

## Reviews of Books.

### THE ORIGIN OF THE WORLD.

THE PROBLEM OF CREATION. By the Rt. Rev. J. E. Mercer, D.D. London : S.P.C.K. Price 7s. 6d. net.

So rare are the merits of a clear style and forceful utterance in recent philosophical literature that a reviewer must hasten to thankfully acknowledge the remarkable extent to which Dr. Mercer has achieved both in a volume of great help to all who desire to keep themselves abreast of modern thought. Gratitude for such benefits will refrain from comment on the abundant use of the first personal pronoun.

In the progress of science an era of analysis has given place to an epoch of synthesis. In this a peculiar need arises to be cautious of the peril of logomachy. By assigning modern definitions to terms employed by former writers we may appear to reconcile opposites, and yet in reality only deceive ourselves. The acceptance of Dr. Driver's exposition of the word "create" in Genesis i. 1 enables an easy, but unsound, *rapprochement* of Scripture and Science. Reference to older commentaries—the Speaker, Ellicott, Lange, Alford, and others—shows it to be no new discovery that the Hebrew does not necessarily mean a creation *ex nihilo*. But etymology is not the whole of the science of words, and the phrase "in the beginning" requires an absolute interpretation of the idea of creation. Nor does our author's whole-hearted adoption of the principle *Nihil ex nihilo fit* permit a very lucid description of the initial act. "God detaches, as it were, but without severing from Himself a portion of His own being." Thus the origin of the universe is lost in the jargon of mediæval ecclesiasticism or the speech of a modern Hibernianism. Verbal speculations will never solve the mystery.

An excellent chapter on the limitations of evolution reaches a conclusive position in reference to the controversy which has raged since the publication of the *Origin of Species*. Argument based on ignorance is admittedly precarious, but Dr. Mercer discounts too heavily any accentuation of the gaps between the inorganic and the organic, or between the animal and man. "That man is the highest product of creative activity is hopelessly improbable." Can Evolution ever bridge the chasm between men and angels? But the precision which places Evolution in its rightful place by exposing its subordination to the primary concepts of space and time, to the laws of nature, and to psychic factors effectually demonstrates that a creation must have preceded the commencement of its operations.

Dr. Mercer is a disciple of Schopenhauer, but not blindly. Matter is resolved into force, and force into Will. But the abject pessimism of the foreign philosopher is avoided by endowing the Will with consciousness of purpose. The assumption of conscious Will-centres not only in lower forms of life, but even in material objects, leads to a sphere where such Will is hampered at every turn by environment, and, as we still further descend the scale, becomes the mere subject of environment. We get no nearer to the Absolute Will. The argument is based on experience. It was exactly upon this ground that the most primitive peoples held the belief in animism. Either philosophy must teach us to transcend experience, or we must hold that impeded by experience the origins of the world are unknowable to us. We are not infinite: by what authority are we required to explain everything by experience?

Scientific thought is subject to variation. The dogmas of the indestructi-

bility of matter, the conservation of energy, and the laws of motion are not held as tenaciously to-day as by a former generation : or rather, they have become more circumspectly defined. Of this fact Dr. Mercer takes the fullest advantage. Theology also changes. The present tendency is more and more to recover the Atonement through the death of Christ as the central feature of Christian doctrine. Here Dr. Mercer fails. But if the subject-matter is occasionally open to criticism, and if the theological standpoint leaves much to be desired, readers of scientific taste and philosophical disposition will have no reason to regret the expenditure of a few shillings in a book which, by its fullness of information and its cogent reasoning, stimulates inquiry into the interesting questions concerning the origin of the world.

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#### AN INTERESTING DIOCESE.

THE DIOCESE OF GIBRALTAR. A Sketch of its History, Work and Tasks.  
By Henry J. C. Knight, D.D., Bishop of Gibraltar. London : S.P.C.K.  
Price 7s. 6d.

