

Valeria, The Martyr of the Catacombs:

A Tale of Early Christian Life in Rome, by W. H. Withrow, D.D. Toronto: William Briggs, 78 and 80 King Street East.

This is a novel by the well known author of "The Catacombs of Rome, and their Testimony Relative to Primitive Christianity." The careful researches of the author into the structure and history of the Catacombs have enabled him to combine interest with accuracy of detail. Roman life, of that time, is briefly but well sketched as the story proceeds. If we turn from the book to either Roman or Church History we will find that we have nothing to unlearn. Indeed we fear that Dr. Withrow's desire to present the facts of history just as we have them has injured the literary style of his work.

This tale of the Diocletian persecution cannot fail to awaken in both old and young a desire to know more of the history of the Early Church, about which we fear the majority of our church members are sadly ignorant. The book should be given a place on the shelves of our Sunday school libraries.

A Church Catechism for Children and Youth in the Presbyterian Church.
Toronto: Presbyterian Printing House, Jordan Street.

This is an adaptation to Canadian use of a Catechism, by the Rev. B. B. Hotckin, published by the Presbyterian Board, Philadelphia. The following is a summary of the contents. The first twelve questions deal with the Church Visible, and the characteristics of its members. Next follow in order, the dispensations through which it has passed, denominations, the creed, with three explanatory questions, bringing us to the thirtieth question. From the thirtieth to the sixtieth the officers and courts of the

Church are detailed and explained. The last twenty-two treat of Baptism and the relation in which it places the child to the Church.

That a book dealing with these subjects in some form or other is needed in our Church will be readily admitted, and one stating them in the form of question and answer, is perhaps the most useful. The young people of the Church should have a knowledge of the constitution implanted in their minds along with the doctrines. But more than this is needed. They must be made to see the advantages which the Presbyterian form of church government possesses when compared with that of other denominations. The rising generation seems to set little store by denominational distinctions, and pass from one to another on the ground of social relations or mere convenience. Now while we rejoice to see all bitter sectarian feeling dying out, we are afraid of liberality which is the result of indifference. Indifference to the progress of one's own denomination means indifference to the progress of Christianity.

It is upon the Sunday school teachers that the work of imparting this knowledge must largely fall; and this little book, while it does not do all we could desire, and comes far short of the Assembly's Catechism in comprehensiveness and conciseness will serve as a basis for their teaching.

Some Scripture references are appended to certain of the questions; they are not in every case as satisfactory as could be wished. References, especially when intended for the young, should be clear and accurate or they will defeat their object. Take two examples from the book. Question 30. "What form of church organization is always to be preferred." Ans.: "That whose official orderings and modes of administration come nearest to the rules given