

And the intention of the Poet is to sing the inherent majesty of Love, its Divine origin, its victorious course, its unpurchaseable sanctity. He is speaking of Love not simply, nor mainly, as it shews itself in our imperfect affections for each other, but as an universal and divine principle, the motive and supreme principle of universal being; of the Love which is from God, the Love which *is* God and in which He dwells; the Love in which if we dwell, God dwells in us and we in Him. And, taken in this high sense, the Hymn is surely no unworthy precursor, no mean rival even, of St. Paul's noble and famous song in praise of Charity.

BRIEF NOTICES OF BOOKS.

LIFE AND WORK OF ST. PAUL. *By F. W. Farrar, D.D., F.R.S.* (London: Cassell and Co.) Immediately on its appearance this book was saluted with a chorus of unstinted and rapturous praise, which went far to create a suspicion, if not a prejudice, against it. Critics of the dithyrambic school should bear in mind that not only do they render the task of the fair and sober critic even more difficult than it naturally is, but that they also insult the understanding of the Author for whom they think no flattery too gross, and excite in his readers an expectation too high for mortal man to fulfil. When they affirmed that Canon Farrar's new book had superseded the works of Lewin, and Conybeare and Howson, scholars by whose original researches he has been spared a world of toil, and even of Bishop Lightfoot, the very prince of commentators, and of Tischendorf, the prince of textualists, and begin to sing hymns to one who could bear

all that weight
Of learning rightly, like a flower,

they probably offended no one so much as Canon Farrar himself. For of him we may say—bating the adverb—what he himself says of St. Paul: “He stands infinitely above the need of indiscriminate panegyric,” and never stood so high above it as in the work before

us. Those who wish to study the text of St. Paul's Epistles, line by line, and word by word, must still keep their Tischendorf at hand ; Lightfoot's unrivalled commentaries have *not* been in any sense superseded, and will long continue to be indispensable to those who have to search out the meaning of Epistles in which there are still " many things hard to be understood : " while those who desire to familiarize themselves with all the details, historical and probable, of the outward life of the great Apostle, and of the various communities among whom he laboured or to whom he wrote, will still betake themselves to the laborious collections of Lewin, and Conybeare and Howson.

Let our readers, then, put all that fulsome and indiscriminate panegyric out of their minds at once ; let them bring a caudid and unbiassed judgment to the perusal of this book—a book that will repay study as well as perusal, and we are much mistaken if they do not pronounce it by far the best book Canon Farrar has written, and even by far the best account yet given of the life and lifework of St. Paul.

If it be asked in what the special excellence of this picturesque and erudite book consists, it is impossible within our limits to do more than hint a reply. In previous " Lives " of the Apostle we have had as much, and even more, detail of the historical conditions under which he lived and worked ; we have had even fuller translations of his Epistles, though none so suggestive, or accompanied by comments so original and helpful ; but, while Lewin, and Conybeare and Howson—to name only the best previous works on St. Paul—wrote his life, as it were, only from the outside, Canon Farrar has written it as *from the inside* : and, whereas in their works the Letters of the Apostle are simply set side by side with the historical facts that suggested and conditioned them, in his work Life and Letters are fused into a living and picturesque whole. Though we know nothing of Canon Farrar's method of preparing himself for and approaching this great task, we do not doubt that, before he began to write, he not only studied the several Epistles intently, noting whatever threw light on the intellectual and spiritual development of the Apostle, but that he also steeped and saturated his mind in them till, by those subtle emanations which proceed from the utterances of every great thinker, but only penetrate and irradiate a sympathetic atmosphere, their rich and rare and passionate spirit took possession of his spirit, and the life of the man and the work of the Apostle grew vital and intelligible to him. To him the Speeches and Letters of St. Paul seem to have been what, for example, the letters and poems of Cowper should be to the biographer of Cowper—not simply productions of a bygone age, to be

historically and scholastically explained, but living offshoots from the very heart of the man, in which the man himself, the man within the man, stood revealed. *This* we take to be the special and high distinction of the work before us, the *differentia* which give it its value, originality, power.

