

HELPFUL DATA IN CURRENT LITERATURE.

BY J. M. SHERWOOD, D.D.

Periodicals.

CHILD NURTURE IN THE CHURCH. By Rev. James W. Cooper, *Andover Review* (July), 11 pp. It is hopeful to see so much attention given to this subject. This writer says: "There are just now blessed intimations that we are entering upon a revival, which we trust will be powerful and permanent—a revival in zeal and wisdom for the saving of the children. Some of our ministers and churches are feeling deeply on the subject, and are anxiously seeking for more effective methods." While commending the Puritan stern sense of duty to the "rising generation," he claims that a change is working "in reference to the object of Christian training." "It is generally believed at the present time that the object of our endeavors should be the child's immediate conversion; that we should expect this at a very early period in its life; that, indeed, as soon as it can know its mother the child may know Christ; and that instead of training him for a Christian life to be entered upon at some indefinite future time, he may most frequently be trained in a Christian life already entered and recognized. Of course such a change as this in our conceptions is fundamental. It puts the whole subject in a different light. We have an entirely different aim before us now, and we must of necessity proceed in a different way. The old measures cannot lead to the new results. Our different aim compels us to take a new path."

RECONSTRUCTION IN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT. By Rev. Francis A. Henry, *Princeton Review* (July), 17 pp. The author of this well-written and well-meaning paper assumes "that a revolution is sweeping over the religious thought of Christendom," which renders "obsolete its present doctrinal formulations," as "out of harmony with the spirit of the age;" and he hereby aims to "simplify the necessary creed, or rather to return to its original simplicity, by distinguishing between what is essential to Christian faith and what is to be left open to individual opinion." The result reminds us of the words of that sturdy original thinker and preacher, Daniel A. Clark: "If you take away all this from my old Bible you may have the rest for a penny!" A Christianity that teaches "that humanity is by nature righteous," and that Christ's "panacea" for sin was "sympathy," and "the power which drew all men unto him when lifted up," was "sympathy," is a Christianity without regenerating or soul-saving power. The historic *Princeton Review* for more than fifty years taught quite "another gospel" than this! But the closing words, taken in their historical sense, have the true ring: "Christianity is Christ himself. Its power in the world has been the power of a perfect human character to mould the sons of men into the image of the Son of God. That

power, then, is with us now. What He was, He is. As He loved and helped men once, He loves and helps them still. He is still the Revealer of the Father, the Redeemer of the sinful, the Giver of eternal life. He has not faded into a reminiscence; He is not lost to us in the dim perspective of history; for we know Him no more after the flesh. Let our Christianity be faith in Christ, and love of Christ, and allegiance to Christ, and He will lead us out of the darkness that shadows our time into the marvellous light of His kingdom—the household and Family of God, which knows no sovereign but the Father, no citizenship but brotherhood, no law but love."

PROHIBITION AND PERSUASION. By Neal Dow and Dio Lewis, *North American Review* (August), 20 pp. While this long article presents nothing essentially new either in the way of facts or arguments, it is timely and worthy of the attention of all friends of the Temperance cause. The times are specially favorable for action. "Prohibition" is fairly before the people as one of the great economic, social and moral issues that are pressing, and will continue to press, till there is a solution. We verily believe that it is bound to succeed. We commend this paper to our readers. The facts and statistics (some of which were taken from the columns of THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY), and the considerations presented by both of these able and veteran advocates of the cause, are worthy of the study of all patriots and lovers of humanity.

THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH. From the German of Schultz, by Prof. G. H. Schodde, *The Lutheran Quarterly Review* (July), 11 pp. The contrast of heathen and Christian views of death and eternity is an interesting subject of investigation. This contrast is nowhere more strikingly shown than in the manner in which the whole system of burial and its attending circumstances was conducted in the early ages; for everywhere the rites and system of burying the dead correspond exactly to the popular ideas of death and of eternity. Hence the introduction of Christianity gave new views of death and new forms of burial, such as were entirely unknown to the nations of antiquity. Compare the picture of a heathen funeral with that of a Christian! The historical view of the matter, here briefly sketched, will be read with interest.

THE PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH (Roman Catholic) IN THE UNITED STATES. By John Gilmary Shea, LL.D., *American Catholic Quarterly Review* (July), 25 pp. This long article is written with masterly skill and ability by one of the leading lights of the Romish Church. It is mainly historical, tracing in detail and with a remarkable array of statistics, the growth of Romanism in the United States from "the first provincial