

# AMONG THE BOOKS

**The Story of the Christian Church.** George R. Crooks, D.D., LL.D. The author says that a divine element enters into all human history, but that for the sake of convenience he accepts the division of sacred and secular history, the latter dealing with man in his relation to time and the sensuous world, the former in his relation to eternity and the supernatural. "In secular history the sphere of his action is the State; in sacred history the sphere of his activity is the Church, the Kingdom of God." As in all history, so especially in sacred, free man acts and lives under the controlling power of Providence for "the attainment of the highest moral and spiritual ends." It "is indispensable to right Christian thinking, nay, to reasonable theistic thinking," that we conceive of history as having this lofty and definite end. "Christianity is organized in the world, and its organization is the Church," which has been instituted by Christ and "embraces all who live by faith in Him." Church history is the history of this organic body. "It sets out with a complete body of truth which is intended to be regulative of its life." "This body of truth," the Holy Scriptures, "can neither be increased nor diminished." Progress is made, not by new discoveries of truth, "but in advancing from truth to truth by appropriation" of truth as contained in Scripture. "We cannot go beyond revelation." "God in man, which is the incarnation, becomes God in man through the working of the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ; the Church. And the record of this working; of its conflicts with weakness and sin; of its successive triumphs: of its reorganization of humanity, is the history of the Church." "Yet from its beginnings to its last results it is the history of but one—the God-man—and His work." We have in this volume the history of the Church from the apostles to the Synod of Dort as interpreted by the above philosophy. The Apostolic Church and its institutions are treated with especial fulness and felicity. We dissent from his view of the New Testament mode of baptism. He has brought together a large number of important facts in compact form and in an interesting style. With strong Armenian sympathies, he has not always succeeded in being entirely just to Calvinism. But the book is one of great merit and deserves a place in every minister's library. It will serve as a good text-book on Church history. Eaton and Mains.

**The Christ of History and of Experience.** The Rev. David W. Forrest, M.A. This volume contains the Kerr Lectures for 1897. The author discusses "the relation between the historical and spiritual Christianity with special reference to their alleged incongruity." His argument, always clear and forceful, aims at demonstrating the entire harmony of the two. He takes as his start and view-point "the moral self-consciousness of Jesus," which he finds to be "a unique type of human personality." This moral self-consciousness can be interpreted by no one but Jesus Himself because of His entire uniqueness. Human analogy cannot explain it. Jesus interprets it by the claims which He makes respecting His relation to God and man which imply "His eternal and transcendent Sonship." The author combats the idea that Jesus attained to the consciousness of His Messiahship only at His baptism. He had it much earlier than that. He gradually manifested His true personality by the three-fold means of teaching, miracle and personal influence. The resurrection of Jesus furnishes the transition point from the historical to the spiritual. There was a true union of God and man in Christ. He was God manifested in the flesh. The pardon of sin is bestowed on the ground of His death with a view to the attainment of a holy life. This can be realized only by the exercise of that faith which makes a living appropriation of the grace of Christ. At this point the author puts strong emphasis on the fact that the historical element is necessary to the spiritual and that it is capable of exceptional verification in the unparalleled personality of Jesus who evermore bestows on the believer forgiveness and renewal. The Gospels supply the link for connecting the historical and spiritual in Christian faith and life. We cannot accept his view of the kenotic theory and think that, while what he says respecting an unconscious faith may meet a certain class of objections, it is also liable to mislead. But he is always interesting, reverent and candid, and has produced a book which is sure to remove doubt and strengthen faith. We bid it a hearty welcome. Imported by Charles Scribner's Sons.

**God, Nature and Attributes.** Randolph S. Foster, D.D., LL.D. This is the fifth volume of the series known as *Studies in Theology*. The author says "that the outcome of rational thought is the certainty of the existence of an eternal personal Cause as the ground and source of the universe." In the discussion of this book "nature and revelation will jointly furnish the materials of the argument and conclusion." Dr. Foster affirms the validity of human knowledge beyond the boundary of the finite. He makes some clear and discriminating statements respecting "subject and attribute," "matter and spirit," and the doctrine of creation. The whole essence of being, he contends, is in the attribute, and the attribute in the essence, and it is through the attributes that the subject is discernible. In matter and spirit we have two kinds of substances which are known to us as "fundamentally different." Phenomena discover God to us because reason necessarily posits Him to be the Cause of the self and not self whose phenomena affect us. "The universe furnishes in itself proof that it was created," and "declares to reason that the Being who created it must, in nature and attributes, be identical with the Being thus posited in revelation." "Creation ex nihilo is the only true doctrine of creation," God being able to "originate entity from nonentity." Creation is, however, "immediate and mediate," but God is the efficient Cause of both, since "intermediates are not causes, but instruments merely." These principles control in the discussion of the book. The author considers in order the following themes: "God Is a Spirit," "Unity of God," "Eternity of God," "God Is Absolute, Unconditioned Being," "God Is a Person," "Moral Nature of God," "Divine Attributes," "Omnipresence of God," "Omniscience of God," "Goodness of God," "Justice of God," "Truth Is a Divine Attribute." It is an admirable and helpful presentation of the doctrines respecting God. The sum of the conclusions "reached shows that there is perfect harmony between the teachings of the Bible and the deepest reaches of human reason. The God set forth in the former is demanded by the latter." Eaton and Mains.

