

BRIEF NOTICES.

No book published for many a month will be more welcome to Biblical students than THE PARALLEL NEW TESTAMENT, issued a month or two since by *The Oxford University Press*, in which the Authorised Version and the Revised Version are printed side by side, and can therefore be instantly compared. We have longed and called for it ever since the New Testament Company brought their somewhat questionable offspring to the birth; and we receive it with the gratitude of men who foresee that much otherwise inevitable labour is to be spared them. For now a mere glance at the two columns as they lie side by side on the same page will replace the necessity of comparing two distinct volumes printed on different scales, and thus an immense saving both of time, and of toil of a peculiarly tedious and fretting kind, will be secured. With a little practice it will even be possible to read the New Testament aloud from this volume, quietly correcting the innumerable unnecessary alterations of the Revised Version from the other column, while retaining all that are really necessary and valuable. In the copy before us, moreover, the book is as nearly perfect—in type, paper, and binding—as a book can well be; pleasant to the eye, and pleasant to the touch. In short, it will be of the utmost value to every student of the New Testament into whose hands it falls; while it reflects no little credit on the Press from which it issues.

LOGIC AND LIFE, with other Sermons, by *Rev. H. S. Holland*, M.A. (London: Rivingtons), are sermons not to be *read* simply, but *perused*. True to their title, there is both logic and life in them—a very close and cogent logic, a very vivid and throbbing life. They are manifestly the productions of a mind at once subtle and strong, familiar too with the difficulties which modern science and culture have suggested, and able to grapple with them. In such discourses as those on “The Venture of Reason,” “The Cost of Moral Movement,” and “Christ the Justification of a Suffering World”—to single out only a few of those which have most impressed us—trains of thought are started which cannot fail to be most helpful to any sceptic who will be at the pains of following

them out. And the style, save for its over elaborateness and an occasional tone of over excitement, is worthy of the thoughts it expresses, often indeed rising into a natural and noble eloquence; not the eloquence of mere words, but of thoughts which by their own swift motion and steadfast pressure have taken fire. In short, it is long since we have met with sermons so powerful, or so well adapted to the wants and cravings of the time. There are at least five or six of them the arguments of which we would gladly place before our readers did space permit. There is not one of them from which cultivated men may not cull some striking suggestion, or by which devout men may not find their spirits comforted and refreshed. To preachers of the higher stamp, who are so happy as to address educated and thoughtful congregations, they will be of immense value, stimulating and enriching their minds, and indicating some new lines along which the great problems of the age may be approached with advantage.

It is not often that a Prize Essay is of permanent worth, or that it even shews signs of much promise. But in *THE SYNOD OF ELVIRA*, By *A. W. W. Dale, M.A.* (London: Macmillan) we have an Essay which carried off the Hulsean premium of 1881, and is nevertheless both of good promise and of good performance. Mr. Dale's style whether of thought or of expression is singularly mature for that of so young an author. And though his theme is not inviting—for the Synod of Elvira was only an obscure Spanish Council of the fourth century, the very name of which will be unknown to many of our readers—he has so handled it as to make it quick with interest and instruction.

He starts by discussing the place, date, and constitution of the Synod, collecting his facts and arguments from a wide range of reading, and reaching his conclusions with a remarkable moderation and impartiality. Then, taking up the decrees of the Synod, he infers from them the social, ecclesiastical, and political conditions which they were evidently designed to meet, and gives us a vivid and impressive sketch of the state both of the Church of the time and of the Empire, in which he makes it clear how far the Church had already fallen from its original simplicity, how rapidly the Roman Empire was tending to decay. Most of our ecclesiastical historians, however learned and able, are but dull reading at the best; but Mr. Dale has a gift of lively narrative, a

power of seizing on the essential, picturesque, and really illustrative points of his subject, which has enabled him to invest an obscure and unattractive event in Church History with life and interest. If his harvest should answer to his "first-fruits," as we trust it will, we may look to receive many pleasant and instructive books from his hands.

Mr. T. Fisher Unwin (London) could hardly have opened his career as a publisher more auspiciously than by issuing the facsimile reprint of *THE TEMPLE*, by *George Herbert*, in which he has given us an exact typographical reproduction of the copy in the British Museum (First Edition, A.D. 1633). Not that we ourselves care much for these curious and costly reprints of ugly old books. For our own use we should prefer a handsome modern edition of almost any one of them even to the original, and much more to a mere copy of the original. Still there are many who do value them. And the publisher who could produce this wonderfully exact reprint gives no doubtful proof that he can produce almost any work within the compass of his art. He has shewn good judgment, too, in selecting Mr. Shorthouse to write the introductory Essay. It would hardly be possible to find in this generation a man so entirely in sympathy with the Poet of the Church as the author of *John Inglesant*. And his essay is quite worthy of his reputation. Written in choice and dainty English, it adequately characterises both the Poet and his work. Nonconformists may be irritated or amused, according to their complexion, by his too "churchy" tone, his bland assumption that "the Church of England"—which, after all, is only *one* of the Churches of Christ in England—is the bright consummate flower of the universe, his too evident belief that the production of "*fine gentlemen*" is the supreme end for which both the universe and the Church exist; especially as it would seem quite consistent with the character of a fine gentleman to trust in himself that he is righteous and to despise others. But they have no right at least to be irritated by it. What else could they expect from the author of *John Inglesant*? In what other tone could the poems of George Herbert be so fitly introduced?

THE PULPIT COMMENTARY. EXODUS. *Exposition and Homiletics*, by the Rev. George Rawlinson, M.A., with homilies by Rev. J. Orr, M.A., Rev. C. A. Goodhart, M.A., Rev. Dr. Young, B.A., Rev. J.

Urquhart, and the Rev. H. T. Robjohns, B.A. (London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co.). This book weighs five pounds. It measures ten inches by six and a half, and is three inches through. And its back is sure to break before it has been a month in use.

One is driven back on this primitive and barbarous method of reviewing the volume by its very bulk. We do not pretend to have read it. We doubt whether any even of the patient and much enduring tribe of reviewers ever will read it straight through. The mortal span—since the Flood at least; Methusaleh might have amused his leisure hours with it, and Noah might have found it even a relief to the tedium of the Ark—is not long enough, human patience is not sufficient for the task.

And now that the Editors have succeeded in producing a volume to which no man who has any serious occupation of his own can possibly do justice, we trust that they will reconsider their plan, and reduce it to a scale which will bring it within the reach of those the days of whose years are but three-score years and ten.

We have only to add that Canon Rawlinson's name is a guarantee of good work; and that, so far as we can judge from occasional dips into this unwieldy book, his work here is, in both branches of it, up to the mark of his reputation.

OLD FAITHS IN NEW LIGHTS, by *Rev. Newman Smyth, D.D.*, is one of the best theological books we have received from America, most original in substance, most finished and attractive in style. We heartily welcome, therefore, a new and cheap *English* edition of it, published by Higham and by Unwin of London. To the sincere and devout sceptic the book will have a very special value and charm.
