

BRIEF NOTICES.

CANONICITY: *A Collection of Early Testimonies to the Canonical Books of the New Testament, based on Kirckhofer's "Quellensammlung."* By A. B. Charteris, D.D. (Edinburgh: Wm. Blackwood and Sons.) Dr. Charteris has rendered no slight service to scholars by collecting in a single volume the testimony to the authorship and authenticity of the several New Testament Scriptures, and to their early admission into the Canon, which lies scattered through an innumerable array of volumes, many of which are rare or difficult of access. He has largely added to the service by characterizing and weighing the leading authorities he quotes in an introductory chapter which is very ably written, and shews a just discrimination of their respective values.

THE SCRIPTURAL DOCTRINE OF SACRIFICE (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark) is very carefully and thoroughly discussed by the Rev. Alfred Cave, B.A., from its first revelation to the Patriarchs, through its differentiations in the teachings of Moses and the Prophets, to its consummation and apotheosis in the Sacrifice of the Cross. It is long since this weighty theme has been so weightily treated. And the conclusions at which Mr. Cane arrives are none the less valuable because they are strictly orthodox.

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST. By the Rev. A. M. Fairbairn, D.D. (London: Hodder and Stoughton.) These "studies" are familiar to the readers of the *Expositor*, for they first appeared in this Magazine, although by some oversight that fact is not mentioned either in Preface or Titlepage; and, in this collected form, will no doubt receive a hearty welcome from them. That sacred Life is simply inexhaustible in its suggestions; and, though of late years it has been more largely and ably set forth than ever, there was ample room for Professor Fairbairn's thoughtful and brilliant sketches of its main movements and events. The only objection ever alleged against these studies, even by the most exacting critic, was that they were "too rhetorical." Let it be granted that they are rhetorical. But let those who object to them on that ground, observe that Dr. Fairbairn's is not the base rhetoric often employed to hide want of thought or poverty of thought, but the noble rhetoric which is alive with thought and imagination to its utmost and

finest extremities. Let them also consider how facts and truths of the gravest moment are to be driven home to the general mind otherwise than by noble and impassioned eloquence. And let them turn to such a "study" as that on "the Resurrection," and tell us where the objections to that historical fact have been more ably and exhaustively stated, or more logically and triumphantly refuted.

THE INCARNATE SAVIOUR: A LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST. *By the Rev. W. R. Nicoll, M.A.* (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark.) It is hardly fair to Mr. Nicoll, though there is no help for it, to bring his "Life" into such close contact with Dr. Fairbairn's "Studies"; for his work lacks the passion, power, and imagination by which that of the learned and eloquent Professor is characterized. Somewhat slender, if not slight, in substance, it nevertheless moves on the right lines; for, like Dr. Fairbairn's "studies," it is an honest attempt to deal with the inner rather than the outer life of the Lord, to set forth the progress of his thoughts, the unfolding of the truths to which He came to bear witness, rather than to depict the external conditions amid which He moved. The simple and unlettered Christian will find it a very agreeable and instructive book, for there are some vital signs in the style in which it is written; while even the scholar, weary of sceptical hypotheses and logical refutations of them, will be refreshed as he reads, and may find here and there a hint not without critical or exegetical value.

The last contribution to the CAMBRIDGE BIBLE FOR SCHOOLS is a Commentary on the *First Book of Samuel*, by the *Rev. A. F. Kirkpatrick, M.A.*, which is quite worthy of its place in the series. The exegetical notes are sensible and helpful; while the Introduction compresses much useful information into narrow compass, and is now and then bright with touches of picturesque description.

"THESE SAYINGS OF MINE," by *Rev. Joseph Parker, D.D.* (London: Richard Clarke), is really a popular exposition of St. Matthew i.-vii. And very able and powerful the exposition often is; one of its chief excellences being that all the truths suggested to Dr. Parker's mind by the Scripture in hand are duly related to the thought and experience of to-day, and often interpreted by them. The style both of thought and expression is masculine and robust,

degenerating at times—for even Dr. Parker has the defects of his qualities—into coarseness. But no man can bring an unprejudiced mind to these expository discourses without being healthily impressed by them, and at times even charmed by unexpected glimpses of truth, and by equally unexpected delicacies of insight and touch.

ECCE VERITAS, or Modern Scepticism and Revealed Religion Weighed. *By Rev. J. Hiles Hitchens, D.D.* (London: Houghton & Co.) This is not a book that calls for review. Its calibre may be inferred from the following citation, taken from Chapter I.:

“We say to those who to-day heap their valueless scorn upon the Bible—first, be good enough to find a volume that can take its place, before you deprive humanity of this peerless production. Ye very wise men, who look down with supercilious scorn from your self-constructed pedestals of sceptical indifference, and pity the credulity of the earnest believer in the truths of revelation, how is it that ye have not yet furnished a book worthy to lie by the side of this majestic book? Would not your position be more secure and your judgment more respected, if you could point to a volume containing as many specimens of elevated genius and exquisite elegance; a volume as capable of captivating the taste, electrifying the affections, subduing the heart, and elevating the moral nature; a volume that has evoked as many thousands of books for and against it, in confirmation and in confutation of its claims? You cannot. You gladly would if you could. Meanwhile you have tried the cowardly trick of endeavouring to elevate human intellect by ineffectual efforts to pick to pieces what you could not construct. You have aimed to ruin what you cannot rival, to mar what you cannot match, to uproot what you cannot understand. With what result? Poor pigmy worms! ye thought to thrash the mountain level, but ye have sorely bruised yourselves; whilst the Bible still,—

Like some tall cliff that lifts its reverend form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm;
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.”

This is but one of many specimens of “the elevated genius and exquisite elegance” with which this volume abounds. And, after reading it, no man can well deny that Dr. Hitchens has produced a work which has at least one characteristic of a great book: it is all of a piece. But whether it is more vulgar in thought or in rhetoric, or whether its tone or its spirit is the more crude and uncharitable, it is difficult to determine.