

LITERARY

The Philosophy of Belief; or, Law in Christian Theology. By the Duke of Argyll, K. G., K. T. The author enters into "an examination of the relation in which the great conception of natural law, when properly understood, stands to religion in general, and to Christian theology in particular." He contends that we "immediately" perceive "mind as an elementary and fundamental fact in the economy of nature." This is the Supreme Mind working out his purposes. Our limited knowledge is true knowledge. The more correct name for the agnostic is "ignoramus." The distinction between the natural and the supernatural is "vulgar," and untenable. God works everywhere and always through immutable laws. In religion these laws are those of eternal truth and righteousness, which are self-evidencing. This conception is fundamental in both Jewish and Christian theology. Everything rests on ascertainable facts. Miracles, prediction and all matters of faith are predicated on "the operation of natural causes, which, being natural, are irresistible and divine." For these reasons, Christianity furnishes the

only satisfactory and the final philosophy. We cannot accept all the positions of the distinguished author. His blending of the natural and the supernatural is often confusing; and his views on the sacrifice of Christ are not only defective, but misleading. The book is, however, one of great merit. It is intensely stimulating, and on the whole, helpful to faith. Imported by Charles Scribner's Sons.

The Empire of the Tsars and the Russians. By Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, Member of the Institute of France. Translated by Zénaïde A. Ragozin. This third volume of a valuable work is devoted entirely to religion and to matters bearing upon religion in Russia. The author has shown his intelligence and ability by such an act. Russia is religious to an extent unsurpassed by any other European nation. The revolutionists, and the erroneously called Nihilists, are profoundly religious. They are not Christian nor pagan, but religious sentiments and ideas lie at the foundation of their theories, and are the motive power of many of their acts. No one can understand the past history or present condition of Russia without knowing thoroughly, not only the Greek church as it exists there, but also the hundreds of sects and opinions which control vast masses of the population of the empire. With the same careful patience which has marked his previous volumes, and with discrimination and judgment of which the subject was worthy, the author has threaded his way among the Russian beliefs, and has given in this volume a clear and comprehensive view of the varied forms of religious belief and practice in the great Russian empire. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

The Bible in Spain. By George Borrow. Two Volumes. This is a book which will never grow old. Under this semi-religious title the accomplished, brilliant and eccentric author has given the most entertaining book about Spain that has been written in modern times. George Borrow was an Englishman who undertook to circulate the sacred Scriptures in the Spanish peninsula. Of course, he was opposed by the priests and misunderstood by the people, but this mattered little to the adventurous traveller and the devoted Christian. He was thrown into prison, he met with every variety of adventure, and he was never dismayed, discouraged or materially hindered in his good work. He was a keen observer, a brilliant narrator, and withal he had the eye and soul of an artist. His chapters are paintings, his characters portraits, whether they be hidalgos or gypsies. He gives us descriptions, conversations, narratives of travel, historical information, and passages from Spanish literature; and all in such a vivacious and attractive style that one reads the book as if it were a romance, yet is informed, instructed and profited as well as amused at the same time. The Putnams have published the book in two handsome volumes, illustrated with suitable engravings, and bound for the library.

The Visions of a Prophet. Studies in Zechariah. By Marcus Dods, D. D., Professor of Exegetical Theology, New College, Edinburgh. This volume is one of six Little Books on Religion edited by the

Rev. W. Robertson Nicoll, LL. D., including The Upper Room, by the author of Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush. They are published in a convenient pocket form with plain, clear type, and of attractive outward appearance. We take up the book with interest because we have long wanted to see an exposition of the visions of Zechariah suitable for the average English reader. Careful perusal of the volume has not disappointed us. The author avoids controversy and aims to make his discourses spiritual and helpful in Christian living. His treatment of the fourth vision, in which God calls Joshua, the high priest, a brand plucked from the burning, portrays vividly the defiling and destructive power of sin, the cleansing by Christ, and the design of God to yet use the sinner for some good purpose. Another helpful discourse is The Shepherd of Israel, growing out of the prophecies in the ninth chapter. Dr. Dods does not follow many critics who assign the last chapters of Zechariah to an unknown author, but shows that primarily the prophecy concerned the generation in which Zechariah lived and thus confirms the commonly accepted view that the whole book was written by the one from whom it is named. Published in London by Hodder and Stoughton; New York, Dodd, Mead and Co.

The Verbalist, a Manual Devoted to Brief Discussions of the Right and Wrong Use of Words, by Alfred Ayres, is a useful little volume in convenient shape, very helpful to those who would learn to avoid the many little errors of speech into which even persons of considerable culture, and authors of repute, are often betrayed. The first edition was published five years ago, but it is now revised and made very comprehensive. D. Appleton and Co.