

SURVEY OF RECENT LITERATURE ON THE
NEW TESTAMENT.

TEXTUAL CRITICISM.—All who are interested in New Testament studies must have hailed with much satisfaction the publication of the first *fasciculus* of the magnificent work undertaken by Bishop Wordsworth and Mr. White. It is entitled *Novum Testamentum Domini Nostri Jesu Christi Latine secundum editionem S. Hieronymi ad codicum manuscriptorum fidem recensuit*, etc. This part or fascicle contains thirty-seven pages of explanatory remarks and the whole of the Gospel of St. Matthew. In the explanatory remarks we have an account of the origin of this undertaking and of its many hindrances and difficulties; a register and brief identification of the twenty-nine MSS. which the editors have constantly consulted for the gospels, together with some notice of those editions of the Vulgate which have been more or less consulted. In the body of the book the text is printed in columns on the upper part of the page; across the middle is printed the "Itala" as it stands in the Codex Brixianus, which is supposed to give the nearest approximation to the version used by Jerome in composing the Vulgate; while the lower part of the page is occupied by a record of various readings. Nothing could exceed the beauty of the typography, and no one can fail to recognise the diligence and skill of the editors. When complete, the work will be one of the most substantial fruits of English scholarship. The only lack the reader feels is the absence of material for forming one's own judgment regarding the relative value of the MSS. used. If the editors saw their way to issue a little handbook supplying this want, many would be grateful to them. It would by no means require to be of the size or fulness of Westcott and Hort's second volume.

In the death of Prof. Ezra Abbot, America lost her most

accurate biblical scholar. No better monument could be raised to his memory than the volume of *Critical Essays* which Dr. Thayer has edited and which Mr. Ellis of Boston has published. The well-known paper on the authorship of the fourth gospel occupies more than a fifth part of the whole volume. The other papers all bear on New Testament studies. Two are biographical, the subjects being Tischendorf and Tregelles; one is devoted to a critique of Buttmann's Greek Testament, and another to Westcott and Hort's; and about half the volume is devoted to a discussion of some of the most important readings adopted by the last-named editors. All these papers have previously appeared in American periodicals, but they were deserving of a more permanent and wider circulation than those periodicals could give them. The volume will be highly prized and often referred to by all who are interested in the New Testament text.

INTRODUCTION.—Dr. Edwin Hatch has rendered to New Testament studies a service of which it is difficult to overestimate the value in publishing his *Essays in Biblical Greek* (Oxford, Clarendon Press). The volume contains the substance of the lectures he delivered during his term of office as Grinfield Lecturer on the Septuagint. As might be expected, a large part of the volume is occupied with discussions bearing directly on the text of the Septuagint, but the earlier portions of the volume indicate to students of the New Testament "some of the rich fields which have not yet been adequately explored, and offer suggestions for their exploration." No book has ever been published which is so likely to promote the study of the Septuagint, because no book has so clearly exhibited in well selected instances the fruitfulness of that study for the New Testament student. With the patience of the true scholar, Dr. Hatch has traced the history of many words through the periods of classical and Hellenistic Greek, and has pointed out the bearing of this

history upon the use of these words in the New Testament. In one or two instances Dr. Hatch seems unduly to press the Septuagint usage, although it must be admitted that he never does so without citing a great abundance of corroborative passages. On many previous occasions he has liberally bestowed on poorer scholars the rich fruits of his industry, learning, and research; but he has never struck a vein which it would be so profitable to work out as this of the Septuagint. One would fain construe some expressions in his preface into a promise that this first instalment of a great work may in due course be followed by complementary volumes. Meanwhile by this original and substantial contribution to the knowledge of Greek he has laid all students of the LXX, of Philo, and of the New Testament under deep obligation.¹

As the readers of this journal have already had an opportunity of judging for themselves as to the merits of Prof. Godet's papers on the Epistles of the New Testament, it is not necessary to do more than chronicle their collection into one volume, and publication by Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton under the title, *Studies on the Epistles*. There is no other book in which the results of modern criticism are so conveniently accessible and so admirably sifted.

