

THE UNION SEMINARY MAGAZINE

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I.—LITERARY.

THE DIVINE ORIGIN OF THE SCRIPTURES.

The fundamental question of the christian religion is the origin of the Scriptures. It is fundamental because the answer we must give to almost all other religious questions depends on the answer we must give to it. What we are to think about God and his attributes ; about the law and its penalties ; about sin and its consequences ; about Christ and his salvation ; about life and its duties ; about death and its issues ; about the future that lies beyond death, and the destiny that awaits the righteous and the wicked ; what we are to think about these and number of other subjects, is determined by the conclusion at which we arrive as to the source whence the Bible has come. If it originated with men in the exercise of their own unaided powers, its contents are merely human speculations, having no more authority than human reason can confer. But if it came from God, and, in all its parts, is a record of divine truth, its teachings on all subjects come to us with authority that precludes all debate, and that demands immediate obedience.

A very important question, then, is, how may the ordinary reader of the Book, who has no acquaintance with its original languages, and who has no time for protracted study of books on the evidences, come to a satisfactory conclusion as to its divine origin, so that he may be able to rest upon its teachings all the weight of his eternal interests without any misgivings that his hopes will at last go up as dust.

EARLY PRESBYTERIAN MISSIONS IN THE UNITED STATES. *By Rev. James D. Tadlock, D. D., LL.D.* Pp. 32. Price 5 cents.

This is an address delivered in the Chapel of the Theological Seminary at Columbia, S. C., on Mission Day, February 6, 1895. It is an exceedingly able and instructive sketch of the Missionary effort which the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. and its off-shoots have made since the organization of the General Presbytery in 1705.

We hope that it will be widely read. It proves that the Presbyterian church of our country is a living church; by its clear showing of what the fathers have done, it is fitted to excite our own generations to renewed effort.

CAMPING ON THE BLUE RIDGE, NEAR THE "LICK LOG" TUNNEL. *By Mrs. E. H. Amis.* Pp. 106, 12 mo. Price, 60 cents. Richmond, Va.: Presbyterian Committee of Publication.

This is a simple story, of good done and happiness gained, during a few weeks of camping out, in the mountains of North Carolina.

It illustrates the power of Christian sympathy with the lowly; and the power of the Gospel to sweeten and elevate all classes of mankind, including even the criminal class.

OVER AT LITTLE ACORNS. *By Elizabeth Olms, Author of "Jack's Hymn."* Pp. 384. Price \$1.25. Richmond, Va.: Presbyterian Committee of Publication.

This is a very pleasantly told and healthful story for boys and girls. It is chiefly about boys and girls, with just enough about people who are older and of more experience, to give an increased relish for what the boys and girls of the story do.

The young people who figure on our authoress's pages are very natural young people. Two or three of them are very attractive. They were made of uncommonly fine material and they had wise and loving tuition and gave a noble response to it. It is pleasant to look on such young people developing into high manhood and womanhood.

It does us good, too, to watch them grow thus; and that, whether we see them in our communities, or on the pages of a book. This should, therefore, be a welcome addition to our family libraries.

While commending the work to the fathers and mothers in search of literature for their children, we feel constrained, nevertheless, to call attention to a sort of narrow casuistry by which the book is once or twice marred. The book teaches that smoking tobacco is smoking a poison of "the vilest kind;" and that the thought of a man's doing it should excite Christian indignation. It teaches on the other hand that the Annapolis balls may be properly patronized by professing Christians.

Now, we do not ourselves smoke, nor do we chew. Moreover, we regard smoking as very often a nuisance to others than the smoker and

as unhelpful, in nine cases out of ten to him. Besides it is an expensive habit, and not one of the cleanest. But we are not ready to say that it is so hurtful to the cause of Christ as attending the modern dance. The casuist should think deeply. He should certainly avoid counting one of two things as morally worse than the other because it happens to be worse from an esthetic standpoint. We may agree that the tobacco habit is more offensive to the esthetic faculty than the waltz. The question as to which will work the greater moral evil is not settled by this agreement.

THOS. C. JOHNSON.

THE ETHICS OF MARRIAGE. *By H. S. Pomeroy, M. D., Boston.* With a Prefatory Note by Thomas Addis Emmet, M. D., New York; and an Introduction by Rev. J. T. Duryea, D. D., Boston. Also with an Appendix showing the laws of most of the States and Territories Regarding Certain Forms of Crime. Pp. 197, 12 mo. Funk & Wagnolls: New York; London.

This work has been before the public since 1888. We have no doubt that it has already done a vast deal of good. It should do much more, however. The questions handled in this book are of fundamental importance whether looked at from the point of view of the family, the state or the church. They are discussed with as much reserve and delicacy as was consistent with the high purpose of the author, viz.; To convey much needed truth on themes of the greatest moment. The discussions are marked throughout by the sort of conviction which springs of thorough-going research, and by great fairness in dealing with well meant but misdirected protests against the evils, at the root of which the author gives well directed blows.

We believe that his main positions are at once scientific and Biblical—that they are true. And so valuable do we esteem the work that we would not offer adverse criticisms if we could.

We especially, advise all our young brethren in the ministry, whether married or not, to buy the work and read it.

Orlando, March 7, '96.

THOS. C. JOHNSON.

A HISTORY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES IN THE UNITED STATES.
By Robt. Ellis Thompson, D. D. New York: The Christian Librature Co.

This is the sixth volume in the American Church Series. It is properly a history of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. The treatment of the other Presbyterian Churches, attempted, is very sketchy and defective. As a historical product it is, perhaps, of about the average value of the volumes of this series. It can not be called a good history of even the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. In several particulars the author has failed of the historical truth. Some of them are important.