It was a happy inspiration that moved Bishop Ingham some years ago to gather together the chronicles of the Diocese of Sierra Leone. Bishop Knight has in this volume accomplished a similar task with no less success. In his opening chapters he tells the story of the early British trading settlements in South Europe and the Levant, and we are reminded how greatly we are indebted to Richard Hakluyt, whose writings are too little known, for records that the Bishop fitly describes as "priceless and absorbingly interesting." It is also good to be reminded, as we are in these pages, of the fact that the men, who as far back as the days of the Muscovie Levant Company in 1567, were actively engaged in mercantile enterprise, were at the same time imbued with a deep religious spirit and were not ashamed of either their faith or their Church. The proofs of this, which Dr. Knight has given us, will be read with the deepest interest. As far as is possible, owing to the paucity of early records, we have an account of the work of Bishops Tomlinson, Trower and Harris, the three prelates who presided over the See of Gibraltar from 1842 to 1873. In 1874 Bishop Sandford was consecrated and his Episcopate lasted thirty years. Perhaps one of the most interesting matters dealt with in the record of those busy years—for the extensive Diocese is no sinecure—is the story of the reform movement in Spain and Portugal. Dr. Sandford unfortunately, we think, maintained throughout (like his immediate predecessor, Bishop Harris,) an attitude of "sympathetic aloofness" (to quote Dr. Knight's own words), and though the Lambeth Conference of 1888 passed a resolution expressing sympathy with the reformers in their struggle to "free themselves from the burden of unlawful terms of communion," nothing was done until the Irish Bishops consecrated the late Bishop Cabrera in 1894. It is due to Bishop Sandford's memory to observe that though he preferred that the Chaplains under his jurisdiction should follow his example in the matter of aloofness from the reformers, he yet collated Rev. T. G. P. Pope, Chaplain at Lisbon, to a Canonry—a fact of which Bishop Knight makes no mention in the one passage in which Mr. Pope is referred to, though he mentions the fact that he declined to be Bishop of the Lusitanian Church on more than one occasion. It is a regrettable story of fruitless playing into the hands of the Roman Church for "fear of compromising" the Church of England, and though Dr. Knight is at pains to justify Bishop Sandford, we confess we do not think he has succeeded. Leaving that controversial subject we have in Bishop

Sandford the portrait of an exemplary and, in many respects, typical English Bishop—patient, painstaking and businesslike, and there are very many men still living who served under him in Continental Chaplaincies who cherish his memory. He was followed by Bishop Collins, a forceful personality with very decided opinions and exceptional ability. He had a perfectly prodigious capacity for work which helped to undermine a constitution never robust, and he died in March, 1911, at the early age of forty-four. He had, however, in the seven years of his Episcopate done much to consolidate the work of his predecessors, and if he had lived he would certainly have made his mark. The volume is enriched with portraits and photographs: the series of the former would have been complete had not Bishop Knight's modesty forbidden the insertion of his own.

Needless to say there are scattered throughout the book frequent references to the Colonial and Continental Church Society, the C.M.S. and the Jews' Society, and we are reminded that the former began to subsidize Chaplaincies as far back as 1839, having been founded in 1823.

Not the least interesting chapter is the last, in which we have an account of the Diocese as it is affected by the present war, and those who take the trouble to look at the map which shows the limits of the Bishop's jurisdiction will surely feel that there is probably no Bishop of the Anglican Church who is better entitled at the present time to our respectful and prayerful sympathy. Dr. Knight has placed us under a distinct obligation by the compilation of this very complete and comprehensive record. S. R. C.

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#### THE STUDY OF PROPHECY.

THE NEW PROPHECY. By R. K. Arnaud. London: *Hodder & Stoughton*. Price 2s. 6d.

We have here a book which is likely to attract some notice, and not a little criticism. And it is not difficult to criticize it. A work of this kind is a sort of magnet which draws to itself many loose filings. The three schools of prophecy in our midst will each find something to approve, and no doubt something to disapprove, in its pages, which are at once interesting and controversial. It is not always evident what Mr. Arnaud's views are, in certain crucial cases; and he has not the knack of writing with conspicuous ease. But he has given us a book to think over carefully, and he states his case with moderation.

