

The People's Bible: Discourses on Holy Scripture. By JOSEPH PARKER, D.D., Minister of the City Temple, Holborn Viaduct, London. New York: Funk & Wagnall's, 18 and 20 Astor Place. Toronto: William Briggs. 8vo, pp. 360. Price \$1.50.

This great work, which has now reached the twenty-second volume, is too well known, and too highly prized by ministers and Bible students to need any elaborate commendations from us. It is only necessary to say that with the issue of each succeeding volume it confirms the hold which it has long since acquired upon the most thoughtful portion of the Christian Church. It is valuable not only on account of what it puts into the mind of the thoughtful reader, but also on account of what it strikes out of the mind itself. It is eminently suggestive as well as instructive. At the same time that it brings great masses of precious ore to the surface from the mine of truth, it does what to the student of Holy Scripture and especially to the preacher is still more important, it lays bare the lode which he may work for himself.

Dr. Parker is a minister of the spirit rather than of the letter. He leaves the technicalities and niceties of Biblical criticism to be dealt with by others, and seizes as directly as possibly upon the living thought which is wrapped up in the text. Words and phrases are indeed explained, and the allusions to ancient customs are expounded, but all this is held in strict subordination to the great end which the writer has in view, which is to lodge the truth taught in the passage in the mind, and to do this in such a way to most effectually influence the after-thinking and the life. It is in this way that passages which the shallow student has considered dry and uninteresting are clothed with a freshness and beauty which makes them a surprise.

The work can scarcely be called a commentary; and it would scarcely be an accurate description of it to call it so many volumes of sermons.

It would probably come nearer to a correct definition to call it a commentary on the whole Bible in the form of popular lectures. One misses in it the technicalities of the commentary, and the tediousness which too often characterizes books of sermons. No preacher ought to be without it; and the work when it is completed will form in itself an invaluable family library. Dr. Parker is an independent thinker, and doubtless has his idiosyncrasies like other men, and we are not prepared to vouch for the absolute correctness of all his opinions, but in saying this we are saying only what should be said of all writers not supernaturally and plenarily inspired.

The African Methodist Episcopal Review, April 1889. Subscription, \$1.50 per Year. Philadelphia: Publishing House of African Methodist Episcopal Church.

This is a good Quarterly of about 120 pages. The articles, though not all of a high order, will repay a careful perusal. No one could have supposed that the coloured people could have made such rapid progress in education as they have done. Their progress in other respects has been equally marvellous. Here is one extract from the number before us, illustrating this fact:—

"Twenty-four years ago, the five million of newly-enfranchised freemen were not worth altogether five million cents. They were naked, helpless, inept. Within a decade they had \$12,000,000 in the savings banks alone. They lived on wages, and flourished on conditions that would have exterminated the Northern white labourer in a generation. To-day they claim a value in the Southern States alone of \$100,000,000. In Georgia they own nearly a million acres of land. In 1865, hardly one in a thousand knew the letters in the alphabet; in 1880, more than twenty in a hundred above the age of ten years could read and write."

The Hon. Fred. Douglas, who was formerly known as "the coloured orator," expresses himself as "per-