

HELPFUL DATA IN CURRENT LITERATURE.

MILTON AND TENNYSON. By Rev. Henry J. Van Dyke, Jr., *Presbyterian Review* (October), 28 pp. A masterly paper, evincing rare literary taste and ability in so young a writer—the earnest of a brilliant future. The parallel of resemblances which he runs between these masters in the lyric art cannot fail to interest the cultivated reader.

THE GODS OF CANAAN. By Prof. A. H. Sayce. *Contemporary Review* via *Eclectic* (November), pp. 10. Students of the Old Testament will find in this carefully prepared paper much that will interest and instruct in relation to the several gods of heathen worship named or alluded to in Hebrew history. It is an important field of investigation, and the writer has done his work well.

EXPOSITORY PREACHING. By Rev. W. H. Black. *Cumberland Presbyterian Review* (October), pp. 10. It is a good sign to see the thorough ventilation which the methods of preaching are getting; great good will come of it. While there is nothing specially new in this paper, yet it discusses the subject intelligently, and states several weighty reasons in favor of the expository plan, in preference to the topical and textual.

THE LAW OF PRAYER. By James Gibbons, D.D. *Catholic Review* (October), pp. 20. Coming from a leading Roman Catholic divine, this paper has special interest. Its teaching, in the main, is sound and Scriptural, and is enforced by pertinent and impressive argument. He gives "a striking instance of the power of prayer and of the direct interposition of God in the conversion and illumination of a soul without the help or agency of man," which came under his own observation.

STUDIES IN ESCHATOLOGY. By Philip Schaff, D.D. *Presbyterian Review* (October), pp. 20. A timely and valuable historical presentation of the subject, giving the Jewish, the heathen, and the Patristic views, and, in contrast, the Eschatology of the New Testament, and the essential faith of the Christian Church as expressed in the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds and her various Liturgies. "Everlasting punishment," says Dr. Schaff, in his summing up, "always was, and always will be, the orthodox doctrine on that dark, terrible subject."

PROBATION AFTER DEATH; OR, THE SPIRITS IN PRISON. By C. F. Mussey, D.D. *Baptist Quarterly Review* (Oct.-Dec.), pp. 16. A very able and satisfactory exegesis of 1 Peter iii: 18-20. No attempt is made to review particular eschatologies, which advocate a probation after death, but this famous passage, on which those who favor that view mainly rely, is shown to teach no such doctrine. Its proper interpretation, as here given, is: "That Christ in His divine Spirit preached to the men of the time of Noah, who

were afterward—because they did not repent when they heard the messages of mercy—up to the time of Christ, and at present are, and till the judgment will remain, in prison."

THE BRAHMA SAMAJ. By Rev. C. W. Park. *Bib. Sacra* (July and October), pp. 32 and 33. Written by one lately of Bombay and familiar with the theme, these papers are exceedingly interesting and instructive; and the presence in this country of the able and distinguished expounder of this reformed Hinduism, on a mission of enlightenment to the Occidental Church, gives them special claims on the Christian scholar and preacher. As a reliable historic sketch of this remarkable movement, and of Ram Mahan Bai, the chief originator of it, and of his successors in it, and especially of the views and career of Keshab Chandra Sen, who has excited no little attention in England and in this country, some of whose utterances have approximated the teachings of Christianity, it is both timely and invaluable.

THE PRACTICAL BEARINGS OF OUR BELIEF CONCERNING THE RELATION OF DEATH TO PROBATION. By Prof. G. Frederick Wright. *Bibliotheca Sacra* (October), pp. 20. Both from an historical and a doctrinal standpoint, this article possesses decided homiletic value. "The belief that death ends probation has been so nearly universal in the Church that there has been little occasion to affirm it;" and this is the reason assigned why so many of the creeds have not definitely excluded the idea of another "chance." The views of Dörner are sharply criticised in the light of Scripture: it is shown that "no new light has dawned respecting these problems since the New Testament was written," and that "those who are endeavoring to unsettle the common faith of Christendom upon the subject of future probation" cannot realize the responsibility they assume.

THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY. By F. W. Conrad, D. D. *Lutheran Quarterly* (October), pp. 18. The prevalent and the true theories, in relation to this vital question, are here set forth with clearness and decided ability. The present and prospective "death of ministers" lends special interest to this discussion. The writer reasons stoutly against what he calls the "prevalent" theory, viz.: a direct call from God to particular individuals, impressed upon their minds by the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit, and whom the grace and providence of God are sure to bring into the ministry. The "true" theory in his judgment is "rational," not "miraculous," "ordinary," not "extraordinary"—a conviction of duty arising from a survey of one's personal fitness, and the leadings of God's providence. And this view is enforced by weighty and conclusive reasons, drawn from Scripture, experience and the nature of things. The paper has an historical as well as practical value.