

BOOKS AND THEIR WRITERS.

IT would be easy to fill several pages with notes on the host of interesting points raised by Dean Inge in his last book, *The Lay Thoughts of a Dean* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, 7s. 6d. net.). The Dean is a close observer of men and of manners. He has the courage of his convictions and does not hesitate to express his views, pleasant or unpleasant. He is gifted with an excellent memory. This enables him to draw upon the large resources of illustrative matter which he has acquired by more than usually extensive reading and an interest in an extraordinarily wide range of subjects. His style is remarkably easy and clear, and it is a pleasure to read his crisp and often epigrammatic sentences. He has been invited by the editors of several of our widely circulated papers to write his views on current events and has thus found an excellent medium for self-expression and for useful instruction on a variety of topics. He passes "from grave to gay, from lively to severe," and is equally at home in each. Probably no ecclesiastic is so widely read at the present time, and in the opinion of many none is more interesting and entertaining. At the same time his scholarship is acknowledged by all and the weight of his learning makes him an acceptable speaker at the gatherings of the learned. He is one of those chosen to preach on such special occasions as a meeting of the British Association. We may not agree with every opinion expressed, but we have to acknowledge that he is able to give good reasons for all that he advances. The present volume shows the Dean mostly in a lighter vein, and it reveals his personality in many interesting ways.

It is a reprint of a number of essays which have appeared in various papers in recent years, and is divided into four sections: Literary, Political, Social, and Religious. In the first he pays a tribute to the memory of one of his great predecessors in the deanery of St. Paul's, John Colet, one of the precursors of the Reformation and the friend of Erasmus. Two essays on Aphorisms bring together a collection of sayings of great men. They are in happy harmony with much of the Dean's own mood and tempt us to extensive quotation. We must be content with two, both of them from Bishop Creighton, whose death many of us regarded as a great blow to the true lines of progress of the Church of England. They are "Socialism will only be possible when we are all perfect, and then it will not be needed," and "We cannot improve the world faster than we improve ourselves." Lovers of the English language will appreciate the Dean's exposure of some flagrant tendencies towards abuses in its pronunciation and use. In the political section the War naturally figures largely, and the effect upon population is considered at some length. As this volume is in some measure intended for American readers it is natural that prominence is given to Ambassador Page's Letters and other matters of interest across the Atlantic. The essays on social affairs are widely

varied. Eugenics have a prominent place. Psychotherapy is severely criticized. It gives an opportunity for one of those welcome pieces of self-revelation which are scattered throughout the essays. "I believe that my reason was given to me that I may know things as they are, and my will that I may bring my refractory disposition into harmony with the laws of my Creator. I will neither twist up the corners of my mouth when I am in the dumps, nor tell myself that in all respects I am getting better and younger and handsomer every day. If I can help it, I will play no tricks with my soul in the faith that though bluff may sometimes pay very well in this world, it will cut a very poor figure in the next."

In dealing with religious topics the Dean discusses the Lambeth Conference of 1920 without much regard for episcopal susceptibilities. He is not a worshipper at the prelatical shrine. He points out that "the Bishops representing overseas dioceses have not a very high average of intellectual distinction," and touches upon episcopal weaknesses by a quotation from Bishop Phillips Brooks, "The bishops are not very wise, nor very clever; but they think they are, and they very much enjoy being bishops." Only a bishop could have said that, and only the Dean of St. Paul's could dare to repeat it. His treatment of reunion in Great Britain exposes the narrowness and the ecclesiastical theorizing which stand in the way of much-needed advance in unity with our non-episcopal brethren.

Such a strong current of wholesome fresh air on the dusty corners of our mental, moral, personal and national life is useful. It helps to bring things to the test of sound common sense, to clear away cobwebs and to restore sanity where it is likely to be lost by some paralysing obsession. May the Dean long continue his work of *censor morium* even though he gives some of us shrewd knocks on occasions. Probably we are all the better for them. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend," though the friend is not often thanked for his efforts.

Dr. Adam C. Welch, Professor of Hebrew in New College, Edinburgh, is well known to Biblical students south of the Tweed. It was a happy thought to invite him to give a course of lectures at the Vacation School for Old Testament Study in King's College Hostel in September, 1925. He chose as his subject, the Psalter in Life, Worship and History. The lectures have now been published by Mr. Humphrey Milford, the Oxford University Press (5s. net). The titles of the four lectures are:—The Psalter and Nature, The Psalter and History, The Psalter and Worship, The Psalter and the Inner Life. He expresses the view in his preface that "the greatest need in Old Testament exegetical literature is a modern hand-book or commentary on the Psalter, which would bring within the reach of English readers some knowledge of the work which has been done in recent years on this book, both in Great Britain and abroad." Dr. Welch's all too brief treatment of the Psalter in these lectures is a fitting introduction to the study. The first lecture shows a keen appreciation of the Hebrew attitude towards

nature. The second displays the view taken of the divine action in history. The national religion was more concerned with its moral and spiritual character than with its ceremonial side. On this element the Psalter dwells insistently and constantly. Its place in worship is considered in the next lecture and some of the accepted theories are questioned. The last lecture is the most interesting of all. Its purpose is to show how the hymns of a sharply defined community have become the classic expression in the wider world of the relation of the soul to God. This is a scholar's treatment of a great theme, and its practical value is not overshadowed by the weight of its learning.

