

organization of Catholicism, are prejudiced against Protestantism thus disunited. Vigorous efforts have lately been made to bring the various evangelical denominations nearer together. The preliminaries for the union of the Waldenses and the Free Italian Church have already been agreed on, and it is hoped that during the year the two churches will be united. Perhaps the various Baptist bodies can also form a Baptist union, and the Wesleyans and Methodists a Wesleyan or Methodist union; or it may be that all the evangelical churches can form a confederation. Much has, at least, been gained by showing the evils of disunion, and by creating a desire for entering into more fraternal relations. Believers generally will echo the sentiments of Rev. McDougal when, in speaking of the union or confederation of believers, he

says: "Our great desire is to reach, by either plan, the greatly desired union of the missionary efforts in Italy. What a blessing to the world this would be at the present time! What could be done in Italy might as readily be accomplished in China or Africa. The Church of Christ is now brought face to face with the problem of the world's evangelization. Her wealth and energy, consecrated to the Lord, are able to overtake this great work. What an honor it would be for Italy to lead the way in this blessed enterprise by setting the example of the subordination of denominational feelings, to the great aim of united Christian effort for the ingathering of the heathen to the fold of Jesus! That which was practicable here might be carried out all over the world!"

A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF CURRENT LITERATURE IN GREAT BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES.

By J. M. SHERWOOD.

GREAT BRITAIN.

British Quarterly (July). Among the notable articles in the present number we name "The Coptic Churches of Egypt," "The Admissions of Agnosticism," and "The Revised Old Testament." The last is very different in spirit and appreciation from Prof. Brigg's pretentious and severe article on the same subject in the *Presbyterian Review*. The paper on Agnosticism we shall refer to again. The first paper is one of great historic interest and value, going back to the origin of the Coptic Church and tracing its history very intelligently down to recent date. From the Edict of Theodosius (A.D. 379) to the Arab Conquest (641), the State religion of Egypt was Christianity. This early Egyptian Church is, indeed, the Coptic Church, though it was not known by this name till the decision of the Council of Chalcedon (451). By their adhesion to the Nicene definition of the single nature of Christ—that "Christ being made man is one Nature, one Person, one Will, is also God the Word, and at the same time Man born of the Virgin Mary; so that to Him belong all the attributes and properties of the Divine as well as of the human nature"—the Copts subjected themselves to prosecution and isolation, and, sharing in none of the changes and developments of the other churches, preserved in their scanty and neglected community, unchanged for fifteen hundred years, the ancient tradition and practice of the fifth century. Their implacable hatred of the Greeks, or Melkites (*i.e.*, "Royalists" or Church and State men), induced the Copts, or Jacobites (*i.e.*, followers of Jacob of Odessa, the leader of the Eutychians), to throw themselves into the arms of the Arab conqueror, when he invaded Egypt in the seventh century; and though their shameful surrender at first procured them a considerable measure of toleration, they were not long in discovering how fatal a blunder they had committed. There is something very heroic in the constancy of this

people to the faith of their forefathers. The Copts combine the language of the Pharaohs with the alphabet of Alexander; and they use the two to express the dogmas of the primitive Christian Church, unchanged since the fifth century. No more extraordinary combination can be imagined; none fraught with associations of a more moving nature. A people of the race of the Pharaohs, speaking the very words of Rameses, writing them with the letters of Cadmus, and embalming in the sentences thus written a creed and liturgy which twelve centuries of persecution have not been able to wrest from them, or to alter a jot, are, indeed, a people worthy of more than a passing attention. The time is coming when the Copt may have a chance of rehabilitating the character he has been losing for so many centuries. Persecution has ceased of late years. The descendants of Mohammed 'Aly have favored their Christian subjects, and raised them to some of the highest posts in the country; there is even a Coptic pasha. Besides this, the Copts themselves are beginning to wake up to the necessity of education, and their schools are undergoing a gradual process of reform which was much needed. We may hope before long to see the good results of the spirit now being developed among the younger Copts, though it will take time to eradicate the fruits of prolonged subjection. At present there is no doubt that the coldness with which travelers like Lane and Klunzinger have looked upon the Copts is natural, and the neglect which has befallen their singularly interesting community is not so surprising as it would at first seem. But in future years we may hope to find them deserving of sympathy and respect as much for themselves as for their history and antiquities.

Contemporary Review (July). "Catholicism and Historical Criticism," by Principal Fairbairn, and "Mind and Motion," by G. J. Romanes, F.R.S., are very readable papers—indeed, the