

## BOOK NOTICES.

**THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF PRAYER.** An Essay by James Freeman Clarke. Boston: Crosby, Nichols & Co. For sale in Montreal by C. Bryson.

THIS is a concise and able treatise on one of the most important of themes. The author, by his frank and candid manner of treating the great subject has put us all under obligations to him. And the American Unitarian Association, (for whom it is published,) by placing it before the public in its present form has rendered good service to the cause of sound religion. In the common run of tracts on prayer, rational difficulties and objections are too generally evaded. Here they are met — met directly, and in the proper spirit — and met, we think, very satisfactorily. The tendencies of multitudes of the very best minds in our age are man-ward rather than God-ward, and the tendency of multitudes more is self-ward, rather than toward anything else. There is no lack of formal faith and formal prayer in every Christian community; but who does not see how much the traditional faith and habits of all churches require to be quickened into vitality by life from on high. If this were accomplished, a change would be wrought which would give a new cast and character to the whole of Christendom. The idea of a God personal and paternal, always loving and always near — this idea, transfused into the consciousness of humanity, and thoroughly incorporated with it, would inspire it with new motive and awaken it to new life. Beside this idea selfishness and sensualism could not long exist — certainly they could not long rule; and with this idea the best philanthropy of our best men within our churches and outside of them would become better still — certainly much more permanent. A sincere recognition of God, as distinguished from that which is merely formal, is a standing want in the world. And any book like this, calculated to help man to a genuine intercourse and vital com-