

theology. The most widely diffused religion in the world, that of one-fourth of the human race, is well worth careful study. Léon de Rosny announced a short time ago that there were twenty thousand Buddhists in Paris alone, a statement which seems incredible to us. Even if true, it no more demonstrates the truth of Buddhism than the prevalence of the worship of Osiris and Mithras among the jaded voluptuaries of Rome proved the divinity of these oriental deities.

Our author has a strong admiration of Buddha and Buddhism—and truly there are many noble things in the life of the Light of Asia, and many beautiful sentiments in the words which he uttered. Mr. Lillie records the mythological life of Buddha, recounts some of his parables, points out the striking coincidences between the Buddhist and Christian scriptures, and Buddhist and Christian rites. Some of these are more fanciful than real, some of the resemblances are extremely remote, others are but the natural parallelisms of two ancient oriental religions, or may be reflections from the benign religious teachings of Judaism—broken lights from the source of all wisdom—like the wise sayings of Confucius and of Plato.

A system must be judged by its fruits. For thousands of years Buddhism has prevailed in the Orient, and has especially dominated China. One result is the arrested development of that great empire. We have been long told of the mild virtues of the Buddhists, of the lofty ethics of Confucius, of the aversion to cause suffering of the Buddhist faith. These find a strange comment and contradiction in the unspeakable atrocities performed, not merely by the Boxers, but, as captured documents demonstrate, by the very highest in authority, and at the active instigation of the Buddhist priests. On the other hand, Christianity came to the painted savages of Britain and to the forests of Germany a few centuries ago, and to-day the Anglo-Teuton races lead the world in the highest civilization of the race.

*History of the Ritual of the Methodist Episcopal Church. With a Commentary on Its Offices.* By R. J. COOK, M. A., D. D., Cincinnati: Jennings & Co. Toronto: William Briggs. 113. Price, \$1.20.

Methodism, more than any Church we know, exhibits the characteristics of being rooted in the past and reaching out to the

future. Some Churches, in their revolt against corruptions and persecutions have cut themselves off from the historic past, and unduly emphasize their protest and revolt against its influence. Methodism in its ritual and liturgy is widely connected with the historic Churches of Christendom. The ritual of the Methodist Church did not originate wholly in the Anglican or Roman ordinal, but was compiled from the services of the Primitive Church, parts of it being handed down from the earliest times. In a very instructive historical research and lucid commentary the author of this book points out the origin of the Methodist Ritual of Baptism, the Holy Sacrament, Matrimony, Burial of the Dead, Office of Consecration and Ordination, and Reception of Members. The use of this common language in the most sacred and solemn events of our life gives a unity and solidarity to the English-speaking race throughout the world—ay, of the Church throughout Christendom—that has not been adequately appreciated.

*The Reign of Law. A Tale of the Kentucky Hemp Fields.* By James Lane Allen. Author of "The Choir Invisible," "Summer in Arcady," "A Kentucky Cardinal," etc. Toronto: The Copp, Clark Company. Pp. 385. Price, \$1.25; paper, 75 cents.

The theological novel is very much in evidence. It is a mark of the more strenuous thought of the times. It has an earnest moral purpose—to confute error and establish truth. A book from the author of "The Choir Invisible" is sure to possess much artistic merit and literary grace. In this volume he creates an epic of almost tragic dignity and pathos from the plain homespun life of a raw Kentucky youth and his contact with the New Thought of the times. A rawboned lad, by stern self-denial, inspired by an immortal hunger for knowledge, finds his way to a narrow, creed-bound Bible college.

The bigotry, not to say fanaticism, of the college reacts upon the generous sympathies of the lad. The denunciations of the new science and new thought impel him to partake of the forbidden fruit. His addiction to the literature of doubt and despair is marked by his alienation from orthodoxy, he ceases to attend the students' prayer-meeting, to sing in the choir, or receive the Lord's Supper. He is arraigned for lack of orthodoxy and expelled from college, and from the "hard shell" Baptist Church, because his most