

# At the Literary Table.

## THE BOOKS OF THE MONTH.

### PART I.

#### The Bible.

A GUIDE TO BIBLICAL STUDY. By A. S. PEAKE, M.A., Fellow of Merton College, Oxford. With an Introduction by A. M. FAIRBAIRN, D.D. (*Hodder & Stoughton*. Crown 8vo, pp. xxiv, 264. 3s. 6d.)

NOTWITHSTANDING the ease and interest with which one reads Professor Peake's *Guide*, it must have cost him many an anxious hour. For a Guide to the Study of the Bible is not an easy book to write at present. What it means Principal Fairbairn makes clear enough. It means leaving much unsettled still, and giving many provokingly uncertain judgments. But it is when a study is alive that it has its unsettled problems, and that is the very time we need a Guide. When all the problems about the Bible are laid to rest, there will be no demand for Guides, and no place for them.

Professor Peake has been most circumspect. We knew he was accomplished. The book will certainly push the scientific study of the Bible one step forward. And it is so capably, carefully written that it will be a landmark in the future. There, we shall say, is how we stood in 1897. The notes on books are very just. Besides Principal Fairbairn's, we find Mr. Buchanan Gray's hand in that. And these three together make nearly final work. In the next edition, Mr. Peake must give us a bibliography and a set of indexes, and then our gratitude will be full.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD. (*Stock*. 8vo, pp. 32. 1s.)

This is the first instalment of a new Bible. For when it rains it pours, even Bibles. The plan of this anonymous editor is to give a new translation on one page, and then on the other a record of his variations from A.V. and R.V., together with Notes on the text.

Now it must be very difficult to produce a new Bible. Shortcomings are a certainty, absolute breakdown a probability. As this Bible covers only the first four chapters of Genesis yet, it has only shortcomings. And they are not decisive.

The translation is often clever and commendable. Adam and Eve (the editor urgently invites criticism) are said to be 'unprotected' (עָרוֹם, Gn 2<sup>25</sup>), not 'naked'; the serpent is said to be 'unprotected' too (עָרוֹם, 3<sup>1</sup>), but Adam and Eve are afterwards found 'naked' (עָרוֹם, 3<sup>7</sup>). Now 'naked' is better English than 'unprotected,' and 'subtle,' as applied to a serpent, is a better translation. What an unprotected serpent means, indeed, we cannot think, especially such a serpent. Still the translation is commendable and often clever. The notes are the only part that need serious reconsideration. They are too wordy, too obvious also, and too deficient in what is called historical imagination.

THE HOLY BIBLE. (*Macmillan*. Vol. I. Globe 8vo, pp. xxix, 513. 5s.)

Mr. Mackail's 'Eversley' edition of the Bible has been announced here already. The first volume is equal to all our expectation. The editor has written a modest, mannerly introduction, giving the meaning of this issue; and the publishers have chosen the most beautiful printing they could find.

#### The Old Testament.

GENESIS: CRITICALLY AND EXEGETICALLY EXPOUNDED. BY DR. A. DILLMANN, late Professor of Theology in Berlin. TRANSLATED FROM THE LAST EDITION BY W. B. STEVENSON, B.D. (*T. & T. Clark*. 8vo, Two Vols., pp. xii, 413; 507. 21s.)

'The most perfect form of the *Commentarius Perpetuus*.' That is Professor Budde's word for Dillmann's *Genesis*. It is itself the perfect word. That Dillmann was not accessible earlier in a good English translation (as this translation is good) is a puzzle to most and a great regret to all. For even with Delitzsch at our elbow, it is to Dillmann we have gone with increasing confidence. What industry of scholarship or aptitude of historical imagination gave him the right thing to say and the right word to say it with, we cannot tell.

ASPECTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. By R. L. OTTLEY, M.A. (*Longmans*. 8vo, pp. xix, 448. 16s.)

When a great classical scholar like Dr. Blass of Halle engages upon the study of the New Testament, his work is regarded with lively interest. When an able New Testament scholar like Mr. Ottley enters upon the field of the Old Testament, the same keen interest attends his exploit. For Mr. Ottley does not imagine that he has mastered the Old Testament, and he does not pose as an authority upon it. He knows enough to know who the authorities are. And he deliberately appears before us, after having studied the authorities, as what Canon Cheyne would call 'a layman' in Old Testament scholarship, to tell us what he finds the Old Testament still to be.

The volume contains the Bampton Lectures of 1897. It therefore contains eight lectures, the ground being so mapped out that all the leading and pressing questions regarding the Old Testament receive fair and uniform consideration. These questions are:—First, the 'higher criticism,' and what the Church is to do with it; secondly, the great religious contents of the Old Testament; thirdly, the history that lies at the basis of its contents; fourthly, the progressive revelations made in it of the *Name* (in its grand Hebrew fulness) of God; fifthly, its worship; sixthly, the prophetic and Messianic hope; seventhly, the Old Testament conception of personal religion; and lastly, the Old Testament as Christianity found it and made of it.

