

*The Old Testament Prophecy of the Consummation of God's Kingdom Traced in its Historical Development.* By C. VON ORELLI, Professor of Theology, Basel. Translated by Rev. J. S. Banks, Headingley College, Leeds (England). 8vo, pp. 472. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark. New York: Scribner & Welford.

The reconstruction of Old Testament thought among evangelical Christians is a marked, and also a hopeful, fact of our times. With the enlarged and corrected views brought about by improved methods of biblical interpretation, a modification of the conceptions of the substance of the older revelation, and of the correlations of the old and the new, had at length become a necessity. It is not strange that at such a time of the transition of thought the audacity of unspiritual scholarship should seek to discredit the traditional estimate of the character and design of the Hebrew Scriptures, and to develop just what is seen in a well-known and very pretentious school of Old Testament interpretation. These things have also devolved on the Christian scholarship of the age the duty of readjusting the conceptions of the prophetic Scriptures to the more or less complete development of their contents in the Gospel. This great work is now proceeding, not only ably, but on the whole not unsatisfactorily. We have noticed within the past twelve months, in these pages, several highly valuable contributions to this design, some of them translations from the German, and some originally written in English—of the latter special mention may be made of Edersheim's great works—and we now with pleasure place among these the work above named.

The Christology of the Old Testament is an attractive and a practically valuable study: for there can be no question but that the older Scriptures testify of Christ, and that the two Testaments are parts of an indivisible unit. It is no doubt true, that the Old Testament can be best understood when contemplated in the clear light of its own fulfillment as seen in the gospels. But to study and interpret that collection of history and prophecy and poetry through the New Testament has its perils also, which the Protestant commentators of the last two centuries before our own did not wholly escape. The remark of the good Bishop Horne, respecting his Notes on the Psalms, that he would rather seem to find Christ in prophecy ten times where he is not than to miss him once where he really is, may have a pious tone about it, but there is also in it a most damaging element of untruthfulness—something of the nature of a pious fraud con-

sciously accepted for one's self and imposed upon others. To truly enter into the spirit of the Hebrew Scriptures one should seek to place himself, in mind and thought, among their conditions and environments; to ask himself how they were understood by those to whom they were originally given, and what the writers themselves meant by them; and while his better Christian knowledge will greatly help him to apprehend their deep spiritual import, which the people did not suspect and the prophets themselves only partially perceived, great care should be used not to read the New Testament *into* the Old. Especially is it needful to avoid that sort of microscopic literalism which seeks to make of prophecy a kind of anticipatory history of future details of facts. The design of the work we are noticing appears to agree with this notion. Its full "Introduction," of nearly eight pages, discusses the general character of biblical prophecy, distinguishing it from every thing, pretended or real, in heathenism, and showing that its perpetually recognized ideal was the "kingdom of God." In Part I. we have a discussion of the prophetic manifestation of God's purpose in respect to that kingdom among the patriarchs and to the Israelites; and in Part II. is given the testimony of the prophets of Israel to its future manifestation in Him "of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write." We can heartily commend this work as well calculated to prove helpful to all earnest students of the Bible who dare to be instructed in the truth. There are points at which we hesitate to accept the writer's views and to adopt his methods, and there are minor conclusions drawn from accepted methods that may appear doubtful; but as a whole the work is wholesome, evangelical, and conservative.