

Reviews.

Apologetics ; or, Christianity Defensively Stated. By Professor BRUCE. Pp. 522. Price 10s. 6d. T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh.

THEIS is a very able and systematic arrangement of reasons for the faith which would be given by a thoughtful and learned student and scholar in answer to the various attacks and criticisms in current thought. Its method is historical, and is eminently candid in its treatment. In the first chapter Professor Bruce sketches the reasons for belief given in the New Testament, and the reply of Origen to the attack of Celsus ; passing on to freethought in the eighteenth century, and freethought in the present time. With regard to his plan of writing, he says : "The aim naturally determines the method. The aim is to secure for Christianity a fair hearing with conscious or implicit believers whose faith is stifled or weakened by anti-Christian prejudices of varied nature and origin." The book, in short, is intended to be, not so much a complete philosophical treatise, as to deal with current difficulties and misconceptions. An enumeration of the chapters will partly indicate this plan : "The Christian Facts," "The Christian Theory of the Universe," "The Pantheistic Theory," "The Materialistic Theory," "The Deistic Theory," "Modern Speculative Theism," "Agnosticism."

The second book deals with the historical preparation for Christianity. In the first chapter, on "The Sources," the Professor adopts a very sensible attitude towards the higher criticism ; he respectfully waits until there is some ground for establishing conclusions, and in the meantime is content to begin with the consideration of the prophets, and to see how much of the previous existence of the ideas and traditions accepted as Jewish their writings imply. He goes on with "The Religion of the Prophets"; "The Prophetic Idea of Israel's Vocation and History"; "Mosaism," or the existence, character, and influence of the great law-giver ; "Prophetism," or the influence of the prophets ; "Prophetic Optimism," or the three conceptions of the Ideal Royal Man, the kingdom of the good, and the suffering servant of God, all meeting in Jesus. In the seventh chapter, on "Judaism," Dr. Bruce discusses the Levitical code, and the work of Ezra in re-establishing its provisions. Under the head "The Night of Legalism" he treats of the Jewish system after the light of prophecy had ceased. The ninth chapter sums up the "Old Testament Literature," and gives an account of the Hebrew canon ; and in the tenth chapter he points out the defects of "The Old Testament Religion and its Literature." The third book presents an account of the Christian origins. The first chapter deals with the personality of Jesus, the second with His setting forth as Messiah. The writer then describes Jesus as Founder of the Kingdom of God ; discussing with great frankness in the next chapter the resurrection, of which he says "that our Lord's physical resurrection remains as a fact to be accounted for, but a mystery." In the fifth chapter he presents the problem of the Divinity of our Lord. This is followed by a very important chapter on the position of St. Paul as the great Christian teacher. In the seventh chapter the divergent views of different German critics are examined with great ability.

In his account of the synoptical gospels, Dr. Bruce, with marked acumen, gives reasons for thinking that the Evangelists were incapable of producing ideal portraits. In estimating the authenticity of the fourth gospel in the ninth chapter, the Professor sums up as follows : "It has indeed been pronounced beyond belief that a companion of Jesus

could come to think of Him as the incarnate Logos, or that any power, either of faith or philosophy, could so extinguish the recollection of the real life, and set in its place this wonderful image of a Divine Being. If we have rightly regarded the Gospel as intended for the use of disciples assumed to be familiar with the primitive evangelic tradition, the writer must have conceived it possible for his readers to combine the two images. He could hardly have thought this possible for them, unless he felt it to be possible for himself. Why, then, should it be possible for a scholar of John's to adopt the human image from his lips, or from current tradition, or from the synoptical gospels, and impossible for John himself, who had got that image from personal intercourse with Jesus?" The book concludes with a powerful appeal to the recognition of Christ as the true Light of the World.

WILLIAM SINCLAIR.

Sermons. By the late Rev. JAMES LONSDALE, formerly Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford, Classical Professor King's College, London, and Rector of South Luffenham and Huntspill. Longmans, Green and Co., London.

The elegant scholarship and varied learning of James Lonsdale are applied in these Sermons, not as a show, but to use in the most simple, direct, forcible, and admirable way. That is made plain which other writers would somewhat obscure—appeals to sober reason and genuine affection, instead of puzzling the judgment, and rendering the conclusion doubtful. The style is varied, never obscure nor stilted. In the great learning here and there apparent, the quaint simplicity so frequent, the lively imagination so interesting, the heart is made better, and the mind rests on the latent power which pervades every sermon. Earnestness, evident sincerity, accompany admirable teaching, and remind those who knew him how admirable he was as a companion.

