

France, narrated in a speech a story of the French ship *Le Rodeur*, which sailed from Bonny, in Africa, April, 1819. On approaching the equatorial line, a terrible malady broke out—an obstinate disease of the eyes, contagious and beyond the cure of medicine. One after another was smitten, till only one remained unaffected. In the midst of their dreadful fears lest this solitary individual should also be afflicted, a sail was discovered. It was the Spanish vessel *Leon*. But the same disease had been there, and, horrible to tell, *all* the crew had become blind. Unable to assist each other, the vessels parted. The Spanish ship was never again heard from. But the *Rodeur*, steered by the one whose vision was unimpaired, reached Guadeloupe June 21. So has *moral* blindness fallen upon us all; but there is One whose sight is undimmed.

The Delusions of Sin have been often illustrated by the mirage, but the illustration gains remarkable power by the following incident related by Sir Samuel Baker: "Many years ago, when the Egyptian troops first conquered Nubia, a regiment was destroyed by thirst in crossing the Nubian desert. The men, being upon a limited allowance of water, suffered from

extreme thirst, and deceived by the appearance of a mirage that exactly resembled a beautiful lake, they insisted on being taken to its banks by the Arab guide. It was in vain that the guide assured them that the lake was unreal, and he refused to lose the precious time by wandering from his course. Words led to blows, and he was killed by the soldiers, whose lives depended upon his guidance. The whole regiment turned from the track and rushed toward the welcome waters. Thirsty and faint, over the burning sands they hurried; heavier and heavier their footsteps became; hotter and hotter their breath as deeper they pushed into the desert, farther and farther from the lost track where the pilot lay in his blood; and still the mocking spirits of the desert, the affects of the mirage, led them on, and the lake, glistening in the sunshine, tempted them to bathe in its cool waters, close to their eyes, but never at their lips. At length the delusion vanished—the fatal lake had turned to burning sand! Raging thirst and horrible despair! the pathless desert and the murdered guide! lost! lost! all lost! Not a man ever left the desert, but they were subsequently discovered, parched and withered corpses, by the Arabs sent upon the search."

HELPFUL DATA IN CURRENT LITERATURE.

By J. M. SHEERWOOD, D.D.

Books of the Month.

A. C. Armstrong & Son. "System of Christian Theology," by Henry B. Smith, D.D., edited by William S. Karr, D.D. Both publishers and editor have laid the public under great obligation for the matter and the style of this noble octavo. Prof. Smith, as a scholar, thinker, theologian, and teacher of Christian doctrine, had few equals and no superior. His influence while living was widely felt, not only on the numerous students who came under it, but by the Church at large. His death, in the prime of manhood, was an irreparable loss, and the more so because his Lectures on Theology were not prepared for the press. We rejoice, however, that Dr. Karr has succeeded in giving so full and reliable an exhibition of his views and teachings in Theology. There is much in the present tendencies of religious thought and discussion to give special timeliness and emphasis to the mature, masterly and scriptural statements and vindication of the Christian system by such an acknowledged master in Israel.—"The Principles of Written Discourse," by Theodore W. Hunt. Same publishers. "Designed to be philosophic and suggestive, rather than technical or formal," and "especially prepared for use in our higher collegiate classes," we fear Prof. Hunt assumes far too much on the student's part, and aims too high to be of much practical use. He falls into the common fault, also, of abstract discussion and bewildering details of points and principles. It is too "dry," too purely "philosophic," to

interest the mass even of advanced students.—"Richard Baxter," by G. D. Boyle, Dean of Salisbury. Same publishers. Few men stand higher in the religious annals of England than this famous Puritan divine of the seventeenth century. As preacher, author, and man of affairs, he left his mark on the theology and literature of the world. This brief and popular history of this "Christian hero" is admirably written, and ought to have a place in every family, and in every Sunday-school.

Charles Scribner's Sons have given us a gem of a book in Prof. Guyot's "Creation; or, The Biblical Cosmology in the Light of Modern Science." We are glad to have, in compact, permanent form, so clear, mature and independent a presentation of the truth on this important subject. The work was prepared long before the "higher criticism" attempt was made to shake the faith in the authenticity of Genesis, and yet its conclusions all tend to confirm the Mosaic record, despite the assaults of modern scientists. It is the best treatise on the genesis of creation that we know of.

Congregational Sunday School Publishing Society. "The Last of the Luscombs," by Helen Pearson Barnard. A sensible, interesting story, teaching needful and important lessons. It is, in its literary and religious qualities, considerably above the average of books written for the Sunday-school.

Cassell & Co. "Energy in Nature," by Wm. L. Carpenter. The substance of this book was