life is part. Bishop Westcott's work, *The Gospel of the Resurrection*, is quite in the spirit of German thought, and is a good example of what is meant. The Gospel is a gospel for man's reason as well as for his practical life. Dr. Dorner says that the business of theology is to set forth Christian doctrine "as truth," *i.e.* to prove it in every way in which spiritual truth can be proved—by history, by analogy, by reason, by those moral instincts and intuitions which underlie all religious faith. Many a British student has felt that the reading of a strong book, like Martensen's *Christian Dogmatics*, has been like the gift of a new sense, like opening a door into a new world. He sees familiar doctrines, which he thought he knew all about, in new relations, and comes to believe them for new reasons. Even a work like Müller's *Christian Doctrine of Sin*, which gives another impossible solution of an insoluble problem, can scarcely fail to stimulate and strengthen thought.

"The Memorabilia of Jesus."[1]

By the Rev. G. Elmslie Troup, M.A., Broughty-Ferry.

In an evil moment I agreed to endeavour to give the readers of The Expository Times some idea of this remarkable book. I have found the task almost desperate. The book is a work of genius. Its author has long been known to his friends, not only as a singularly gentle and beautiful spirit, piercing far into the spiritual, but as a man of altogether unique genius. And you cannot review genius. It has its own way of putting its thoughts —its own way of looking at life and things. Sometimes when you think you have hold, it slips out of your grasp away into the ethereal, and you can only wonder or follow with halting, uncertain steps. It needs genius to properly appreciate genius; but this must be said, that, in Mr. Peyton's book, even the commonplace reader has his thoughts wonderfully quickened, and his vision deepened and broadened. Here is new light on big problems—new solutions of them, sometimes very strange, at first sight, perhaps, somewhat Quixotic, but truly, as you turn them over, growing in reasonableness. I should doubt if any book quite as startling in its bold suggestiveness, with its epigrammatic sentences, that positively seem to hit you, and its beautiful sayings packed with thought, has appeared for many a day. The author, who is a reasonable preacher of the doctrine of evolution, uses his large acquaintance with scientific fact to light up his subject, but it is really the poetry of science, and the optimistic side of life,—*e.g.* "this Samaritan female is a thoughtful woman,"—which fascinate him.

The book, in its way a large one of 513 pages, consists of reflections—probably discourses delivered to a congregation—on the first ten chapters of the Gospel of St. John. The field has been well trodden, but Mr. Peyton does not follow the usual paths, and his discourses are not like any others. He has his own conceptions of St. John. He is nothing if not original; and he takes his own view, —that the spiritual life of man is not isolated from the large life of nature,—and works it throughout. Plato, science, the facts of life and their poetry, give him the key into the deep things of the Fourth Evangelist. He refuses to trouble himself about the vexed question of authorship, or lose himself in the "chaotic cockpit of probabilities and improbabilities, where the critic with spurs of the latest manufacture, commonly of German steel, silences his opponents, crowing loud for a brief while, when the sparring begins again unending" (p. 7). That St. John *inspired* the gospel, whether or not he *wrote* it, he is sure; but he prefers to address himself to the real question—the Christian life with its worships, ethics, institutions, enthusiasms, which lie in these chapters. By unfolding these, this Gospel proves its superiority; for "the superior biography of Jesus is the biography not of outward incidents, but of that inner world which He brought with Him, and which He lodged so affectionately in the souls of men, and which now invests our earthly world" (p. 17). "The problem before critics and apologists equally is the correspondence between the potences of this

[1] *The Memorabilia of Jesus, commonly called the Gospel of St. John.* By William Wynne Peyton, Minister of Free St. Luke's, Broughty Ferry, N.B. London and Edinburgh: Adam & Charles Black. 1892. 10s. 6d.

life and the analytic portraiture of the potences. Suppose John did not write these reminiscences, some one else did, and they are just as valuable as far as this correspondence is concerned" (p. 21). "If it (*i.e.* the gospel) be an adequate exhibition of the forces which created the Christian life—and it must be that at least—it is of no consequence who wrote it or when it was written" (pp. 23, 24). A good many will sympathise with this view. What, after all, is the question of authorship compared with the impression St. John gives of the "profound intimacy between Christ and the ideal, mystic, and spiritual world; that He is the Son of the Eternal Father as no one else before Him was, and as such He is the Creator of a life not before found amongst men"? (p. 40).

Mr. Peyton's attitude to the "old theology," as he calls it, is not easily defined. Certainly he is indebted to it, and he confesses his indebtedness. The old theology, he thinks, has done well by us. "When rightly understood, it is one road through the spiritual country; but no country is known by seeing it from one road only" ((p. 74). It has brought us where we are; and he has no patience for the son who despises his patrimony. On the other hand, "the wise son does not keep his patrimony only but increases it, brings it up to date in the market. . . . It is not the old theology that is bad, but that excess of theology which insists upon keeping the beautiful spindle and refusing the spinning-jenny, which limits the truth of God to a few texts in the Bible, and puts its thumb on a score of others, which claims a finality for one angle of the truth. . . . Like all science, theology has a native elasticity, and asks to be modified, and reset, and restated as the Bible is better understood, and as God's universe is better known, as crosslights fall upon it, and a new arrangement of light and shade is required" (pp. 183, 184).

