

that the new history of Israel begins, and from this on to the end, each succeeding chapter replete with interest and instruction. The side lights thrown upon the Hebrew people, in their desert life, in their tribal settlements in Canaan, during the period of the Judges, and the gradual and inevitable movement toward monarchy, impart a vividness to the history which is positively fascinating.

The part played by the prophets in the history of Israel is admirably described, and at some length. We are glad to observe that while the author designates the prophets as "men of thought and men of action, keen and accurate observers, statesmen and publicists, social reformers, lofty moralists, leal-hearted patriots," he also holds them, unlike some recent writers, to be messengers of Jehovah, gifted with powery of prevision whereby they were able to indicate future events. They were more than shrewd; they were inspired men of God, as well as preachers of righteousness.

The varying fortunes of the chosen people depicted, embracing the schism of the Ten Tribes, and the onward national life of Judah, and Israel, down to the fall of Samaria, and the dispersion of the Ten Tribes, concerning whom the author pertinently remarks: "To preclude any further temptation to search for these mythical wanderers, it is worth while pointing out that this comparatively small number speedily lost its identity, by being absorbed in the new populations to which it was introduced."

We have greatly enjoyed the perusal of this volume, by Dr. McCurdy. Its style is clear and forcible, its diction graceful, and the writer's opinions expressed with moderation and good taste. His spirit is the very reverse of polemical, even where he differs from others. The references are copious, the authorities quoted numerous and of the highest order, and the appendices valuable. Perhaps a verbal index might improve facility of reference for the general reader. The paper and printing are bright and attractive to the eye. We shall look forward with much pleasure to the companion volume, and trust that the book may have the extensive sale, which it so well deserves.

Happy and Prosperous.

The Christmas greetings of last week are now followed by our cordial wishes to every reader for a happy and prosperous New Year. Week by week, during the year drawing to a close, we have spoken to our circle on a great variety of subjects; now we return to starting point once again, and heartily extend the seasonable salutation. It is not the least important of the topics we have discussed together. Happiness and prosperity! Comprehensive and far-reaching wishes indeed. Yet, in a reasonable measure, within the reach of most people. How to be happy, how to be prosperous are, and have been, the main problems of mankind from the worldly point of view. Of pure worldly happiness there is probably very little; the conditions of life are not favorable for such an attainment, but of happiness there is a great deal and if it were sought for in the right quarter and with the right spirit it would abound. This is how the Good Book has it, and it is the REVIEW's greeting for the New Year:—"Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is

more precious than rubies; and all things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honor." It is a case of the heart being right with God. From that relationship spring true joy and contentment, blessings unpurchasable by wealth. Set out on the right road at the beginning of the year not in your own strength, dear reader, and you may hope to enjoy the fulfillment of our best wishes at this joyful season. We shall seek to accompany you on the way deriving and possibly imparting strength for the journey through your fellowship and reciprocal courtesy until the next milestone shall have been reached and another year left behind.

The Call of Duty.

To give to the cause of Christ is the bounden duty of every one who professes the Christian religion. It is a high privilege to contribute to a good cause; to be humble workers in the vineyard. In accordance with this truth our columns are often laden with appeals for the various funds of the Church and one in last week's issue has elicited an anonymous letter, kindly but half protesting, that "Home Missions" were overlooked. Our correspondent says: "The 'Aged and Infirm Ministers' are very often championed by you, which is laudable enough, but they have been taken in hand by powerful friends, whereas the cause of Home Missions ought to lie very much on the heart of the Church and ought to be kept before the people. . . you have nothing to say of it in your Christmas number," etc. Every mark of interest in the great and needy work of the Home Mission Committee is cause for thankfulness and coming as we think probable, from a layman this letter is doubly welcome. We need not wait to say that we have not lost sight of the claims of this important work and did we flag, the energetic convener, whose eyes are everywhere, would soon apply the spur. What is wanted is that the membership should be aroused to a due sense of duty. There is work at our doors to be done, and why it is not overtaken can be answered by every kirk session in the land. Our correspondent does well to draw attention to this part of the harvest field. Would there were hundreds of such letters, from the heart, if the writers did but consider their duty begun, and not as discharged, when they had penned their protests. After all, a journal can only urge and advocate; it can point out your duty; you must do the actual work. There is a superabundance of latent energy, enterprise and means, in the Church for all the schemes, and departments of work already undertaken. This fact cannot be gainsaid. There is one supreme way of commanding the full resources of the Church—the spiritual quickening of the membership. Even twenty men and women in each congregation, with hearts on fire would work a revolution in the Church.

It has been generally accepted that times of commercial depression are extremely favorable for religious impressions. Judging from the Assembly reports hard times have not yet reached Canada, for the offerings (which denote contrition and thankfulness) have not greatly increased. If business depression be a remedy for religious apathy and worldliness, then we may soon expect it in this land, for, while fairly prosperous, we have shown a lack of substantial interest in the work and funds of the Church.