

THE BOOK PAGE

Readers of Professor William Newton Clarke's, *Outline of Christian Theology*, and other earlier works of his pen, are familiar with the author's clearness of presentation and charm of style, which make his discussion of the most abstract themes as easy reading as the work of the skilfullest teller of stories. The qualities of the earlier books are found also in **The Christian Doctrine of God**, just published by T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, U.C. Tract, Society, Toronto, (477 pages, \$2.50 net). Dr. Clarke, in this volume,—it is the latest in the International Theological Library,—sets himself a twofold task. His first business, with which the greater part of the book is occupied, is just to present the conception of God held by Christians of to-day. Controversy is laid aside. The doctrine of God is permitted to shine in its own light, as its own best evidence. What Christians believe God to be, in His own character, and in His relations to men and the universe, is simply stated, without reference to other views of the present or any other time. But when the Christian doctrine of God has thus been stated, the question immediately arises, Is this doctrine true? The thing remaining, therefore, to be done, is to marshal the evidence in its support. This part of Dr. Clarke's work, also, shows the hand of a master, and closes with a noble chapter, in which it is set forth that, after all, the Christian belief in God does not rest merely upon this or that logical argument, but is, in the last analysis, the response of the human heart to a divine revelation.

It is the warring of the new against the old—"modern progress" in the form of greed for money-making and display, invading the conservative traditions of Boston's "Back Bay" families—which is described in **The Chippendales**, by Robert Grant (Copp Clark Co., Toronto, 602 pages, \$1.50). Judge Grant, the author, is himself a Boston and a Harvard man, and so writes with a full understanding of the Boston "atmosphere", which it is sometimes so difficult for outsiders either to comprehend or penetrate. Across the horizon of the Chippendales,—"of the Brahmin caste" of Boston,—comes young Hugh Blaisdell, born in Maine, educated at a small New England college, and with no capital except good looks, a keen mind, pleasant, likable ways, an indomitable ambition to get on, hampered with no more than the usual scruples as to how he should gain his ends. In sharp contrast is the other of the two main characters. Henry Chippendale Sumner is sketched as a typical Bostonian, "a chronic objector", conventional, critical, and apparently cold. Yet he had an absolute devotion to truth, an earnest longing to help on the real work of the world, and a loyalty to his ideals, which could not be turned aside even by the offer of a half million dollar legacy. Given two such temperaments, brought into rivalry in love, in politics, in civic art, clashings are certain, and the story develops a wealth of well worked out situations. But the chief charm of *The Chippendales*,—and it is very strong,—is in the keen analysis of character, and the delineation of those who possess the much misunderstood "New England conscience".

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