

### "The Christ We Forget."<sup>1</sup>

AN arresting title to a notable book. Even if the book had been published anonymously, it would with such a title have commanded attention, and if read would assuredly have stamped upon the memory the picture of a Christ not to be forgotten. But it is not anonymous, and the writer is not a divine, but a layman and a well-known journalist. That the Parliamentary correspondent of the *Daily News*, whose brilliant sketches over the initials "P. W. W." are so widely read and appreciated by men of all sides in politics, should essay to draw a portrait of our Lord, is of itself a fact to appeal to the "men of to-day" whom he especially addresses. There is nothing new in secular writers, novelists in particular, discussing Christ; but they rarely manifest any close acquaintance with the Scriptures, from which alone we know anything about Him. Mr. Wilson is quite different; every page of his book witnesses to his familiarity with the Gospels, indeed with the Bible as a whole.

As we read the book, the older among us may be reminded of Professor Seeley's *Ecce Homo*, which made so profound an impression half a century ago. But *The Christ We Forget* lacks the special attractiveness of heterodoxy which characterised—or was supposed to characterise—that memorable work. The anonymous (as he was at first) author of *Ecce Homo* hinted in its pages that a further study of Christ might be expected from him; and many of us hoped that his next title would be *Ecce Deus*. But the second book, when after a long interval it did come, was less orthodox than its predecessor; and Seeley left Dr. Parker to bespeak the title *Ecce Deus*. Otherwise it might have been adopted by Mr. Wilson; for he is a firm upholder of the Christian Faith in its fullness. He does not even incline to the modernism of Mr. T. R. Glover, whose able and in many ways delightful book, *The Jesus of History*, is so strongly commended by the Archbishop of Canterbury. It is surely an encouraging sign of the times that two such books should appear nearly together: both of them emphatically fresh and striking as pen-portraits of our Lord Jesus Christ, yet both

<sup>1</sup> *The Christ We Forget*. By P. W. Wilson. London: Morgan and Scott, 6s. net.

loyal to fundamental truth. Comparisons are odious, and I will only remark that while Mr. Glover may more fully satisfy students familiar with "higher criticism" and modern speculations, Mr. Wilson will appeal more successfully to the average man guiltless of those studies.

Mr. Wilson does not profess to be a theologian. He does not discuss theological questions. He just accepts what we all understand to be the Catholic Faith, including the Deity of our Lord, the Virgin Birth, the Atonement, the Resurrection and Ascension; and his *obiter dicta* are unmistakable. Thus, "Either He was Divine, or He blasphemed. Since those days, men have sought to evade this supreme choice by formulating some kind of a middle solution, like Unitarianism, in one of its many guises. None of these compromises avails for more than a few years, and with a few enthusiasts. Sooner or later we have, like the Jews, to face the main question, as they faced it—either to worship the Christ or to reject Him" (p. 226). Again, "You must not ask me to tell you how it was that Jesus came to us as God and Man, for this is a mystery, which means an undisclosed truth that cannot be put into words. . . . I must be content with the Gospels. There I find that He does not expect us to *understand* what theologians call 'His substance,' but He would have us *receive* Him" (p. 178).

So with regard to the Cross. "In forgiving sin, as Son of Man, Jesus accepted an obligation to pay the penalty for sin; with Him there was no compounding with one's creditors" (p. 219). "From that universal guilt of man, He, as Redeemer, could not be excluded; and He alone could bear the penalty, for He alone knew what penalty was due" (p. 294). "He offered Himself . . . a perfect Victim, to make for all our sins a complete and final atonement" (p. 170). The supreme cry on the Cross was "the utterance of a Son, innocent Himself, but disowned." It was a cry, not to "the Father," but to "the All-Just and Omnipotent One, then exacting punishment of Him Who alone knew, because He alone shared, God's righteousness" (p. 295); but presently, "He spoke no longer of 'My God'; the Father, the Son, and the Spirit returned with His death to their everlasting Tri-unity. . . . God and Man were reconciled" (p. 296). This is not quite the language of precise orthodoxy. Some of us would use different phrases. But the spirit and intention of the words will be appreciated.