There are thirty-three Sermons. These are a few of the titles: The Advent of Death, The Agony in the Garden, The Christian's Contest, Satan Transformed, Immortality, Wisdom Justified, Time and Eternity, The Paradise of God, The End of the Year. There is much learning in Sermons xxii., xxiii., xxiv. A lively imagination and delicious quaintness abound in Sermons xxvii. and xxix. Not that these are the only excellent, for in all the excellence grows on you in the reading, and the quaintness is found to be wisdom lit up with humour. Every sermon is that which a good man, a scholar, a teacher, should write; but the ease, the unpretentiousness, the absence of self, and the Lord in all, mark a genius not less modest than rare. In its order, every sermon, even without the author's finishing touches, may be studied as a model of unadorned beauty.

As to the Lord's Second Advent, these are his words: "Then will Christ conclude the preaching of the Gospel, and end the duration of the world. By one act and one appearance will He unite the greatest terror with the greatest glory; He will transform the world, and nature and time, and the bodies of His saints, and the souls of His disciples; He will awaken the dead, and change the living as in a moment; He will judge the living and the dead, and carry the children of God to the inheritance of eternal life" (p. 9).

In the Sermon on Bethlehem (p. 20), we find: "Of all the many wonderful things which belong to our holy religion, whether we think of the miracles that accompanied it, its spread through the world, its effect on the world, still more its effect on those who are really good and kind, yet, among all these wonderful things, none more wonderful than its little beginning with a stable, a manger."

On Trinity Sunday (p. 92) he writes: "We poor weak, sinful men are

taught by the Holy Spirit in prayer, through Christ our Lord, to draw near freely and confidently to our good Father which is in heaven."

It is hard to say whether the naturalness is child of consummate skill, and the hidden power, ever and ever bursting out from the simplicity, is a gift of the Holy Ghost, or whether both are not the retiring beauties of a genuinely noble character, of one who knows, as he says, "God careth for no man's eloquence."

As to Immortality (p. 169), we read: "This doctrine can never perish. If it perished, the Church would perish with it. A gloom would settle upon the world, as though the sun were darkened in the heavens. Unless we may believe in the last articles of the Creed, the Resurrection of the Body, and the Life Everlasting, we cannot believe in Jesus Christ our Lord, nor the Holy Ghost, nor the Holy Catholic Church. Our places of worship would be deserted, our cathedrals become ruins, or be turned into mere galleries of arts and exhibitions. Our hymns would lose all their beauty, pathos, sublimity. The death-bed of the dying would be hopeless indeed."

Having spoken of four periods in the course of the last sermon in the book (p. 263), he closes with these words: "The first gives us all confidence in God; the second suggests repentance; the third calls for our prayers, our vigilance, our active efforts against evil; the last gives us the final motive, the great hope, and runs up into the eternal charity of our heavenly Father."

In the whole book is not one pretentious sentence. Every sermon will, in the reading, interest those who have lost interest in religion: for there is much sacred amusement, a cheerfulness that elevates. The devout man will learn how great a beauty and power reside in simple faith and in taking God at His word. The book is good for the teacher, and a book good, very good, for him who desires to be taught.

JOSEPH WILLIAM REYNOLDS.

Short Notices.

Early Christian Missions of Ireland, Scotland, and England. By Mrs. CHARLES. Pp. 425. S.P.C.K.

THE authoress of "The Schönberg-Cotta Family," who is a general and deservedly popular favourite, has gathered together, in her pleasant way, sketches of the mission of St. Patrick from Wales to Ireland, St. Columba from Ireland to Scotland, the missions from Iona to England of St. Aidan, St. Hilda, St. Colman, St. Chad, and St. Cuthbert. Then there comes the exceedingly interesting mission of St. Columban to Europe, and that of Winifred of Devonshire, better known as St. Boniface, who became the Apostle of Germany, and lastly, there is a biography, translated chiefly from the Latin, of St. Margaret the Saxon, wife of Malcolm Canmore, who did much to civilize and Christianize her husband's wild subjects. This book will be a valuable introduction for many young students to the fascinating regions of Early Church History in our native land.

The Church and her Teaching. By the REV. C. H. ROBINSON. Pp. 69. Price 2s. Longman and Co.

This little book consists of six Lenten Addresses given in Truro Cathedral on the subject of the Church. It contains many useful