Books descriptive of life in other lands have a special fascination for many of us. Accounts of the habits and customs of the people in tropical countries have their own interest, and present contrasts with the developments of civilization in the more temperate zones. When we come nearer home to the countries which many of us are familiar with, through visits to the Continent, we have still much to learn of the institutions of the larger European countries. Probably the lands that we know least about are the smaller countries of Europe. The Balkan provinces, for example, especially since the War, are unfamiliar to most of us, and some of the northern lands are equally unfamiliar. Mr. Frank Fox, who has already written books on *The Balkan Peninsula*, *Switzerland*, and various portions of the British Empire, has just brought out a book on *Finland To-Day*, which gives the sort of information we are glad to have. There is a short account of the origin of the Finns; then an historical *résumé* telling of the relationship of Finland to Russia and Sweden and the influence of these connections on its development. Several chapters tell of the present industrial conditions, and of the work of the Finns as farmers, foresters and manufacturers. In 1919 Finland secured its liberty and an interesting account is given of the form of government set up. The country adopted prohibition, and Mr. Fox tells of some of the difficulties encountered in enforcing it. A chapter is devoted to the guidance of the tourist. There are a number of excellent illustrations. The volume gives a good impression of an efficiency-loving people who are determined to make good in every way, and not least in educational matters. Their attention to physical culture, as recent events have shown, is strikingly effective. The publishers are A. & C. Black and the price is 7s. 6d. net.

The name of Dr. Edersheim has long been known as the author of several well-known works on the life and time of our Lord. He made a special study of the conditions of Palestine in that period, and of the thought, literature and customs of our Lord's contemporaries. These he set out in a number of works which have had a deservedly wide circulation. He devoted special attention to the Temple and its services, and gave the results of his researches in

his book *The Temple, Its Ministry and Service as they were at the Time of Jesus Christ*. In another volume he dealt with the more general aspects of the life of the period, the methods of travel, the roads, the inns, the home surroundings and education of the children, the position of women, Jewish trades and commerce and some of the religious sects. These are contained in a volume entitled *Sketches of Jewish Life in the Days of Christ*. The Religious Tract Society has recently brought out new editions of the two books at six shillings each. They contain an amount of information which is specially useful to Bible Class leaders and teachers. We recognize that we cannot fully understand many of the allusions in the New Testament without some acquaintance with the mode of life and the customs of the people of the land. Dr. Edersheim has provided in these volumes the necessary information. His object has been throughout to illustrate the New Testament History and teaching, and the full index shows how completely this has been done. The Book on the Temple gives full information as to the Jewish feasts and festivals. It explains the meaning of many of the symbolic acts in the worship, and deals specially with the relation between the Passover and the Lord's Supper.

I expect the volumes of "Everyman's Library" are well known to most of my readers. They provide, at moderate cost and in a small form suited for overcrowded shelves, a supply of the best literature in many departments of thought. The number of books in the Library is now close on eight hundred, and the choice has been made with such true catholicity that every taste is met. Among the latest additions to the series there are three which I can recommend for general reading. Mr. E. H. Blakeney, M.A., is well known to readers of *THE CHURCHMAN*. He is a frequent contributor to its pages, and many of the reviews of books which its readers enjoy are from his pen. He is a lover of Switzerland and its mountains, as well as an expert climber. In a volume entitled *Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers*, he has collected a number of essays by great climbers of the past and has added a series of notes to help the uninitiated. Accounts are given of the first ascents of some of the giants of the Alps, and thrilling experiences are recorded by such well-known pioneers as Wills, Tyndall, Mathews, Hinchliff, Ball, Hardy, and Kennedy. Better known even than most of these are Sir Leslie Stephen, the author of *The Playground of Europe*, Canon Llewelyn Davies, and Edward Whymper, whose name is associated with the first ascent of the Matterhorn and the terrible accident which overtook the party on their descent. The account of the accident is given here as it was sent to *The Times* by Whymper, soon after the unfortunate controversy broke out as to the cause of the catastrophe. A chapter on the dangers of mountaineering by Leslie Stephen will remove any false impressions which may be entertained on the subject. We are indebted to Mr. Blakeney for a delightful and interesting book.

