

## Book Notices.

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*The Ancient World and Christianity.* By E. DE PRESSENSÉ, D.D. Translated by ANNIE HARWOOD HOLMDEN. 8vo, pp. xxxi-479. New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son. Toronto: William Briggs. Price \$1.75.

With this book Dr. Pressensé worthily crowns the labours of a long and busy life, and completes the cycle of his studies of Christianity and its conquest of the world. His noble series of volumes on this great theme form a monument "more lasting than brass." Few men possess at once the rich and varied learning of Pressensé and his literary grace and skill. His style is like a herald's coat, with its rich embroidery of metaphor and simile. But the fabric is also closely wrought and strong. There is an inimitable French grace and elegance, but one feels all the time that he is walking on the solid ground of well-ascertained fact.

In the great progressive movements of the ages Pressensé recognizes the guiding providence of God. "The great organ of knowledge in the moral world," he says, "is conscience, of which the law of duty, inseparable from free will, is the fundamental axiom. Everywhere and always we have found the voice of conscience uplifted in support of the law of right. Everywhere we have found the soul of man soaring above the earth and aspiring after immortal life, crying out for a God greater than any local and national divinities." In the development of his august theme our author begins with the religions of the ancient East—Chaldeo-Assyria, Egypt and Phœnicia. Then he treats the religious development of the oriental Aryans, especially the religion of Zoroaster. Book three treats of the religions of India, of the Vedas and Buddha. Book four treats of Hellenic paganism, and of the development of the Greek conscience, as seen in its language, literature, art, worship, and

philosophy. The concluding book discusses the Greco-Roman paganism and its decline, the social and moral condition of the pagan world at the coming of Christ; the failure of false religions and false philosophy to appease the immortal hunger and thirst of the soul; the satiety and disgust of life amid excessive luxury; the hopelessness of a world weary with waiting for the Divine Healer of its woes. And this is his conclusion: "When we find that eighteen centuries ago, in the decadence of a world ready to perish, the unutterable groaning of creation was answered by a sovereign manifestation of holiness and love, which caused a new river of life to flow through the thirsty land, this great fact, attested by unquestionable documents, gives confirmation to our faith in Christ. And in this troubled evening of the nineteenth century, our only hope of an effective salvation for society lies in that great spiritual force which eighteen centuries ago put new life and vigour into a state of society as effete and troubled as that of to-day."

*Philosophy and Religion: A Series of Addresses, Essays, and Sermons, designed to set forth Great Truths in Popular Form.* By AUGUSTUS HOPKINS STRONG, D.D. 8vo, pp. 632. New York: A. C. Armstrong, & Co. Toronto: William Briggs. Price \$3.50.

This book contains the best thoughts of a profound and original thinker, gleaned from the records of a long and studious life. Dr. Strong is the President and Professor of Biblical Theology in the Rochester Theological Seminary. He is thoroughly equipped for the discussion of the vast and varied themes treated in this volume. He possesses in addition a beauty of style, a vigour of thought, a clearness of insight into the topics on which he writes, that make his essays very interesting and attractive reading. The fact that