

THE
PRESBYTERIAN QUARTERLY.

NO. 6.—OCTOBER, 1888.

I. THE PENTATEUCHAL STORY OF CREATION.

IN the opening portion of the Book of Genesis we have a history of creation which claims to be a direct revelation from God. Geology aims to give us a history of creation gathered from a careful study of the structure of the earth itself, especially the study of its fossils—those “medals of creation,” as they have been aptly termed—in which many things respecting the order of creation are written for our learning.

These two histories ought to be in perfect harmony the one with the other. The books of revelation and of nature, where they cover the same ground, ought to agree. And yet, as a matter of fact, and as these two records are often interpreted, so great is their apparent discrepancy as to lead Prof. Huxley to write:

“My belief is, and long has been, that the Pentateuchal story of creation is simply a myth. I suppose it to be a hypothesis respecting the origin of the universe which some ancient thinker found himself able to reconcile with his knowledge of the nature of things, and therefore assumed to be true. As such I hold it to be not only an interesting, but a venerable monument of a stage in the mental progress of mankind, . . . and to possess neither more nor less scientific importance than the cosmogonies of the Egyptians and Babylonians.”—*Order of Creation*, page 147.

Such discrepancies as are alleged in this case are, I believe, apparent, not real, and may be owing either to a misinterpretation of the Pentateuchal story of creation, or to a misreading of the

If the student or the teacher has really seized the idea of the method, he will easily make the necessary modifications for the special study he has in mind himself." (Pp. 3, 4.)

The Seminary Method is not essentially different, then, from that employed in the chemical, or physical, or physiological laboratory. The object in all is to bring the student face to face with the facts, and to make him, in some degree at least, an independent investigator. "No man is truly a student in any branch until he is an original student. He is never fully interested in study till he begins to pursue it for himself by original methods." The design of the Historical Seminary is to furnish him opportunity for training by actually doing original work under the guidance of an experienced worker. "It is a workshop where the student is taught to make history. It is a place where the beginner may acquire methods, and where the advanced student may do work which shall contribute to the sum of human knowledge." (P. 18.)

After having thus defined the Historical Seminary, and then described its outfit, the author devotes a chapter to each of the following topics: The Necessary Preparation for Seminary Study; The Method of Original Study; Detailed Examples; The Place of Original Study of History in a Theological Seminary; The Uses and Limits of the Method in Colleges. In an appendix, covering fourteen pages, there is given a useful list of topics, together with miscellaneous information and suggestions as to method.

The task which Professor Foster set before him in the preparation of this volume was well worth doing. Although Historical Seminaries in successful operation are no longer a novelty in this country, yet many instructors in this department have had no acquaintance with them. In this book all necessary information is given. There are also many valuable suggestions made as to the application of the method. The concluding chapter, which discusses the Uses and Limits of the Method in Colleges, is very judicious, and cannot fail to be helpful to those who give instruction in such institutions. The chapter on The Place of Original Study of History in a Theological Seminary deserves the especial attention of all who are interested in ministerial education. It can leave upon the mind of the candid reader no doubt that there is room for vast improvement in this regard in our schools of training for the ministry. This subject, however, is too large for discussion here. It deserves fuller notice, which it is to be hoped it will receive.

J. F. LATIMER.

KERR'S PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF PRESBYTERIANISM.

THE PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF PRESBYTERIANISM IN ALL AGES. *By Robert P. Kerr, D. D., author of "Presbyterianism for the People."* 12mo, pp. 284. \$1.25. Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication. 1888.

We have here a book in every way to be commended. It is published in good style, printed on good tinted paper, in clear type, and well bound, so that reading it is a pleasure. It is at a reasonable price also, so that it is in reach of "the people" for whom it is written. The book is a happy conception, and happily executed. It fills a place that was waiting for it. Its aim is an admirable one, to present a succinct history of the Presbyterian Church in a popular manner for the members of the Presbyterian family. It is the "*People's History*." The style is

clear and attractive; the language well-chosen, and the whole subject is presented in a graphic and interesting manner.

Its object is not to give an exhaustive history of the Church, but to fix attention on the leading points, and tell succinctly what has been the history of the Presbyterian Church since Luke closed his records of what was done in apostolic days, and since Paul's picture of a model church made up of "the saints in Christ Jesus with the elders and deacons," which can only be seen now in every church under the Presbyterian faith and confession. Dr. Kerr has told this story with the true spirit of the historian.

The book is not written for scholars, but for the people; yet it is accurate and fair, and shows that the author has profited by modern investigations and views. Thus he does not make the extravagant claim for the Waldenses and Culdees which some have made, yet shows that there was that in their history which was indisputable, that could only be explained by the theory of Presbyterian origin. That argument is really stronger than to set up extravagant claims that can be controverted, and shows them not only to have been substantially Presbyterian in their church life as then exhibited, but also that the impress of apostolic days had never been lost. When almost the same can be shown in every land where there was a break with Rome, and the church was reaching after more scriptural life, you have an argument whose force cannot be escaped.

