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RECENT ENGLISH LITERATURE ON THE NEW
TESTAMENT.

IN 1849 Dr. James Morison delivered and published a course of lectures *On the Ninth Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans*. These lectures he has frequently been asked to reprint. Instead of doing so he has remodelled and rewritten them, and now publishes an *Exposition* of the same chapter. Dr. Morison's learning, industry, and fairness have won for him a large audience, and his present volume will quite sustain his reputation. It is interesting to note in this exposition his impartiality as an expositor contending with his theological presuppositions. Sometimes he seems, unconsciously to himself, to make admissions which open the gate to full-blown Calvinism; at other times he strains his text to make Paul speak the language of Arminius. The unprejudiced reader will still find Calvinism in this chapter; and, able as Dr. Morison is, he will scarcely persuade his readers that Paul was not a believer in absolute predestination.—The same chapter is handled with similar result in Mr. Sadler's *Epistle to the Romans, with Notes Critical and Practical* (George Bell & Sons). Mr. Sadler's commentaries are always welcome. They are written in a devout spirit and with care. Tainted a little his exposition is with extreme sacramentarian views, but the error is easily eliminated, and the residuum is eminently edifying. Even those who totally differ from Prebendary Sadler in his interpretation of crucial passages will allow that he defends his views with vigour. For English readers this commentary furnishes in a readable form the results of much reading and thought.

It may not be out of place to remind our readers that a work of great and permanent value has been produced by Dr. James Drummond, to whom already the theological world owes so much. His present work, though not bearing so directly on exposition as *The Jewish Messiah*, has yet very obvious relation to the interpretation of the New Testament writings. It is entitled *Philo-Judæus; or, The Jewish-Alexandrian Philosophy in its Development and Completion*, and is published by Messrs. Williams & Norgate. There has hitherto been a very manifest gap in English theological and philosophical literature, which Dr. Drummond's volumes now adequately fill. The task of reading Philo is a hard one; to frame a coherent philosophy out of his allegorising interpretations

of Scripture and eclectic speculation is still harder; and perhaps hardest of all is to assign him his due place historically. To these tasks Dr. Drummond has set himself with true scholarly zeal, and has fought his way through the difficulties with admirable success. The blending of Hellenism and Judaism which prepared the way for Philo is expounded at length, and with much independence. Here Dr. Drummond is on familiar ground, and many of Gfrörer's opinions are contested with reason and force. The doctrine of the Logos is dealt with at great length, and with eminent fairness. The whole work is a credit to English learning, and should stimulate philosophical studies.

MARCUS DODS.

BREVIA.

Second Twilights and Old Testament Miracles.—A committee of the Royal Society was appointed some time ago to collect all accessible information upon the subject of the volcanic eruptions which took place on the island of Krakatoa in August, 1883. The report of that commission has just been issued, and a most instructive and fascinating volume it is. The various data are illustrated by maps, drawings, and diagrams, and six water-colour sketches of the wonderful skies seen in England shortly after the eruption.

The remarkable glows of colour seen in the late autumn of 1883, long after sunset, will be fresh in the recollection of most students of nature. Within a few days or weeks of the eruptions this phenomenon attracted attention in Australia, Honolulu, China, Japan, and in almost every part of Europe. After sunset, a first flush of colour appeared, lasting fifty minutes, followed after a while by a second, lasting in many instances nearly an hour and a half. The sunset scale of colour was inverted, the glow of singular brilliance and its continuance into the far night almost unexampled. In tropical latitudes, the sky-effect was sometimes mistaken by the sailors for the northern lights.

The evidence brought together tends to show that these highly tinted clouds were formed by extremely minute particles of vitreous pumice-dust held in suspension in the upper region of the atmosphere. For hundreds of miles along the coasts of Java and