

SELECT LITERARY NOTICES.

[The insertion of any article in this list is not to be considered as pledging us to the approbation of its contents, unless it be accompanied by some express notice of our favourable opinion. Nor is the omission of any such notice to be regarded as indicating a contrary opinion; as our limits, and other reasons, impose on us the necessity of selection and brevity.]

The Life and Reign of David, King of Israel. By George Smith, LL.D., F.A.S., Member of the Royal Asiatic Society, &c. 8vo. Longmans.

—When the advertisement of this volume first caught our attention, we felt a doubt as to the necessity of an additional Life of King David; two elaborate works on the same subject having been long since supplied by Dr. Delany, an Irish clergyman, and Dr. Samuel Chandler, a Nonconformist divine of eminent learning and ability. Delany's volumes are distinguished by elegant scholarship, considerable ingenuity, and a warm admiration of David. Chandler's work is elaborate and argumentative; and contains a large amount of Hebrew criticism. Both these eminent men deemed it necessary to defend the conduct of David against the assaults of infidel objectors.

Yet, excellent in many respects as are the works we have now mentioned, we had not read many pages of this before we were convinced that there was room for another biography of the Hebrew monarch. Dr. Smith has exhibited a just appreciation of the personal godliness of which David was in the main an eminent example; has thrown a strong and steady light upon the state of religion among the Hebrews in the time of David; has clearly shown what is to be understood by the "tabernacle of David," as distinguished from the place of sacrifice; and has pointed out why our blessed Lord is, by way of eminence, called the Son of David, and is said to occupy David's throne.

He has also described, in their real turpitude, the sins into which David fell, the penalties with which they were visited, with the fact of their full and free forgiveness. These subjects are so treated as to magnify the mercy of God, to enforce the duty of constant watchfulness and prayer, and effectually to guard against every antinomian abuse of the Divine clemency.

We cannot make ourselves answerable, in every instance, for the application of the Psalms to the events of David's life; but we are not prepared to offer objections to what Dr. Smith has advanced on the subject. We thank him very sincerely for this additional production of his fertile mind. It is characterized throughout by an honest independence of thought, without any approach to an offensive dogmatism. We have read the whole with satisfaction and profit; and we earnestly recommend it both to ministers and private Christians, all of whom are, or ought to be, diligent students of the Bible. They will here find considerable aid in the examination of an important part of sacred history.

Lamps, Pitchers, and Trumpets. Lectures on the Vocation of the Preacher. Illustrated by Anecdotes, Biographical, Historical, &c. By Edwin Paxton Hood, Minister of Queen-square Chapel, Brighton. London: Jackson, Walford, and Co. 1867.

Remoter Stars in the Church Sky, being a Gallery of uncelebrated Divines. By George Gilfillan. Lon-

don : Jackson, Walford, and Hodder. 1867. (*From the Pulpit Analyst.*)

Manual of Hermeneutics for the Writings of the New Testament. By J. J. Doedes, D.D., translated from the Dutch by G. W. Stegman, Jun. Edinburgh : T. and T. Clark. 1867.

An Inaugural Address delivered in the College Chapel, Didsbury, on Friday, September 20th, 1867. By the Rev. W. B. Pope. London : sold at 66, Paternoster-row. 1867.

The works here grouped together have all more or less reference to the Christian ministry, either in its preparatory stages or in its full exercise. But when we have noted this one tie of connexion, we have mentioned all they have in common. "Lamps, Pitchers, and Trumpets" is intended to give the reader some knowledge of the various men who, in the Christian Church, "have illustrated the genius and success of the pulpit—its method and its power." Many of the extracts from the sermons of great preachers are aptly chosen, and will be frequently perused by the possessors of the book. But with regard to the matter of the work, we have no great encomiums to bestow. Mr. Hood lacks critical power, at least he does not display it in this instance; and that order, which is to a treatise what clearness is to a stream, nowhere appears in the course of the Lectures before us. Quaint stories moreover abound in the volume, utterly out of place in any treatise professing to set before young men a writer's views as to the "method" and "power" of the pulpit.

Mr. Gilfillan directs his attention to the discovery of the "remoter stars in the church sky." In other words he would erect a monument to the memory of comparatively unknown ministers. The work of inscribing memorials upon nameless graves is pre-eminently

one of goodness and of love. This species of writing has been carried to a high degree of perfection by the author of "Rab and his Friends;" but its successful execution demands powers which Mr. Gilfillan does not possess. The man who allows such a blot to remain upon his printed page as the phrase "a Divine pet," when his theme is Divine wrath, and who has not removed it in reprinting, has yet to learn the use of the file. But our chief dissatisfaction with Mr. Gilfillan is, that he deals with living ministers. The minute painting of a preacher's *personnel*, and a critique upon his peculiarities, must be very distasteful to a "remoter star," supposing him to have any feeling. After all, we learn something from this Gallery. It presents a lesson not entirely superfluous for a generation that seeketh after a "sign." The uncelebrated and humble do a work in their obscurity that enlightens and blesses their own sphere. The steady but lowly light still shines on by its own radiance; and, if it be any consolation to the light-bearer, he may cherish the thought that there are some who see and appreciate it.