Moreover, Mr. Wilson is not embarrassed by modern criticism. “ The Bible is one and indivisible. You cannot tear it apart. It stands or falls as a whole. And it is not by neglecting the Old Testament that we gain a better knowledge of our Saviour—quite the reverse ” (p. 168). “ In the Sermon on the Mount there is not one thought which cannot be traced to the Old Testament ” (p. 167). “ It seems as if, deliberately, He put His divine *imprimatur* on those ancient miracles—the fiery serpents, the manna, the healing of Naaman, the experiences of Jonah—which criticism most furiously declares to be incredible. . . . With all respect to learned men of to-day, I hold to the Incomparable Wisdom of Him Who, as ‘ the Mighty God,’ seems to have foreseen these attacks ” (p. 170).

So with regard to the Gospel narratives : “ Some of us think that we can ignore His miracles, provided that we accept and obey His teaching. If I were to try thus to cut the Gospels in half, I am sure that I should fail over it. To tear His words from His works is to rend Him in twain. Of our Saviour’s Divinity you cannot say, ‘ Thus far shall thou go and no farther.’ Of His Birth there are two, but only two, explanations. Nor can we, on the one hand, dismiss Gabriel, and, on the other hand, retain the *Magnificat*. If peace on earth and goodwill for men was not an angel-song, what was it? Did the shepherds improvise it? ” (p. 173). “ Some of us,” again, “ would like to think that the entire life of Christ—words and works together—is an exquisite product of the human imagination, playing around an attractive Personality, who did not do or say one-tenth part of what is now attributed to Him. I ask the question, Whose imagination? . . . If our Lord be really a hero of fiction, who was the author of Him? . . . I am told that Christ did not say, ‘ I am the True Vine,’ and ‘ I am the Bread of Life,’ and ‘ I am the Good Shepherd.’ Then who did say it? Somehow or other these words came to the birth, and cannot now be got rid of. What was their origin? ” (p. 175).

The remarks on miracles are striking. Incidentally, Mr. Wilson finds that “ we have only a particular record of thirty-three : one, that is, for every year of His life, one for every month of His ministry ” (p. 194). He introduces the subject with a rather touching personal word :—

“ If you tell me that you do not believe in the miracles of the Bible, I

will not argue, for that would do harm to both of us ; but I will state simply and briefly where I stand in this matter. Life is as incomprehensible now as it was to Job in his day ; I have neither time nor strength to wander uncertainly amid its mazes ; and having found in our Lord a sure guide to truths which I can test by experience, I am ready to trust Him in this, where neither I nor any one else can prove or disprove what is stated as fact. I could not so commit my judgment to the Church ; still less to ' the results of scholarship,' which vary like the fashions. But I am satisfied that, if my future is safe with our Redeemer, so also must be my intellect. From which it follows that it is my duty, first, to discover what He thought and said<sup>a</sup> about miracles ; and secondly, to accept what He thought and said as final " (p. 171).

Mr. Wilson points out that while Christ's " prerogative " " embraced all nature, animate and inanimate," it was " sparingly invoked." " Our Lord always displayed a reverent consideration for the established order of the world " :—

" While He walked on the water, He did not abolish the laws of gravity. Peter at once fell when the link of faith between him and the Almighty was broken. While He stilled the tempest, He left the world with air to breathe, and so taught us that our life depends even on the hurricane. He made wine out of water, not out of nothing ; and in feeding the multitudes, He used what loaves and fishes there were, however few, and the fragments that remained over were carefully preserved for the future. . . .

" In all His works, His object was not to relieve us of our responsibilities. His religion was not legerdemain. He left us still to live our humdrum lives, but showed what a difference His presence makes in the kitchen, the counting-house, the ocean liner, and the railway train. Environment remains, but He rules it " (p. 195).

