

SURVEY OF RECENT ENGLISH LITERATURE
ON THE NEW TESTAMENT.

MISCELLANEOUS.—Dr. James Morison, whose commentaries on the first two gospels have met with so wide an acceptance, having completed a fifty years' ministry, has been asked to issue a memorial volume of sermons. This we have in his *Sheaves of Ministry* (Hodder & Stoughton). As might be expected, they are doctrinal, but in thoroughly good taste and temper. In the sermon which may be considered the heart of the volume, "Does God fix Everything?" Dr. Morison ignores the explanations offered by Calvinists, and the replies they have made to the charge that they make God the only sinner. In a popular sermon this course was excusable and legitimate; but the wisdom of publishing so barely one-sided a statement on a disputed topic may be questioned. In another sermon, in order to escape Calvinistic foreordination, he resorts to the expedient of interpreting the words, "as many as were ordained to eternal life," as meaning, "as many as were self-addicted to the things that naturally issue in eternal life." It is this kind of thing that scares wavering Calvinists, and hurries them back to their Calvinism. Dr. Morison cannot find in Scripture any "larger hope." His method of harmonizing Paul and James is scarcely what might have been looked for from an exegete of repute; and his sermon on the Bible, "The Book of God," evades all the questions which at present exercise theologians. Many of the sermons are useful, and give clear and sufficient definitions of important truths.—A serious and thoughtful exposition of the Lord's Prayer comes to us from Canada: *Our Father's Kingdom*, by the Rev. Charles B. Ross, M.A., B.D. (T. & T. Clark). The twelve lectures in this volume must have been listened to with profit; they are sensible, and they strive to bring Christian faith into contact with life and social needs.

Two volumes on the life of Christ deserve notice. Principal Wace has collected into a volume a number of papers he had contributed to the *Clergyman's Magazine*, and issues it with the attractive, if non-mathematical, title, *Some Central Points of our Lord's Ministry* (Hodder & Stoughton). The papers are not so suggestive as Dr. Wace by his previous writings has led us to expect; but they are, it need not be said, carefully thought out

and, if accepted as sermons, must take high rank. They are devout, reverential, thoughtful meditations on important themes, and were worthy of the pulpit of Lincoln's Inn Chapel, where they were first delivered.—*Pastor Pastorum*; or, *The Schooling of the Apostles by our Lord*, is the title of a volume by the Rev. Henry Latham, M.A., Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge (Deighton, Bell & Co.), and has grown out of five and thirty years of college work. Mr. Latham has done well to publish this volume; for, although it is curiously incomplete, yet the points which are treated are handled with insight and originality. As an evidence of the independence of the author, it may be mentioned that, although one of the great books of this generation is occupied with the same theme, there is no trace of its influence from beginning to end of Mr. Latham's volume. Proceeding upon the idea that the training of the apostles was a very principal object in our Lord's ministry, he endeavours to trace the method and principles acted upon. For this purpose he examines the call of the apostles, showing how our Lord respected their freedom of choice, and selected agents suitable for the work He wished them to do; how He taught them by parable and miracle, and gave them also a practical training. Every one who has pursued similar lines of thought will gladly acknowledge that, if Mr. Latham omits matters essential to completeness of treatment, and if he occasionally introduces ideas that are familiar, he much more frequently lets fall a pencil of clearest illumination on points which hitherto have escaped notice. His "Chronological Appendix" will also be found useful, although a most unfortunate misprint at the beginning of it represents our Lord as being born in A.U.C. 753 instead of 750.

That Charles Kingsley's volume of sermons entitled *The Good News of God* should have run through eleven editions since 1863 will surprise no one and will gratify many. Other sermons of the same preacher which have attained great popularity are those entitled *The Gospel of the Pentateuch* and those on *David*, which are now included in one cheap and pretty volume. The volume *Discipline and other Sermons* has also a good record, and is now re-issued in this attractive edition, which is meant to range with the novels and other writings of the manly and genial rector of Eversley, now being issued by Messrs. Macmillan. Not less than in his novels did Kingsley reveal a fertile mind and an ardent spirit. In their combination of profundity of thought with sim-

plicity of exposition his sermons stand alone. They are always flowing and rhythmical, even musical in language; and, indeed, the sermon on "Music" is a *tour de force*, remarkably illustrating how the subject of a discourse can dominate its style.—A third volume of *Notes of Sermons*, by the late missionary-bishop, Dr. Steere (George Bell & Sons), deserves a heartier welcome than most collections of skeleton sermons. There is really life in these, but the essential uselessness of such notes is unconsciously illustrated in the anecdote, told in the preface, of a reporter (falsely so called), who adopted the easy method prevalent among his class of asking for the preacher's manuscript, and was presented with an old envelope with one word jotted down upon it.—Another bunch of homiletical germs is by Mr. John Harries, *Does God break His Pledges?* (Elliot Stock.) If they fall into congenial soil, they may germinate.—In the Rev. Nathaniel Dimock's *Doctrine of the Death of Christ* (Elliot Stock), an enormous amount of more or less relevant matter is brought together. A very complete *catena* of passages from Polycarp to the *Theologia Germanica* is itself a contribution of value. There are also exegetical annotations on all the passages of Scripture bearing on the atonement. Mr. Dimock writes in the interest of the traditional view; but even although his conclusions may not at all times be acceptable to the reader, the material adduced cannot but be useful to the inquirer. But it is not learning that is now needed for the solution of the difficulties which surround the atonement. Of learning there is in this volume rather a superfluity than a lack; but Mr. Dimock does not seem to have himself felt the difficulties he seeks to remove, and it is simply impossible that an unsympathetic reasoner can bring light to the groping mind. Especially does Mr. Dimock reveal incapacity when he endeavours to show the relation of the atonement to the incarnation. The Apostle John would not endorse his statements on this point.—Another keenly orthodox volume rendered useless by a similar want of perception is *The New Apologetic; or, The Down-grade in Criticism, Theology, and Science*, by Prof. Watts, of Belfast (T. & T. Clark). The "down-grade" is represented by Bushnell, Farrar, Drummond, Bruce, and such like. Dr. Watts is one of those unhappily constituted men who cannot write unless they are angry. He needs the red rag to excite him; and this time he follows the lead of Mr. Spurgeon, and has brought himself up to fighting

point by the imagination that the whole theological world is swiftly rushing to destruction, and that Dr. Watts alone can save it. He is a clever logician, deftly manipulating theological formulæ; but whether these have any relation to reality he never inquires. There is no evidence from board to board of this volume that he has ever seriously pondered the matters he discusses. He is essentially an advocate, not a judge. He belongs, craving Horace's pardon, to the *irritabile genus disputatorum*.—We are glad to notice that Messrs. Maclehose, of Glasgow, have issued a second volume of the late Dr. Leckie's sermons, with a brief memoir. Dr. Leckie had a delicacy of fancy, a directness of spiritual insight, and a felicity of exposition unsurpassed in this generation of preachers.—To the "Men of the Bible" series, Prof. Iverach, of Aberdeen, has added a volume on *Paul*, in which the fruit of much reading and study is presented. The masculine thinking, and theological intelligence, and critical acuteness, which characterize the writings of Prof. Iverach are abundantly present in this little book.

We have also received from Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co. the new volume of their "Pulpit Commentary." It is on the *Epistle to the Romans*. The exposition has been written by the Rev. J. Barmby, B.D., and is characterized by considerable insight and vigour, and by adequate scholarship. The homiletics have been entrusted to Prof. J. Radford Thomson and others.

MARCUS DODS.