

Book Notices.

The Problem of Religious Progress. By DANIEL DORCHESTER, D.D. Revised Edition, with New Coloured Plates and Diagrams. New York: Hunt & Eaton. Toronto: William Briggs. Pp. 768. Price, \$2.75.

The earlier edition of this book made a very profound impression, and its remarkable facts, figures and deductions have been widely quoted. The new edition is largely re-written and the statistical tables and diagrams brought down to date. It is a brilliant exposition of the accelerated progress of Christianity during the last three hundred years. It is certainly a complete refutation of the pessimists and croakers who fear that Romanism, infidelity and other forms of error are growing so fast that they will swamp evangelical orthodoxy. Dr. Dorchester, by a careful study of social and religious history, and by an induction from an ample presentation of statistics, shows that the progress of Christianity is like that of the sun, growing brighter and brighter unto the perfect day; that its advance is in a geometrical ratio, with ever accelerating speed; and that the simple calculations of arithmetic confirm the prophetic teachings of Holy Writ, that the day is hastening when the knowledge of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the mighty deep. These conclusions are made still more strikingly apparent to the eye by diagrams, where the lines of the past, if produced into the future, would soon embrace by far the greater portion of the world in the pale of Protestant Christianity.

Bunyan Characters. Lectures delivered in St. George's Free Church, Edinburgh, by DR. ALEXANDER WHYTE. Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier. Toronto: William Briggs. First, second and third series. Ninety cents each. Antique style.

The grand allegories of the Bedford tinker are not so much read now-a-days, amid the flood of sensational literature, as they should be. Bunyan's "Grace Abounding," "Pilgrim's Progress" and "Holy War," are, perhaps, more admired than studied. To omit these books from one's reading is to lose one of the

greatest aids to intellectual and moral education. Next to the Bible and Shakespeare their imagery, their figures, their allusions, have coloured our English speech, and no English books have been published in so many editions or translated into so many languages.

The revived interest in Bunyan literature is shown by the remarkable popularity of Dr. Whyte's lectures, the first series having already reached its twenty-first thousand. Dr. Whyte has a shrewd and pithy way of commenting on the text that lights up its inner meaning, explains its quaintness and interprets its religious significance.

The "Holy War" is less known than the "Pilgrim's Progress." It is written in the plenitude of the author's power. Macaulay said that, if the "Pilgrim's Progress" did not exist, the "Holy War" would be the best allegory ever written. The antique style in which these books appear harmonizes well with the quaintness of their subject-matter.

Russian Rambles. By ISABEL F. HAPGOOD, author of "The Epic Songs of Russia." New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Toronto: William Briggs.

Miss Hapgood is one of the few English-speaking women who, from long residence and acquaintance with the language, understand the social life and political institutions of the great empire of Russia. This is not a consecutive narrative of travel, but a series of graphic pictures of different aspects of Russian life. The opening chapter deals with passports, police and police offices. Then follows, under the title of "Nevsky Prospekt," a graphic study of St. Petersburg. Memories of Moscow, of the "Holy City" of Kieff, of the Nizni-Novgorod Fair, of bargaining in Russia, experiences with the Russian censor, and the like, give us an inside view of that great Empire such as we know not how to find elsewhere. The author was favoured with the personal acquaintance of Count Tolstoy, visited him at his home, and under his guidance visited the ancient capital of Moskovy. This interesting book has distinct literary merit which gives it a permanent value.