The present war has focussed the attention of thousands of people on the great prophecies of the Bible; and the result of this interest has shown itself in the number of "prophetic" books issued during the past three years. And, if we mistake not, the Fall of Jerusalem (the one really outstanding event of the past six months) will cause students to turn, with yet greater zeal, to learn the lessons which the ancient prophetic Scriptures have to offer.

Mr. Arnaud justly insists that the *master-key of all prophecy* is the Second Coming of the Messiah; it is the failure to understand this that has led to so much fallacy in the past. No final and complete conspectus of history has ever been, or will ever be, got out of the prophetic writings; the various attempts to do so have resulted in little that is valuable to students. One thing, however, appears to be certain—the Second Coming; this, and nothing else, is (to use Tennyson's words)

"that one far-off divine event  
To which the whole creation moves."

All prophecies connect there; therein all make their final contact. Prophecy,

so viewed, possesses something more than a speculative interest ; it becomes of supreme practical importance.

### STANTON AS PREACHER.

FATHER STANTON'S SERMON OUTLINES. By the Rev. E. F. Russell, M.A., St. Alban's, Holborn. London : *Longmans, Green and Co.* Price 5s. net.

The almost unprecedented welcome that has been accorded to the two volumes of Father Stanton's sermons which have appeared since his death has led to the preparation of the present volume. It contains outlines taken from his note-books without addition or alteration of any kind. In an interesting preface we are allowed to see this popular preacher at work in his study. "When he had fixed upon his subject, and it was time to get to work, he would draw up his chair to the fire and sit gazing on and on into it, as if in expectation that some spiritual light might come through the flame into his own soul." His tools were, we are told, few in number—he seldom consulted commentaries or books of any kind and studiously avoided critical questions—"the familiar Authorized Version contented him." The only exception mentioned by Mr. Russell is rather remarkable : he tells us that if Spurgeon or Dr. Parker had said anything on the subject with which he was dealing, he would look it up. In the sermons on Temptation, in the volume itself, we can trace Dr. Parker's shrewd comments in "*These sayings of mine.*" Of course not every book of this kind will be useful to every preacher, and some never can make use of such aids at all. But many a young preacher will find here ample suggestion. Father Stanton's own ideal, which appears on the title page, is well worthy of imitation—"This is what I should like to be said of me, when I am dead and gone the way of all flesh : 'He preached Jesus.'" This he seems to have kept steadily in view, and those who look in these pages for topical sermons with "catchy" texts will be disappointed—the old Gospel is everywhere set forth in one aspect or another and the claims of Christ plainly enforced. Though there are just a few sentences here and there in which things are not put quite as we should put them, we can yet venture to recommend this book, breathing, as it does, the fervent spirit of a great and good man.

### PASTORAL VISITATION.

PAX HUIC DOMUI. A Manual for Pastoral Visitation. By Bernard M. Hancock, Vicar of St. James', Southampton Docks. London : *S.P.C.K.* Price 2s. 6d. net.

The Bishop of Edinburgh contributes a commendatory note to this little book and certainly not the least valuable portion of its contents is the first of the five sections, entitled "*Ad Clerum Junioyrem,*" and consisting of practical hints together with some wise counsels gathered from other writers. The section "*Officia*" contains nine short services. The Visitation of the Sick is given in abbreviated form. In certain places the rubric is not from the Prayer Book—as where, in the Private Baptism of Infants, we read—"The Minister, vested in stole and surplice, shall say." As a matter of fact the stole is nowhere mentioned in the Prayer Book and is actually illegal by the Purchas Judgment ! We think it was a pity the author introduced the Service for Compline and that he did not content himself with reproducing the Communion of the Sick exactly as it stands in the Prayer Book, without introducing the rubric on Reservation proposed by the Upper House of the

Convocation of Canterbury, even though he heads it—"For use where Church authority permits." Then again he is braver than the compilers of the Prayer Book, for he has given a form of Confession. The little service "In the hour of death," and the introductory hints, are quite excellent, and the readings, seed-thoughts, etc., of which the rest of the book is made up, are well chosen. The compactness of the volume is a great advantage, and notwithstanding these criticisms we feel that the author has compiled a manual which will help many young clergymen in their own religious life and in the work of pastoral visitation, which is often found difficult especially in the earlier years of the ministry. The suggestion (p. 21) that every man should make his own manual—in manuscript of course—is excellent. Looking over the list of books recommended we wonder why it is "of set purpose incomplete"? Was it the theological bias of the compiler that led him to ignore some that are worthy of mention? We hope not.

