

ceptions, is incompatible with the due appreciation of the intellectual progress of the age. These are two tolerably large assumptions in writers whom modesty and charity should adorn, and a better knowledge, not unpossessed, should lead them to take a more sympathetic view of the opinions and practices of others, albeit different from their own. Names of notable men in our ecclesiastical history, of the highest gifts, and inferior to no secular writers in intellectual equipment, ought readily to occur to them, who were able to value a precise and even elaborate symbolic worship. The fact is, the difference between men in regard to questions of ritual, is owing to individual idiosyncrasies or associations or training, and all arguments upon them should turn upon the question whether the thing symbolized by any religious act is in itself right or wrong, or whether such act is forbidden by the laws of the Church as being inexpedient. The doctrine that "omission is prohibition" is absurd, and has been exploded over and over again. At the time of the Reformation the Sarum ritual was the one legally established, and only such parts of it as were altered in the subsequent books indicate what was repealed. The traditional customs and observances, unprovided for in the reformed Prayer Books, but necessary to the orderly and reverent rendering of the services, yet symbolizing no rejected doctrine, were continued, and the private devotional acts of the laity were not interfered with; why then should the devotional and ritual acts of either clergy or laity, which are not illegal and symbolize no doctrine rejected at the Reformation, be tabooed at this day? It seems to us the height of impertinence that this should be done in the name of modern enlightenment, for the Faith was once for all delivered to the saints by Him who was the Light of the world, and the various symbolic acts of clergy and Christians generally represent some phase of that Faith. If any symbolic act in use can be proved to represent anything contrary to Christian doctrine, it would be *ad rem* to point it out and bring forward the proof. But the invidious cry of obscurantism proves nothing, unless it be the incompetence of the accusers to exercise an impartial judgment. It cannot be that they object to symbolism altogether, for they cannot do without it either in public or social affairs; but if they are so destitute of imagination as to be unable to understand it, we are sorry for them, and regret that they should force attention to their misfortune upon a long-suffering public. The definition of 'obscurantism' which we have given is according to the dictionary, but from our point of view, its true inwardness is better represented in words like these: "The helpless cry of ignorant or interested prejudice in matters of doctrine and ritual, against what is misunderstood or unappreciated." This is a mild statement of the truth, for we fear we might add that the cry is also, at least in many cases, judging from the manifest animus of some writers, the fruit of all uncharitableness. What is taken for modern enlightenment is the sum total of our knowledge, acquired by human reason and industry; but it is a variable quantity, and the supposed enlightener of yesterday becomes the obscurant of to-day. The world's "enlighteners" are ever and anon the victims of mere's nests, and so must those be who follow them blindly. But the Word of God abideth forever, and God is the same yesterday, to-day and forever; and though in God's providence the Old Dispensation has given place to the New, yet the principles underlying and sanctioning public worship and ritual are eternal, and the adaptation of ancient

and divinely sanctioned forms, transfigured by the light of the new Divine Revelation, is but rational and appropriate, unless we would make out that the God of Moses is different from the God in Christ, or that His attribute of unchangeableness is a myth. These notions suit the scoffer and the infidel, and we are sorry to see them abetted by Churchmen and other professing Christians. God Himself has revealed to us an adaptation of the ancient forms, in the Vision of Patmos. Why then should those who adhere to the principle, be accounted by Christians to be obscurants? This is indeed unaccountable. The wisdom of this world is but darkness compared with the wisdom from above. What shall we say of those who would have us substitute the former for the latter? Is not here a hint as to who are the real "obscurantists"? We trust our adversaries and friends alike will sit down to the devout study and contemplation of their "boomerangs," before they hurl them promiscuously for the delectation of the scoffer, to the injury and prejudice of Churchmen, who hold reverence to Almighty God and the honour due to His name no less dearly than themselves. Those they impugn have ample justification not only in Rubrics and Canons, but also in the Word of God; and it does not become the impugnors, as Christians, to fit others who differ from them to their peculiar bed of Procrustes to stretch or truncate, as in their view of "modern enlightenment" may seem desirable.

REVIEWS.

MESSIANIC PROPHECY: Its Origin, Historical Growth, and Relation to New Testament Fulfilment. By Dr. Edward Riehm. Second Edition. Price 7/6d. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark; Toronto: McAlinsh, 1891.

