

## REVIEW.

"God's Iron." A Life of the Prophet Jeremiah, by George A. Birmingham (the Rev. James O. Hannay). Published by Messrs. Skeffington and Son, Paternoster House, St. Paul's, E.C.4. Price 7s. 6d.

Members of the Association, when on a visit to the Club very often go to Holy Trinity Church, Prince Consort Road, to listen to Canon Hannay and to enjoy the beautiful music and surroundings there in the true spirit of worship that such induce. They will be interested in the new book by the Canon which was published recently, and will find it one of great interest and very applicable to the spirit of the times in which we live.

We can remember the days, in our training school at the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, when a new book by George Birmingham appeared and was considered a great prize; in those days, libraries had not yet brought all the newest

interesting. We enjoyed the books of other days from the same pen, with all their humour and versatility, but this one aroused our admiration in quite other directions. Here is an "Imagination" of quite a different kind—an imagination arising from profound study of the prophet and meticulous discrimination in adherence to facts so that it culminates in a great word-picture of the poet-prophet. It draws us into the atmosphere of peaceful Anathoth, and into the turmoil of Jerusalem; in portraying the prophet himself it gives a picture that is alive with imagination, and a magnificent piece of psychological writing—psychology in its ancient meaning of the study of the soul including the temperaments, characteristics and many other aspects of an individual but without the Freudistic teaching of later times. We are shown Jeremiah not only as a great prophet but as a great poet—a splendid figure in both aspects and otherwise in his victory over himself, for he was not a fighter from any natural choice; he is not shown as



H.R.H. THE PRINCESS ARTHUR OF CONNAUGHT CHRISTENS AMBULANCE TRAIN  
"THE GOOD COMPANIONS."

books so easily within reach as at the present time. It followed that whoever got hold of a fresh book, by this author, usually found herself responsible to a long "waiting list." Perhaps it is not surprising that the books of this robust Christian (we use the term from a mental aspect) should have had such special appeal for a group of very tired and often footsore probationers. The humour contained in them may have accounted for it, in days and in a country in which humour and Christianity were not supposed to have much in common! We had yet to learn, in those days, that humour is one of the fine arts, and George Birmingham was one of those to teach us so, whether he intended to or not. So if we grow flippant, how far will our Parish Priest hold himself responsible now? But here is flippancy already, and we had better desist or we may find ourselves in the pillory when the Canon preaches next Sunday.

We draw our members' attention to this book, "God's Iron," with the certainty that they will find it exceedingly

being possessed of the spirit of the rebel that makes fighting easy to some. The book depicts great triumphs of will; again and again the prophet goes forth in his "Deuteronomic fierceness" to carry the message from his God and to brave the penalty, be it the jeers of the multitude, imprisonment or perhaps death. A gentle retiring descendant of Abiathar and a line of priests in peaceful Anathoth is here, but here, too, is a god-like will, and who can break "God's iron"?

We are given a fascinating picture of the childhood of Jeremiah and its environment, and there is a great charm in the manner in which the author indicates how the "gadfly" and "the graceful heifer" and other incidents of this environment leave their deep impressions on the subconsciousness of the child and arise transfigured in his manhood in poem and prophecy; it is most interesting to read of this interplay of the years of childhood with those of manhood. There are other facts, interesting for those concerned with child hygiene, showing the effects of heredity, environment, education and moral and social

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