So much has been said of Canon Farrar's style, mainly in its dispraise, that even the briefest notice would be incomplete without some reference to it. We frankly admit that his style is often too rhetorical for our taste, too heavily laden with epithets of too high a colour. But we submit that those who would judge it fairly should bear in mind that it is these very epithets, and this abundance or superabundance of colour, which go far to render his work acceptable to the immense audience which he commands; that the epithets he employs are not thrown at random on the page, but are commonly suggested by some latent hint in the text over which he is working, or spring from a desire to characterize, to convey the conception or the moral emotion in his own mind: and that if "purple patches" are to be found in his writings, there are also many passages written in as simple, strong, and noble English as the most exacting purist can demand. Throughout the present work, indeed, his style is, in our judgment, much more simple and clear and weighty than in any of his previous works.

BISHOP ELLICOTT'S NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY, VOL. III. (London: Cassell.) This valuable Commentary is now complete; and in the final volume, as in its immediate predecessor, there is much good work, some of the best indeed, if there is also much that might easily have been made better. Canon Barry's exposition of the philosophical Epistles of St. Paul is all that could be desired; it is as good as Professor Plumptre's exposition of the Synoptic Gospels in Volume i., and what more can one say than that? Dr. Moulton—though this, we believe, is his first appearance as an expositor—proves himself not unlikely to take a place in the front rank of popular Commentators by his handling of the difficult Epistle to the Hebrews, on which he has evidently bestowed much labour and reading and thought: we cannot always assent to his conclusions, indeed;—our conception of Chapter vi. 1-6, for instance, wholly differs from his; but nevertheless, we should be sorry to frame an opinion on any passage in the Epistle without having first consulted him, and considered what he had to say. Mr. Boyd Carpenter, again, has contributed an exposition of the Apocalypse, characterized by rare

ability and good sense. These are "the first three" of the present volume, or, at all events, their work is the best work : and "the first of the three" is Canon Barry.

On the whole this Commentary is, in our judgment, the best popular commentary on the *whole* New Testament yet produced in England, though it still leaves something to be desired and done ; and if the other Scriptures were as ably handled as the Gospels, the Acts, Romans, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Hebrews, and the Revelation, it would probably hold its own for many a year to come, and almost shut out the hope of excelling it—a hint which it might be worth the while of the publishers to consider.

It cannot but be gratifying to the Editor and Staff of this Magazine to find so many of the Contributors to this able and learned work—and among them some of the best—acknowledging their obligations to THE EXPOSITOR ; to find also, even where no such acknowledgment is made, that criticisms and suggestions which first appeared in these pages have been assimilated and employed.

STUDIES ON THE TIMES OF ABRAHAM. *By the Rev. Henry George Tomkins.* (London : Bagster and Sons.) This erudite and beautiful book is a book for scholars, and especially for those of them who have the gift of a creative or constructive imagination, denied to the Author, and are able to assimilate the abundant material here supplied and to reproduce it in new and living forms. With great care and labour, though he does not always indicate the relative weight of the several authorities he quotes, Mr. Tomkins has culled from the investigations of recent Oriental scholars such facts as serve to illustrate the earlier stages of Abraham's life. The bricks of Babylon, the tiles and tablets of Assyria, the inscriptions and paintings of Egyptian sarcophagi, the ruins and remains of Phœnicia and Bashan, and the writings of Herodotus, as interpreted by Menant, Lenormant, Haigh, Oppert, Meyer, Lepsius, Ebers, Brugsch-Bey, Mariette-Bey, Sayce, Rawlinson, Wilkinson, Layard, Birch, Malan, George Smith, Porter, Tristram, Drew, and many more, are compelled to yield whatever throws light on the sacred narrative. The migrations of Abraham from "Ur of the Chaldees" to Kharran, Damascus, Canaan, Egypt, and back again to the Promised Land, are carefully traced ; in short, the whole course of his life, from the days of early childhood to his great military adventure, the pursuit and defeat of Kedor-la'omer, and the successive conditions which affected the pro-

