

effect of this wonderful letter when first read in the Church at Philippi, are hidden from us. And we may almost say that with this letter the Church itself passes from our view. To-day, in silent meadows quiet cattle browse among the few ruins which mark the site of what was once the flourishing Roman colony of Philippi, the home of the most attractive Church of the apostolic age. But the name and fame and spiritual influence of that Church will never pass. To myriads of men and women in every age and nation, the letter written in a dungeon at Rome and carried along the Egnatian Way by an obscure Christian messenger, has been a light Divine, and a cheerful guide along the most rugged paths in life. As I watch, and myself rejoice in, the brightness of that far-shining light, and glance at those silent ruins, I see fulfilled an ancient prophecy: *The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.*

JOSEPH AGAR BEET.

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### RECENT ENGLISH LITERATURE ON THE NEW TESTAMENT.

PATRISTIC TEXTS.—The Cambridge University press has issued for Prof. Rendel Harris and the Johns Hopkins University a very complete and beautiful edition of *The Teaching of the Apostles*. This edition indeed may be said to take rank as the *editio princeps* of this important relic of primitive Christianity; for not only does it present a carefully edited text, but it gives photographs of the entire MS., so that any one can satisfy himself as to the correctness of the text. These photographs are beautifully executed, and will do something towards inducing curators of MSS. to follow Prof. Harris' advice, and insure by photography that, if important historical monuments disappear by fire or otherwise, we shall have guaranteed duplicates to refer to. Not only does Prof. Harris give us in this volume an assured text, but the notes he

has appended to this text are of very great value. Indeed among the many excellent editions of the *Teaching* which have been produced, none gives a more truly illustrative book of notes. The chapter on the Hebraisms of the *Teaching* is especially interesting and valuable, adding, as it does, to the information already furnished by Dr. Taylor. The volume does credit to all concerned in its production.

From the same press has been issued *A Collation of the Athos Codex of The Shepherd of Hermas* by Spyr. P. Lambros, Ph.D., Prof. Univ. Athens, translated and edited by J. Armitage Robinson, M.A. Until 1855 the text of the *Shepherd* was merely guessed at through a Latin version. In that year the notorious Constantine Simonides sold to the University of Leipsic what he affirmed was the original Greek text of the *Shepherd*. This was in the form of three leaves of a fourteenth century MS., and a copy of six other leaves of the same MS. which he had not been able to bring away. In consequence of the literary frauds he was found to be perpetrating, the gravest suspicions were thrown upon this pretended copy. But Dr. Lambros, in cataloguing the MSS. of the Athos libraries, came upon one which he believes to be "the much-desired original of the *apographon* of Simonides." It is a collation of this MS. that is now published, and it must of course be the chief authority for the text of Hermas.

INTRODUCTION.—To this department of New Testament literature Dr. Paton J. Gloag has made a contribution of great value in his *Introduction to the Catholic Epistles* (T. & T. Clark). In this volume every question which has arisen regarding these epistles is fully and candidly discussed. Nothing escapes Dr. Gloag's research. With the whole field of modern criticism he is familiar; and he puts his reader in possession of an amount of information which very few men have time to acquire for themselves. This research and learning Dr. Gloag uses with great good sense and judgment. His conclusions are at all times reasonable, and there are few critics with whom a majority of unbiassed minds will more frequently be found in agreement. To discuss those points on which we might be disposed to disagree with Dr. Gloag is here impossible. It is from his own book any who disagree with him are likely to find weapons wherewith to encounter him, for it is a vast repertory of opinions and suggestions on all questions of date, authorship, and contents of the catholic epistles. It does not

broach any new theories, and it is none the worse on that account. But while it defends traditional conclusions, it does so with full and candid consideration of all that has been urged against them. Dr. Gloag maintains the authenticity of 2 Peter, although he feels himself unable to determine whether that epistle or Jude has the better claim to priority, and on other points he is equally conservative. We may reasonably desire the more piercing light and the more original criticism which genius can bring, but we need not look for a more complete digest of opinions than this acceptable volume gives us.

In Mr. Nicoll's "Theological Educator," *An Introduction to the New Testament* has been furnished by Dr. Marcus Dods. This does not profess to be more than a compilation for the use of those who are beginning this study. It is hoped that it may find its way where larger books cannot find access.

An introduction to the fourth Gospel has been written by Mr. Howard Heber Evans under the title, *St. John the Author of the Fourth Gospel* (Messrs. James Nisbet & Co.). This is an attempt to prove the Johannine authorship, chiefly by an examination of the phraseology and style of the Gospel. It turns the tables on those who declare it to be a psychological impossibility that the Apocalypse and the Gospel proceeded from one mind. Mr. Evans, by a careful analysis of the language of both writings, shows it to be a psychological impossibility that those two documents could have been other than the work of one and the same hand. The case he presents is a very strong one, and he presents it in a simple and lucid form, and even such critics as may repudiate his conclusion must at least be thankful for the useful tables of parallel phrases and ideas he has furnished. This is the best piece of criticism Mr. Evans has yet given us, and is indeed a solid and important contribution to the criticism of the fourth Gospel.

EXPOSITION.—To Mr. Nicoll's "Expositor's Bible" (Hodder and Stoughton) two volumes of uncommon merit have been added, the one by Prof. Findlay on *The Epistle to the Galatians*, the other by Principal Edwards on *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. Readers of this magazine have learned to expect thorough work from Prof. Findlay. In his New Testament studies he has always shown independence and originality, combined with an accurate apprehension of what other scholars have ascertained. The same qualities are visible in his present volume; and it may safely be

said that no other commentary enables the reader to apprehend so readily and so accurately the meaning of this great epistle. To ascertain and expound the apostle's gospel as exhibited in *Galatians* calls for a theologian as well as a scholar. The expositor must be able to lift the mind from the exact analysis of words and phrases to those great ideas which make this epistle one of the foundation-stones of Christian doctrine. This is accomplished by Prof. Findlay. He writes with the accuracy of one who has long pondered his theme, and with the vigour and spirit of a full and eager mind.

