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works on theology have usurped the place of scholarly research. They will also, I think, admit that all investigation into this subject must, in the main, follow the lines marked out in this article.

JOSEPH AGAR BEET.

BRIEF NOTICES.

OUR space for "brief notices" grows so scanty that our notices must of necessity be briefer than ever. For the present we can only mention the issues of a single firm.

Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton have recently published some excellent books, among which we give the first place to *THE CITY OF GOD*, by *Dr. Fairbairn*. It contains some of the best work he has yet given to the world, and includes many "discussions" on topics of the profoundest interest to all who take part in the strife between modern Scepticism and Religion. The only drawback to the book is that the author has thrown into it, apparently as make-weights, several occasional pieces of inferior worth to the bulk of its contents; and so, instead of adding to, has detracted from its weight. *A STUDY OF ORIGINS*, by *Dr. De Pressensé*, and translated by Annie Harwood Holmden, is a serious contribution to a solution of the main problems of Knowledge, of Being, and of Duty. It is marked by a sobriety and solidity of thought not too common with French theologians, and by a clearness and vivacity of expression far too uncommon with their English *confrères*. It would be a capital book to put into the hands of young men whose religious difficulties are of a metaphysical kind, In *A POPULAR INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT*, *Dr. J. Rawson Lumby* has compiled a useful manual, admirably adapted to the wants of intelligent laymen who wish to acquaint themselves with the structure, history, and interdependence of the New Testament Scriptures.

The book on the Parables of our Lord has yet to be written. Archbishop Trench's well-known work is valuable more especially for its graceful and poetic treatment of their literary aspects and qualities; his interpretation of their contents being deflected by his ecclesiastical prepossessions and undue deference to the judgment of the Fathers, and a little obscured by his studied and elaborate

style. *Dr. A. B. Bruce*, in *THE PARABOLIC TEACHING OF CHRIST*—not on the whole so good a book as “*The Training of the Twelve*”—devotes the energies of an acute and vigorous mind to tracing out the thoughts and doctrines conveyed in these simple but exquisite stories, and is often very happy in his treatment of them from his own point of view. But what we want and sigh for is a commentator who should blend in himself both poet and scholar, both thinker and theologian, make these parables the main study of his life, and then, in the full maturity and ripeness of his powers, pour out for us the treasures he has slowly garnered up. Not till then shall we have an exposition of the Parables worthy of its theme. *Dr. C. H. H. Wright's* *BOOK OF KOHELETH* embodies the results of much learned application and wide reading, and contains many thoughts and suggestions of which future commentators will do well to take note. But as a work of art—which, among other things, every good commentary should be—he has spoiled his treatise both by attempting to cover too many subjects, and by blending popular lectures with scholarly annotation. To combine in a single volume a dissertation on modern Pessimism, a critical exposition of Ecclesiastes, and lectures on the questions which the higher criticism has raised about that Scripture, is a feat too difficult to warrant any hope of success.

M. Bovel's *EGYPT, PALESTINE, AND PHENICIA*, was a very charming book in its time; but we hardly see why the Rector of Hagley should have been at the pains to translate it five and twenty years after date, when it has been superseded by other books, some equally charming, and some much more learned and instructive.
