

Reviews.

Children of Gibeon. By WALTER BESANT. Chatto and Windus.

MR. BESANT is one of the most successful of modern novelists. His writings not only have a wide circulation, but largely influence public opinion; and his reputation appears to increase with each successive publication. Among these none have attracted attention more deeply or generally than the one which forms the subject of this review.

It is obviously a book written "with a purpose." The plot, in itself most improbable, the incidents strange and exceptional, have all been conceived in order to illustrate and expose the author's theories respecting the life of the London work-girl, her wrongs and sufferings. A lady of rank is represented as adopting the child of a washerwoman, who believes herself to be a widow, but is really the wife of a hardened criminal. The lady brings up the child as the adopted sister of her own infant daughter, carefully concealing, not only from the girls themselves, but from everyone else, which is the true, and which the pretended, heiress of the ancestral estates. She also, for the necessities of the story, selects another of the same family—a boy—to whom she gives a gentleman's education, and who becomes a fellow of his college and a barrister. When the girls are grown up to womanhood, they are sent, still in ignorance of their real parentage, to make the acquaintance of the other members of the washerwoman's family. These are, besides the barrister, Joe, Sam, and Melenda—a journeyman in an ironmonger's shop, a Board School master, and a work-girl. With all these they become more or less intimate. The patrician girl, believing herself to be the plebeian, becomes deeply interested in the daily life of her supposed sister Melenda. Notwithstanding a most unkindly reception, she takes up her abode for three months in the same home with her and her two companions in toil. In these three girls—Melenda, hard, resolute and proud; Lizzie, weak and flighty; and Lotty, gentle, patient and suffering—the main interest centres. Valentine, the young lady, a most exquisite creation, has in this manner opportunities of learning all about the lives of the London working girls, their severe and incessant drudgery, their privations, wrongs, and patient endurance. She succeeds by patient perseverance in softening the stubborn Melenda, rescuing from ruin the yielding Lizzie, and smoothing the sick and dying bed of the meek Lotty. This is the real business of the story. In order to heighten its dramatic interest, a convict father, an irreclaimable ruffian, is introduced as persecuting and outraging his respectable children, until they are relieved from him by his sudden death; and Claude and Valentine are made to discover early in the book that they are not brother and sister, in order that they may fall in love with each other, and be duly married at the end. But these are only the draperies and background of the picture.

The main idea of the book is that there is much that is grievously and monstrously wrong in the daily life of the London work-girl—which ought to be, and which must be, set right. Various remedies are suggested as the story proceeds. The medical practitioner of the district proposes a Brotherhood, or league of labour. All the working men in the land are to combine to enforce on all employers equitable wages for labour. They are, apparently, to be the sole judges of what is equitable. They are to determine what ought to be producer's profits. To prevent disputes, he is to have no voice in the matter. If he should decline to carry on the business at the rate of profit allowed him, so that the working

man would be thrown altogether out of work, we are not told how the evil is to be remedied. The working men are to insist upon *some one* paying the employés properly, but who that some one is, does not appear. The Board School master and Socialist Sam (a cleverly conceived character) does attempt to solve the difficulty. His scheme is at once more simple and more comprehensive. He proposes to confiscate all property, and forbid all competition. All men are to work every day, for the same length of time and the same amount of wage, the State being the sole employer. All difficulties that might arise out of this scheme are ignored with the most lordly indifference. If one man's work is of invaluable service to the community, and another's almost worthless, they are nevertheless to be remunerated at precisely the same rate. If one man labours honestly all day, and another scamp his job, so that it has to be done all over again, that consideration is to make no difference in the pay given. Nay, if a man, not fascinated by the idea of "free labour," should prefer "free idleness," he is still to be kept by the State on bread and water. The amount of work scamped under such circumstances, and the number of "free idlers" to be fed by the State, would probably be something portentous. But these are trifles in comparison with other considerations. There are certain difficult and dangerous trades at which men are at present induced to work by the fact of the high wages obtained by it. If the wages for all labour are to be the same, who would work at them? If a difference is to be allowed, the whole principle collapses at once. It is not quite clear whether brain work is to be allowed to count as labour; or rather it would seem that it is *not*. A man, we are told, is to be allowed to perform clerical functions, or study or write books, when his day's manual work has been done, but not during the day itself. The only professions to be recognised are those of the physician and the schoolmaster. The calling of the lawyer is altogether superseded by the consideration that "free justice" will be dispensed to all; which would probably be found to be nearly identical with "mob law." But why should not "free health" and "free knowledge" also be provided, and so remove the necessity for the professions of the doctor and the teacher, obliging every man to work with his hands, to the total exclusion of his other organs? Socialism is nothing if it is not consistent.