To Mr. Nicoll's "Theological Educator" the late Rev. W. H. Simcox has contributed a volume on *The Language of the New Testament*. Those who have followed with interest and with profit the career of the author, and who mourn his decease, will know what to expect in this little book. They will expect surprisingly clear and ingenious suggestions, a most competent scholarship, and that slight degree of obscurity which attaches to the writings of men whose own minds are rapid in their movements, and who do not sufficiently consider the slower comprehension

¹ The mournful intelligence of Dr. Hatch's death reached us after this notice was in type. A greater loss biblical literature could not have sustained.

of the ordinary reader. This volume, indeed, is better adapted for advanced students than for beginners. It is not sufficiently formal and explanatory. These are blemishes which the more advanced student will consider merits, for it is rarely that a grammar has been written with such marked originality. Not that the results are by any means revolutionary, or even strikingly new,—that was not to be expected; but the entire volume flows from the fresh and independent reading and observation of the author. The distinctive peculiarities of New Testament Greek are defined with exactness, the gradations by which one grammatical usage passes into another are clearly traced, the frontier between grammar and exegesis marked with unusual sense and discrimination. In a word, this is the most living grammar of the New Testament we have. It is not the fullest, but behind every rule and observation we come into contact with the well-informed and sagacious scholar, working his own way through every intricacy and problem of his subject. On the whole, it may be said to fill a gap, and to put in the hands of students a satisfactory and interesting guide to the language of the New Testament. It does not enter into competition with Moulton's *Winer* nor with *Buttmann*, neither ought it to oust the philosophical and handy grammar of *Thomas Sheldon Green*; but, considering price, size, and accuracy, no grammar may more confidently be recommended. The references, it may be said, are singularly correct, and the misprints are trifling (pp. 140, 143, 175, 178).

EXPOSITION.—To the "Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges" two additions have recently been made. The one is on the *Epistle to the Philippians* by *Principal Moule* of *Ridley Hall*. Mr. Moule's experience as a teacher enables him to understand what needs explanation and what does not; and this volume is commendable as well for what it omits as for what it includes. The epistle,

too, suits Mr. Moule's theological and experimental bias, and it is easy to trace in the notes the same hand that has given us the admirable *Outlines of Christian Doctrine*. Concise, lucid, and well-informed, these notes are precisely what they ought to be for their purpose.—The other volume is contributed to the Cambridge *Greek Testament* by Archdeacon Farrar. The subject is the *Epistle to the Hebrews*. However grudging is the praise bestowed by many of Dr. Farrar's critics on the herculean industry which has produced so large a theological library as he has given us, not the most grudging will deny him the praise of sound Greek scholarship. Other qualities besides this pointed him out as the suitable writer of an exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews. He is in sympathy with the breadth of treatment and spiritual suggestiveness of the epistle, and he has given us in this little volume the results of considerable study. In his discussion of the authorship, he concludes that it was either written by Apollos or by some author who is to us entirely unknown. In his notes he does not trouble himself or his reader with the theories and interpretations of other writers, but summarily pronounces his own judgment and passes on. "Volumes of various explanations have been written on this verse, but the explanation given above is very simple"—yes; but sometimes it is too simple and apparently misses the difficulty. However nothing could well be better for its purpose than this volume. Much will be found in it which is not to be found in the larger commentaries, and it is full of life, vigour, and interest throughout.

To Mr. Nicoll's "Expositor's Bible" three additions have been made. One is on *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, by the present writer. Another is a thoroughly ripe and beautiful study of *The Epistles of St. John*, by William Alexander, D.D., D.C.L., Lord Bishop of Derry and Raphoe. This is in every respect a remarkable book, and

