

Book Notices.

God's Gentlemen. By REV. R. E. WELSH, M.A. London: James Bowden. Toronto: William Briggs. 12mo, pp. xiii-251.

This is a book of unusual vigour and vivacity. The author writes in a vein of Christian philosophy, blended with poetic feeling and fine literary skill. The very titles of his essays indicate their wide range and elevated plane. Among these are: A Medicated Memory; The Glamour of Life -1, Angelic Illusions; 2, The Ape of God; The Cynic and the Enthusiast; Chambers of Imagery; Exiles of the Church. We can best indicate the character of these essays by quotation from that which gives the book its title:

"God has his own gentlemen, and they are not identical with the gentlemen of fashion. The word 'gentleman' has a charm, a hint and flavour of something fine and incommunicable, which touches and appeals to every man who respects himself and desires to be respected. There are few affronts which a man resents more keenly than to be told he is 'no gentleman'; and there are few tributes which he tastes with better relish than to be accredited 'a thorough gentleman.'

"Some there are who profess a preference to be called *men* rather than gentlemen, or *women* rather than ladies. If this be anything more than a passing fancy, it may spring partly from the democratic spirit of the age, which takes pride in the bond of universal brotherhood. It may also spring in part from the diffused sentiment of Him who delighted to call Himself 'the Son of man,' claiming thus to be one with common humanity.

"Measured by the false standard of society, Jesus was not a gentleman, since he was a working carpenter—although humanly he was of the purest blood, of the best Jewish family. He has, however, rescued the much-abused name of gentleman from the false and fantastic associations with which society has encrusted it, by creating a nobler standard of measurement.

"Christians are God's gentlemen—if they are Christian so far forth as to have the spirit and tone of their prototype suffusing them. The phrase has floated down to us from Hare's suggestive 'Guesses at Truth': 'A Christian is God Almighty's gentleman.' A vital Christian life carries

or ought to carry with it the refinement of all our instincts. It implies a quickened sense of all that is courteous, gracious, honourable, winsome, and chivalrous.

"The same Christ who cleanses heart and conscience from the defilement of sin breeds a spirit of kindly consideration for others, a new feeling for the seemly and beautiful in behaviour, a self-denying disposition to serve and smooth the way of the weak. Christianity, wherever it is a living force, tends to refine and ennoble—as witness many a home and many an individual life into which Christ has entered, making things clean and sweet. He trains delicacy of feeling sharpens humane perceptions, and quickens sensibility to the condition of others. If He abides in us, He gives us the calm poise of serenity of heart.

"By revealing potential worth in all, He teaches us to 'honour all men,' bidding us 'look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.' Christian love 'doth not behave herself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked.' Never was there written a finer panegyric than 1 Corinthians xiii. on what lies at the root of all gentlemanliness.

"Christ has set the fashion for a perfect manhood and for a perfect manner of life. What calm dignity, springing from a heart tranquil and strong! What self-restraint when baited by unmannerly opponents! What tender regard, even up to his last moments on the cross, for womanhood and motherhood! What delicacy of feeling when unblushing men dragged before Him a frail sister and her impure life, at which He could but stoop in modest shame! What considerate regard for the lonely widow whose only son was being carried to his grave! How ready to 'lose Himself' and serve, even unto washing the disciples' feet! How deeply was He troubled when at a dinner He saw the guests pushing and contending for the best seats! When He went into the house of wealthy Simon the Pharisee and His host failed to show Him the usual courtesies of oriental life, and when the woman who was a sinner stole in and with her tears and hair and ointment performed the omitted service upon His feet and head, how graciously He honoured her modest devotion, and