Now, Mr. Ottley knows as well as you that one of these questions is enough for a Bampton lectureship. But to confine himself to one of the questions would have been to take up a false position and to miss his whole intention. His intention is to relieve the stress which recent criticism has laid upon the students, and especially the teachers of the Bible. And the way he does that is just to tell what the Bible is to *him* (a student and a teacher) after all that criticism has said and done. The value of such an effort depends partly on the man who makes it—his position and his character; and those who know Mr. Ottley will reap the benefit of that. For the rest the book itself must speak. But, again, there is so happy a combination of sweet reason and firm faith that the mere reader will feel no disadvantage. There are few who, coming to the book without immovable pre-

judice, will fail to lay it down saying that the Old Testament is theirs still, more theirs than ever it was.

An occasional erratum may be found, as the spelling of Dillmann's name with one *n* twice or thrice. Our Scotch printers did that in our own pages last month, their apology being that a man's a man for a' that. But Mr. Ottley's Oxford printers cannot enter that defence.

A HEBREW AND ENGLISH LEXICON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. By FRANCIS BROWN, D.D., with the co-operation of S. R. DRIVER, D.D., and CHARLES A. BRIGGS, D.D. (Oxford: *At the Clarendon Press*. 4to, Part VI. 8vo, pp. 441-528. 2s. 6d.)

The announcement of the new part is enough. It has long been waited for. Some of us, having got accustomed to the use of the earlier parts, have missed it more than we can tell. It is a marvelously full and rich book; there is nothing in the way of Hebrew Lexicons in any language to be compared with it. Would that we had it all!

REASONS FOR THE HIGHER CRITICISM OF THE HEXATEUCH. By THE REV. ISAAC GIBSON. (Philadelphia: *Jacobs*. Crown 8vo, pp. 100. 50 cents net.)

We have over and over again been asked for an untechnical book on the 'higher criticism,' untechnical yet reliable, and that gives the reader the means of settling the question for himself. This is the book. As Dr. Hazard says, in introducing it, you must be both intelligent and interested—then this is the book for your purpose.

THE FIRST BOOK OF MACCABEES. By THE REV. W. FAIRWEATHER, M.A., and J. SUTHERLAND BLACK, LL.D. (Cambridge: *At the University Press*. Fcap. 8vo, pp. 271. 3s. 6d.)

*The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*, not content with having covered the New Testament and nearly all the Old, has boldly invaded the Apocrypha. Well, we hope both the publishers and editors will have their reward. For the Apocrypha will repay study even in schools and colleges beyond the dream of our educational reformers. The headmaster of one of our great public schools has lately been asking 'Are we to go on with Latin verse?' For God's sake, no, Mr. Lyttleton, take the First Book of Maccabees instead. For the First Book of Maccabees will feed the soul as well as sharpen the wit. And if it is pure scholarship you are after, it is here, in the work of these two most accomplished scholars.

ECCLESIASTICUS xxxix. 15 TO XLIX. II. TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL HEBREW BY A. E. COWLEY, M.A., and AD. NEUBAUER, M.A. (Oxford: *At the Clarendon Press.* Crown 8vo, pp. xii, 65. 2s. 6d.)

This is the Fragment of Sirach that was so fortunately found some months ago. Its translation (which we may depend upon) is printed opposite the Revised Version for comparison.

### The New Testament.

THE EXPOSITOR'S GREEK TESTAMENT. 1. THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS. BY THE REV. A. B. BRUCE, D.D. 2. THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN. BY THE REV. MARCUS DODS, D.D. (*Hodder & Stoughton.* Large 8vo, pp. x, 872. 28s.)

Such a book as this cannot be exhausted in a single notice. We must come back to it again and again. For a new Alford—as the general editor desires it to be regarded—means so many things. It demands that we estimate its superiority over Alford in three great departments at least, in Introduction, Textual Criticism, and Exegesis. And one of these is enough for one month's notice.

But there is a fourth department which comes upon our notice first of all, almost thrusts itself upon our notice in the earlier portion of the volume. It is the 'higher criticism' of the Gospels. In Alford it was scarce an element. Here it is prominent and pressing. Now, it must be at once acknowledged that it is to many of us a most unpleasant element. When, for example, we come to the *Parable of the Eye*, as Dr. Bruce happily describes vv. <sup>22-24</sup> of the fifth chapter of St. Matthew, 'The light of the body is the eye,' etc., and when we read: 'A most difficult passage; connection obscure, and the evangelic report apparently imperfect. The parallel passage in Luke gives little help. The figure and its ethical meaning seem to be mixed up, moral attributes ascribed to the physical eye which with these still gives light to the *body*.' When we read that, we feel uncomfortable.

