

Literature.

Rev. James Stalker, M.A., D.D.

THE LIFE OF ST. PAUL.—Handbook for Bible Classes.
THE FOUR MEN, And Other Discourses. By James Stalker, D.D. Toronto. The Fleming H. Revell Co.

The author of these volumes occupies a unique position. To some he is the ideal preacher; to others, the scholarly writer; and to others still, the best known pattern of what a hard-working, practical pastor ought to be. He is thus variously regarded by his brethren in the ministry. The fact is, he is one of the best all-round men his Church possesses—a preacher, an author and an indefatigable pastor.

He emerged into prominence as pastor of St. Brycedale Free Church, Kirkcaldy, one of the foremost congregations in the denomination. His work there attracted the attention of the country, so that his name became a household word. To meet him taking a walk through the woods of Raith, as he loved to do when ministering in the "Lang toon," one would not set him down as a celebrity. Rather below the medium height, and slightly stooped, his head bending forward, his eyes spectacled, and his head covered with a low soft felt, his appearance would not indicate a name and fame such as are his, when he grasps your hand in a quiet, kindly way, a genial smile lights the face, a few words pass, and you have seen and heard enough to discover a modest, retiring, but a strong man. And Dr. Stalker is strong in every essential. The healthy ring is born of a sound and vigorous mental constitution. Broad-minded and liberal of view, he is well grounded, and there can be no mistaking where he stands on the leading questions of the day. His sympathies are with the forward school, yet he is trusted by the watchmen on the towers of true-blue doctrine, because he appreciates their scruples and is careful not to offend their susceptibilities. He is popular with and exercises great influence over young men. In Kirkcaldy the young men of the congregation were organized, led and directed by him to do most admirable work. The same may be said of his congregation in Glasgow, where the field is wider and more difficult. This power is strongly felt by that most critical class, the Scotch student. The University and Divinity Hall furnish many occupants for the pews of his church. On one occasion the Glasgow theological students asked him to speak to them on preaching. As an attractive and successful preacher, he was considered as specially fitted to impart useful hints to the embryo ministers.

His "hints" were very practical, their essence was careful preparation, a complete mastery and study of the subject. "When you go to the pulpit, be fully charged with your subject, then—out with it!" was his summing up and conclusion. It was a leaf from his own book of practice. His sermons bear evidence of patient and thorough research, he gathers his material carefully, and when he mounts the rostrum the charged mind finds ready and effective utterance. He is by no means a pulpit orator in the popular or any other sense. His delivery is distinct and pleasing, but it is in the fresh suggestiveness of his subject matter, in the instructive character of his sermons, and the model character of their style and construction that his charm as a preacher lies. His pastoral work is characterized by method and activity, and the many duties of the minister are overtaken with seeming ease. Volume after volume have placed his claims as an author on a high plane. No inferior work can be charged against him. This fact is the more surprising that his books are largely made up from material used in his work as a minister. But they are not hashed-up, second-hand palnium. Every page has its merit, and where a defect can be pointed out, it cannot be laid at the door of incapacity or want of thoughtful preparation. His name is prefixed to these books:—"The Life of Christ," "Life of St. Paul," (handbooks for Bible classes) "The Preacher and His Models," "Imago Christi," and "The Four Men." Two of these, the last named and the "Life of St. Paul," are placed

specially on the Canadian market at the present time. Both are admirable books. The "Life of St. Paul," is especially opportune, when the subject of the book forms the subject for the Sabbath-school lesson in the churches. Teachers could not have a more convenient and portable hand book, containing much information excellently arranged and accurately stated. There is an absence of speculation and a conformity to facts, but the dry bones are clothed in vivid language and the story is charmingly told. There is no attempt at great work, the purpose of the book being to provide an elementary text book, but there are passages which show the broad touch of a master of the subject. The chapter on the place of St. Paul in history is one of the freshest in the book; the author gives his mind free-room and the reader is led from paragraph to paragraph through a well-planned introduction to the point where the life of the apostle begins; the chapter on a Picture of a Pauline Church is probably one of the most graphically interesting pictures of the condition of the early Church ever written. A few pages at the end of the book are devoted to Hints and Questions for teachers and students which will be found of great service to those concerned.

