

## Book Notices.

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*Plato and Paul; or, Philosophy and Christianity.* An examination of the Fundamental Forces of Cosmic and Human History, with their Contents, Methods, Functions, Relations, and Results Compared. By J. W. MENDINHALL, PH.D., D.D. New York: Hunt & Eaton. Toronto: William Briggs. Octavo, 777 pages. Price \$3.50.

This title, if open to the objection of being somewhat lengthy, has the merit of being accurately descriptive of the work. It is not a mere label, but a definition. And the more carefully it is examined the more profoundly will the reader be impressed with the arduous and difficult character of the work which the esteemed and able author has undertaken. Plato and Paul are selected as being respectively the representatives of Philosophy and Christianity; the first standing for the former of these, and the second for the latter. According to the conception of the author of the work under review, both these great forces "are engaged with the same problems, employing different and, sometimes, opposite methods in the attempt to solve them, but anticipating in the final rehearsal a vindication of the same truths, or the same form of truth."

The object of the stately volume before us is not, as we understand it, to array Philosophy and Christianity against each other, or to degrade the one in order to exalt the other; but to show by the careful examination and comparison of their respective methods, that the dream of the former can only be realized by the latter. That the guesses of philosophy can only be verified by Christianity. So far from these being antagonistic to each other, the author holds, and undertakes to prove, that Christianity may be amply justified by the philosophical method, and, to use his own words, "that its philoso-

phical basis is as impregnable as the more common historical basis on which it supposedly and safely rests."

It will be seen from these observations that the aim of this work is apologetical; and the defence which it sets up for Christianity takes the form of a philosophical demonstration. Admitting the strength and adequacy of the Theological, the Experimental and the Historical argument, he contends that the Philosophical is no less strong and unanswerable. In other words, he holds that "*Christianity is true Philosophy, or the philosophy of truth in a religious form.*" It is this argument that is unfolded and emphasized in this volume. In the execution of this design, Dr. Mendinhal subjects philosophy to a thorough examination. Beginning with Plato, in whom he finds an impersonation of the philosophical spirit and method, the systems of philosophy are passed in review.

It is scarcely needful to say that no intelligible account of this process, which occupies more than three hundred closely-printed octavo pages, can be given in a paragraph. If it were incapable of answering any higher end; the light which this part of the book sheds upon the philosophical systems, ancient and modern, would well repay a careful perusal. The result of the examination is to reveal such a breakdown of Philosophy, apart from revelation, as to demonstrate the need of the superior certitude of the Christian faith. The chapter which deals with this is profoundly interesting.

But all this, as the intelligent reader will readily understand, is merely preparatory to the main development of the argument which is the main object of the author—an argument of real importance, but for the nature and details of which we must refer the reader to the volume itself, which will amply repay a careful perusal.