

Book Notices.

Christianity in the United States.

From the First Settlement down to the Present Time. By DANIEL DORCHESTER, D.D. Cloth, pp. 795, price \$4.50. New York and Detroit: Phillips and Hunt. Toronto: William Briggs.

If any religious pessimist bemoans the thought that the former days were better than these, we commend him to the study of this noble volume as one of the best moral tonics we know. Many readers remember with pleasure Dr. Dorchester's former volume, the "Problem of Religious Progress," with its convincing array of statistics and the irrefragable demonstrations arising therefrom. This book is of the same general character, but is much more comprehensive in its scope and mode of treatment. This is really a religious history of the nation since its settlement, and, in part, of Canada. The author traces the religious and social life of the people during the colonial period and finds that the state of morals was in many cases far below even the present imperfect standard. At the Revolutionary period, the influence of French infidelity had permeated the life of the nation, even in high places, as never before nor since. Intemperance, political bitterness, the practice of duelling and other immoralities, were rife.

With the dawn of the century a new life was kindled in the Protestant churches and an era of revivals was inaugurated. Evangelizing agencies were organized, home and foreign missions, Bible and Tract Societies and a religious press, and religious educational institutions were established. Then followed temperance, anti-slavery, and Sabbath reforms, the wonderful growth of the Sunday-school movement, and the revived life and aggressive movements of the Protestant churches. Our author traces the growth of Romanism and shows that it has by no

means kept pace with that of the population or with that of Protestantism. Among the convergent currents in favour of a higher Christian civilization he notes the following:—A strong trend from atheism to theism, from science *versus* the Bible to science *with* the Bible, from Christ discarded, to Christ honoured, from negative to Biblical ethics, from the poverty of scepticism to the wealth of Christianity, and from scholastic to vital truth. These conclusions are not vague inferences, but are sustained by abundant statistical and other evidence. It will long be a treasury of information on the important subjects which it treats. The labour of compiling these tables must have been immense.

The book is sumptuously printed and bound, and is illustrated with a number of coloured maps and diagrams. We give the accompanying brief statement of the progress and status of the Protestant Churches of the United States:

Baptists and kindred bodies, 42,389 churches, 28,003 ministers, 3,729,745 members; Congregationalists, 4,277 churches, 4,090 ministers, 436,379 members; Episcopalians, 3,526 churches, 3,915 ministers, 423,605 members; Friends, 600 churches, 500 ministers, 82,000 members; Lutherans, 7,573 churches, 3,990 ministers, 930,830 members; Methodists and kindred bodies 40,321 churches, 27,542 ministers, 4,601,416 members; Presbyterian and kindred bodies, 15,002 churches, 11,241 ministers, 1,431,249 members; aggregate, 120,944 churches, 83,845 ministers, 12,132,651.

On the basis of 58,420,00 population for 1866, we have in

1800	one comm't	in 14.5 inhab'ts.
1850	"	" 6.5 "
1870	"	" 5.7 "
1880	"	" 5.0 "
1886	"	" 4.8 "

There is now one evangelical Pro-