Another significant personal reference is worth quoting. Being challenged as to the two reports of the Sermon on the Mount in St. Matthew and St. Luke, Mr. Wilson draws on his journalistic experience :—

" As one who has devoted his life to the task of summarising speeches, and can speak with a practical experience not possessed by any critical scholar who spends his time among books, I am entitled to the opinion that these are vivid and nervous accounts of a real utterance, by a real Teacher—the very variations showing that we have here, not error or carelessness, but the corroboration of more than one witness " (p. 5).

He challenges our whole attitude on questions of this kind. " We assume," he says, " that we are judicial persons, sitting as jurors, detached from the issues involved, whereas in reality we are parties to the case." " The only real question is whether we will or will not have this Man to reign over us " (p. 160). That is plain speaking of the most effective kind. No wonder he deprecates in several places " crystal-gazing, necromancy, spiritualism, ghostlore," " palmistry, phrenology, fortune-telling," " charms, luck,

quackery, hypnotism,” “ shaded lamps, soft music, séances.” “ On psychic phenomena the Lord Jesus said the last word ” (pp. viii, 106, 115, 196, 210). And no wonder that in the impressive Introduction he declares that what we need, what England needs, is “ a revival—a new birth of life—a resurrection.” But how is this to come about ? “ Over and over again,” he replies, “ nations have been revived by reading the forgotten Bible.”

Among the best chapters in the book are those on the Annunciation, the Infant Jesus in Egypt, John the Baptist and Christ’s Baptism, and the Temptation. Impressive as the Passion chapters are, these earlier ones seem to me superior. The Virgin Mary is beautifully sketched. “ One cannot imagine,” says Mr. Wilson, “ a girl less likely to be deluded into thinking that the Angel Gabriel had visited her. Of that scene she is, perforce, the only witness, but her evidence has stood two thousand years of cross-examination ; and when I read her story, so candid and simple, I cannot believe her capable of defending her innocence against suspicion by putting forward so tremendous a blasphemy as a fabricated Annunciation ” —and he goes on to describe the scene as St. Luke gives it to us. Mr. Wilson has no sympathy with Mariolatry. “ By sending her away with John, our Lord made it clear that she was in no way associated with His atoning work ; and when He ascended, we leave her still among His friends, praying with them, which, despite all later teaching, was her only ‘ rapture,’ her sufficient ‘ coronation.’ ” “ St. John was the Apostle to whose care she was committed by her dying Son, yet in that Book of the Revelation which bears his name, and describes heaven opened, there is no mention of the Virgin Mary—let alone of the Virgin enthroned ” (pp. 22, 23).

Egypt is viewed as the doomed land of disappointment. “ There were multitudes of Jews in Egypt, but not one of them recognized Him as Messiah. . . . Yet they had the Old Testament, with its prophecies, translated into the Greek vernacular—an open Bible—and they had the heathen at their very doors. Here surely was the ideal headquarters for a world-wide mission ! ” (p. 57). Egypt, “ the House of Bondage, was a place where men lived among the tombs. By the desperate device of embalming the body, they hoped to win the splendours of immortality, and they succeeded. You may still see the face of Rameses II in the museum of Cairo. Jesus . . . by removing from us His own most blessed and wounded

body, bearing it with Him to the throne of God, destroyed for ever the efficacy of relic-worship, which fades into a memory, having accomplished in Egypt all the human consolation of which it was capable. . . . Where our Bible is a Book of Life, the Bible of ancient Egypt was a Book of the Dead " (pp. 61, 62). " *Out of Egypt* " God called His Son, as He had called His people, " because He loved Him " (p. 59). Perhaps Mr. Wilson is a little hard on the country of Pantænus and Clement and Origen and Athanasius ; but the chapter teems with striking thoughts.

