

BRIEF NOTICES.

MESSRS. CLARK of Edinburgh could hardly have enriched their Foreign Theological Library with a more valuable and delightful work than *Dr. Godel's Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, of which the first volume has been recently issued by them. The Introduction contains more, and is more suggestive, than many a popular "Life" of the great Apostle: and even those to whom the man and his writings are most familiar may here find much to render their conception of his character, spiritual growth, modes of thought and of teaching still more vivid and complete. The Commentary proper, although it does not always put the largest and most generous conception on St. Paul's words of which they are susceptible—and this we hold to be the supreme canon of interpretation in dealing with the utterances of so large, generous, and catholic a mind—is nevertheless marked by the broad sympathies and delicate penetrating insight which have made Dr. Godet one of the most popular, esteemed, and influential expositors of the day. All who are content to move within the lines of Augustinian theology in its most modern and advanced forms will find themselves in full sympathy with this exposition of St. Paul's greatest Epistle, while even those who take an occasional excursion beyond those lines may yet learn much from it, and cannot fail to find in it much to love and admire. In fine, with this and Mr. Beet's Commentary at hand, every orthodox preacher of the Word may deem himself furnished with all he needs for the study of the grandest and most difficult Letter in the New Testament.

Canon Farrar's contribution to THE CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL BIBLE is one of the most valuable yet made. His annotations on *The Gospel according to St. Luke*, while they display a scholarship at least as sound, and an erudition at least as wide and varied as those of the editors of St. Matthew and St. Mark, are rendered telling and attractive by a more lively imagination, a keener intellectual and spiritual insight, a more incisive and picturesque style. They are marked, in short, by the very qualities most requisite to interest and instruct the class for which this work is designed. His *St. Luke* is worthy to be ranked with Professor Plumptre's *St. James*, than which no higher commendation can well be given.

The Household Library of Exposition makes a capital start with *The Life of David as reflected in his Psalms*. By A. MACLAREN, D.D. The idea of illustrating the life of David, as the life of Cowper or Burns might be illustrated, by his songs or poems, is itself a happy one : and it is here carried out very happily and skilfully. The life grows fuller and richer from the suggestions of the psalms, while the psalms kindle into new force and meaning when interpreted by the history of the poet, by the circumstances which prompted them. Real gems of exposition are to be found in this slight work which might be sought in vain from more erudite and ponderous tomes—as the reader may easily convince himself by noting the treatment of Psalm xxiv. in pages 174-184, Psalm cx. in pages 190-199, Psalm li. in pages 216-227, and Psalm xli. in pages 234-239. The defects of the work are a somewhat overstrained orthodoxy and an occasional over-intensity of expression. An instance of the first may be found on page 190, where the fact that Christ quoted “David” is not only expanded into the assertion, “Christ says that *David wrote*” the Psalm from which He quotes—an assertion much to be questioned, as Dr. Maclaren must know ; but is followed by the comment, “Some of us are far enough behind the age to believe that what He said He meant, and that what He meant is truth”—which sounds too much like an insinuation that those who hold that to quote “David” was a common way of quoting the Psalter, and carries with it no specification of authorship, do *not* believe that Christ said what He meant, or do not defer to it as true. Instances of the second defect are more frequent, as might be expected ; for the very intensity which is one of the finest qualities of Dr. Maclaren’s work easily slips beyond restraint : and, when it does, we find too much sound and fury in his words, though even at the worst they are far, indeed, from signifying nothing. Yet the book would be improved if some of these excesses were to be corrected—such, for example, as the “*cataract of calamities*” which fell on David’s head in his old age ; or the “*two earthquakes* in his life”—viz., his anointing and his call to Court ; or the description of the new Divine Name of Psalm xxiv. as “*crashing like a catapult*” at the gates of Jerusalem—here, indeed, the author needs to be reminded that gates do not turn or even “grate back on their brazen hinges” when they are crashed in by a catapult. These blemishes apart—and they are but blemishes—we have nothing but admiration and praise for this valuable little reprint.