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### THE VIRGIN BIRTH.

THE VIRGIN'S SON. By Bertram Pollock, C.V.O., D.D., Bishop of Norwich.  
London: *John Murray*. Price 2s. 6d. net.

This little volume, from the pen of so scholarly an author, is somewhat disappointing: but it is good to have so plain and clear a defence of the doctrine of the virgin-birth, which can be put into the hands of doubters and inquirers, and such as desire to be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them. To the seven chapters of the little work, there is added as an eighth a sermon preached in Norwich Cathedral on Christmas Day, 1914, and a full summary at the beginning is a valuable aid to the reader. The Bishop gives advice concerning clergy who do not believe the doctrine of the virgin-birth, and yet find no difficulty in reciting the Creed. Referring to the growth of practices, during the period of the War, which rest upon no secure foundation, and in which distraught people have looked for comfort, the author writes—"The notion has gained ground that it is good for anxious and broken hearts to cling to any ideas, true or false, in which they believe they find peace"; and adds, "My own conviction, on the contrary, is that we must not let everything go by default because we have been at war. Nor, because of the results of the War, must we maintain anything and everything, in thought and practice, to be permissible for those who have felt the strain of such fearful years."

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### OTHER VOLUMES.

THE HEROIC DEAD. By the Rev. Dr. Homes Dudden, Rector of Holy Trinity, Sloane Street. London: *Longmans, Green and Co.* Price 3s. 6d. net.

Here are twelve excellent sermons dealing more or less with war topics, and dealing with them well. There is little to find fault with in the volume, and much to praise. The sermons cover a pretty wide field, treating of such subjects as—"The Heroic Dead," "The Christian Attitude towards the Enemy," "Plain Living in War Time," "The Duty of the Non-Combatant," "Work and War." Nor is the relation of God to the War overlooked. Three of the sermons deal with this—"The Lord upon the Throne," "Christus Imperator," and "God in the Cloud." The title of the book, and the titles of the addresses will combine to commend the volume to a large circle of readers, and they will not be disappointed when they lay it down.

THE LIFE OF THE WORLD TO COME. By the Rev. H. B. Swete, D.D., D.Lit., F.B.A. London: S.P.C.K. Price 2s. 6d. net.

This volume contains the last utterances of the great scholar in six addresses given during the Lent of 1917 in the Parish Church at Hitchin, where he had made his home after his resignation of the Regius Professorship at Cambridge. The addresses are marked by all the painstaking accuracy, wealth of scholarship, and deep spirituality that marked Dr. Swete's work: and deal with "Immortality," "The Intermediate State," "The Resurrection of Christ," "The Resurrection of the Church," "The Risen Body," "Eternal Life." The book will be read with eagerness by many in days when the Life of the World to Come has become a thing most real.

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JERUSALEM THE GOLDEN. By Gertrude Hollis. London: S.P.C.K. Price 2s. net.

A Biblical study, founded mainly upon the Revelation of St. John, of the joys that await faithful Christians in Heaven. After a preliminary chapter on St. John the Divine, the writer deals, in thirteen chapters, with the Bride, the Holy City, the Wall, the Foundations, the Gates, the Gate-Keepers, the Streets, the River, the Tree, the Inhabitants, the Golden Reed, the Light, the Beatific Vision. Recent events in the Holy Land will invest this little book with a fresh interest.

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THE MINOR PROPHETS UNFOLDED—HOSEA. By Dr. A. Lukyn Williams. London: S.P.C.K. Price 1s. 6d. net.