John the Baptist is portrayed with much care and skill, and the references to him would repay quotation, but I must forbear, only noticing in passing Mr. Wilson's curious thought of counting the churches in London dedicated to the Baptist, and his surprise at finding how few there are. " St. George himself is a more popular, if somewhat mythical, patron." But I pass to the chapters on the Temptation of Christ, which are perhaps the most interesting and suggestive in the book (pp. 117-143). Mr. Wilson naturally notes the fact that the mysterious narrative is " strictly autobiographical, a personal disclosure by Christ Himself." He further acutely observes that although Jesus was charged with being allied with Beelzebub, " the Slanderer who inspired the abuse " never dared to refer to the wilderness conflict. " No one suggested that during those six weeks Jesus was other than sinless." " To the accounts of the matter in the Gospels there is no alternative record. Those documents stand unchallenged, and it would be irreverent even to suggest the measureless contrast between our Lord's inner experiences and those, let us say, of Mohammed or Buddha " (p. 138). On Satan himself Mr. Wilson remarks that " before the war broke out, many doubted whether there was a Devil. They talked about environment and heredity, but they denied that Evil, like Good (or God), was personal ; and gradually God faded away too. Nowadays, we are not quite so assured of our negations." No, indeed ! " Modern history has been described as the failure of Christianity, but it is rather a panorama of astonishing conflict—grim, incessant, pitiless—in which Christ helps us, because, amid poison gas and all the trickery of warfare, He, with eagle eye and steady finger, has located, once for all, the Arch-Enemy. He drew the fire, and by His heroic reconnaissance, unmasked for all time the entrenched batteries of iniquity." . . . " He did not waste one moment on

dates and authorship, on alleged discrepancies and erasures in manuscripts, and such-like bow-and-arrow tactics. He took the words as written ” (pp. 120, 121).

It is startling in the twentieth century to find a writer who pictures Jesus as actually standing on the pinnacle of the Temple, but I am not sure that Mr. Wilson does not draw the picture allegorically. Certainly it is a very effective one. Here are a fragment or two :—

“ He stood there, lonely and unapproachable, silent and motionless, like a sculptured saint on the portal of some ancient cathedral—safe from reproach or irreverence, ready to receive the devotion of mankind. Here was the ecclesiastical Christ, Divine yet solitary, only to be met at church, or by leave of the priests ; and so far elevated above us that we cannot see Him clearly, or tell Him of our needs, still less feel His touch. . . . On the pinnacle, He could not move one inch—He was as impotent to save as a Crucifix. . . . As Jesus stood, unrecognized, on that dizzy eminence, it seemed once more that He had failed. . . . The Devil, mocking as he sought to seduce, repeated his ‘ if. ’ . . . ‘ Cast Thyself down ’ sums up all the arts of sensationalism, whereby we advertise our religion, our politics, our arts, our social position. . . . Imagine, if you can, what would have been the disaster to faith, if our Lord had flung Himself down among the people. Good men and women, anxious to follow Him, would have committed every extravagance. . . . But His wonders were never inspired by bravado. He did *not* cast Himself down. . . . The generation that sought after a sign was wicked and adulterous.”

On the third temptation Mr. Wilson writes :—

“ From the Temple, with its man-made pinnacle, our Lord proceeded to the mountain where—no longer an ecclesiastical Christ but the Christ that is universal—He surveyed the world. What Satan showed Him was the kingdoms and their glory ; what He saw was the sin and suffering to which Satan was indifferent. . . . It was the world that God loved so intensely as to send into it His only begotten Son ; and to corrupt our Lord’s ambition to save the perishing was the last endeavour of the Devil. In casting down there was danger. But to fall down and worship, what could be simpler ? A little bribery on polling-day, a touch of insincerity in a peroration, a hint of sharp practice in business, a compromise of principles, a word of flattery to the influential, some innocent wire-pulling—we all know these genuflections to the Evil One ” (p. 142).

