

HELPFUL DATA IN CURRENT LITERATURE.

By J. M. SHERWOOD, D.D.

Books.

A. C. Armstrong & Son. "Manual of Preaching." By Franklin W. Fisk. The author has been twenty-five years Professor in Chicago Theological Seminary, and these twenty-three lectures are the condensation of material which has been accumulating in his hands during this period. They are therefore practical and the fruit of long experience in teaching. The work is well done; not striking or original, but a very sensible performance. His method has an advantage over that of some other writers on Homiletics: it is first to take a sermon to pieces and inspect its principal parts, and then to show how to gather materials and construct a sermon. First, the analysis, then the synthesis. If we do not have a generation of good preachers, it certainly will not be for lack of homiletical instruction, and much of it of a high order of merit.

American Baptist Publication Society. "The Old Theology Restated." By Henry H. Tucker. The title of the book is not a happy one. Instead of a Body of Divinity, or a Scientific Statement of the good old doctrines of the Gospel, it is simply a volume of sermons in the ordinary forms, and delivered on ordinary occasions. The sermons, too, are mainly on practical subjects. There is very little "theology" in the book—we mean a formal or scientific statement of doctrine. The great themes of repentance, faith, conversion, atonement, the judgment, and the like, are treated with discrimination, fidelity and ability. Evidently the author has no leaning towards the "New Theology," which has turned away so many from "the truth as it is in Jesus." His trumpet has "no uncertain sound." Two of the sermons are on Baptism, and of course inculcate the Baptist view on this ordinance, but not in an offensive spirit.

Lutheran Publication Society. "The Folly of Profanity," by Rev. W. H. Luckenbach. A volume on this subject, we believe, is something never before attempted. It is not an attractive subject for literary ambition. We remember the powerful sermon of President Dwight on "The Guilt of Profaneness." That would have been a more fitting title for this book. "Folly" is not strong enough. Profanity is a *sin*, and the most wanton and inexcusable form of guilt, as the author clearly shows. We have elsewhere used some of his material to endeavor to arouse public sentiment on the subject. It is a crying, we we fear a growing, sin. We are a fearfully profane people. "Because of swearing the land mourneth." Every minister will find abundant material in this book to enable him to prepare a strong and impressive sermon on the subject, which we hope he will do, and boldly preach it to his people.

Congregational Sunday-School and Publishing So-

ciety. "The Divine Authority of the Bible." By G. Frederick Wright. The author is Professor of the language and literature of the New Testament in Oberlin Theological Seminary, and one of the editors of the *Bibliotheca Sacra*. His "Logic of Christian Evidences," "Studies in Science and Religion," and "Relation of Death to Probation," have made him widely and favorably known as a writer. The question here discussed is the question of the inspiration, interpretation, and authority of our present Bible—a question fundamental to every distinctive principle of Protestant Christianity. The work lays no claim to being exhaustive, and will not supersede the special works upon the various subjects which are here brought together in one view. As a guide through the logical mazes of a vast field, and a clear, incisive presentation of the substance of the argument, it is an admirable work. It is learned, simple, logical, condensed; meets the main difficulties of the subject, and is just the book to put into the hands of our busy pastors and intelligent laymen. It is worthy of a wide circulation.

Kegan, Paul, Trench & Co. [London]. "The Witness of St. Matthew." By F. J. B. Alnatt, B.D. This work is designed to "represent a survey of St. Matthew's Gospel, in the attempt to trace the indications of a divine plan governing their order and arrangement, to elucidate the sequence of thought and its advance in progressive stages adapted to the development of the soul's growth in spiritual knowledge, with the links by which these are connected; and thus to demonstrate the general result of unity, symmetry and completeness as a picture, from one point of view, of the Person and Work of Jesus Christ." The work is unique in its plan. It is not exactly expository in form, nor a commentary. We have first an analysis of the Gospel, indicating the special purpose of it to be to establish the connection between the two dispensations. The author shows that the one great theme of it is the "Kingdom of Heaven." The principal divisions in it, which are treated at length, are I. The Shadow. II. The Person. III. The Manifestation. Under these, the salient points of Christ's life, ministry, kingdom, and sacrificial death are discussed with great discrimination and fulness. Our main objection to the work is the bewildering array of points, parts, divisions, and sub-divisions. They break the unity of thought, confuse the reader, and lessen the effect. The author has evidently devoted a good deal of patient thought and study in the preparation of the book.

Periodicals.

MORAL CHARACTER IN POLITICS. By President Julius H. Seelye; *North American Review* (Oct.), 9 pp. This brief paper is timely and pertinent to the times. It assumes that very significant