There is nothing very new in Sam's theories, and there would be nothing worthy of remark, if it were not that Mr. Besant, while he here and there gives the Board School master a smart slap, seems half inclined to endorse his fancies. Sam's Socialism, he says, "is perfectly right in principle. It is only the selfishness of human nature that renders it unpractical." Indeed! Does Mr. Besant mean that all men are born equal, "as Sam says"? Does the world indeed belong by natural right to the great corporation of mankind, every member of which has a right to his exact share of it; and, if he has not got it, has it been stolen from him? Of all the products of nature, there is none in which so vast an amount of difference is observable among the individual members, as man. Set the vigorous infant, with its sound constitution and well-knit frame, by the side of the puny weakling in which the spark of life can hardly be kept alive, and then ask—Are they born equal? Is equality of gifts bestowed on the infant Shakespeare and the irreclaimable idiot? Is the beautiful woman, whose will and pleasure hundreds are eager to fulfil, no better dowered than the misshapen hunchback, from whom men shrink with aversion? Or is the child that is welcomed by the ready affection of parents and relatives, no better off at its birth than the bastard foundling that is consigned to the mercies of the workhouse nurse? Or, again, if men are by right of their birth joint owners of the earth, each entitled

to his sixteen-millionth portion of it—who gave it them? Where are their title-deeds? When have they ever possessed it? How is the distribution to be made?¹

It is of course impossible to suppose that Mr. Besant can intend to endorse raw absurdities like Sam Monument's. He displays far too great intelligence to allow anyone to think so. Indeed, he shows plainly that he does not; yet, in some parts of his book, his utterances are so confused that it is difficult to gather what he really thinks. We must, I suppose, understand Claude Monument, if anyone, to be the exponent of his true sentiments. Claude's views are not so wild as those of the Doctor and Sam, but they are somewhat startling nevertheless. Choice spirits among working-classes are—according to him—to be highly educated, "to learn all that science and art and history and philosophy can teach them;" and then they are to return to live among the working-classes, on an equality with them, doing the same work, partaking the same food and lodging, and sharing the same hardships, and, by their intercourse with them, elevate and ennoble them. I have no disposition to sneer at this. The self-sacrifice of such a life would be too grand to sneer at. But I am tempted to ask, did Mr. Besant ever read the Gospels? In them the idea he suggests was carried out in its full perfection. No mere man, filled with acquired knowledge and experience, but Man gifted with divine and perfect wisdom—Man, who was also God Himself—came down to dwell with fallen and suffering man, to enlighten, comfort, and exalt him. And what He did Himself, He has commanded His followers to do.² Mr. Besant's remedy is, in itself, right enough. His only error, and it is a wild one, consists in believing that what has been attempted from the highest and truest of all principles, yet with very imperfect success, would prove effectual, if actuated by lower motives.