The chapter on the younger days and domestic life of Jesus at Nazareth reminds me of Mr. Harrington Lees’s delightful book, *The Divine Master in Home Life*. Both books draw attractive pictures in much the same way. All that Mr. Wilson says about our Lord’s love for children, and on children generally, is worth noting. For example : “ When He entered Jerusalem on His last visit, they were His chief retinue and bodyguard, His Boy Scouts and Girl Guides ” (p. 146). “ What distinguishes Christian lands from all others is, first and foremost, the education of children. Schools

and orphanages, day nurseries and infant clinics, special care of the weaklings, and play centres, cottage homes and country holidays—all these are evidences that Herod has died ; that Jesus has returned to Galilee from His exile in Egypt " (p. 56). " It is His custom to test all that we do by its effect on the children in our midst. He sees them outside the swing-doors of the public-house. It is with their eyes that He watches the pictures that we show them. He feels every hurt that war inflicts on them " (p. 74). And Christ is Himself " the Eternal Child, ever in our midst ; not only trustful, not only innocent, but also observant, listening to what we say more carefully than we say it, and then quietly but irresistibly asking us the reason why " (p. 74). Very just is the remark that " despite the language of certain hymns," the Evangelists do not apply to our Lord " the softer adjectives," " mild, and sweet, and kind." " Even in His gentlest utterance there is the salt of duty, with its savour of judgment " (p. 186). " For judgment Jesus came into the world—to show us God : the love of God assuredly, but the wrath of God no less " (p. 189). And the chapter on " The Generation of Vipers " is particularly impressive (p. 87).

I must quote almost at random some other striking sentences and passages :—

" Despite [St. Luke's] carefulness to set things in chronological order, for the sake of Theophilus, who evidently thought that emperors and tetrarchs were very illustrious personages, we do not, and perhaps never shall know, the precise date of our Lord's nativity. His coming was unmarked by clocks and calendars, and the death of Herod is an event more precisely dated. . . . Yet this unobserved nativity is now honoured more widely than any other festival. Indeed, it has become, for society and commerce, a season as unchallengeable as the tides. . . . If you were to abolish the birthday of Christ, you would inflict on mere trade a loss only to be reckoned in hundreds of millions sterling " (p. 25).

" For generations Malachi's prophecy remained unfulfilled, yet unfor-gotten. It was as if Wycliffe in the fourteenth century had foretold a Wesley in the eighteenth, and had, in the long interval, maintained England in a state of expectancy " (p. 43).

" All through His ministry Jesus taught by questions. We lay down creeds and tell people to repeat them. Jesus drafted a catechism in which each of us is left to fill in the replies. . . . His inquiries were a Holy Office in which there was no torture, no dungeon, but only candour, sympathy, and the light of day " (p. 75).

" Christianity in every era unlooses the energies of men, sending them forth as pioneers, now into the depths of the coal mine, then, again, aloft, as on wings, above the clouds ; then to the chill solitudes of Arctic ice ; yet not forgetting the pathless forests of Equatorial Africa. The telescope is Christian ; the microscope is Christian ; the locomotive is Christian ; telegraphy is Christian ; steamships are Christian ; Christian, that is, in ultimate origin



—the things that are added unto those who first seek the kingdom of God” (p. 76).

“When Mary burst in on Him, she had apparent cause for complaint. . . . Why had He thus dealt with them? Theirs was the usual complaint of parents, who habitually blame their children less for doing wrong than for giving trouble!” (p. 77).

“The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is not, as the Sadduces imagined, the God of the dead, but of the living. . . . But, on the other hand, Abraham and Isaac and Jacob each remains himself and no other. There has been no transmigration of their souls. The inexhaustible God has no need to re-issue old coinage from His mint” (p. 105).

“The farmer, whose barns were full . . . was a fool, because he only thought of his assets; forgetting his liabilities, which included a mortgage on his soul, due to a sleepless Creditor, Who foreclosed that very night after business hours” (p. 100).