The other book, "The Four Men," was noticed in our columns not very long ago. The book takes its title from a sermon preached in the chapel of Yale University entitled "The Four Men." It now forms the first chapter of the book and is followed by sermons on "Conscience," "Temptation,"



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preached at Northfield to Mr. Moody's students: "The Religion for To-day," "Christ and the Wants of Humanity," "Public Spirit," "The Evidences of Religion," and "Youth and Age." This collection of sermons makes good reading, exceptionally good, and each sermon or chapter being brief and tersely written: the mind is not burdened with words in getting at the kernel of the teaching. It is a book worthy of Dr. Stalker, and its popularity has already been well established.

It is not our object now to refer to his other works, all of which are more ambitious and elaborate than the two here specially noticed.

J. A. MITCHELL, the clever artist and writer who founded *Life*, and has conducted it from the beginning, contributes to the August *Scrivener* his Impressions of the World's Fair, under the title "Types and People at the Fair," illustrated by himself and by Charles Howard Johnson.

ONE of the leading articles of the August *St. Nicholas* will be "The Boyhood of Edison," with an account of some of the great inventor's juvenile experiments, including his attempt to hatch eggs by sitting on the nest as he had seen the hen do! A portrait of Edison when a boy forms the frontispiece of the number.

THE Midsummer Holiday Century will contain a brief article on Anders Zorn, the Swedish painter and etcher, whose work in the Swedish department of the art exhibit at the World's Fair is attracting great attention.

The same number will contain a paper on "Contemporary Japanese Art," by Prof. Fenolosa, of the Boston Museum of Art, with examples of Japanese painting and sculpture from the Japanese exhibit at the World's Fair.

Hitting the Nail on the Head.

THE Toronto World must rate the intelligence of that city very low, judging by the manner in which it attempts to besmirch clergymen and others who do not see the necessity of enriching the Street Car Company by handing over the Sabbath to enable them to make money. The World must have a vastly better idea of its own morals than have other people, or it would be very careful about impugning the morals, motives and lives of the best people in the city, because they do not accede to the Street Car Company's demand for this Sunday franchise. As a general thing the clergymen of the city do not adopt the best tactics, and some of them are not oracles on public questions, but they all know what the circus style of Sunday observance amounts to, and what its tendencies are. They can also see that while some good men favour Sunday cars, all the immoral classes favour them. It does not require preponderating ability for any man to notice what side the toughs and rounders take on any question, and then it is safe ninety-nine times out of a hundred, to take the other side. It is sufficient in Toronto to notice which side of a question the World espouses, and then face about the other way.—Whitby Chronicle.

"THE most successful event held in the history of the church." Such was the opinion of a very old member of Chalmers' church, Guelph, who rode back from the picnic grounds in the midst of a merry, laughing, singing concourse of little ones. The picnic was held in Mitchell's grove, Tuesday afternoon. The weather was delightfully cool and pleasant, and the attendance was unusually large. The afternoon's programme made ample provision for the feasting and enjoyment of old and young. A feature that was at once popular and interesting was a series of foot races, for which acceptable prizes were given. The pastor, Rev. R. J. M. Glassford, was in attendance, and this being the first opportunity he had of meeting his entire flock in a social way, the event was especially gratifying to him. The rev. gentleman has already entrenched himself in the love and esteem of his people, a fact that was plainly shown by more than one incident on Tuesday afternoon. The pleasure seekers returned home about 9 o'clock, well pleased, indeed, with the afternoon's outing.

A Prompt Response.

"Cheap rates" is the cry of all holiday-makers, and to their appeal the Canadian Pacific Railway have responded promptly. As Chicago will be the objective point of thousands of tourists this year, the Company announce a specially cheap excursion leaving Toronto and all points west on July 21 and 22. The trains for this excursion traffic will consist of solid vestibuled palace sleeping cars, dining cars, drawing-room coaches, and second-class sleeping cars (an innovation in Canadian railway travel and a pronounced success).

Through trains will leave the north side of the Union Station at 7.20 a.m. and 7.20 p.m. on the above dates, and as this is the first occasion during the Fair of so cheap a rate a large number may be expected to take advantage of it; therefore it is advisable to secure berths early, which may be done by telephoning 149, communicating by letter or in person at 1 King street east. The tickets bought for this excursion will be available for return any time until and on July 31. It may be added that the Canadian Pacific Railway claim their tourist cars, or second-class sleepers far surpass anything of the kind running on rival lines, and their claim has never been disputed. They must not, however, be confounded with their palatial sleeping cars, which stand unrivalled in railway equipment.