gress of his thoughts as he came into contact with race after race, are illustrated by a multitude of facts, drawn from secular sources, which confirm the Mosaic narrative at a hundred different points. Not that the Author has given us a lively picture of Abraham's outward and inward life; but that he has collected and furnished the data, before so widely scattered, and to many so inaccessible, from which, if, at least, we have any gift that way, we may paint such a picture for ourselves. All who have hereafter to deal with the life of "the father of the faithful" will find it much to their advantage to consult this laborious and valuable work.

It would be unjust to close our brief notice of this beautiful book without calling attention to the valuable and instructive series of artistic illustrations prefixed to it—derived from Assyrian and Babylonian sources—and to the unusual excellence of type, paper, and arrangement, which make the book a pleasant one to eye and hand. It is a book for the table as well as for the shelf.

THE CAMBRIDGE BIBLE FOR SCHOOLS holds on its useful career. Since it was last noticed here no less than three volumes have been added to this pleasant and instructive Library. And since we are about to point out their defects rather than their excellences, let us say at once, and say emphatically, that these new volumes are quite worthy of the good company to which they are the most recent additions. *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* is expounded by *Professor Lias*—who annotated the first Epistle—with his usual careful scholarship and sobriety of judgment. *Dr. Rawson Lumby* gives us the first section of his comment on *the Acts of the Apostles* (Chapters i.–xiv.), in which he turns his recent Talmudic studies to good account, and displays, like Professor Lias, both sound scholarship and a sober judgment. But are not the volumes of this series growing somewhat *too* sober, and even a little dull, especially considering that they are intended mainly for the use of lads and lasses in our high schools, grammar schools, and public schools? And do they not tend to become dull very much because they do not go deep enough, because one hardly feels in reading them that the writers have put forth their best powers, and taken pains to put the results of their thought and reading in bright animated forms likely to engage the attention of the young? To give but one example. More ought certainly to have been made of the phrase, "And the disciples were called *Christians* first at Antioch." It would be easy to compile a brief historical note on that phrase which would be

full of vivid interest for young and opening minds, and which would really convey the significance of the new Name to them. And yet this seems hardly to have been attempted. Bright animated books, which reflect the eager interest of the writer in the theme which he handles, are above all wanted for and in our schools. And some of the volumes in this series are a little lacking in that quality.

Professor Plumptre, however, it must be admitted, is never dull, and hardly ever falls below his own highest level. His "notes" on the *General Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude* are admirable, full of erudition quickened by thought, and conveyed in lively picturesque forms. The only defect we can suggest in his last contribution to this useful series is that his life of St. Peter, measured by the standard of the whole work, is out of scale, and need not, since its incidents are so well known, have been told at such length. The "too much" has to be avoided in books of this kind as well as the "too little." The volume which bears Dr. Plumptre's name has, however, one feature which demands a special word of praise. The Tables in which the Epistles of St. Peter are compared with other writings in the New Testament are of high and special value.

The peculiarity of *Abbott's ILLUSTRATED COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT* (London: Hodder and Stoughton), is, of course, its illustrations. And these are really very helpful, since they are evidently selected not so much for their artistic qualities as because they are really explanatory of the text. Nor are the expository notes without value, especially to those who have not Morison and Godet on the Gospels, or Ellicott's New Testament at hand; though, as the Rev. Lyman Abbott does not rise above the American level of mediocrity in Biblical scholarship, and as, moreover, he has taken the whole New Testament for his province, he cannot be expected to shew the originality which can only come of unusual gifts and from much pondering over wise sayings that have been long laid up in the heart. It is a pity that at least the common run of commentators cannot be restricted to a single Scripture; in that case even the least original of us might hope to leave something behind him that the Church would not willingly let die.

