

NOTICES OF BOOKS.

ESSAYS AND DISCOURSES, Practical and Historical, by Cortlandt Van Rensselaer D. D. 12mo., pp. 435. Philadelphia, Presbyterian Board of Publication

The author of this work was a highly esteemed and influential minister of the Old School Presbyterian Church of the United States, lately called to his reward. Descended of an ancient and wealthy Dutch family in the State of New York, he devoted his talents and his wealth to the service of the Redeemer. He first studied for the bar, but, after being duly admitted to practice, he resolved to devote himself to the work of the Christian ministry. In 1837 he was called to the pastoral charge of the Presbyterian congregation of Burlington, N. J., but resigned a few years after, and in 1843 was appointed General Agent of Princeton Theological Seminary, in which capacity he collected one hundred thousand dollars for its permanent endowment. In 1846 he was elected Corresponding Secretary and chief executive officer of the General Assembly's Board of Education, which office he held for fourteen years, till in 1860 failing health compelled his resignation. It was in this last office that he rendered his chief services to the Church. The work of the Board consists principally in aiding young men preparing for the ministry, but its efforts are also directed to the promotion of Christian education in colleges and academies. To both these departments of the Board's operations he devoted his time, labours, and means, and with the most happy results to the Church. He died July 25th, 1860.

The manuscript of the present volume was the object of the author's careful preparation during the last few months of his life, and it was placed as his last gift at the disposal of the Board of Publication, in whose operations he had taken a great interest. There are in it ten sermons on such topics as the following, "Martha's cumbering care and Mary's good part," "The redemption of the soul precious," "None of us liveth to himself," "The lessons of old age," &c. These are all clear, practical and evangelical discourses, which cannot fail to be profitable. Besides these the volume contains a "Centennial Historical Discourse" delivered in 1858 in commemoration of the re-union of the Synods of New York and Philadelphia a century before. This is an excellent essay, containing a succinct account of the origin and progress of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, with suitable reflections, suggested by its history during the century. Perhaps, however, the most valuable part of the volume is "the historical contributions." This consists of an examination of the principles of the founders of the Presbyterian Church, as bearing upon the questions at issue between the New and Old School, together with a clear narrative of the division in 1837-8, and defence of the measures of the Old School party at that important crisis. This last we consider the best discussion of the subject we have seen, and we would recommend it to all who wish to make themselves acquainted with the principles at issue in that struggle.

HEAVENLY WATCHWORDS, or Promises and Countersigns, by L. B. I. Small 12mo., pp. 125. Same Publishers.

The Scripture contains many "exceeding great and precious promises" for the children of God. But how shall I know that I am one of those who have a right to these, asks the humble believer. This little work is founded on the idea that this may be known by his having an exercise of mind corresponding