

by Christ to the Jews first, should soon be as fully offered to the Gentile world, we feel no need to yield to the criticism of those who, by reason of this similarity—for which we as being Gentiles are heartily thankful—would ask us to detract from our estimate of the credibility of the Gospel narratives, because there are in them, beside the points of likeness, strong points of difference. For these, if rightly weighed, seem to give the most powerful, because unintentional, testimony to the truth of all that the Evangelists have told us concerning these miracles.

J. RAWSON LUMBY.

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*BRIEF NOTICES OF BOOKS.*

THE SPEAKER'S COMMENTARY. NEW TESTAMENT. Vol. I. (London: John Murray.) This volume includes the Synoptical Gospels, of which the first was assigned to the late Dean Mansel. His commentary on St. Matthew, which extends to Chapter xxvi., can hardly fail to disappoint those who hoped much from the application of a mind so penetrating and original to the exposition of Holy Writ. There is little in it which might not have been written by a clergyman of the most ordinary type, provided that he had some touch of scholarship, and had taken the pains to read the commentaries most acceptable in orthodox circles. To a man of the Dean's remarkable gifts and culture it must have been the slightest and most perfunctory work. It reads as if he had simply jotted down what first occurred to him as he glanced through the Gospel.

But Canon Cook's work on St. Mark and St. Luke is, as all his work is apt to be, good and honest work: not quite so good, I think, as it is in his Commentary on Job; but that may be in part because that subject was chosen by himself,

while these books were originally assigned to other authors; and in part because his notes on St. Luke are simply a revision and completion of a commentary prepared some years ago by the Bishop of St. David's, but never sent to press.

On the whole the commentaries in this volume are hardly up to the mark which might easily have been reached by men who follow in the wake of Dr. Morison and Professor Godet. But the Introduction to the Gospels, by the Archbishop of York, is very able, comprehensive, and instructive. Happily, Professor Westcott has undertaken to annotate the Gospel of St. John—a fact which will induce all Biblical students to look with intense interest for the forthcoming volume of this great and laborious work.

Two Volumes have been added to THE CAMBRIDGE BIBLE FOR SCHOOLS since Professor Plumptre's admirable exposition of the Epistle of St. James was noticed in this Magazine—*The Book of Joshua*, by the Rev. G. F. Maclear, D.D., and *The Gospel according to St. Matthew*, by the Rev. A. Carr, M.A. They fully sustain the high reputation which this "Bible" has already achieved. Dr. Maclear's notes on Joshua do not, indeed, go very deep, nor do they betray much vivacity or originality of mind. Nor are the difficulties of this Scripture—e.g., the astonishing miracle recorded in Chapter x. Verses 12-14—handled with the decision and thoroughness which the researches of modern criticism have rendered comparatively easy. Nevertheless his work breathes a painstaking and reverent spirit; his annotations are clear and intelligent, and if at times a little dull and commonplace, they are always and pre-eminently safe. Mr. Carr's notes on St. Matthew are much more lively and telling, much more likely, I should think, to lay hold of a lad's mind and put him in the way of reading Scripture with quickened interest and an intelligent apprehension of its meaning. Difficulties are fairly faced, and, so far as possible, solved. There is a fine tone of sincerity and vivacity in his work, and even those who have

read many commentaries on this Gospel will occasionally get from him a suggestion which may set them thinking in new directions.

