

## Literary Reviews.

*The Student's Ecclesiastical History. Part II. The History of the Christian Church during the Middle Ages, with a Summary of the Reformation. Centuries XI. to XVI. By PHILIP SMITH, B.A. Pp. 699, with 65 illustrations. New York: Harper Brothers. Toronto: William Briggs. Price, \$1.25.*

Harpers' Student's Series comprises the finest condensed apparatus for historical study in the language. We have the great histories of Hume, Gibbon, Hallam, Merivale, Miss Strickland and others brought within the compass of a single volume and sold for the small sum of \$1.25 each. In our student-days the same series, or what was then published of it, cost \$2 a volume. The present work fills a gap in ecclesiastical history, for which Milman's expensive "Latin Christianity," in nine volumes, was the chief accessible authority. That great work, and the other great English and German works on this interesting period, have been made the basis of the present volume. So far as we can judge, the author has succeeded in being strictly impartial and honest in discussing the exciting controversies of the period under review. The great themes are the struggle of the Empire and the Papacy for the supremacy; the Babylonian captivity and renaissance of the Papacy; the constitution, worship and doctrines of the Mediaeval Church; the monastic orders; the university and scholastic theology; seeds and heresies of the Middle Ages; and the Reformation and its precursors. We cordially recommend this admirable volume to young ministers and thoughtful teachers who would understand how through the ages God unfolds Himself in many ways.

*Boy Travellers in Arabia: a Story of travel from Boston to the famous city of "good Haroun Alraschid." By the Rev. DANIEL WISE, D.D. New York: Phillips & Hunt. Toronto: William Briggs. Price, 90 cents.*

This is a book of somewhat similar character to the last, but adapted for younger scholars. Through the medium of a slightly fictitious element, represented by the narrative of the two boys and their instructors, the author conveys much useful information in regard to the history of Arabia, the life, customs and manners of the people. We far prefer books of this sort for schools to the ordinary story books. From the former a large amount of useful information can be gained; from the latter very little.

*Phil Vernon and His School Masters. By BYRON A. BROOKS. New York: Phillips & Hunt. Toronto: William Briggs. Price, \$1.*

If boys must have story books, this is about as harmless, and perhaps as useful a one as they can have. It is a wholesome, breezy sort of book; but we would like to have seen greater prominence given to direct religious teaching. The author says in his preface: "I have endeavoured in this story to trace the life of a real, live, average boy, placed amid natural and

healthful surroundings, under various influences good and bad, through experiences in school and out, in the fields and in the town, in his sports and more serious occupations, with his companions and teachers, which combine to form his character and develop his innate being."

*Abide in Christ. Thoughts on the Blessed Life of Fellowship with the Son of God. By the Rev. ANDREW MURRAY, Wellington, Cape of Good Hope. Pp. 222. Toronto: S. R. Briggs. Price, 90 cents.*

It says much for any religious book, especially for a colonial book, that it should reach, as this book has reached, its thirty-third thousand. It has also been translated into Dutch, we presume for the use of the Boers. Africa is already repaying the missionary expenditure bestowed upon it, by sending forth such valuable works. The book is a series of devout meditations—one for each day of the month—which cannot but prove helpful in the cultivation of piety.

## The Wonderful Book.

BY REV. W. HARRISON, DORCHESTER, N.B.

It spreads before us, as in some far-reaching panoramic form, the various manifestations and characteristics of the heart and life of the old oriental world. The atmosphere, habits, customs, religions, laws, natural images, earth and skies of that Eastern clime pass before us in those pages, which all the attritions of the centuries are unable to wear away or destroy. And amid all this drapery of scene and circumstance, the moral conditions of humanity are here photographed in the clearest manner, and no effort of man or lapse of years can break or dim the picture, so truly and divinely drawn.

The generations of the earlier times seem to pass before us, and under the brief but realistic representations of this one great Book, appear as if they had only passed from this earthly scene but a short time ago. With a matchless ease, it reaches back through the dim, dark mazes of unmeasured years, and with sublime, prophetic vision peers into the future, far beyond the loftiest thoughts of unaided men. Its revelations respecting our planet's origin, mission and ultimate end, have flung a welcome light on mysteries, once painful and profound; and the speculations of materialistic schools as to the eternity of matter, and of a mindless evolution, are scattered by the winds by its august, convincing words. In view of the divine revelations of the sacred and age-crowned Book, our world-home is no longer an insignificant and worthless speck in the palace of the universe, no longer a mere playground, sleeping-room or brilliant saloon for the poor irresponsible, unpitied creatures of a day, but a theatre where the great and solemn drama of human existence and history is being enacted, and the place where the grandest operations of a beneficent God are being carried on before the gaze of