**James Macdonell, Journalist.** W. Robertson Nicoll, M.A., with etched portrait by H. Manesse. This is a most interesting biography to literary men and journalists, for Macdonell was a model of journalism. Here is a specimen of his work on the "Express," a Newcastle paper: "The other week I wrote in the course of six days, five leaders, besides from half to three quarters of a column of summary daily, and in addition to this I was seldom in bed much before four o'clock, and was in the office at least ten hours daily, so you won't say that I am an idler. \* \* You see what daily journalism is. I used to pine for the day when I should be an editor, and verily, I've got my wish granted with a vengeance." From the "Express" he went to London to the "Telegraph," and became, after a successful career on that paper, a staff-editor on the "Times." This was the height of his ambition, a place for which he had qualified himself by careful study, severe and protracted labor and an unusual experience. In one of his first weeks he wrote a leader for the "Times" every day. "The subjects were Burmah, Spanish Affairs, Russia in Central Asia, Canadian Affairs." This list gives an idea of the variety of knowledge required in his position. But he had reached the goal of his ambition and was contented and happy. Macdonnell was only permitted to enjoy success for four years. Then he died. The biography is a good one for young men to read, who think that they would like to be journalists. It shows the difference between a high idea of the profession, and the vulgar opinion about editors and writers for the press. It shows also that the secret of influence through the press lies chiefly in devotion to one's calling and in downright hard work. In short, the same elements which bring success elsewhere unite in the successful journalist. Such a life is also worth reading as an antidote to the shame and disgust which we feel, at the flood of vile, "yellow" journalism that is now deluging our land. Dodd, Mead and Company.

**A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons.** John A. Broadus, D.D., LL.D. It is great commendation to this book that it has passed through twenty-two editions in the twenty-seven years during which it has been before the public. It has also been translated into several foreign languages and been adopted as a text-book in theological seminaries outside of the author's denomination. In this twenty

third edition the work has been revised and somewhat enlarged by the Rev. Edwin Charles Dargan, D.D., who succeeded Dr. Broadus in his chair in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The revision and additions have been made almost entirely from notes and suggestions left by Dr. Broadus, and it is, therefore, throughout his own production. The book has been brought up to date and adjusted to the demands of the times. The merits which gave it first so large a circulation have not been detracted from in the least, but rather enhanced. Dr. Broadus had a high ideal of preaching, and he seeks to bring the practice of ministers up to that ideal. With a thorough discussion of the principles of preaching, he has succeeded in combining an abundance of practical rules and suggestions for the work of sermonizing. He begins with the selection of a text and proceeds step by step onward to the delivery of the sermon and the effect to be produced by it. The presentation is admirable, both in respect to matter and spirit. The volume closes with an excellent chapter on the conduct of public worship. A careful reading of it by ministers and theological students cannot fail to increase their effectiveness as preachers of the Word. We give it our hearty commendation. A. C. Armstrong and Son.

**A New Astronomy for Beginners.** Daniel P. Todd, Ph.D., Professor of Astronomy in Amherst College. The question arises in this day of multiplying school books, Is there room for another text book upon Astronomy? A careful perusal of Professor Todd's volume compels the emphatic answer, Yes, there is. We know of no better book for one who wishes to gain an insight into the laws governing the heavenly bodies. It is free from technical terms confusing to beginners, and each step is explained in such a careful, lucid way that any person of moderate education can understand it from beginning to end. At the same time, any one mastering the volume will have a sufficient knowledge of the subject to comprehend any ordinary reference he may meet in his reading and will be prepared to continue the study should opportunity offer. We commend it heartily as a text book in high schools, academies or colleges, and feel sure it will prove helpful to any teacher in his work with beginners. Much of the apparatus used in experiment has been devised by Professor Todd, and both illustrations and text make it easy for anyone to construct similar devices to assist the pupil in his study. Professor Todd, though a comparatively young man, is well known throughout the world for his work as leader of two solar eclipse expeditions under the auspices of our Government, while his success in class room and observatory at Amherst has endeared him to every alumnus of that institution. The American Book Company, New York, Cincinnati and Chicago, issue the work in an attractive form, including many illustrations with photographs by Barnard, Roberts and others.