But the book also carries the war into the enemy's camp. Nothing, for instance, could be better than the way in which the author puts the keen edge of his irony into modern explanations of Christianity. Mr. Herbert Spencer and Professor Huxley, in tracing the great institutions of religion —the sense of God and the vision of a hereafter— to the dreams of primitive men, come in for a good share of this. "It is a burlesque and a *deliquium* of all science to be told by philosophers that the large facts of our religious life have their origin in dreamlands and phosphorescences. It is the despair of science, despair up to the lips. Can you do even jerry-building on such foundations? You don't mean that from the cerebral gas of dreams has risen up the stately structure of Christendom? Opium smoking, which organises rare dreams, ought to be tried to produce a new religion" (p. 77). Again, Mr. Peyton knows how to poke fun at the agnostic: "The attention of the mind for these ten thousand years has been concentrated on the relations of the human soul to the upper world; and yet, while you can write books on fishes and roses, you have arrived at nothing more, after millenniums of industry and agony, than that man has a skull and a stomach" (p. 156). This is clever, Carlylese writing,—there is a good deal of it,—and as true as it is clever; and perhaps, if apologists had possessed some such sense of humour, they would have dealt more effectively with the don't-know critics of the faith.

In such a brief notice as this must necessarily be, it is impossible to give anything but a very imperfect idea of this book. Some inkling as to its character may be gathered from the headings of various chapters: viz. The Eternal Mind in the World; the Eternal Mind in Human Flesh; the Hebrew Contribution; the Evolution Idea (conversation with Nicodemus); the Subjective (conversation with the Samaritan woman); Mysticism (John v.); Idealities (vi. 1–21); and, perhaps best of all, the Platonic Doctrine of Recollection. The reader, however, will naturally turn to see what is said on certain questions which come up in these chapters, and doing so he will more easily discover Mr. Peyton's method, and see the value of his contribution to religious thought. For instance, the question of miracles is discussed in connection with the declarations (p. 140): "This beginning of signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory; and His disciples believed in (it should be *on*, a distinctive expression of St. John) Him" (ii. 11); "the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me" (v. 36); and in a chapter entitled, "Signalling the Higher Natural World." The title is sufficiently expressive. It precisely puts the author's view: "A miracle is the action of a superior mind on matter and mind. It is an intimation to us of the existence of sympathetic forces of a superior pressure, but on lines which reach up from the known to the unknown. It is an intimation to us of the ideal world which

invests us round" (p. 315). Possess that higher order of mind and miracles are possible, even natural. Mr. Peyton finds this in our Lord's reply to the disciples' question why they could not exorcise the evil spirit in the demoniac, which He paraphrases thus: "Establish a more magnetic sympathy with the unseen world, get a more copious flow of the life of God, acquire more spiritual capacity, and you will act on the lunatic, and the epileptic, and the paralytic with healing virtues" (p. 159). Consequently he does not think the age of miracles is *necessarily* past: "Granted more forceful passion and miracles of healing would be no uncommon incident" (p. 160); and he thinks he finds suggestions of this in the phenomena of hypnotism, etc. All this is to show that miracles are not *per se* unnatural, but phenomena naturally incident to the action of a higher type of mind. But I doubt if much is gained by it. Indeed, to say the truth, it hardly reads seriously. Christ's miracles were signs, but signs to prove that He was different from all others. They were not unnatural to Him, because He was above nature, and nature's Lord; and does it really advance the question to say that if you had Christ's mind and spirit you could work miracles? You may call the supernatural the Higher Natural if you please, but, after all, you are only playing with words.

The question of the Atonement comes up in connection with a very able discussion on the Baptist's words, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Mr. Peyton points out that the death of Christ is implied in the expression "Lamb of God"; and he combats the view of it as the death of a martyr. "It is a death manifestly unlike the death of martyrs: it is a death out of which special virtues have been obtained" (p. 111). On the other hand, he does not think that vicarious punishment *alone* can explain it. "You must put an unknown element into it; you must combine it with other elements; you must put it (the theory of vicarious punishment *i.e.*) alongside of other aspects of the death of Christ" (p. 112). Rather he prefers to dwell upon our Lord's death in its practical and non-metaphysical aspect as the New Moral Force—the Power of God, as St. Paul describes it. "When we name it the Moral Force, by the action of which the remission of sin is found, and a redemption from the liabilities of wrong-doing, and a revival of the life of God in the soul, then we have removed it far away from the category of the martyr's death" (p. 112). "These three—forgiveness, the sense of God's unbroken interest in us; redemption, the confidence that there is no danger and disability from the rear of our years; life, a positive life displacing evil and the abnormal,—these three are implied in this newly-coined phrase, the Lamb of God" (pp. 127, 128).

