

correct by an appeal to the fountain of authority for the existence of any or all of the churches, the teaching of Christ and his Apostles on this subject as it is to be found in the New Testament. Our space this week is too limited for its due consideration, and may be left until our next issue when we shall return to it.

APOCALYPTIC SKETCHES.*

We have much pleasure in calling attention to this volume of expository discourses, first, because the author is a Canadian who holds a high position in the metropolis of the British Empire, and second, because he has succeeded in giving a suggestive treatment of a difficult subject in a series of discourses which may well serve as models of this kind of work to younger, less experienced preachers. The book of the Revelation is one that is either unused or abused, it suffers large neglect or it submits to fantastic treatment which tortures the mechanism and misses the life. Dr. Gibson has put this well in his opening paragraph:

"The Book of the Revelations is in many respects a tempting one to the expositor. It has not only the attractiveness of that which offers in any measure to lift the veil from the unknown future, but the advantage of being in the highest degree imaginative and pictorial, while it abounds in passages which reach the loftiest pitch of inspired ecstasy. On the other hand, it so bristles with difficulties that modest men are slow to encounter them, especially as its glowing pages have often been perverted so as to pander to vulgar curiosity, and sometimes made to minister to the most unhealthy excitement, in the hands of those who profess to map out all the future and fix a precise date for the end of the world."

Without discussing the differences between Apocalypse and Prophecy, or the place of The Revelations in Apocalyptic literature, we may say that Dr. Gibson rightly treats his author as we have to treat the Old Testament prophets at the present time; that is, he shows that the primary meaning of the book is to be sought in its message to those to whom it was first addressed. "Of what possible use could it be to these persecuted saints of the first century to be supplied in advance with the history of Napoleon Bonaparte, or of any other great man who was to come into the world so many centuries after they were dead and buried, or to be furnished with data from which they might learn that the world was to come to an end in 1866 there or thereabout?" To this some might reply that it is a great proof of the inspiration of the writers if they can forecast the history of the world so long before hand and furnish the Church with an almanac which rests on divine authority. But evidently that mechanical view has no attraction for this expositor; he feels that the Book of the Revelation is in the first place a piece of splendid preaching, that is, the application of great gospel truths to the actual needs of tempted suffering men, and that it is therefore a manifestation of eternal principles in noble, poetic form.

"Not only must we put ourselves in the

position of the writers and the first readers of the Apocalypse in order to interpret it aright, but we must read it in the light of the imagination. The great poem of the New Testament must be read in the poetic spirit. It is "of imagination all compact;" for it gathers up in a marvellous way the imagery of the older prophets and seers, so that there is scarcely a poetic utterance in all the Bible which does not find some echo here. Yet it is not a book of echoes. It has its own originality throughout. The borrowing is like that of all great poets, like that of Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Tennyson. You see the relation to the old; but it is a recreation with a new beauty of its own. We must be careful, then, that we do not with our prosaic western minds, so interpret the details of this vision as to impoverish its great poetry into very poor prose." Our attention is called to the fact that the more strictly prophetic part of the book is introduced in these striking words: "After these things I saw, and behold a door was opened in heaven" and through the open door he saw the Throne of God. "This again," our author says, "was an unveiling, not of the future but of the unseen." It is evident that Dr. Gibson has been prepared for this kind of exposition by the study of the highest poetic literature and by his sympathy with the struggling of the men and women by whom he has been thrown in contact. It is not our present business to discuss particular interpretations; in handling the details of such a book there must always be room for difference of opinion; sufficient to say, that in this case, they are moved by the spirit of combined soberness and sympathy here indicated. We feel sure that many who find The Book of the Revelations to be a perplexing enigma will get much profit and inspiration if they read it over carefully using these brief, interesting lectures as their guide.

*Apocalyptic Sketches, by Rev. J. Munro Gibson, M. A., D. D. The Free Church Pulpit, 1, Arthur H. Stockwell, 2 Amen Corner, Paternoster Row, E. C. 2S 6d.

