

# THE HOMILETIC REVIEW.

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## REVIEW SECTION.

### I.—THE SACRED SCRIPTURES OF THE EGYPTIANS.

BY REV. CAMDEN M. COBERN, PH.D., ANN ARBOR, MICH.

THE sources from which a knowledge of the Egyptian religion may be gathered are in the inverse order of their value:

- (1) The statements of the Christian fathers and earlier Greek and Latin writers.
- (2) The express utterances of late Egyptian writers.
- (3) The direct testimony gathered from the scarabs, amulets, wall-paintings and memorial tablets.
- (4) The long religious texts preserved on coffins, the walls of temples or tombs, and in ten thousand papyri.

These religious texts are sometimes individual expressions of adoration, petition, or praise; but usually they are selections from that mysterious "Book of the Dead," *Per-n-hru*, which appears even before Abraham's day as the well-known sacred scriptures of the Egyptians.

Of this strange work, existing in so many copies, there have been only two complete translations: one in English by Dr. Birch, made over twenty-five years ago, and one in French by M. Paul Pierret, the director of the Egyptian department of the Louvre, made twelve years ago.

Dr. Charles H. S. Davis, editor of the "Biblia," Meriden, Conn., is about to publish an English translation of Pierret's work, giving also the great Turin papyrus in facsimile and chapters on animal worship, the Egyptian Pantheon, etc., at the nominal price of \$3.50.

All of these scholars have used in their translations, however, a corrupt text of the Ptolemaic epoch; and for critical scholars the best translation of the "Book of the Dead" ever made, or likely to be made in this generation, will be that of P. Le Page Renouf, which, with a learned commentary, is now appearing in the "Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archeology," and will be completed in eight parts.\*

This translation relies upon the critical text of the Theban era

\* Obtained from W. H. Rylands, F.S.A., 37 Russell Street, Bloomsbury, W. C., London, England; price, 40 shillings.