Principal Edwards may also be congratulated on successfully achieving the difficult task of unfolding the meaning of *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. In this volume every page shows traces of careful and capable study. The epistle bristles with crucial passages for a commentator, and none but a veteran need attempt to find his way through these and to keep a firm hold on the thread that guides. However any critic may differ from Principal Edwards' interpretation of this or that passage, it will be owned that he deals with every difficulty in a straightforward and scholarly manner. It would very greatly have aided the reader if a brief introduction, indicating the scope and course of the epistle, had been prefixed to the exposition. But when one gets fairly launched in the book the stream of strong and consecutive thought carries one on. Brilliant and weighty passages relieve the strain of following the argument and quicken the attention. And it will be the opinion of every reader that Principal Edwards has produced a volume full of substance and worthy of its great theme.

Another admirable guide to the meaning of this epistle is furnished to English readers in Mr. Frederic Rendall's *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Macmillan & Co.). The same author had previously published a thoughtful and original introduction to this epistle, as well as critical and explanatory notes on the Greek text. He has now republished the introduction along with a translation of the Greek text and copious notes. These notes are free from everything that might stagger the English reader. No Greek words occur, no names of commentators or books of reference load the page. But beneath this unscholastic surface lie a scholarship as severe and a criticism as penetrating and exact as are to be found in the most learned of German commentaries. The reader at once finds himself under the guidance of a serious

and candid mind. New meaning is assigned to several words, and a new turn given to some phrases and passages; and although these will not always be approved, they are all recommended by considerations that are both interesting and weighty. We have few expositions of Scripture which will be found more incentive to thought, and certainly no one who wishes to understand the Epistle to the Hebrews should neglect Mr. Rendall's volume.

The Gospel of St. John still attracts expositors. Not only has the second volume of *The Pulpit Commentary* on the fourth Gospel been published, completing a very full and instructive book, but Dr. Thomas Whitelaw has issued with Messrs. Macle hose an exposition of the same Gospel for the use of clergymen, students, and teachers. It is named *The Gospel of St. John: an Exposition Exegetical and Homiletical*. The homiletical part, in our opinion, does injustice to the exegetical; and is besides incongruous, for those who relish the exegesis will not consult the homiletics. The exegetical part is decidedly good of its kind. It gathers all the interpretations of each phrase, and classifies them, so that the reader can choose for himself. The volume therefore represents, and will save, a vast amount of labour. Sometimes the reader desiderates a little more dogmatism on the part of Dr. Whitelaw, and a little less of the mosaic of other men's opinions; but for practical purposes, probably Dr. Whitelaw's method is best. And we cannot too highly respect the painstaking diligence which every page of his work evinces. The introduction to the Gospel is a most satisfactory piece of work, full, strong, and conclusive. It would be difficult to furnish in the same space a more effective defence of the authorship of this much-debated Gospel. Altogether the book will fulfil its author's design, and be useful to clergymen, students, and teachers.

In mentioning Dr. Thomas Richey's *The Parables of the Lord Jesus according to St. Matthew*, we travel beyond our province, as the volume is published in New York. Mr. Higham, the English publisher, has however sent us a copy; and while we leave the criticism of it to Professor Warfield, we think it right meanwhile to recommend it to all who wish to see the parables treated in a more scientific manner than that which is sometimes adopted. It is a book which repays study.

Dr. Robert Johnstone, Professor of New Testament Literature in the United Presbyterian College, Edinburgh, has issued two

books during the past half year. One of these is published by Messrs. Clark, and is on *The First Epistle of Peter*. It is intended to aid students of the Greek text, and is perhaps even too full in its grammatical and textual explanations. This however is a vice that leans to virtue's side; and no one will question the conscientious and painstaking diligence with which Dr. Johnstone has applied himself to the accurate ascertainment of his author's meaning. Turning to one of the crucial passages of the epistle, we find that Dr. Johnstone understands that Christ's preaching to the spirits in prison was accomplished during the lifetime and through the agency of Noah. This interpretation is scarcely compatible with the clause, τοῖς ἐν φυλακῇ πνεύμασι πορευθεῖς; and although Dr. Johnstone endeavours to show that πορευθεῖς is admissible on his interpretation, we find in the numerous pages devoted to the passage no explanation of the phrase, "the spirits in prison," although it may be gathered from what is said that the imprisonment referred to is their condition after death. Dr. Johnstone's explanation of the references which the apostles made to the expected coming of Christ is not satisfactory. "Whether the apostles themselves, pondering the data which God had made known to them, thought it likely that 'the end of all things' would come during their own generation, is a question to which we are not in a position to give an answer." This assertion seems at all events a little out of place in a commentary on the words, "the end of all things is at hand." In the main however Dr. Johnstone's determination of the meaning of his author can be accepted, and as a whole the commentary is full of the fruits of sound and exact scholarship, and of serious thought. It is the best available aid to the study of the epistle with which it deals.

The other volume, issued for Dr. Johnstone by Messrs. Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, is a second edition of his *Lectures on the Epistle of James*. These are popular, and are yet based on a careful examination of the text. They were delivered from the pulpit to an ordinary congregation, and are admirably adapted for preaching purposes. They give a lucid explanation of every verse, and carry out its meaning into suitable applications to life and character. Preachers will derive valuable assistance from the volume.

MARCUS DODS.