

have aroused new interest since the publication of the *Homily on the Passion* by Melito of Sardis (ed. C. Bonner) in 1940. A translation of the text would have been useful, because although there are several already in existence, they might not always be to hand: and the inclusion of a translation would only have added twelve pages to the slender volume. The Commentary is efficient and cheerful, containing useful material on such subjects as God's purpose in creating the world (p. 74), the eternity of God (p. 66), Man's creation in the image of God (p. 78), the Christian's pilgrimage on earth (p. 48), and Infanticide (p. 50). The book concludes with a useful Index Verborum, in which words not found in the New Testament or which occur neither in the New Testament nor the LXX are asterisked. It is unfortunate that a book of ninety-four pages should cost as much as 6s., because it may not have so large a sale as it deserves.

A.V.W.

THE LITERARY OUTLOOK. By S. L. Bethell. (Christian News-Letter Books; 2s. 6d.)

Here is a plainly-written account of the present literary situation in England and a plea for its Christian interpretation. 'If the Church is to fulfil its obligations to every aspect of the social order, it must maintain, not only its theology, its sociology, and so forth, but also a body of sound and respected Christian criticism.' Such is Mr. Bethell's theme.

There are chapters on Lowbrows, Middlebrows and Highbrows, and one on the Future. And running through them all is an acute perception that takes nothing, least of all a fashionable reputation, for granted. Mr. Bethell's analyses, for instance, of Charles Morgan (pp. 42-50) and Dylan Thomas (pp. 71-76) are models of smooth writing and hard hitting. Bogus mysticism and careless talk don't get past Mr. Bethell. He has a formidable critical equipment; wide knowledge, sharp logic, humour and, *mirabile dictu*, a conviction that 'as the Christian revelation is in absolute agreement with natural law (both being divinely decreed), the Church must necessarily find it easier to work, and the Christian to live, in a state in which the natural law is respected, than in such a society as we have at present.'

The functions of the Christian critic are certainly of supreme importance, and Mr. Bethell's book is to be recommended as a guide to them. It may be that he expects too much of society as perfectible and it is to be hoped that his constructive proposals do not depend altogether on 'the reorganised society, whenever it may come about,' or they may be a very long time in being realised.

I.E.