But to proceed with Mr. Besant's book. He gives a most graphic and touching picture of the trials and sufferings of the London work-girl. These, he appears to think, are mainly due to two causes: the selfishness of the "ladies," who insist on buying cheap goods; and the grinding cruelty of the employers of labour. Throughout, the ladies are accused not only of selfish indifference to the sufferings of their poorer sisters, but of making them a subject of ridicule. They are "the people that keep the working-girls on a shilling a day that they may get their dresses

¹ It does not seem to have occurred to the promoters of "three acres and a cow" to each Englishman, that there is nothing like sufficient land in England to supply every one with the required amount. At least another acre and a half would be required. Where, then, is this to be found? In some other land, or in the moon? Again, is the distribution to be made according to countries? Is England to be divided among the English, Spain among the Spaniards, Australia among the Australians, etc. But what monstrous breaches of natural right would ensue from this. A native of, say, Northern Australia would find himself possessed of an estate which might put to shame the Duke of Sutherland. A native of some provinces of China would not get many square yards! But if the whole world is to be divided among all its inhabitants, there might be some difficulty in accomplishing the partition.

² Whatever Mr. Besant may believe on the subject, every faithful priest who ministers among the poor, every sister of mercy who goes on her rounds, to visit and relieve the sick and suffering, or remains at home to teach, clothe, and support the orphan, brings whatever gifts he or she may possess, whatever knowledge he or she may have acquired, to do, for Christ's sake, the very work Claude suggests. I have said elsewhere that it is difficult to gather from Mr. Besant's writings what his religious views really are. If I may say so without disrespect, they seem to be Christianity without Christ—a thing which will be found about as practically useful as a watch without a mainspring.

cheap." They are bid "go away and laugh" at the working-girls. "They don't care how many girls starve, so long as they can buy things cheap," etc.¹ It is impossible to believe that Mr. Besant can really maintain this. In the first place, does he believe that ladies could make things cheap by simply insisting upon it that they *should* be cheap? Many writers have enlarged on the great influence exercised by women in England; but surely no one before ever attributed to them power like this. And if they do desire to buy cheap articles of dress, is that so great a sin? Is it wrong to buy cheap watches, cheap penknives, cheap shoes? or is it only wrong to buy cheap petticoats and cheap mantles? When a lady goes into a shop, does she fix the price she has to pay for it herself, or does she pay the price asked of her? Is she bound to pay ten or twenty per cent. more than the market-price for every article of female attire, in order to save herself from the guilt of the misery and starvation of her working sister? Nay, if we could suppose that ladies did feel themselves bound to pay money over and above the amount charged them, would that really benefit the working girl? Labour could still be had on the old terms. If there are, say, 1,000 girls wanting work, and there was work for 800 only, the competition for it would be as keen as ever. They would inevitably undersell one another, until the point was reached at which they could not work cheaper and live. No doubt the producer might, if he chose it under such circumstances, pay more than the market-value of the work-girl's labour. But if he did so, that would be from a charitable motive; and charity is the thing, above all others, we are told, that the working-classes reject and abhor.

To take another ground, can anything be conceived more untrue than that English ladies are indifferent to, much less make a mock of, the sufferings of their poorer sisters? Look at the nursing and teaching sisterhoods with which London is filled. Look at the armies of district visitors. Mr. Besant may find fault with the want of wisdom often displayed by these; but that does not disprove the fact of their unselfish zeal in behalf of those, whom they are represented as mercilessly sacrificing to their own ease and luxury, and of whose sufferings they are supposed to make a mock. Are not our breakfast-tables loaded and our waste-paper baskets filled with appeals from unnumbered institutions—orphanges, schools, almshouses, homes, refuges, conducted by ladies for the benefit of the working-classes, which are rejected, because the wealth of Croesus would not enable us to respond to them all? Could it be said, without the most monstrous falsehood, that English ladies care nothing how the working-girls may suffer?

