

written B, having soared to this height could not reach that depth, or even the common level between, they will exclaim "Hold! that is our province. Face to the right about and retreat." For

no argument that would shatter Shakespeare and dismember Dante will have a feather's weight with such men.'

WILLIAM H. COBB.

*Boston.*

## Inter Alia.

THE death of Professor A. B. Davidson of the New College, Edinburgh, is the sorest loss that biblical scholarship could sustain. His health had not been good for some time; the sudden flush, so characteristic of his face, betokened a heart weakness; and perhaps we ought not to have been taken by surprise. But his mind was as vigorous as ever, his interest in men and books was as fresh; he was investigating the oldest problems with the old zest, and reading the latest German brochure on them; and just before this session began he told us that he was preparing some new work for his students this year.

Estimates of his work and himself have appeared in the *British Weekly* and elsewhere; we offer one also by one of his most distinguished pupils. But every writer feels the impossibility of reproducing on paper the effect of his personality. Perhaps Professor Driver of Oxford comes as near as any. He has written at the request of the editor of the *Guardian*, and has kindly furnished us with a proof of his paper, from which we quote two paragraphs. For ourselves, we feel as one of the *children* in the house.

For by the hearth the children sit  
Cold in that atmosphere of Death,  
And scarce endure to draw the breath,  
Or like to noiseless phantoms fit:

But open converse is there none,  
So much the vital spirits sink  
To see the vacant chair, and think,  
'How good! how kind! and he is gone.'

This is what Dr. Driver says of Dr. Davidson's work: 'Professor Davidson was a man of rare powers, and of still rarer qualities of mind. Whatever subject he touched, his treatment of it always displayed two qualities—it was *masterly*, and it was *judicial*. No one had a better power

of penetrating to the heart of a subject; no one was more skilful in the discovery and delineation of the characteristics of an age, the drift of an argument, the aim of a writer; no one—witness his *Job*—could more powerfully analyse moral feeling or exhibit the conflict of motives in a difficult moral situation. His mastery of a subject was always complete; he grasped it firmly, he saw it under all its bearings, he expounded it with clearness, and he enabled his reader to see it with him. And his discussion of it was, moreover, always *judicial*. He weighs reasons, he balances opposing considerations, he is never carried away by a brilliant but hazardous speculation, he can always distinguish the certain from the hypothetical. His native caution, shrewdness, and insight never fail him. If his final judgments seem sometimes to show indecision, it is because indecision is warranted by the facts. His exegetical works are of the very highest quality; one reads them with the feeling that whatever he says is the result of long and mature study, that he has considered his subject from every point of view, and applied the best available methods with the single object of getting precisely at what his author thought and meant. And so one feels that his interpretation of a difficult passage, or conclusion on a controverted question, has an antecedent presumption of being the best attainable.'

This again is what Dr. Driver says of Dr. Davidson's influence: 'His lot was cast in a time when influence and guidance were greatly needed. Professor Davidson supplied both. He moved circumspectly: but he was gifted with openness of mind; and when he saw the way clear, even though it might be a new way, he did not hesitate to follow it. The judgments of a man whose temper and habits of mind were such as Professor Davidson's were well known to be,

naturally commanded confidence; and he was instrumental in leading many safely through a difficult and trying transition. His work was always spiritually fruitful. He deepened and enlarged the spiritual perceptions of his students; he illuminated and widened their mental view; many parts of the Old Testament he placed before them in a new light; and he set the whole upon a far surer foundation than it occupied before. The loss of a teacher thus highly gifted may well be deemed irreparable: but Professor Davidson will still live for long in the grateful memories of his pupils and friends; and by his writings, and the writings of those who, in the formative period of their lives, imbibed his principles and methods, he will continue to teach many generations of readers.'

In the article from which we have quoted Professor Driver expresses the hope that some of Dr. Davidson's promised work will yet see the light, especially his *Theology of the Old Testament*. We believe that that hope will be realized.

Another volume which has been long looked for, and almost as eagerly as Dr. Davidson's *Theology of the Old Testament*, is Principal Rainy's history of *The Ancient Catholic Church*. Happily it has been published, and its author is still with us. How like its author the book is. We hear his voice in every sentence. Some of the words are so associated with his speech that they might have been coined by him. The whole volume, however, is a characteristic product of his peculiar genius. It begins slowly, it moves slowly for a time, every word right, every sentence telling, the whole picture clear and memorable. Then it suddenly awakens emotion, deep thrilling emotion, we hold our breath, we seem to watch the speaker's lips again, we resent the slightest sound near us, we are ready to cry 'Well done, well done'; we have had an experience which is more than memorable, an experience which has gone to the making of our life. When the book has once got hold it does not let us go. Surely those who never read the history of the Church of Christ will read it now.

The title which Sheriff Guthrie has given to the

little book which he has prepared for the 'Young People's Commemoration Day' is *Our Scots Reformers and Covenanters: Their Humanity and Humour* (Oliphant). It is a right well-chosen title. It is the title of a most opportune and happy little book. Led by the great wizard, who never did a sorrier service, the novelists and even the historians have taught that the noble forefathers of religious Scotland had neither humour nor humanity. Here is the abundant and triumphant refutation of the ghastly calumny. Let Englishmen especially seek this morsel of good reading—it costs but three halfpence—and learn how John Knox loved England and distrusted France, and never wavered, for had he not an English wife to love most dearly and never lose the memory of her sweetness?

In the *Auburn Seminary Review*, Professor A. T. Robertson of Louisville reviews Deissmann's *Bible Studies*, and says that it marks an epoch in the study of New Testament Greek. The phrase is sometimes used foolishly, here its use is quite accurate. For Deissmann's book marks the change that has come over the study of New Testament Greek from the evidence of the contemporary inscriptions.

*The Testament of our Lord* is now ready. Professor Cooper and Dean Maclean have spent much pains upon the translation, notes, and introduction. It will be one of the greatest books of the spring.

The *Guardian* receives Dr. Ball's book on St. Paul and the Roman Law as Professor Robertson receives Deissmann, saying that his 'most useful suggestive studies' illustrate the fact that 'the language of the Greek Testament and of Dogmatic Theology is charged with associations which can only be fully understood in the light of a larger knowledge of contemporary philosophy, law, and literature.'

Printed by MORRISON & GIBB LIMITED, Tanfield Works, and Published by T. & T. CLARK, 38 George Street, Edinburgh. It is requested that all literary communications be addressed to THE EDITOR, St. Cyrus, N.B.