This little book is the first instalment of a devotional commentary on the Minor Prophets, intended for short daily reading. It is hoped that by its timely issue the prophet's solemn message may be brought home to the conscience of the nation. Like the author's previous work, *Romans*, in *St. Paul's Letters Unfolded*, it is intended for busy folk, who have a limited time to give to their Bibles. There are some thirty sections, of varying length, followed in each case by a brief summary and short notes.

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THE CATECHISM IN THE BIBLE. By Miss A. H. Walker, Organizing Visitor for Sunday Schools in the Diocese of Oxford: with an introduction by the Bishop of Oxford. London: Longmans, Green and Co. Price 3s. 6d. net.

The aim of this book is to give definite teaching, on modern lines, with the Catechism as a basis of instruction, and personal love for the Saviour as the great end. The Lessons are arranged according to the Church's year. It is difficult to follow the "order" in which the lessons are set out, but they are most useful and easy to teach. The Preface gives in four pages much valuable information with regard to modern Sunday School work. It is a pity that such an otherwise excellent volume is spoiled by such "exclusive" teaching as declares that "Other sects are not part of the Church," or by the advocacy of unwarrantable claims of a mechanical "Apostolic Succession."

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THE FAITH OF A FARMER. Extracts from the Diary of William Dannatt of Great Waltham. Edited by J. E. G. De Montmorency, M.A., LL.B. London: John Murray. Price 5s. net.

The editor tells us in his introduction something about the remarkable man whose reflections, culled from his voluminous notebook or diary, are

here gathered together. Mr. Dannatt was a successful agriculturalist, who—coming of Huguenot stock—was born in 1843 at Great Waltham where he died in 1914. Certainly Mr. Montmorency is quite justified in saying that “his life and his religious experience is so significant that even in these days of universal publication there should be a welcome for some record of his written expression of them.” We do not remember when we came across a book that gave us more pleasure than this. We cordially commend it and advise every country clergyman to get it and lend it to farmers. Materialism is potent in the country as in the town, and the portrait we have in these pages of the keen business man who is at the same time an unostentatious Christian and a devoted Churchman, with a fine spiritual perception and a simple faith of which he is not ashamed, is a delightful inspiration. May the faith of this Essex farmer stimulate the faith of many others!

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NEW LIGHT ON THE OLD PATHS AND THE FIFTH GOSPEL. By Wm. Pascoe Goard, Vancouver, B.C. London: *Marshall Bros.* Price 6s. net.

The writer of this work appears to have approached his subject from an original point of view—“no commentary has been on his shelves, no doctrinal scriptural help in his hands, for long years.” For over a quarter of a century he has brooded upon the message of the Word, endeavouring by a constant effort passively to catch the story of the Bible. The writers of the prefatory pages describe the book as “wonderful,” and its teachings as “revolutionary”: both terms have their correct application—but “arbitrary,” and “fanciful” would be nearer the truth.

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THE CONTROL OF THE SON OF GOD. By the Rev. John Bulteel, M.A., Vicar of Northfleet. London: *Elliot Stock.* Price 3s. net.

In this little volume the Sermon in the Upper Room (John xiii. 31-xvi. 33) is expounded sentence by sentence. The general plan is unusual, and for ourselves we think that the multiplicity of short paragraphs detracts from the readableness and utility of the book. There may, however, be persons with limited time at their disposal who will find them helpful as daily readings. We miss at the outset, in Mr. Bulteel’s observations on the words—“I go to prepare a place for you,” etc., any reference to the Second Coming, indeed his comments explain it away, while at the same time he manages to get in several to the Eucharist. We confess that to be told that “house” and “way” are “the two words which express the relation of the universe to God,” does not appear very illuminating, nor do we like such expressions as “God the Son crammed His being into man” or “He is God’s prodigal for man’s sin,” and we might multiply examples of passages which are in some cases by no means lucid and in others hardly, we think, in the best taste. We observe (page 60) that Mr. Bulteel is one of an increasing number of clergy who would, within clearly defined limits, give women a wider ministry.

