

set forth." Mr. Allen writes under the influence of this high ideal. He does not aim at completeness. He looks at his subject from a single point of view—that of "the fundamentally ethical character of Christianity." Here we touch upon the leading excellence of these volumes, and also, if we judge rightly, upon their chief defect.

The endeavor to write the history of the church as a development of moral power is as legitimate as it is fascinating. The gospel is "a gospel for the salvation of human life." Christianity must be tried by its fruits. What sort of men and women does it make? What is its influence on character? How does it affect conduct? A historian can have no nobler nor truer aim than to answer these questions in accordance with facts. We are grateful to our author for selecting this point of view, as well as for the candor, patience, ability, with which he has wrought. But to our thought the ethical is conceived of too much apart from the religious; the moral from the intellectual, and also from the personal. The most important quality of religion, as it bears on conduct, Mr. Allen characterizes by the phrase "ethical passion." This, he remarks, "is the very heart of true religion on its manward side, and is the characteristic we have chiefly to seek and verify in the study of its history." "Conscience, so obeyed, becomes a source of enthusiasm, a ground of faith, an inspiration of the will." All this is well, but the question is, How does Christianity excite, purify, and sustain this ethical passion? Mr. Allen regards dogma as unessential. He lays on such stress as the facts seem to us to require upon the central Person and redeeming work of Christ. An ethical passion implies truth—dogmatic truth. Passion implies persons. What is the truth, what the Person, that explains Christian consciousness and history? It is impossible, in our opinion, to write adequately the history of Christianity from an ethical point of view, and not recognize a closer, more necessary and vital connection of this history with the Person of Christ, and the evangelical doctrine of that Person, than Mr. Allen brings to view.

Books and Authors.

PROFESSOR ALLEN'S CHRISTIAN HISTORY.¹

These books are part of a series of which "Hebrew Men and Times" and "Our Liberal Movement in Theology" are the opening and concluding volumes. An intermediate volume, on the Third, or Modern Period, is announced. Those before us treat of the "development of Catholic Christianity down to the eve of the Reformation." They are accompanied by a valuable introduction on "The Study of Christian History," and the chief sources and authorities, and by chronological outlines and indexes. They were prepared while their author was lecturer on ecclesiastical history in Harvard University, and are the fruit of wide and careful reading, and a careful study of the original authorities. While commending them to the notice of all lovers of history, we would particularly turn to them the attention of any who desire a general guide to the study of the themes of which they treat, and to teachers of history in our higher schools and academies. The dullness of manuals will be much relieved by Mr. Allen's suggestive method of treatment. New points of view will be gained, fruitful themes for further study, instructive parallels. A strong, helpful moral tone and influence pervade these books. "The right place to study history," Mr. Allen remarks, "is not in its errors, ignorances, bigotries, and crimes. It must be studied in its great and brave sincerities, as witnessed by its glorious martyr-roll, blood-stained, fire-scorched; by its record of heroic names, from those who bore the faith like a flag before the despotisms of Rome or the barbarians of Germany and Scandinavia, down to the last missionary who died for it in field or hospital; in the lives of its great patient thinkers, the prayers of its saints, the glad, tender, or triumphant strains of its choruses and hymns, the fidelity of many generations of humble, trustful, victorious lives. These are what it is the historian's chief business to

¹*Christian History in its Three Great Periods. First Period: Early Christianity. By Joseph Henry Allen. Christian History, etc. Second Period: The Middle Age. (Boston: Roberts Brothers.)*