In his brief chapter on "Presbyterianism in England," the author shows that the reason England did not become Presbyterian as Scotland, was not that the people did not turn to Presbyterianism, but Presbyterianism and monarchy did not agree. Henry VIII. wanted a church of which he could be the head, hence he established the Church of England. Elizabeth could not bend the Presbyterian Church to her will, and therefore crushed it. She did not want to be troubled in England as Queen Mary was in Scotland with that spirit of liberty which Presbyterianism engenders.

The history of Presbyterianism in England is largely yet an unwritten chapter, and awaits a pen to show that that church which lays such stress on the historic episcopate, had its corner-stone laid by Henry VIII., because "Presbyterianism and monarchy agree with each other as God and devil agree."

This book has come at a time when it was needed. We see such statements as that "Calvinism is dying out in the world," or that by a diocesan bishop, recently made, that "Calvinism has always produced a spirit of intolerance." It is well to have the people see how little foundation there is for such statements. It is well that the world should be again reminded of the debt it owes for civil liberty, and that other churches, which make slings of intolerance against Calvinism, should see they owe the religious liberty they enjoy chiefly to the heroic struggles of Calvinists, who loved liberty for themselves and wanted others to enjoy the same rich boon.

"Produced intolerance?" We wondered what the bishop had been reading. Certainly not the history of Christ's church, for that shows that the great battles for religious freedom were fought by those of whose deeds this book is a brief history; by those who loved, as our author well says, "an institution which has accomplished more for the welfare of mankind than all other agencies, except the gospel, for which it has been a fitting vehicle." What would the history of freedom be if the names of William the Silent and William of Orange, John Calvin and John Knox were blotted out? Or without the heroic sufferings and sacrifices of

the Alps and the mountains and glens of Scotland, of the green fields of England, of the fertile fields of France, of the dykes of the Netherlands? Who are those that wrote with their blood the sad but glorious page of martyr history? This book tells us once more that God has called the Presbyterian Church "to suffer these great things for him." They are the ones who have bought with their blood the priceless boon of liberty. The action of the Presbytery of Hanover and of the Presbyterians of Mecklenburg was but the evidence that these same principles were imbedded in their hearts. We are enjoying the results of their labors, as this book shows.

We rely for the proof of our apostolicity on the conformity of Presbyterianism to the word of God. Yet it is well for the people to see the safe historical grounds on which we base our claims.

The history of Presbyterianism in the United States is presented to us fairly, and shows the position of the Southern Church in its relations to the Northern, and the action of each prior to the establishment of fraternal relations, in which the Southern Church has certainly nothing to be ashamed of, and is glad for the church at large to have the whole history presented.

The statistical data gathered from the most reliable sources available show the relative strength of Presbyterianism in the world, and can be effectively used for the benefit of croakers and those ignorant of our numbers. This book ought to be in every Presbyterian home. It deserves and ought to command a large sale. Every pastor may safely commend it as a judicious, admirable, and yet catholic history; and he ought to see that it is in the Sabbath-school library and in the church library where our country and village churches have fallen on the good plan of having one. It is the right book on the right theme and at the right time.

J. W. ROSEBRO.

COOKE'S CREDENTIALS OF SCIENCE THE WARRANT OF FAITH.

THE CREDENTIALS OF SCIENCE THE WARRANT OF FAITH. *By Josiah Parsons Cooke, LL. D., Erving Professor of Chemistry and Mineralogy in Harvard University.* Pp. 324. \$1.75. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. 1888.

This is a volume of lectures which were delivered first before Union Theological Seminary, New York, and subsequently before the Lowell Institute, Boston. The following is the table of contents: I. The Argument of Natural Theology. II. Preparing the Way. III. The Induction of Newton. IV. Deduction. V. Examples of Scientific Investigation. VI. Laws of Nature. VII. Determinate and Indeterminate Laws. VIII. Theories or Systems of Science. IX. Predominant Principles of Scientific Thought. X. The Systems Compared—Religion and Science.

In these lectures our author looks at the christian religion from the view-point of natural physical science. He construes our theology into a mere secular philosophy, and then proceeds to test it in the light of those credentials which warrant an hypothesis or theory of physics. To our view, the very starting point abandons high vantage ground, and we cannot expect the argument to rise higher than its major premise. The christian religion refuses to be thus degraded. It is God-like, who is high and lifted up above all the earth. It is a unique and distinctive system, and rejoices to stand on its own evidences. It is derived principally from