**Eighty Years and More (1815-1897).** Reminiscences of Elizabeth Cady Stanton. In these reminiscences, Mrs. Stanton has given the public an enjoyable book. Written in a narrative style, she unfolds her life in a way that is sure to please. Not that we approve all she says, or think her conclusions always correct, but she does show the causes that influenced her life and made her what she has been and is. She says in her preface: "The story of my private life as the wife of an earnest reformer, as an enthusiastic housekeeper, proud of my skill in every department of domestic economy, and as the mother of seven children, may amuse and benefit the reader. The incidents of my public career as a leader in the most momentous reform yet launched upon the world—the emancipation of woman—will be found in *The History of Woman Suffrage*." The book abounds in anecdotes, in witty sayings, and is well worth perusal. We regret the lack of a wise guiding hand in Mrs. Stanton's early religious experience. Her account of her anxiety and distress during a revival under President Finney is a sad one. It would seem as if a word fitly spoken might have changed her whole life. New York: European Publishing Co.

**The New Dispensation.** The New Testament translated from the Greek by Robert D. Weekes. The author is a deacon in a Congregational Church, and a close Bible student for more than seventy years. The preface of his work is "to remedy as far as possible many of the infelicities, defects and generally acknowledged imperfections of the familiar versions of the New Testament." In doing this he has allowed himself

more freedom than would be warranted in a close and careful translation. His work will prove helpful to students familiar with Greek in the way of suggestion, but weight can be given to his version only for what is intended, the careful study and revision of one man. Mr. Weekes has been happy in some of his renderings, and his work will be kindly received even by those who differ in respect to certain passages. No one translation can give all there is in the original. Comparison of many versions is helpful, but one needs a thorough knowledge of New Testament Greek to detect and appreciate the beauties of this portion of the Word of God. Mr. Weekes is always reverent, shows a genuine love for and quite a good mastery of his subject. Funk and Wagnalls Company.

**Poetical Sermons, Including the Ballad of Plymouth Church.** William E. Davenport. The motive of the author is given in his opening poem, To You:

"Not the great sages, poets, seers, I praise not Beecher, Whitman, Luther, Paul or Emerson—

It is to you I come direct; I see the best of all, in all the best, in you."

This is a specimen of much of the metre used by Mr. Davenport in his *Poetical Sermons*. These sermons are not so much theological as heart to heart talks. In fact, their theology is sadly mixed. An example of this is seen in the poem entitled *Plain Preaching*, p. 107. Again on p. 162 we read:

"Yea! and my Christology complete, what is it more than this:

That Jesus Christ, my Master dear and true,  
Enjoyed sound health on earth, in body, mind and spirit, and calls us to the same."

The volume closes with a rhapsody, Henry Ward Beecher; or, The Heart of the Republic. Our author's estimate of his pastor is given in these lines:

"But other theme is mine than here to trace  
A wasteful life - a poor and treacherous love,  
Him rather let me chant, the powerful soul  
O'ershadowing still the land with recent flight,  
Beecher, the Man of men and all his time,  
Whose Will walked free and first before the world  
And this United States; whose voice he was,  
And made its meaning known; not only here  
Where all men heard, but to the farthest hills  
Of Europe and the rangers of the East,  
This Man I chant as first."

G. P. Putnam's Sons.

**Man's Place in the Cosmos, and Other Essays.** Andrew Seth, M.A., LL.D., professor of Logic and Metaphysics in the University of Edinburgh. These essays have been brought together in the hope that they may prove useful in answering monism. Man as rational and the shaper of his own destiny gives a standard of value and reveals the nature of the divine. Man's personal agency is a perpetual miracle, or as Goethe says, "Man alone achieves the impossible." Our author lays great stress upon the value of an ethical life. Reason demands an end sufficient to account for the Cosmos. Man alone furnishes a justification. Man, subject to duty and the heir of immortal hopes, is in himself a sufficient reason why God should have made the world. We can also rest assured that our goodness and wisdom has its fount in a more perfect Goodness and Truth. One of the most interesting essays is that entitled *Mr. Balfour and His Critics*, a review of Mr. Balfour's *Foundations of Belief*, which Dr. Seth declares to show a master mind. These essays are a noteworthy addition to philosophic thought and are worthy of a wide perusal this side of the Atlantic. The volume is imported by Charles Scribner's Sons.

We have received from New Jersey State authorities *The Physical Geography of New Jersey*, by Rollin D. Salisbury, with appendix by Cornelius Clarkson Vermeule. This book is volume four of the final report of John C. Smock, the State Geologist. This is a work of rare value in which four great natural divisions of New Jersey are carefully described by one whose acquaintance with the surface geology of the State eminently fits him for the task so excellently done in the first part of this report. The second part is devoted to the history of the origin and development of the surface beginning with the end of the Triassic age. The book contains many useful pictures, charts of geological survey and maps to illustrate the report that greatly increase its value as a means of accurate information. A very finely executed relief map, prepared by Mr. Smock and based upon the topographical survey accompanies the volume.