What are the evangelical Churches, of Ottawa going to do towards gathering in the "unchurched masses"—those who for one reason or other, more frequently without any valid reason at all, persistently and continuously absent themselves from places of worship on the Sabbath? Usually the reading of such people is not calculated to elevate the thoughts to the eternal verities of the Christian religion or to satisfy the need of the immortal soul—that is, when they have any reading at all; and too often the Lord's Day is spent in gossiping and visiting, and sometimes worse. It will never do to allow these people and their families to drift away into practical atheism. The Christian people of Ottawa are not attending to their missionary duties if they fail to put forth efforts to correct so undesirable a state of affairs. They must learn to do the practical Christian work of going out into the highways and by-ways to gather in the lost ones, who are drifting away from all that is good. It is just in such an emergency that the parable of the Great Supper comes in with its searching teaching and practical lessons.

The children of God are those who do His will here as angels do in heaven.

Literary Notes.

The opening article in the January Studio is "The Art of Fantin Latour," with thirteen illustrations which give an excellent idea of the work of this great artist. In part II of the description of "The First International 'Studio' Exhibition" a great variety of work is shown of a most interesting nature. Interesting too is the review of the work shown at "The Twenty-seventh Exhibition of the New English Art Club." Mr. W. Fred's article on "The Darmstadt Artists' Colony" is concluded in this number. The Studio, 5 Henrietta St., Covent Garden, London, W.C., England.

THE BIBOT for January contains London Voluntaries. Rhymes and Rhythms, by William Ernest Henley. This modern poet and man of letters has made himself notorious if not famous by his attacks on Burns and Stevenson, so that no doubt many would like to know what kind of work he turns out. In this tiny volume for the sum of 5 cts., a fair specimen is given as well as appreciations by contemporary critics; for example, Arthur Symonds says "In the *London Voluntaries* . . . what a scene of the poetry of cities, that rather than pastoral poetry, the romance of what lies beneath our eyes, in the humanity of streets, if we have but the vision and the point of view! Here, at last, is a poet who can so enlarge the limits of his verse as to take in London, &c." The February issue contains "An Essay on Percy Bysshe Shelley by Robert Browning." With two such names no more need be said. T. B. Masher, Portland, Maine 50 cents per annum.

The Nineteenth Century and After for January has plenty of variety, and if variety is the spice of life, then we have here a tasty bill of fare. The monthly article on the political situation in England by Sir Wemyss Reid is always good, and this time dealing with Lord Roseberry's famous Chesterfield speech is especially interesting. "Did Titian live to be ninety-nine years old?", "Where are the Village Gentry?", "Music versus Opera," "The Education Problem," "The Reduction of Town Fogs," "British Labour—a Workingman's View"—here is variety enough and we have not given more than half the list. The BaconShakespeare questions is here again and even if we have no patience with "Mrs. Gallup's Cypher," we may from these articles learn something about BaconShakespeare and English literature in general. Many good people will scarcely know what to make of Dr. Cheyne's article on "A Turning point in Old Testament Study"; it is addressed to 'advanced' people and even from that point of view its predictions may be questioned; there are many scholars just as "progressive" as Professor Cheyne who do not think that Old Testament criticism will turn in the direction that he indicates. The Leonard Scott Publication Co., New York.

APANACEA FOR RHEUMATISM.

Rheumatism is treated with unflinching success at Mount Clemens, Mich. Seventy-five per cent. of Rheumatics are cured, and ninety per cent. benefited by the Thermal Bath treatment. The bubbling springs are highly charged with mineral constituents and possess healing medicinal qualities that have proven so efficacious in diseases originating from uric acid. Excellent hotel accommodation. For free booklet giving full particulars, list of hotels and boarding houses with rates, and all information write to: G. T. Bell, G. P., Agency G.T.E., Montréal.