

aided by Government. The time must soon come—it may be nearer now than we think—when it will be generally admitted that the province of the State with regard to education is limited to the charge of elementary schools. Then the people will see that the Government does not meddle in matters which are too high for it. Above all will they see that the curtain is rung down forever on the screaming farce of “Doctors manufactured by the State.”

#### DEATH OF DR. FREEMAN.

THE death of Dr. E. A. Freeman at Alicante in Spain, is a loss to historical science, which is irreparable. Dr. Freeman was born at Harborne, in Staffordshire, in 1823, and studied at Trinity College, Oxford, from which he graduated, taking a second class in classics—a degree which was generally understood to be below his general deserts. It was not long before Mr. Freeman made his influence felt in the regions of archæology and history, and for many years he took a deep, practical interest in Church matters. One of his first publications of importance was a book on Architecture, which was perhaps too solid for the popular taste, but which was of great value as bringing out the principles of the great types of architecture—the Greek, distinguished by the lintel; the Roman, distinguished by the circular arch; and the Gothic, distinguished by the pointed arch. While preparing for his greater works, he contributed a number of valuable articles to various monthly and quarterly reviews—the *Fortnightly*, the *Edinburgh*, the *National*, the *North-British*, the *British Quarterly*—and was at one time a regular contributor to the *Saturday Review*. Some of his more important essays have been republished as historical essays. Only a few weeks ago, the fourth volume of this series came from the press. An important volume on the History of Federal Government, dealing principally with the Swiss Constitution, was put forth more than twenty years ago, and a hope was given that the series would be continued; but this has not been realized. He also published a book on the Ottoman Power in Europe, another on the Historical Geography of Europe, and a small but valuable compendium on the History of Europe, forming an introduction to Macmillan's valuable series of short histories. Quite recently he put forth a very elaborate and thorough History of Sicily. But the great work of Dr. Freeman's life was undoubtedly his History of the Norman Conquest, which may be said to be almost the last word on that subject. We do not mean that Dr. Freeman's statements are infallible or that some of his theories may not need partial revision. But his researches have been so full, his historical spirit is so true and deep, that it is hardly possible that much should be added to what he has given us, or that any of his conclusions should be greatly modified. A small volume on the Cathedral Church at Wells is an admirable specimen of the manner in which mediæval institutions should be made intelligible to modern readers, whilst it teaches how they may be adapted to modern needs. The Historical Essays may be mentioned as being of extreme value, as furnishing the right point of view for the study of all history, ancient and modern. Dr. Freeman's merits have not gone without recognition. On the appointment of Dr. Stubbs to the Bishopric of Chester, Dr. Freeman was made his successor, as Professor of Modern History at Oxford, whilst various University distinctions have been accorded to him. He was Rede Lecturer at Cambridge in 1872. In 1870 his own University, Oxford, gave him the Honorary Degree of D.C.L., and in 1874 Cambridge gave him that of LL.D., and 1884, he was made an Honorary Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford. Besides these, he had many degrees, and other distinctions conferred upon him by foreign universities and institutions. Dr. Freeman not only did good work himself, but had an

important influence on men like the late J. R. Green, and Dr. Bryce, author of the “Holy Roman Empire.” It is not easy to estimate the value of the work which he has done for the scientific study of history.

#### THE MINOR PROPHETS.\*

PROFESSOR SANDAY in his excellent little book, “The Oracles of God,” has recently endorsed the judgment of a German theologian, that he who would truly comprehend the Old Testament must commence his study with the Minor Prophets, Amos, Hosea and Micah. This will prove a hard saying to some, but younger students at least will do well to accept with humility, the almost unanimous opinion of our greatest Bible scholars, and, albeit *patience* will be needed, endeavour to grasp the main features of that wonderful national religious development, which preceded and prepared the way for the universal religion of Christianity.

No better introduction to this undertaking could be found than the little work above named, by Mr. Blake, whose previous work on Isaiah has met with a very favourable reception. We are not, as in the case of some commentaries, wearied with a mass of often irrelevant and tiresome notes, but the prophets are allowed to tell their own stories without even the *impedimenta* of the division into chapters, headed with the often misleading tables of contents of the authorized version. Mr. Blake's method is to prefix to the prophecies a section from the book of Kings, giving a general survey in a few verses, of the historical circumstances by which the prophet was surrounded. Then follows the prophecy itself, in which the thread of the discourse, which it must be admitted, is sometimes difficult to hold, is indicated by dividing the book into paragraphs each with its appropriate heading.

Mr. Blake divides his book into two parts, of which the second is devoted to a fairly complete historical introduction to each of the Prophets, together with a chapter on “The Ruling Religious Conceptions of the Prophets,” and he is careful to indicate the spiritual and moral values of the several books.

The Pre-Exilian Prophets alone are treated in this volume, but the author trusts to be able in due course, to deal in three successive parts with Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Post-Exilian prophecies, including the second part of Isaiah. Mr. Blake's course on the prophets will then be completed in five volumes, and these, together with the commentaries of the Cambridge Bible for Schools, will furnish the preacher and the teacher with all the help needed for his private enlightenment and edification, or the ordinary demands of parochial, pulpit and Bible-class work.

In conclusion I cannot refrain from urging upon the student the importance of continually remembering that the Prophet's message is primarily to his own age. He is filled with the conviction that he has a commission to denounce wickedness and to preach righteousness. The revelation with which he is entrusted is that Jehovah is *always* on the side of the right, and that no amount of outward prosperity can justify wickedness. In other words “Ethical Monotheism” is the chief contribution of the prophets to the religious consciousness of the race.

The success which is attending the efforts of historical criticism, to render these neglected books once more of

\*How to read the Prophets; being the prophecies arranged chronologically in their historical setting with explanations, maps and glossary, by Rev. Buchanan Blake, B.D., author of “How to read Isaiah,” Part I. The Presbyterian News Co., (Limited), 170 Yonge St., Toronto. Price \$1.40.