THE TEACHERS' BIBLE (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode) has long since won a good reputation with the class for whom it is specially designed. Its worth and usefulness have even been attested, I believe, by the fact that less enterprising publishers have largely plagiarized from it. And, indeed, its excellent maps, tables, indices, concordance, &c., render it very acceptable and valuable to many who do not teach what they learn from it. In the new edition just published a new and most valuable feature is added to it, which cannot fail to make it still more useful and popular. It now contains essays on the poetry, the music, the ethnology, the plants, the animals, the money and weights of the Bible, on the Jewish sects and orders, and a chronological summary of Bible History, which exhibits the contemporary dynasties of non-Jewish countries. And it does great credit to the editor and publishers that these additional essays are not mere compilations by unknown and unskilful hands, but original papers written by scholars who are acknowledged to be in the front rank of their several departments. Thus, for example, the essay on the Poetry of the Bible is by Mr. Cheyne, that on the Music by Dr. Stainer, that on the Ethnology by the Rev. A. H. Sayce, that on the Plants by Sir J. Hooker, that on the Animals by Canon Tristram, and that on the Money and Weights by F. W. Madden. It would be impossible to select six scholars more competent to write on their respective topics than these: it would not be easy to select a six to match them. And their work is worthy of their name and reputation. Necessarily brief, it is nevertheless not only accurate and reliable, but singularly thorough and comprehensive. In fine, this Bible thoroughly deserves the success it commands. Every Sunday-school teacher should possess himself of it, and, if possible, of this last edition of it.

THE DURATION OF FUTURE PUNISHMENT, AND OTHER SERMONS. *By Rev. Charles Short, M.A.* (London: James Clarke and Co.) If Mr. Short has not done himself some injustice, he has at least put himself at some disadvantage, by the title he has given his book. It is very true that it contains two discourses on the duration of future punishment, and that in these discourses the Scriptural argument for the ultimate salvation of all men is stated in a very quiet and effective way. But these sermons stand last in the volume, and need not therefore have been put first on the title-page. The subject is one on which the gravest diversities of opinion obtain. There are myriads among us who are sincerely convinced that his view of it is opposed to the plain teaching of Holy Writ, and many of them are likely to turn away from a volume in which that view is, as it were, flaunted in their very face. It will be a pity if they do, since they would find much in this volume to instruct and edify them. For most of these sermons are able and thoughtful expositions of the Divine Word; and in these he breathes a spirit so intelligent and devout, and shews himself so skilful in interpretation, that all who seek to acquaint themselves with the mind of the Spirit would be the wiser and the better for reading them.

Mr. Short seems to have all the gifts requisite for popular exposition. While studying the several Scriptures he takes in hand thoroughly, so that his acquaintance with even minute points of criticism occasionally reveals itself to the trained and experienced eye in the turn of a sentence or the emphasis laid on a word, he nevertheless handles them with a certain breadth, not labouring on merely critical points, nor dissipating the attention of his audience by insisting on a multitude of details, but presenting the main flow of thought in a large and effective manner, and lighting it up with illustrations drawn from the daily life and common spiritual experience of men.

It is quite evident, too, that he has kept himself acquainted with the best results of modern thought and research, and knows how to meet the difficulties by which the minds of

many are just now distressed. He has considered what Criticism and Science and Philosophy have to allege against the revelation of the Will of God contained in Holy Writ, or against the dogmas inferred from it by the doctors of the Church; and while admitting the force of whatever can be fairly advanced against the current interpretations of the Bible, he finds in it for himself, and for those who listen to him, truths which go deeper than Criticism can reach, and are of too divine a substance for doubt to tarnish. He has glimpses of the larger purer faith that is to issue from the disturbing process in which the things that can be shaken are being removed, in order that the things that cannot be shaken may abide with us in fairer and completer forms. It is impossible to read such sermons as those entitled, "The Two Revelations," or "God's Church wider than Man's," or "The Work of the Spirit in Modern Life," without feeling that, like the men of Issachar, he has "understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do," and to believe.

His style answers to his method and spirit. It is simple and telling, with that scholarly reserve and self-restraint which is so much more impressive than rash and turgid speech. He is fair and candid; and, while eminently reasonable, speaks with an accent of sincere and strong conviction. In fine, a new and able expositor makes his appearance in this striking volume; and, accordingly, we give him our "Welcome, and Well done!"

EDITOR.

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BIBLICAL NOTE.

JOSHUA iv. 9.—This verse, as it stands in our Version and in the LXX., is very puzzling. It says that "Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood: and they are there unto this day." In the verse immediately preceding, we are told that "the children of Israel did as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, as the Lord spake unto Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of