“The soldiers . . . in the very presence of His mother, seized His garments as their booty” (p. 108).

“What we call the Sermon on the Mount is misunderstood because it is misnamed. It was not a sermon, preached from a pulpit to religious people, but an edict or ukase, promulgated for all His subjects by a Sovereign seated on a throne of His own choosing—not designed by men, but one of the eternal hills. . . . There is often a complete misapprehension of the scope of this ‘sermon.’ People think that it contains the Gospel of Salvation, and is therefore the essence of Christianity. . . . It was just because Christ’s law [in the Sermon] was unattainable that His Redemption had to be free to every one.” (pp. 152, 154).

“The heir to the most stable throne in the world acts by the motto, *Ich Dien*—‘I serve.’ . . . The most powerful statesman in the greatest of empires is to-day no Cæsar, or Emperor, or Sultan, or Maharajah. . . . He is the Prime Minister—the one whose duty and office it is not to be ministered unto but to minister.” (p. 206.)

“Bethany . . . was a village without history, without architecture, without social or strategic importance—the kind of hamlet that disappears under the hammering of artillery.” (p. 248.)

“This nameless owner of asses . . . takes his place, though nameless—for there was no subscription list—among the few, the very few, who freely helped our Lord. . . . He was a man who would have presented a lectern to his parish church for the glory of God, without adding ‘and in memory of so-and-so.’ His daughter would have tended the wounded, quite unphotographed.” (p. 245.)

Mr. Wilson has many passing references to current events and present-day problems. For instance, John the Baptist “avoided all such sedition against the civil power as Fenianism and Sinn Fein” (p. 82). One of Christ’s tests for society was its treatment of widows: “the widow’s mite—the widow’s house—the widow’s importunity—the widow’s son”; and “to this day the widow and her children are the unsolved problem of poor law and charity” (p. 92). An important paragraph (p. 98) deals with Christ’s “full understanding” of the problems of Labour. “It was Jesus who first advised a Labour Exchange.” A painful memory of

theatrical London is called up by the words, " Before the war, some of us were more interested in the dance of Salome than in the hideous crime of which it was a part " (p. 212). Herod the Great was " a monster of iniquity," but he was " not unique " :—

" The employer who subordinates the health of his workers to his profits, the emperor who harnesses his people to dreams of aggression, the landlord who receives rent without securing sanitation, the mother who marries her daughter for money—all these are guilty, each in his degree, of Herod's sin ; nor is there any evidence that a child under two years old in England to-day has a greater chance of life than a child of that age in Judea. We do not issue edicts of death, but we are careless, and the percentage of mortality remains " (p. 53).

On the other hand, it is refreshing to read this testimony to the success of men and nations that act—consciously or unconsciously—in accordance with the teachings of John the Baptist : " To this day, the careers of men like General Gordon and Lord Kitchener illustrate what may be achieved in Asiatic lands by John's code of financial correctitude, backed by strict military discipline. All that is great in British control of India and Egypt and Uganda resolves itself, politically, to the wisdom of John the Baptist " (p. 108).

Naturally there are references to the war. Some of the passages already quoted have illustrated the use of war phrases. Here are two or three more direct allusions :—

" The very name ' Emmanuel,' or ' God with us,' which belongs by sole prophetic right to Jesus, has been graven, large and blasphemous, on every Prussian helmet, as if God's presence among men, and His peace which passeth all understanding, could be claimed and enjoyed where the Son of God is dishonoured. ' Emmanuel ' occurs once only in the New Testament, in the opening chapter of Matthew, when Jesus, still unborn, might have been a welcome Guest. From His earliest breath His Divinity was denied, and somehow the word ' Emmanuel ' fell into disuse, as if God could not dwell with nations except upon terms of unchallenged sovereignty over kings and peoples " (p. 37).