Again, if we examine into the charges made against the producer, we shall find the case much the same. We will take the case put forward by Mr. Besant himself. Melenda takes back some work very negligently done to her employer. There are three courses open to the employer. He may condone the neglect and pay her, as if the work had been properly done. If he took this course, others would at once be tempted to be equally negligent, and he would soon find himself obliged to change his mode of dealing with his employés or close his establishment. He may, in the second place, dismiss the offender at once. If he does this, he consigns her probably to starvation; and a very touching picture might be drawn of the consequences of taking this step. There remains the third course—retaining her services, but exacting some penalty for the neglect. This is surely the most merciful course, and this is the one he adopts. But

¹ It is somewhat remarkable that Melenda and the others are employed in making *men's* shirts. To be sure, ladies are not interested in cheapening these. If any persons insisted on buying them cheap, and so ground the three girls down to starvation-level, it must have been the *gentlemen*, not the ladies.

what penalty is to be exacted. As Mr. Besant himself remarks, he cannot in these days have her flogged, or put in the pillory, or the like. He can only finer her, or keep her work back for a while. The last alternative, again, is the most merciful; and this, once more, is the course he does adopt. But the punishment, neither excessive nor cruel in itself, is carried out in a manner which makes it both. The girl is compelled to stand all day without being allowed to take any food. When charged with this, the head of the firm denies that he gave any such orders to his subordinates. No kind of proof is adduced that he did. So far as anything is proved, it is against the clerks and porters of the establishment, who could not at all events be chargeable with being actuated by greed of gain. Whatever other evidence may be adduced, Mr. Besant furnishes none to show that the philanthropy of the head of the firm was mere hypocrisy. We may pardon an impulsive and inexperienced girl for the unsupported charges which she makes. Is it quite so easy to pardon a man of ability, knowledge, and experience for endorsing them?

The truth is, Melenda's hardships are in the main due to neither the selfishness of rich purchasers nor the avarice of producers, but to the simple fact of the insufficiency of the trade to support those that try to live by it. If there is only work enough to feed two, and there are three applicants for it, one must be left unfed. The work-girls, again, will rather be the two that are fed, though the wages may be miserably small, than the one that remains unfed. The producer will employ the money saved by low wages in reducing the price of his goods and so increasing his sales. The public—dairy-maids as well as ladies—will buy as cheap as they can. No missionaries, replete with all that art and science can teach, not even "the fierce light of journalism," will remedy these things. If you can increase trade so as to be sufficient to feed all three, or if you can remove one of them to another place where work is to be had, you supply a remedy. But to expect that lectures, and public meetings, and exposures of hard cases through the medium of the press will effect any sensible improvement, is idle. Men might as well endeavour by the same means to alter the revolution of the planets or the order of the seasons.

This may sound to some stern and harsh. But where is the good of encouraging delusive fancies? The laws of demand and supply and competition must regulate men's dealings with one another. They are natural laws, and all attempts to set them aside only produce an increase of suffering. But the Revelation which has been given through Jesus Christ teaches us that these evils with which we have been dealing, though necessary parts of human probation, can be softened and relieved by the exercise of Christian charity. It is the trial of the poor to deny their natural inclination to murmur and rebel. It is the trial of the rich—I use this term in the sense of all persons who have more than sufficient for the support of life—it is their trial to forego luxuries and self-indulgence in order to relieve the suffering. Thus, and thus only, can the bitter woes, which Mr. Besant's book so graphically portrays, be soothed and healed. His own book is, indeed, a striking evidence of this. In it Melenda's hardships, Lizzie's yielding to temptation, Lottie's down-heartedness, are all amended and removed, their squalid and hopeless misery is exchanged for content and comfort—and how? By the exercise of Valentine's devotion and charity. If there were many Valentines, there would be few Melendas and Lizzies. This is the true moral of Mr. Besant's book, whether he means it or not, and it is a most noble one. Let it not, however, once more, be forgotten that it would be nobler still if Valentine had been actuated by the highest and truest of all motives—the love not of man only, but of Him who is the great Representative of Humanity, and who has told us that whatsoever we do unto one of the least of these His brethren, we do unto Him!

