

The Ne'er-Do-Weel.

BY REV. D. GIBB MITCHELL.

A QUAIN little booklet in paper covers, of some 40 pages, given us the Prodigal Son in text and sermon in the "Braid Scots," by Rev. D. Gibb Mitchell, of Cramond, near Dundee. It is published at John Knox's House, Edinburgh, at "sixpence•net"; and a line at the top of the title page, says "Sermons in Braid Scots, No. 1," and we have had a private hint that all the series may not be by Mr. Mitchell. It would seem that the infection (some would call it an affection) of writing in Broad Scotch is spreading.

The author says in his little preface, "A man brocht up in a bonnie clachan, who keepit in his heart a' the quaint rale meanin words o' his kinsfolk, ae nicht ettled to crack wi' his flock in the braid Scottish tongue. He begude canny an' saft wi' a muckle wish to win in the thochts o' the lads an' lasses. They hearkened weel. The house was quate an' the hush bade to the hinneren' o' the hour. They gaed awa, ilkane to his hame, an' up the by-roads, thro' the glen, to the braes. Syne the preacher heard it was gude." From other sources we learn that he thus preaches occasionally to his flock at Cramond, and that when he does so, he uses for his Scripture—reading the Scotch-Canadian "New Testament in Braid Scots" of W. W. Smith. In the booklet before us he first gives eighteen verses of Luke fifteen, in his own style, as, "Sae he gaed and hired himself to ane o' the burgesses as an 'orra-man, an' was budden gang ootby to fodder the swine. Fain wad he hae filled himself wi' the hools that the swine were eatin'; an' fient a aet did a body gie him." Then for sixteen small pages he comments on the parable and its lessons. And all in the Doric. His beginning is very beautiful. "We've a' had oor ain thochts aboot the wa-gang an' the hame-bringin' o' the Ne'er-do-weel. The spendthrift loon is kent be ane an' a'. We hae a bit o' him in our ain hearts: that's what gars sae

mony o' us take to the story!" A little picture in the front shows the Ne'er-do-weel on a "whumm't trouch," with his elbows on his knees, and his fingers in his "towzie held," thinking. And then he starts home! "Hameward he hirples ower the lea, an' he hears the lowin' o' the kye, an' the bleat, bleat, bleatin' o' the sheep, a' bickerin' down the hillside—a fleecy drove—hame to their cosy pen to be fauldit frae the wolves for the night. Abune his held the wild birds screech, as wastlins they flee to their roost 'mang the weird craggy rocks; an' far abune the sough o' the wind 'mong the pine trees the cushie doo coos an' coos, ower and ower again, as the big reid sun sinks oot o' sicht i' the rosy west. A 'thing was shoutin' loud at th' pitch o' its voice, 'hame, hame, hame!' An' sae was the prodigal." A sixpence, with a "tippence" for postage, sent in British stamps to Wm. J. Hay, John Knox's House, Edinburgh, will bring to the Scottish reader a dainty "message frae hame."

The Home Department can interest some who have become indifferent. A county secretary writes of one man who had not entered a place of worship in twenty-five years, nor looked into a Bible through a similar period, but who has recently become greatly interested in the study of the Scripture lessons in his home through the efforts of a visitor, and has begun to attend church regularly. A gentleman who felt that he had not time for the half-hour of study required each week, was finally induced to undertake it, and he became so interested that he studied up the back lessons.—Epworth Era.

The striking title of Dr. Gladden's new book, "Where Does the Sky Begin?" suggests the obliteration of unreal distinctions and the union of realms and interests that have been unwisely divided. The sky comes down to earth, and so do many other things which our thought puts far away. The book is a series of discussions of the great themes of the spirit, and its purpose is to bring them very close to the daily life of man. It sums up the convictions and experiences of the author's active life more than any of his previous books have done.