

BRIEF NOTICES OF BOOKS.

THE SPEAKER'S COMMENTARY. Vol. VI. *Ezekiel, Daniel, and the Minor Prophets*. (London: John Murray.) It is not easy to write a "brief notice" of a volume which contains expositions by ten different authors on no less than fourteen Scriptures. And though I have kept the volume by me for the last three months, dipping into it whenever I could, testing every man's work, so far as work can be tested by merely tasting it, and carefully examining its treatment of a few critical passages, I cannot affect to have an adequate, and still less a familiar and intimate, acquaintance with it. Yet, lest I should seem wanting in courtesy to the editor, authors, and publisher, I must not any longer defer my "notice" of it. A certain lack of breadth and freedom is as obvious in this as in the previous volumes of the Commentary; but as it arises from the very method and aim of the work, it calls for no censure, since every book should be judged by its professed aim, and its method by its correspondence with that aim. Judged from this point of view, no one, I think, can fail to find much to approve, much that is really valuable in this volume. It presents everywhere the signs of wide reading and honest toil. It is a repertory of orthodox interpretations; and while it leans—a little too much for some tastes—to accepted and established views, it conveys them in a modernized form, and endeavours to reconcile them, often with considerable success, with the discoveries of modern research and with the difficulties and objections started by modern criticism. Of course, in the work of so many scholars great differences of quality may be found. I myself have been most struck with Dr. Currey's on Ezekiel, and Prebendary Huxtable's on Hosea and Jonah; but the main lines of thought, the principles and leading conclusions, and even a certain tone of thought, are wonderfully well maintained throughout, so well as to give a noticeable unity to the whole Commentary which is very striking in the combined labours of so many different hands. Any writer who means to reckon with the orthodox school of the Anglican Church, to familiarize himself with their real mode of handling Holy Writ, must of necessity acquaint himself with this "explanatory and critical Commentary." Students of every school will find much in it which they will value and respect.

STUDIES IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION AND HISTORY. *By Professor A. M. Fairbairn.* (London: William Mullan and Son.) Although this volume has not been sent me for review, I do myself the pleasure, and my readers, if perchance they have not seen it, the service, of calling their attention to it. It contains essays on the Idea of God, Theism and Scientific Speculation, the Belief in Immortality, and the Place of the Indo-European and Semitic Races in History. About one half the volume, and by no means the more valuable half, has appeared in the pages of the "Contemporary Review." In their new and completer form these essays constitute the most valuable contribution to modern apologetic literature I have met for many a day. Mr. Wace, in his charming book, "Christianity and Morality," has very sufficiently disposed of the slight, sentimental, and literary scepticism of the school led by Mr. Matthew Arnold and Mr. Greg; but in these "Studies" Professor Fairbairn shows himself capable of dealing, no less sufficiently, with the far profounder scepticism, the reasoned unbelief, of the scientific and philosophical schools represented by Schelling, Hegel, Haeckel, Comte, Herbert Spencer, and John Stuart Mill. For varied learning and erudition, and keen disciplined thought, combined with an enlightened and devout faith, it would not be easy to produce his match. And if he should live to accomplish the great work for which even these remarkable essays are but "studies," I cannot but think it will prove a real and valuable addition to the literature of the age.

THE BOOK OF RUTH, A POPULAR EXPOSITION (price two shillings), *by Samuel Cox* (Religious Tract Society), is, for the most part, a reprint from the pages of this Magazine (Volume II.). But certain obvious errors in it are here corrected; and two appendices are added, one on "Christ as the true *Messiah* of the world," and the other on "Christ as the true *Goal* of men." In its new and completer shape this small commentary has already had a considerable sale; and my only reason for mentioning it at this late day is that, as certain friendly readers of THE EXPOSITOR have written to ask when they might hope to get it in the form of a book, and therefore were evidently unaware that it had appeared in that form some time ago, it is possible that others may be glad to know where, and on what terms, they may obtain it.

EXPOSITORY ESSAYS AND DISCOURSES, *by Samuel Cox* (Hodder and Stoughton), is also in large measure a reprint, since it contains

most of the articles which have appeared in this Magazine over the name *Carpus*. This volume is the third of a series of which "An Expositor's Note-book" was the first, and "Biblical Expositions" the second volume; and contains, besides the *Carpus* papers, about a dozen others which have not appeared in *THE EXPOSITOR*. It would not become *me* to add more than the final sentence of the preface, which explains the choice of my occasional *nom de plume*. "Carpus of Troas, the friend and host of St. Paul, may or may not have read and pondered the manuscripts which the Apostle left in his charge; but I have always conceived of him as a man of literary tastes and aptitudes, as one of the obscure students and teachers of the Word in apostolic times; and it is this conception of him which has led me now and then to borrow his name."

Messrs Williams and Norgate are publishing a translation, by *J. Frederick Smith*, of EWALD'S great COMMENTARY ON THE PROPHETS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, of which I have received Volumes I. and II. It is too late in the day either to praise or to criticize Ewald's work—always at its best when he is dealing with the poetical books of Scripture. Whatever his defects—and, no doubt, he had "the defects of his qualities," and a few over—he takes the first place among the critics and commentators of Germany as easily and undeniably as Canon Lightfoot takes it among English expositors. All that remains to be said is, therefore, that the publishers of this translation are conferring an immense boon on students to whom Ewald is not accessible in his mother-tongue, and that the translator has done his work with the most painstaking care. On one point, however, I think his reverence for Ewald is excessive—that reverence of the mere letter and symbol which is the root of idolatry. If in an English book we must have *Yahvé* for *Jehovah*, I really do not see that anything is gained by substituting at every turn *Yôél*, *Zakharya*, *Yesaya*, *Obadya*, *Mikha*, &c., for the more familiar name-forms by which the Hebrew prophets are known among us. S. COX.