Before concluding we should like to say one word respecting Mr. Besant's treatment of the Church. We do not know what his own religious belief is, and it would be very difficult to gather it from his book. But, we submit, the Church receives very unfair treatment at his hands. In a large suburban district its sole representative is a weak-minded young man, bigoted and ignorant, whose only idea of his duty is to chant the service in a highly ornate church, which is empty of worshippers, and require the people to submit to discipline, confession and penance, though they are as yet wholly ignorant of the Church's teaching. To carry out this programme he consents to lead the dullest, dreariest and most hopeless of lives, submitting to poverty, loneliness, and neglect, without a murmur. Where did Mr. Besant fall in with this gentleman? We have ourselves been in orders over forty years, and have been brought into contact with clergymen of every school of opinion, and we profess that we have never met with the Reverend Randal Smith, or anybody like him. There are no doubt zealous young men, whose zeal exceeds their discretion, who take up crude theories, and adopt practices which they find it wise afterwards to lay aside. But even of the most extreme of these the Reverend Randal is a gross and clumsy caricature. Is he any representative at all of the hundreds of devoted and earnest men who labour not only zealously, but wisely, for the Church in the suburban parishes? Is it fair to pass over without a word all the Church's other agencies, to which some reference has already been made, the lay helpers, the nursing, teaching, and visiting sisters, the homes, orphanages, private hospitals and colleges? Many of these do the identical work which Valentine is represented as doing. Why should not their work succeed as well as hers?

And even taking Mr. Randal Smith as Mr. Besant has drawn him, ought he to be made merely an object of ridicule? Are *all* his views extravagant and absurd? When he maintains that it is his office to pray for all in his parish, does he do anything more than carry out the instruction of St. Paul to Timothy, which the Apostle declares to be "good and acceptable in the sight of God?"¹ Do his patience, his perseverance, and his humility merit no better recognition than simple ridicule? or does Mr. Besant think that these qualities could fail to have their influence in time with those among whom he lives? Doubtless in some of our suburban districts, where there has been long and systematic neglect, it is difficult for the Church to gain a hold, or regain it, as the case may be. But it would be most unreasonable to argue that because she is a long time about it, she will never do it at all. In other parts of London the churches are crowded with worshippers, and new churches are filled almost as soon as opened. There is nothing different in the resident in Hoxton from the resident in other metropolitan parishes, except that they may have been less cared for. But what has been effected in one district of London by zeal and perseverance, may with the same amount of these qualities be effected in another.

It is not contended that the Legislature can do nothing for the benefit of the working-classes.² It may help emigration in districts where there do not exist sufficient means for the support of the population; it may

¹ 1 Timothy ii. 1, 2, 3.

² Lord Shaftesbury's career is, in itself, a sufficient refutation of the idea that legislation can do nothing for the working-classes. And as the State, in its parental capacity, interfered between children and their employers, so might it interfere, and with the most beneficial results, between the poor and the exactors of exorbitant rents. If it became, to a vast extent, their landlord, as it might easily do, it could remove a very large amount of the disease and wretchedness, from which they suffer.

provide the funds for building decent homes within the capacity of the labouring-classes to pay for them. It may insist on the supply of pure water and the maintenance of efficient drainage. These, supplemented by private charity, would do much for the working-man, and still more for the working-woman. They will not indeed remove poverty, disease, and crime, for these are necessary to human probation, and must last as long as man himself endures. Even if Divine wisdom had not taught us, in those words which Mr. Besant treats with such scant respect, "that the poor shall never cease out of the land," and that "it cannot be but that offences will come," the experience of some thousands of years of human history might have satisfied us of them. But they would pour light on the dark places of the world—the light which Mr. Besant's Russian student so earnestly craved; it would cheer despondency; it would relieve distress; it would make the lives of all men, if not happy, at least hopeful.

We cannot take leave of Mr. Besant without saying, still more plainly than we have hitherto done, how greatly we appreciate his warm and unselfish sympathy with the working-classes, and especially the London work-girls—how we honour his zeal and his benevolence. We only wish we could enlist his sympathies for the working-man's truest friend on earth, whether he believe it or not—the great agency which God Himself has designed for the relief, the instruction, the enlightenment of humanity—the Church of Christ. We may say of Mr. Besant, "Cum talis sit, utinam noster esset."