The Messrs. Clark have placed young English theologians under another obligation by introducing to their notice Dr. Doedes, of the University of Utrecht. A want has often been felt, and complaints have been frequently made of the absence of a *Manual of Hermeneutics*. Large and exhaustive works are well known, and the results of hermeneutical study are presented without stint to all sincere inquirers into the sense of Scripture. But there are many who prefer grasping the principles of a science in skeleton, learning something of its history, and discovering how the questions

treated of by it have come to wear the face they are now presenting, before they commit themselves to any adept in the science. This Manual meets such a want very efficiently. The history of the various exegetical schools is written in an exceedingly clear way; and it cannot fail to impress itself upon the mind of a student of theology, as an outline map imprints the formation of a country upon the learner of geography. A sketch of this kind is peculiarly valuable for reference before reading an author; for by discovering the class under which he falls, we may know beforehand on which side his secret and unconscious bias will lie, and may thus be on our guard against his prejudices. No one man can know everything, but the omission of some names in this work can scarcely be explained on the theory of want of space; and the student of English interpreters, especially, will have to apply the principles here inculcated to writers of whom this manual says nothing. The chapters on the "task the interpreter of the writings of the New Testament has to perform," and on the "method of interpretation," are equally valuable with the history of hermeneutics. A great amount of suggestive matter is contained in a few sentences; and although the nature of the work lays it open to the chance of becoming "bony," there is that in the writer's treatment which quite redeems it from this charge, and renders it, not indeed pleasant reading, but useful—very helpful to the memory and the intellect. Some of the statements about strictly literal renderings, and the existence of only one sense, require, from our point of view, a touch of moderation; but Dr. Doedes

himself says enough to prevent a careful reader from falling into serious error on this point.

Though the size of Mr. Pope's Inaugural Address, delivered at the Didsbury Theological Institution, and the specific objects contemplated by it, precluded the idea of presenting a formal and scientific exposition of the proper training of candidates for the Christian ministry, it will nevertheless repay reading by all who, to adopt its language, having found themselves free from the periodical trials of examiners, have determined to "be to themselves inquisitors." Many Methodists will turn with mingled curiosity and hope to this *apologia pro labore suo* issued by the present occupant of the Theological Chair at Didsbury. If anywhere a latent and unacknowledged suspicion has lodged in men's minds that "the long and blessed labours" of Dr. Hannah were to be succeeded by any line of teaching less Methodistic, or less purely evangelical, this Address will utterly dispel such baseless illusions. Of course—and this pamphlet gives evidence in its structure and its language of the fact—the new teacher will wear his own garment, and use his own voice, seeing with his own eyes, and hearing the Babel of the doubters and the gainsayers with his own ears; but the impress of his Tutor is still on him. Reverence for God's word written, as the sole standard of Christian doctrine, will still distinguish the utterances of this school of the prophets; and if they learn another language or profess another creed, they will not have learned this speech, or been moulded into their beliefs, by the instructions received from their Tutor. We would draw especial attention, on the part of those who are beyond

the voice of any living teacher save One, to the corrective supplied in this Address to the minute criticism of Scripture. We are not deprecating careful study of words and phrases—the jots and the tittles of the Law and of the Gospel; but we do protest against a microscopic study of details, in which the grand view of the whole Christian verity is entirely put out of sight. We have the separate and, in some cases, fragmentary portions of Scripture so incessantly brought before us, and such an outcry is sometimes raised against the modulation of our utterances on separate texts, so as to accord with the harmony of the whole faith, that we sometimes fear lest the very existence of systematic theology should be scouted as one of the “legal fictions of the orthodox.” The sound of the following sentences is truly full of promise, as they fall from the lips of a Theological Tutor in these days, when “there are manifest tokens that, having rent the mantles of the prophets,” the unbelievers “are gathering round the Form most sacred to us all; and are prepared to cast lots upon the seamless vesture of His truth, *whose it shall be.*” “However true it may be,” says the new Tutor, “that we best receive our knowledge of Divine things fresh and living from the pens and lips of the inspired writers, it has ever been found essential, in the training of theological students, that they should have in their minds, as early as possible, an outline of the majestic system of divinity that the evangelical church has, from its beginning, found in the Bible; a system which was completed in all its elements when the last writer of the New Testament laid down his pen; and which, as ‘our most holy faith,’ it is the

office of the church to defend from addition and corruption.” Many beautiful glimpses of the fruitful fields of Christian truth are opened up by various expressions in this Address; and no one can read them without coveting an opportunity of overhearing the writer discoursing in his lecture-room of the things of God.

We trust that Mr. Pope will remember, that while his immediate hearers are his first care, and will be the earliest to acknowledge his efforts, there is a wider audience awaiting him in the regions of Methodism beyond the peaceful enclosures of Didsbury, to whom his voice is very pleasant, and who would highly appreciate, in their varied spheres of toil and business, his views on those forms of intellectual opposition to the truth that they meet with, not in the treatises of the learned, but in the lives and hearts of the multitude. Theological students are to be envied, if they can sit at the feet of one who has in view for them and for himself such ends as this Address unfolds, and who commends them to notice with that chaste and elegant diction in which it abounds.

Memorials of the Rev. William J. Shrewsbury. By his Son, John V. B. Shrewsbury. London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co.—The devoted minister whose career is here traced lives in the esteem of many, both as an eminently holy and faithful servant of the Lord Jesus, and as a thoughtful and searching expositor of the sacred Scriptures. For many years he was engaged in missionary service; and in the earlier part of his career endured severe persecution from those who sought to uphold the system of Negro slavery in our West-Indian colonies. The narrative of his