Mr. Peyton is perhaps most characteristically seen in the last chapter (a discourse on John x.), which bears the heading, "Christ in the Blood," or, as it might be more felicitously called, the Christ-instinct in us. There the writer's optimism comes out most strongly. He has swung to the opposite pole from the doctrine of human depravity; and with great beauty and force he states what needs to be affirmed—the dignity of man, and what constitutes that dignity—an instinct for Christ and Christliness. "When Christ says, I am the Door of the Sheep, He means that the divinest elements are enfibred in us, the elements answering to Him are entwined in the primitives of us. He is there. There is a spiritual element in us in kinship with the Spirit of God, and He opens it; there is a Christ element in us, and Christ opens it" (p. 490).

Not the least valuable contributions of this remarkable book are, as in Jean Paul Richter, the wonderfully beautiful thoughts which lie like jewels throughout it. There is scarcely a page from which more than one might not be quoted. Here are one or two gathered at random:—

"Heaven confers with earth in its losses and dependences, and comforts it, and will have us remember that it has much for us, though the night is coming. But even over our comforts and hopes are shadows, bars sinister, as if it was illegitimate to rejoice too much, or know too much, or hope too much" (p. 56).

"Religion is the chant of the awe and the beauty, the hope and the thankfulness, which Mind has felt in the presence of the venerable Mystery who invests us round" (p. 68).

"Look, and look again with a serious eye, and there steals over the soul the consciousness that God cares for you, that His interest in you has never been interrupted, that your sin was the grief of His love, but not the cessation of it" (p. 117).

"The scientist who denies religion is a clever

vestryman, whose aspirations are limited to a glorified vestry of atom and cell" (p. 150).

"The joys of earth are the throbs of God. We are dull enough to miss the supernatural in the natural, the holy which lies all around us" (p. 178).

"No such article exists as half religion; pronounce it wholly spurious, a sham of blackest dye" (p. 194).

"The idea of God is a pressure of ideals upon us" (p. 233).

"When you have learning, money, position above the average, consult the oracle within you, inquire at once in what service you can empty yourself of them, how carry them into an offering of God, what is the obedience in them by which to enrich the world, as Christ did by the Crucifixion" (p. 445).

"Keep the simple pieties of the soul pure, and they will hear the voice of Jesus as sheep hear the voice of the shepherd, and follow Him" (p. 495).

"As you hear the chimes of bells which have travelled from temples of the Infinite calling you to matins and vespers, as you hear the splash of oars round these time islands of yours, carrying the spirits of the dead to unknown shores of judgment, go into yourself and say to yourself, 'I am not enough in myself; I have not enough when I have myself; I am a barren half in self; a dangerous half in sense. My God, fill me with Thyself. Spirit of God, make me a Spirit. Spirit of Christ, give me Thyself within me'" (p. 225).

I trust enough has been said to draw attention to, and win readers for, as brilliant and character-marked a book as has appeared for many a day on the theological horizon.

The Gospels and Modern Criticism.

By the Rev. J. J. Halcombe, M.A., Balsham Rectory, Cambridge.

I.

"We have been taught, and have subsequently studied and taught, from the standpoint, which we have assumed to be the one alone tenable, that the Gospels are to be divided into *the three* and *the one* —the three Synoptists being in some way related to one another (and here the theories have been many and conflicting), and the one, St. John, the supplement of the three" (The Expository Times, April 1892, p. 313).

Such, as defined by so representative a theologian as Mr. Gwilliam, is the position of modern criticism.

Taking this definition with what follows, it is clear that Mr. Gwilliam intends to make, what seems to me, the extraordinarily damaging admission that theologians have positively never thought it worth while to examine the constructive facts of the holy Gospels, *save on the basis of a foregone conclusion*, and that if such foregone conclusion can be shown to be unfounded, the whole fabric of modern critical opinion which has been reared upon it necessarily crumbles to dust. I do not, of course, admit that any considerations whatever can possibly justify the substitution of an imperfect, one-sided, and prejudiced examination of evidence for that impartial and exhaustive examination by which alone in other departments of knowledge popular errors have been unmasked and an intelligent appreciation of the truth substituted for them. But the extraordinary peculiarity of the present case is that this foregone conclusion has not only dominated the examination of the great mass of evidential facts which the Gospels present. It has, as shown below, entirely obliterated those facts, so much so, that for all practical purposes they have come to be non-existent. Thus, whether the foregone conclusion be correct or incorrect, the effect of its universal acceptance is that the whole field of investigation presented by the Gospels, in spite of its facts being numbered by tens of thousands, is absolutely virgin soil. Mr. Gwilliam seeks in vain for the name of any one who has even attempted to enter upon it (Note, p. 313).

Mr. Gwilliam recognises the possibility of the opinion as to the late date of St. John's Gospel resting "on a mere tradition, and that, too, of uncertain value." But what I maintain is that, so far as early evidence is concerned, the opinion (*i.e.* the all-important foregone conclusion) not only