But we must gather ourselves, and call some things to remembrance. In the first place, we must remember that criticism even of the contents was inevitable. Alford could almost pass it by and spend himself on the criticism of the text. Dr. Bruce must give it as great prominence as he gives the text itself. It is inevitable. The day was when men reckoned it blasphemy to

doubt a letter of the Received Text. Then came the inevitable upon men, and they weighed each letter and kept it or cast it away without emotion, just as they found the manuscripts directed them. The day has come when we must criticise the narrative itself, and we cannot escape from it. In the second place, we must remember that the Scripture was given for edification, actually to lift us out of our present condition, whatever it may be, not to comfort us in it. The Pauline phrase, 'the comfort of the Scriptures,' is not the comfort for the comfortable. It is just the opposite of that. So for these two reasons alone,—one that we may face it, the other that we must,—let us willingly acknowledge that Alford has been superseded in respect of the 'higher criticism' of the Gospels.

In respect of their exegesis Alford has been superseded also. In truth, Alford never was strong there. He was most strangely, and to some good expositors irritatingly, at fault there, again and again. He often sailed smoothly over the surface of the writer's most urgent meaning, and did not so much as touch it with the tip of his finger. Alford was not strong as an exegete. He is easily superseded there.

But Alford was strong in the criticism of the text, and it is not so evident that he is superseded there. We speak hesitatingly, for we have examined but a few passages yet. We only say that Alford was strong there, and we are not quite certain that he has been set aside.

Alford was also strong (though less strong) in introduction. But strong as he was he has been completely thrown. Indeed, so far as our examination has yet proceeded, the introductions seem to us by far the finest thing in the volume, almost the finest thing of the kind we have read. Space was precious: there is no discursiveness. Yet it was plenty: there is no obscurity. Both editors evidently knew what they were to say, said it, and were done. Some will cry out for more literature. We are thankful there is no more. If of making many books there is no end, of writing down their titles the end is further off, and it is the greater weariness of the flesh. Test any commentary by this—you will rarely find it fail—the great has a helpful selection of literature, the little has a useless parade.

So we have reached the conclusion that *The Expositor's Greek Testament* is a genuine and a great addition to our present-day apparatus for the

study of the Gospels. Let us add that in all the externals—printing, paper, binding, and what not—it is in touch with the most modern and welcome improvements.

THE INTERNATIONAL CRITICAL COMMENTARY. EPHESIANS AND COLOSSIANS. By THE REV. T. K. ABBOTT, B.D., D.LIT. (*T. & T. Clark.* 8vo, pp. lxxv, 315. 10s. 6d.)

The Abbots and Abbotts are somewhat confusing. There are three that have taken to New Testament work and made themselves a name there. First, Professor Ezra Abbot of Harvard, whose greatest work was done in textual criticism, and who died in 1884. Next, Dr. Edwin Abbott, who was chosen to write the article on the 'Gospels' in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and who has been so long and so courageously persuading us to embrace an unmiraculous Christianity. And then Professor T. K. Abbott of Trinity College, Dublin, best known, till now, by his *Essays on the Original Texts* (1891), and his *Short Notes on the Pauline Epistles* (1892).

Best known till now. Henceforth he will be better known by his *Commentary on Ephesians and Colossians*. There is no work in all the 'International' series that is more faithful or more felicitous. That Dr. Abbott was a sound scholar we knew already; that he recognized the dark places of the Pauline apostles, and had a happy faculty of touching them into light, we also knew. But these commentaries, as they test his scholarship more severely, give also more scope for his interpretative gift; and both are greater than we knew. He suits this style of commentary as if he had originated it. He understands these epistles—we had almost said as if he had written them. For he adds a master's grasp of the great literature in both to a well-trained spirit of understanding. Try him with the passages that are your favourites here. He will waste no words in carrying his meaning; he will carry a meaning that is either yours already, or will make you wonder why it is not.

THE EMPHASISED NEW TESTAMENT. By JOSEPH BRYANT ROTHERHAM. (*Allenson.* Large 8vo, pp. 272. 10s. 6d.)

The nature of this volume has been already described. Let it be repeated that it contains a new translation made from a good critical text; that the arrangement is neither after verses nor

after paragraphs, but after the logical analysis of the sentence and narrative; that an elaborate system of marks shows where the emphasis lies; and that there are some pertinent references and an appendix of topical notes. Printing and paper are in keeping with a most purposeful and painstaking work.

JESUS, SON OF GOD. By THE REV. F. WARBURTON LEWIS, B.A. (*Stock.* Crown 8vo, pp. x, 67.)

