

small-pox, would be of little moment, for if the people of these republics are willing to commit suicide in that form, so be it. But, owing to the importance of the Isthmus, these insane and unsanitary procedures should be stopped."

In Chap. XVI we have an interesting account of the building of the Panama Railway, and in Chap. XVII we visit the Chinese in their own quarter, and receive a favorable impression of that long-suffering race.

Chap. XVIII deals with the laws of Colombia and with their application at Panama. The author regrets the encroachment of the religious upon the civil power, and the consequent muzzling of the press. There is an error, however, in the last clause of the following sentence: "If there is one thing regarding which the Church of Rome has been as firm as a rock, it is on the question of divorce—that once married nothing could undo the marriage, save the cause of adultery." Even adultery does not constitute a cause of divorce in the Roman Church.

Chap. XIX gives us an animated description of the great earthquake of 1882. Chap. XX. relates the early history of Cartagena, "the citadel of Golden Castile," and of Barranquilla on the Magdalena; and sketches their present appearance. Chap. XXI is occupied with reminiscences of the days before the Panama railway was built, and of the old route across the Isthmus. Chap. XXII conducts us through Chiriqui, "Dame Nature's Hothouse," its scenery and its flora. Chap. XXIII enlightens us upon education in the Isthmus and Colombian etiquette. Chap. XXIV is an interesting résumé of former schemes for making a canal across the Isthmus, and in Chap. XXV we have a merciless exposure of the Lesseps swindle, based on facts and figures from official documents.

The volume contains a large number of engravings from photographs taken by the author; and an excellent map.

For accurate narrative, a complete absence of wordiness and "padding," for lively

and interesting description of scenes he has visited, and for keen insight into the national tendencies. Dr. Nelson's volume stands in striking contrast to the general run of books of this class. The style, too, is charming; never forced, never artificial; ever simple, clear and flowing. Dr. Nelson is always bright, clever and entertaining, and not merely so, but clear-sighted and full of practical suggestions.

In a word, we lay down "Five Years in Panama" with reluctance, and part from the learned and genial author as from an old friend.

R. G. SUTHERLAND.

"The Great Hymns of the Church; their origin and their authorship," by the Rev. Duncan Morrison, M. A., Owen Sound. Hart & Co, Toronto, 1890. 8vo., pp. xxiii—250. \$1.50.

In these studies on "The Great Hymns of the Church" there is much that is admirable. The hymns selected for annotation are, with few exceptions, universal favorites; and Mr. Morrison, so long as he confines himself to the vernacular, is intelligible and interesting. While the standard works on hymnology have been faithfully consulted, illustrative matter from all available sources has been skilfully brought to bear upon the several themes. As a consequence, these essays are not only pleasing, but also instructive and edifying. In the home circle they will be read with enjoyment; and, while to the preacher they offer a rich store of suggestive anecdote, in the worshipper they will arouse a livelier interest in the praises of the sanctuary.

The author adopts St. Augustine's definition of a hymn. "praise to God in a song"—and amplifies it with clearness and good sense. A hymn—he says—should be scriptural, simple, reverential, full of spiritual life, objective and not subjective (yet allowing occasional relaxation of this rule), didactic, but not exclusively so ("both adoration and instruction should meet and mingle as in the Te Deum"); if designed for congregational use it should not be ecstatic; "the hymnist should aim at reality, and address