" One reason why we are constantly cursed with wars is that sometimes nations have used for aggressive ends those great powers of the mind which He liberated from superstition and barbarism. He cannot offer us the ploughshare without also offering us the sword. On Christendom lies the choice which shall be grasped. In Him is Science ; with us is the question whether Science shall slay or heal " (p. 76).

" Jesus never denounced war, whether past or future. He knew that He Himself was raising issues which would fling man into the fighting-line. . . . The dispensation of justice precedes the dispensation of grace, and the one must be satisfied before the other can be enjoyed. Hence the judge, hence the officer, hence the prison—all stamped with our Saviour's unmistakable ' Verily.' Hence His whip of cords which twice cleansed the Temple of the

money-changers. Hence armies, hence navies, which must continue until He reigns in the heart ” (p. 192).

And here is a sentence to lay to heart :—

“ If, as a nation, we had followed John’s teaching [the Baptist], and spent on Missions what we now have to spend on war, who knows what guarantees of peace and justice we might not have established in the world ? One way or the other, we have to learn the lesson that our incomes are not our own. Cæsar will have our money or God will have it, but in Christ’s accountancy there is no third column for Self ” (p. 96).

There is one class of readers that will almost certainly fail to appreciate this book fully—those that are not familiar with the Four Gospels chapter by chapter, and verse by verse. They will not perceive how sentence after sentence in these pages, so far from being mere rhetoric, is based upon definite Scripture statements. Not that this will really hinder the usefulness of the book. It is, in fact, written expressly for the kind of men that do *not* know the Gospels line by line, and I do not question that it will impress them ; I hope it may impress hundreds and thousands. Still, it is those only whose familiarity with the sacred text enables them to recognize the point of every allusion that will fully appreciate the accuracy of Mr. Wilson’s knowledge, and the skill with which he groups his information. For there are no references, either in the text of the book or in footnotes or appendix—an omission no doubt deliberate, in order not to provoke the average man’s annoyance with continual references to chapter and verse. (Stay, there is *one* ! On p. 256 we come across a parenthesis, thus “ (ver. 24) ”—but of what chapter we are not told, though, of course, the well-instructed reader will know it well. It is a curious instance of the exception proving the rule !)

Mr. Glover’s *The Jesus of History* gives a good many references, in the text. Mr. Harrington Lees’s *Divine Master in Home Life* groups all that are needed in each chapter in a note at the end of the chapter—an excellent plan, showing his authority for every statement without interrupting the reader. Again and again, in his case, even a well-instructed reader may sometimes stop suddenly and say, Well, I never observed this : where did he get it from ?—and the same remark applies to the book before us. I confess that I myself have been at first sight puzzled here and there, but have found Mr. Wilson right ; though I must add that I am inclined to dispute two or three incidental statements—not more. The book

is manifestly the work of a mind steeped in Scripture. I am glad to see that Mr. Wilson yields to the opinion of some friends who he says wrote to him against his identification (in *The Christian*, where some of these chapters first appeared) of Mary Magdalene and Mary of Bethany with the sinful woman of Luke vii. He defers on page 250 to their representations, though the identification is still implied on at least two other pages. I wish that all who have been misled by this Roman Catholic confusion of three different women could read an article against it, final and decisive, contributed a few years ago to the *Expositor* by the late Professor A. R. Simpson, of Edinburgh.

I earnestly hope that this book will be widely circulated. I hope that cheap editions will be published. I hope that those Christian men who hold modern criticism of the Bible in more respect than Mr. Wilson does will not let this difference hinder them from using and recommending it. They avow themselves the advocates of reasonable freedom: let them show their liberality by their attitude to it. As they claim the right to accept some of the results of reverent criticism, let them recognize the right of others to decline that acceptance. Some men will probably be more open to Mr. Glover's influence; some to Mr. Wilson's; let the books of both be recommended together. Surely the memorable words which Mr. Wilson prints as a motto on his title page, "I if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me," will find some of its fulfilment through this volume; and many who have hitherto "forgotten" Christ will "forget" Him no longer.

EUGENE STOCK.