H. C. ADAMS.

The Gospel according to St. Mark. By the Very Rev. G. A. CHADWICK, D.D., Dean of Armagh. Hodder and Stoughton.

The title given to this series—"The Expositor's Bible"—will best explain Dr. Chadwick's work. It can scarcely be called critical, in so far that it almost universally adopts without comment the readings of the Revised Version, and the writer seldom pauses to remark on any historical or textual difficulties which may occur. And yet we feel that this volume, and, we trust, the whole series, may supply a real and long-felt want. It seems to us to combine the popular style of many well-known works, with a deeper and more searching exposition of our Lord's words and deeds, and at times a most thoughtful application of them to the needs of the present day.

One of our Bishops in a recent Charge—we think it was the Bishop of Oxford—very earnestly pointed out to his clergy the necessity laid upon them of making themselves in some degree acquainted with the history of, and the manifold evidences for, our common Christian faith, in face of the widespread and pretentious assaults of infidelity. Now the historical foundation in fact of Christianity is at once its strongest evidence, and the evidence most accessible for attack or defence, and yet that of which the majority of its opponents wisely fight most shy. Stoutly controverted, nay, often utterly exploded, theories of German critics are put forward as well-established and undoubted facts in magazines and reviews which lie on the tables of those who fill the pews in our churches. The question of inspiration—verbal or otherwise, of the moral difficulties of the Old Testament, and apparent scientific inaccuracies, are insidiously mixed up with, and made to appear an essential part of, that immeasurably greater, that all-important question, whether the story—as we read it to-day—of the life and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ be true or not. Dr. Chadwick's method of handling his subject—the Gospel according to St. Mark—does admirable service in this matter. In it The Christ is manifested moving in and out amongst the lives of other men.

In it His "energy" demonstrates itself to be divine, even apart from all background of prophecy or purpose of the ages. The appearance of that unique figure in history demands adequate explanation. With great skill, and in language of much power and beauty, Dr. Chadwick matches the many conflicting theories of to-day with the straightforward simplicity of St. Mark's life-like tale.

Upon the internal evidence of a profound unity of clearly marked purpose in the Evangelist he lays most special stress, and he shows to what absurd, untenable extremes those are driven who, refusing, like Strauss, to accept the miraculous element, must nevertheless in some way account for the rise and acceptance in the first centuries of the present story, while the events recorded must still have been fresh in men's minds, alike for confirmation or for refutation. Nor does he avoid or pass lightly over those deeper difficulties which must of necessity beset the human mind while striving to fathom the ways of the divine. His method we think admirable, providing as it does an answer to those petty and flippant objections, so easy to raise, and yet from their very nature so difficult to answer (cf. p. 8): "Now it sometimes lightens a difficulty that it is not occasional nor accidental, but wrought deep into the plan of a consistent work." At times, indeed, we think that Dr. Chadwick's exposition is not always consistent. He takes high and sure ground in his remarks on the alleged profanation of the Sabbath (p. 68): "They (the disciples) were blameless, not because the Fourth Commandment remained inviolate, but because circumstances made it right for them to profane the Sabbath—the larger obligation overruled the lesser." Here the assertion is that a higher, an essential law must in the nature of things take the place of one that is but temporary and subordinate. Yet compare with this Dr. Chadwick's remark on the destruction of the swine at Gadara. We do not think that the reasonable difficulty found here is to be explained by his rather inapposite remark (p. 146), "Was it any part of His mission to protect brutes from death?" Surely it were infinitely preferable to say, that here also the higher law of the salvation of a human soul took the place of the lower and, in its own region, most justifiable one, of the preservation of even brute life? We fail to see how the above quotation can be applied with any appropriateness to Him "Who marks the sparrow's fall." It appears an "unreasonable" remark, and we notice it because Dr. Chadwick's work is pre-eminently distinguished for its "reasonableness." The demoniacal possession in this case resulted in loss or confusion of personal identity. Our Lord allowed the evil spirits to pass into the herd of swine, that thus their poor victims might have visible proof of their own deliverance and consequent sanity. It is a self-evident axiom to assume that He always acted as was best on each occasion, and that nothing was ever left to caprice or the mere exercise of arbitrary power, but that each smallest detail was fraught with meaning. Again, Dr. Chadwick's mode of meeting a possible objection to the healing of the blind man at Bethsaida, by showing that our Lord must have performed a double miracle—instructing the intelligence as well as opening the eyes—seems in this case superfluous, and bound up wholly with the assumption that this man was *born* blind. May not this be said, to be refuted by the man's own reference to the apparently once familiar forms of men and trees—the long-forgotten sights of his childhood? Dr. Chadwick's unwillingness to depart from the Revised Version—a necessity, we imagine, imposed upon him by the requirements of his work—has caused him to give rather a strained interpretation to the words, "Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!" (p. 283). Surely to do this is not merely "hard," but utterly "impossible." The expression "for them that trust in riches" is wanting

