THE MASS. By R. B. Girdlestone, M.A. London: *National Church League Book Room, Westminster, S.W.* Price 1d. MASS VESTMENTS. By R. B. Girdlestone, M.A. London: *National Church League Book Room, Westminster, S.W.* Price 1d. Speeches of the Bishops of Carlisle, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, and Sodor and Man, in the York Convocation. THE COPPING CALENDAR. By Harold Copping. London: *R.T.S.* Small size, 1s.; large size, 2s. 6d.

In the autumn announcements made by Mr. Robert Scott—an exceptionally good list—there are three books to which we should like to call especial attention. Canon Girdlestone issues an important work on the Old Testament, of which the title is "The Building Up of the Old Testament," a book which will be warmly welcomed by conservative students, and which will be worthy of serious attention by those of a different critical standpoint. Principal Tait writes on the Session of our Lord, a matter of serious importance in view of some of the controversy concerning Holy Communion. The third book is a new and greatly-improved edition of Litton's "Dogmatic Theology," a book of exceptional value, which we are glad indeed to see reprinted. Canon Girdlestone's and Principal Tait's books will be reviewed in due course.