

A new spirit is making its way through the world—the spirit of brotherhood, helpfulness, mutualism. Competition and “rights” must give way to co-operation and duty. This is a crucial hour in the history of the church, and this is the test: will we catch the new spirit, will we echo the divine word which fell warm from the lips of Christ? “Brotherhood is possible only in Christ.”

The world does not need a new gospel, nor even a modified gospel. There may be a “new evangelism,” but there is only one evangel. The power of God unto salvation is ever the same, a very Niagara; but there are modern dynamos, and their right use will make this stream of the ages move and light the world.

The author comes with a timely message and delivers it for the most part with kindling directness and force.

GEO. B. EAGER.

Seeing Darkly.

J. Sparhawk Jones, D.D. *The Staff Method*, S. S. Mitchell, D.D. Presbyterian Board of Publication. Philadelphia. 1904. Each 75c. net.

We have here numbers IX. and X. of the series of small volumes of sermons by representative Presbyterians of the day. Some of the earlier volumes have been noticed in previous issues of this Review. The books are all uniform in style and general purpose. The first sermon in each volume gives title to the book.

A masculine thinker is Dr. J. Sparhawk Jones. There is strength of grip, balance of judgment, thoroughness of probing, corresponding vigor of expression in these discussions. A little careless of homiletical symmetry, of occasional needless repetition, of a slight redundancy of vigor here and there, the preacher gives us something to think about in his striking handling of his matter. The moral quality of the discourses is Scriptural and high, and constitutes the main body of thought, the evangelical element being somewhat in abeyance. In the first sermon on *Seeing Darkly* the preacher forcibly brings out the important truth that though as yet we see obscurely, still we do see. Both the limitations and the value of imperfect knowledge of divine things are strongly presented. In the sermon on *Rahab* the divine employment of faulty

agencies is strikingly set out, and the worth of even a crude faith in the better things is emphasized. In the discourse on the Unprofitable Servant we have a vigorous criticism of our tendency to praise in ourselves and each other the simple performance of evident duty, while yet the value of such performance is not slighted. A striking sermon on Paul Aboard shows how the presence of one man of worth may be the saving of a multitude, and the vexed question of the co-operation of the divine purpose with our common sense and activity is duly presented. Altogether the set of sermons is a vigorous, fresh and able presentation of some of the deeper aspects of divine truth and human duty. The sermons are all worth reading.

In Dr. Mitchell's volume the title sermon on the Staff Method is a thoughtful and sharp attack on the proxy method of doing Christian work, based on Elisha's sending Gehazi with his staff instead of going himself to heal the Shunammite's child. A plea for personal ministry in our religious activities is earnestly, and none too earnestly, made. A suggestive sermon on the Divine-Human Face—"the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"—takes up several incidents in our Lord's life and imagines how he looked on the persons mentioned: Matthew the publican, the little children whom he blessed, the hypocritical Pharisees, the woman taken in adultery, those who crucified him, and the penitent robber. This is interesting but at times a little forced and fanciful. In the sermon on the Skepticism of Prominent People the preacher says a wise word on the matter of making too much of this, and shows how men strong in one department of thought are not thereby authorities in others, how skepticism is often a fruit of moral or spiritual corruption. Other sermons deal with various questions of the day, and the treatment is rather moral and apologetic than evangelical and devotional. The style is not easy and flowing, a trifle affected in places, lacking in suppleness and vigor. The thought, never profound, is sensible and just. Illustration is freely and effectively used.

E. C. DARGAN.