For many students of history the reign of Louis XIV has a special fascination. The great monarch who could say without exaggeration "L'État, c'est moi" was a unique personality in the records of Europe. It is little wonder that French writers have delighted to depict the glories of the era and to represent it as the golden age of France. Yet both the Monarch and the age had striking defects which are more obvious to us than to those who lived nearer his time. We are fortunate in having very full information of the life of the times, and specially of the Court and its customs and its intrigues, but probably no brief account of the reign excels that of Voltaire, which is translated by Martyn P. Pollack and appears as number 780 of "Everyman's Library." To Voltaire the reign of Louis XIV was the beginning of the modern era in France. It brought "the birth of a revolution in the human mind." We may make allowance for some measure of exaggeration on the part of the French writer who wrote under the influence of another revolution, though a less eventful one than that of 1789. He gives some interesting details of ecclesiastical affairs, noting the position of the Gallican Church, the influence of Calvinism, the origin of Jansenism and the development of Quietism. His dislike of Mme. Guyon is well known and has to be discounted. With all its limitations Voltaire's Louis XIV is a piece of historical writing which appeals strongly to the student of European history.

Another of the recent additions to the Library is Charles Kingsley's *Madam How and Lady Why*. It is a book from which several generations of young people have received some of their first lessons on the how and the why of this earth, and many more may yet learn from it with equal profit.

With each addition to the volumes of *The Speaker's Bible* the value of the series becomes increasingly evident. The latest volume to appear is on *The Gospel according to St. Luke*, Volume III (*The Speaker's Bible Offices*, Aberdeen, 9s. 6d. net). In just over two hundred and fifty quarto pages four chapters of St. Luke's Gospel are treated. This indicates the fullness of the treatment, but when we remember that the chapters are from XV to XIX, and that they contain some of the most wonderful and instructive of our Lord's parables, we are not surprised. In fact those who are the fortunate possessors of the volume will be profoundly thankful for the fullness with which such parables as the Prodigal Son, the Unjust Steward, Dives and Lazarus, the Importunate Widow, the Pharisee and the Publican are treated. The parable of the Prodigal Son receives, as it deserves, special attention. Perhaps no subject is more frequently taken as a basis for sermons. It represents so much that is central in the message of Christ, that preachers return to it again and again and are constantly seeking fresh methods of expressing the wonderfully varied applications of its simple story. They will find in the fifty-six pages devoted to it here a host of new and valuable suggestions. Dr. J. F. McFadyen contributes an introduction

which brings out several points in the parable not usually observed, while in the treatment of the text nothing seems to have been omitted. As many as three separate sermons are given on the important words "When he came to himself." Dr. J. H. Morrison contributes similar introductions to the parables of the Unjust Steward and the Importunate Widow. A commentary on this generous scale provides busy preachers with a wealth of suggestion and illustration far beyond anything that was available for their predecessors. The level of preaching should be immensely elevated by the existence of the help given in these volumes. Happy is the younger generation of clergy for whom such ample stores of information are at hand. The commonplace book of even their most industrious predecessors could show nothing like the fullness and variety of these notes and illustrations.

Mr. Joseph Hocking's last novel, *Andrew Boconnoc's Will* (Cassell, 7s. 6d. net.), will be found an interesting study of the influence of Anglo-Catholicism on character. The hero is the son of a sturdy and rich Yorkshire manufacturer who is repelled by the un-English ways of the Anglo-Catholic priests in their endeavours to bring the doctrines of the Church of Rome into the Church of England. Julian Boconnoc comes under the influence of some of the most extreme of them while at the University of Oxford, and becomes in everything but name a Romanist. He is not received into that Church as his confessor advises him to remain in the Church of England. He is to help in the task of winning over the Church to communion with Rome. He is expected to be heir to the immense wealth of his father, and his father is determined that none of his money will ever be used for the purposes of such propaganda work. The story tells how he carries out this purpose and how at the same time he seeks to save his son from the intrigues with which he is surrounded. In the course of the story some plain facts are stated as to the influence of "Catholicism" both of the Anglican and the Roman types. The influence of Rome upon the life of Spain is depicted, and those who know the condition of Spain are able to confirm his picture as a true one. In the closing chapters emphasis is laid upon the effect of a revival of spiritual religion in the removal of all the barriers set up between Christians by an artificial ecclesiasticism. Mr. Hocking has made a careful study of the facts and has presented them effectively. Books of this kind are needed to counteract the glamour which some present-day novelists try to throw over the Romanizing movement in our Church.

G. F. I.