in most of the older MSS., and seems to be an evident interpolation of some scribe, who, that he may take away their apparent harshness, adds his own gloss to Christ's words.

Dr. Chadwick's book manifests a strength and a robustness which has no patience with the sentimental and supra-subjective form of religion only too common to-day. He strongly deprecates "That inflexible demand for certain realized personal experiences as the title to recognition in a Christian." "Faith is precious only as it leans on what is trustworthy." "Men are still to repent; for however slightly modern preachers may heal the hurt of souls, real contrition is here taken over into the Gospel Scheme." Altogether admirable are his expository remarks on such difficult subjects as "Blasphemy" (not "Sin" as he rightly remarks) "against the Holy Ghost"—"Asceticism" suggested by John Baptist—"The choice of Judas," p. 368: "It is plain that Jesus could not and did not choose the Apostles through foreknowledge of what they would hereafter prove, but by His perception of what they then were, and what they were capable of becoming, if faithful to the light they should receive." "Divorce," p. 265. "The Agony in Gethsemane," p. 397: "Therefore, since the perfection of manhood means neither the ignoring of pain nor the denying of it, but the union of absolute recognition with absolute mastery of its fearfulness, Jesus, on the approach of agony and shame, and who shall say what besides, yields Himself beforehand to the full contemplation of His lot." It is on this account that, while to clerical readers and teachers of others we can strongly recommend Dean Chadwick's book for its "suggestiveness," yet it is in the hands of our laity of both sexes we should most earnestly desire to see it. Its sober and reverent teaching, its well-executed method of bringing the details of our everyday lives under the illuminating light of Christ's life, its studied avoidance of the mere conventionalisms of religious thought and expression, are highly to be commended.

RICHARD W. SEAVER.

Short Notices.

The Count of the Saxon Shore. A Tale of the Departure of the Romans from Britain. By the Rev. ALFRED J. CHURCH, M.A. With sixteen coloured illustrations. Seeley and Co.

Professor Church's historical Tales have been often commended in these pages, and we can certainly say that the present volume is worthy of its predecessors. "Count of the Saxon Shore" was a title bestowed by Maximian on the officer who guarded the shores of Britain and Gaul from Saxon pirates. The story is admirably planned and vividly told.

The Fugitives; or, The Tyrant Queen of Madagascar. By R. M. BALLANTYNE. Nisbet and Co.

Ranavalona I., "the Tyrant Queen," died in 1861, after a reign of thirty years. Mr. Ballantyne, grouping together interesting facts in regard to the persecution of Christians during that period, has given graphic sketches of Malagasy life and customs. Three English characters (or rather, three persons from an English ship), a young doctor, a negro, and a true-blue tar, are well drawn. As in all this gifted writer's books, there is plenty of incident, much wholesome information, with an admixture of the humorous.