A miniature Life of Christ, the facts faced with courage and penetration, the Son of God made strength to us in our weakness.

### The History of the Church.

HISTORY OF EARLY CHRISTIAN LITERATURE. By DR. GUSTAV KRÜGER. TRANSLATED BY THE REV. CHARLES R. GILLET, A.M. (*Macmillan.* Crown 8vo, pp. xxii, 409. 8s. 6d. net.)

It is a surprising circumstance that with all the making of modern books no one has written a history of the Early Christian literature for so long. There are histories, but they are at least antiquated. Up to date and accurate there is none. And yet the interest in Early Christian literature was never so general and never so intense as at this present time.

At last the long-expected manual—competent and convenient—has come. It is the indefatigable German's work, but the translation seems sufficient to make it our own. It covers the first three centuries. It does not criticise the literature of that time, it simply presents the facts about it. Who wrote it, when, where, why, and all the other questions are answered. And then the modern and reliable bibliography—books, magazine articles, pamphlets, and what not—are recorded for further study. So it is not to be read through, and it is not to be touched by the indolent. At the student's hand it will lie, and save him many a search and blunder.

THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE OXFORD MOVEMENT. By WALTER WALSH. (*Sonnenschein,* 8vo, pp. xv, 410.)

When Mr. Wakeman at the Church Congress presented the case for the High Church party in England, had he read this book? There are two sides, they say, to every question: to this question there are two sides indeed. The side that Mr. Wakeman presented so eloquently was quite

attractive; this side is almost diabolical. For Mr. Walsh gives us to believe that the extreme High Churchman of to-day not only insists on coming between a man and his wife, so that she may be more to the priest than she is to him, but even teaches that he himself may deny under oath in a court of justice that which he knows to be true, if he has gained his knowledge in the Confessional. Now by that sin fell the angels, and it is accurate to describe it as diabolical. But what a terribly unreligious and glaringly unbiblical business it altogether is by this account. Most gladly would we know what Mr. Wakeman has to say of it.

PRE-REFORMATION WORTHIES. BY THE REV. W. COWAN. (*Elliot Stock*. Crown, 8vo. pp. ix, 193. 5s.)

To this short and sympathetic account of Grossetête, Thomas À Kempis, Suso, Ruysbroeck, and others, the Bishop of Derry contributes a short and sympathetic preface. His first paragraph is: 'There is a popular view of the doctrine of the Reformation which urgently needs to be reformed. People think that in order to be justified by faith without the works of the law one must see clearly and grasp firmly the doctrine that justification is by faith. And this is tantamount to asserting that you cannot be justified by faith without the works of the intellect.' That is just, and it opens the way into the book. And as we lay the book down we feel that again the Bishop of Derry has put it justly when he says that 'we are edified and gladdened by learning that the love of God, intense and practical, may live amid forms of life and worship strangely unlike our own, so that if we would fain love all the children of our Father, all the brethren of Christ, we can do this only by a large tolerance.'

A HISTORY OF AMERICAN CHRISTIANITY. BY LEONARD WOOLSEY BACON. (New York: *Christian Literature Co.* 8vo, pp. x, 430. \$2.)

It is by breaking up history into periods and places and parties that it can be written. It is

not possible to write universal histories now. Even a history of America has hitherto been beyond the ability of man. Professor Bacon does not attempt a history of America. He thinks a history of American Christianity can be written, and in this substantial volume he has come as near it as one is likely to get. But he knows that his own publishers are just now publishing a series, in which twelve volumes, each as large as this, will be given to the history of American Christianity; so he does not profess to exhaust: he professes only to know and reveal the salient points and the central movements. It is an extremely edifying history. Its failures are as unmistakable as its successes, and as edifying. In America Christianity has had a freer field than anywhere else in the world. State interference was reduced to a minimum. And so it is in America, and admirably in this volume, that one can discover what Christianity can do with the human heart, and what the human heart can do against Christianity.

SELECTIONS FROM EARLY WRITERS ILLUSTRATIVE OF CHURCH HISTORY. BY H. M. GWATKIN, M.A., D.D. (*Macmillan*. Crown 8vo, pp. xx, 194. 4s. 6d. net.)

A happy thought most happily carried out. It is no surprise that the book has reached a second edition already. Professor Gwatkin has taken the opportunity of adding to the number of his extracts, and making some slight necessary corrections.

CHRISTIAN MARTYRDOM IN RUSSIA. EDITED BY VLADIMIR TCHERTKOFF. (*Clarke*. Crown 8vo, pp. 110. 1s. net.)

It is the story of the fare which the Russian Government serves to those who seek to worship the Father in spirit and in truth. It is humiliating enough, yet verified abundantly. Tolstoi writes one chapter.