worthy to stand on the same shelf with Dean Chadwick's *Mark* and Smith's *Isaiah*. It departs from the form customarily observed by writers in this series, and does so with advantage to the reader. The bishop gives us in the first part of the volume a few discourses on the author and the "surroundings" and general aim of the first epistle. In the latter part he is more exegetical than other writers in this series have been, giving us the Greek text with four translations in parallel columns. The substance of the epistles is treated in discourses which bring out with admirable lucidity and force the significance of the chief ideas. A rich vein of poetry and imaginativeness runs through these discourses, giving colour and brightness to the volume, and insuring for it a warm reception with the public. We consider this one of the most striking and fruitful contributions to expository literature of which recent years can boast. The third addition to the "Expositor's Bible" is *The Book of Revelation*, by William Milligan, D.D.; and however critics may disagree with the principles underlying this exposition, there can be no question that Christian people are more likely to derive profit from it than from the fantastic histories of the future which so often pass for expositions of the Apocalypse. Dr. Milligan has prepared himself for this work by the study of many years. Already he has published a verse by verse commentary on the book, as well as a full explanation and defence of the principles of interpretation in which he believes. The volume now published is better adapted for general reading than either of the foregoing, and the reader will find in it much to interest and much to edify. There are here and there passages of great beauty, and the volume is throughout a scholarly and worthy production.—Those who can appreciate excellence in an unpretentious form will do well to make themselves acquainted with the last issued of Messrs. T. & T. Clark's Bible-class handbooks. It is a

commentary on the *Gospel according to St. John* by Rev. George Reith, M.A., of Glasgow. It is the work of a scholar and a careful student, and of one who possesses what is even more needful than scholarship for the interpretation of John, profound and true spiritual insight. He who uses this little book for the understanding of the fourth gospel will find that he needs no bulkier helps. Preachers will especially find it the very book for their purposes.

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY.—A volume which deserves a much more elaborate notice than can here be given to it is Dr. Bruce's *Kingdom of God* (Clark, Edin.). It is devoted to an exposition of our Lord's teaching as presented in the synoptical gospels, and those who read it will consider it no extravagance to say that it is the most living contribution that has yet been made to the theology of the New Testament. It is only the first instalment of a complete theology of the New Testament, in which Dr. Bruce proposes to treat all the types of doctrine comprised in the synoptical gospels, the Pauline epistles, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Johannine writings. Readers of this journal do not need to be told that Dr. Bruce is a most competent guide in New Testament learning. They have had ample means of appreciating the vigour of his understanding, his mastery of his subject, and his trenchant style. The volume he has now published is not surpassed in these features by any of his writings, and from it, we are sure, students will receive a fresh impulse, and preachers derive new topics for the pulpit. We do not elsewhere possess so scientific a grouping of our Lord's teaching nor so suggestive an exposition of it.

MISCELLANEOUS.—Admirers of Frederick Denison Maurice will be glad to have the volume of extracts from his writings which so intelligent a disciple as Mr. Llewellyn Davies has made for them. He calls it *Lessons of Hope* (Macmillan & Co.), and believes that Mr. Maurice's writings went largely to the cultivation of this grace. Perhaps these writings

suffer less than most by being presented in fragments, for Mr. Maurice was more suggestive than strong in ratiocination. The volume is very prettily got up, and will be acceptable as a gift-book.—The same publishing house has issued the eighteenth edition of Mr. Francis Procter's *History of the Book of Common Prayer*. Published nearly thirty-five years ago, this full and careful history still holds its place as, on the whole, the best guide to the Book of Common Prayer. Other works of the same nature have since been written, each with its own merits; but instead of ousting Mr. Procter's volume, these more recent books have merely stimulated him to make his own more complete. In this last edition there are no alterations of any moment. The book is very handy, and is packed with information.—Mr. Herbert Bindley, of Merton College, Oxford, has published with the Clarendon Press an excellent edition of the *Apologeticus* of Tertullian. In preparing this edition he has endeavoured to meet the wants of young theological students. It seems to us he has been eminently successful, and has furnished an edition which will be found, not only helpful, but most interesting. A perusal of the volume will give the student considerable acquaintance with the conditions through which Christianity had to fight its way, as well as with the laws and customs of the empire.—Messrs. T. & T. Clark have been bold enough to publish yet another system of theology: *Dogmatic Theology*, by Dr. Shedd, of Union Theological Seminary, New York, in two volumes. This is physically a ponderous book, but it is by no means heavy reading; for although Dr. Shedd keeps rigidly to the old and orthodox lines, he writes with the intelligence which necessarily accompanies reading so extensive as his, and he has managed to invest with a good deal of freshness topics which are usually considered threadbare.

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