Mr. Abbott's work, which already covers the Gospels and the Acts—to which four considerable volumes are devoted—is really a compilation, but a compilation for which he has prepared himself by a good deal of reading, and by a judicious discrimination of the comparative value of what he has read, although his reading, strange to

say, does not seem to have embraced the best recent works on the New Testament. Written from an orthodox and evangelical point of view, and following for the most part the commonly accepted readings, his work is likely to be very useful to teachers, who must keep in the main to well-worn grooves, and who wish, as all teachers of children ought to wish, to add an appeal to the eye to their constant address to the ear; but it has not the rare and high value which attaches to the labours of those who, working over a lesser surface, give a lifetime to meditation and research.

A very curious Commentary on the New Testament has reached us from America. Published by the Appletons of New York in two massive volumes, it is "*prepared*" by *Dr. F. Glentworth Butler*. Its name, "THE BIBLE READERS' COMMENTARY," does not let us into the secret of its peculiar quality, though to the initiated that word "*prepared*" may do so in part. In point of fact, it is a compilation in another sense than the Illustrated Commentary noticed above—a *mere* compilation, the whole exposition being drawn from a long catena of authors, not always, though often, in their very words. Sometimes their sentences are summarized by the "*Preparer*," or their thoughts are given in his words. This kind of work is not much to our taste; but we are bound to admit that Dr. Butler has been very catholic in his selection of authors, and that his citations are often very suggestive. He cites from many of the best writers of all schools, whether English or American, orthodox or unorthodox, as also from some whose works are comparatively unknown. Greek and Latin fathers, prelates of the English Church, Puritan divines, German, Swiss, and French expositors, English and American, Catholic and Protestant commentators and preachers, and even the flower of Unitarian authors, stand side by side in this strange work. How widely the Compiler has cast his net may be inferred from the fact that among recent or living writers he quotes from the works of, we can only select a few names from the immense list—Dean Alford, Dr. Angus, Dr. Arnold, Dr. Beecher, Dr. Binney, Dr. Bonar, Stopford Brooke, Dr. Bushnell, Archer Butler, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Delitzsch, Dr. Eadie, Bishop Ellicott, Dr. Faber, Godet, Dr. Hanna, Robert Hall, Dr. James Hamilton, Edward Irving, John Keble, Charles Kingsley, Dr. Liddon, Bishop Lightfoot, Dr. Maclaren, Norman Macleod, George McDonald, Dr. James Martineau, F. D. Maurice, Dr. Raleigh, F. W. Robertson, Dr. Pye Smith, Dean Stanley, Mr. Spurgeon, Isaac Taylor, the Bishop of Exeter, Arch-

bishop Trench, Dr. Vaughan, Dr. Westcott, and Bishop Wordsworth, not to mention the Editor and several of the contributors to this Magazine. And still the half, nor the quarter, is not told. If any one should be on the look-out for a Commentary of quotations, surely he need carry his researches no further, but may well be content with the liberal and eclectic provision made for him in the work before us.

THROUGH BIBLE LANDS. *By Philip Schaff, D.D.* (London : Nisbet and Co.) Dr. Schaff is so well known as a Biblical scholar, or at least as an able editor of the work of other Biblical scholars, that we hoped much from this record of his visit to Bible lands, and hoped the more when we read in the preface that his aim was to "help the reader to a better understanding of the Book of books." It is with reluctance and grave disappointment we have to admit that he has completely failed to reach his aim. He often affirms, indeed, that at such and such a place this or that passage in Bible history became wonderfully clear or impressive to him ; but he tells us nothing which renders any part of the Bible either clearer or more impressive to us. We have talked with many an unlettered layman who, after travelling through Egypt and Syria, had more to say which really threw light on the Sacred Volume than we have been able to gather from a patient perusal of this tedious and feeble book. Dr Schaff has only injured his reputation by publishing it.