Nothing could show more convincingly the interest felt in the great subject of this book, the value of the book itself, or the readiness with which the enterprising publishers respond to the demands of the religious world, than the bringing out of a new translation of a book, the first edition of which appeared a very few years ago. Although the first edition was mainly the reproduction of three essays in a theological review, their value was instantly recognized, and published in book form, it became a text book in many colleges. The new edition has received careful revision and considerable additions. Every thoughtful student of prophecy will be wise to add this volume to his library.

THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH, as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer, Articles and Canons. Sermons by Rev. Morgan Dix. New York: E. & J. B. Young & Co.; Toronto: Rowsell & Hutchison.

These six lectures are thoroughly sound and much needed amid the lack of principles in our present religious condition. The titles of the lectures will at once exhibit their general character. The Church, as described by herself; Ecclesiastical docens: the Christian Priesthood; Apostolic Succession; Christian Ethics; the Outlook for Christian Unity. According to the last of these, the vision of ecclesiastical unity is still far distant, as the Christian world does not appear to be ripe for it, and the cry for union can only proceed on a disregard, all round, of any idea of truth as a sure deposit.

DAYS OF MY YEARS. By Rev. Joseph Cross, D.D., LL.D. Price \$1.50. New York: Thomas Whittaker; Toronto: Rowsell & Hutchison.

Dr. Cross is an experienced writer, and full of quiet humour. His pages are autobiographic, and his story presents a well-sustained interest as he tells how he acted first as a Methodist preacher, then chaplain in the Confederate army; observant traveller in the sunny south of Europe, and finally received Orders in the American Church. He

gives many curious but kindly glimpses of Methodism, and has no railing word to use against it or any of its members. His heart, however, appears to have always been in the Mother Church of England, and it is probably strange, as true, that he should have been so long in the States without coming into a closer acquaintance with her stalwart daughter. This book is as the gleanings of the harvest, with ears ripe and full, to his other published works.

THE HOME AND SCHOOL CHURCH CATECHISM. By A. Slemmont, Baysville, Muskoka. Price 2 cents. Toronto: Rowsell & Hutchison.

The object which the compiler of this little work had before him, was to endeavour to present the Church Catechism in such a way as to render it more easy to learn and to retain, especially by younger scholars. His method is very simple. He breaks up the longer single answers into a number of shorter ones, each with appropriate question where necessary. Thus the Creed is broken up into its twelve articles, and some of the longer commandments into convenient sections. The following may be taken as an example of Mr. Slemmont's work:

"Duty to God."—"What is my duty towards God?"

A. My duty towards God, is to believe in Him, to fear Him, and to love Him.

1st Duty—Love.

A. I am to love God with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength.

2nd Duty—Worship.

A. I am to worship God, to give Him thanks, to put my whole trust in Him, to call upon Him.

3rd Duty—Honour.

A. I am to honour God's holy name and His Word.

4th Duty—Service.

A. I am to serve Him truly all the days of my life.

It will be quite evident from this example, that (1) The Catechism is made easier, and (2) the main subjects of its various parts are very clearly indicated by this method. We have no hesitation therefore in strongly recommending the clergy to make a trial of this excellent little book, which might with advantage take the place of some of the little manuals now in use in the younger classes of our Sunday-schools, and which do not contain the Church Catechism.

Home & Foreign Church News

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS.

MONTREAL.

MONTREAL.—The annual convocation of the Diocesan Theological College took place on 24th April. The attendance was large, and Bishop Bond presided. On the platform were the Revs. Dr. Barbour, Canon Henderson, Canon Mills, Dean Carmichael, J. H. Dixon, G. O. Troop, Sir William Dawson and Mr. A. F. Gault. The proceedings were opened by devotional exercises. The Bishop expressed his thankfulness and gratitude at again being permitted to be present at the annual convocation, and not only was it a pleasurable feeling, but also a solemn one, as he thought of the great responsibility resting on him. He urged those connected with the work to pray that suitable men might be sent forth equipped for the conflict, who would be leaders in the battle and give a good account before God of the work they took in hand. The Rev. Canon Henderson read his annual report. The total number of students during the year had been 26; number at present time, 25; number of graduates, 2; number of undergraduates at McGill, 7; number of partial students at McGill, 6; number of probationers in preparatory class in the college, 10. The number of men supplied to the diocese since the founding of the college was 44, of which 24 were at present working in the diocese. In the senior divinity class the following were entitled to the testamur of the college, or merited prizes: Mr. Garth, B. A., obtained first place in the first rank in Greek Testament, thirty-nine articles, Roman controversy, ecclesiastical polity, pastoral theology, Christian evidence, composition and ecclesiastical history. H. Jekill stood first in the atonement and apologetics, and obtained a prize for