THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY

DIE QUELLEN ZUR GESCHICHTE PRISCILLIANS. Inaugural-Dissertation zur Erlangung der Würde eines Licentiaten der Theologie. Von JOHANNES DIERICH, CAND.THEOL. Breslau: Druck der Breslauer Genossenschafts-Buchdruckerei, Ursulinerstr. No. 1, 1897. Pp. 44. M. 0.80.

THE name of Priscillian will always awaken melancholy interest. He was the first man ever put to death by the Christian church on the charge of heresy. Many so-called heretics had lost their lives by the violence of Christian mobs, and many had been banished by the emperors; but the church, as an organization wielding the sword of civil authority, did not venture legally to execute any heretics till 385, when Priscillian and some of his followers suffered martyrdom. It is significant that both the prosecutors and the victims in this instance were Spaniards, and we may see in it a foreshadowing of many similar events which were destined to make Spain a shuddering and a byword. Moreover, the decree under which the victims were prosecuted had been made by a Spanish emperor, and the sentence was pronounced by another Spanish emperor. Priscillian confessed all the heresies and immoralities with which he was charged; but he did so under torture, and his confession cannot be used against him by the historian. In Würzburg there is a manuscript containing various documents from Priscillianist writers, and among them are three statements from Priscillian himself. This manuscript Dierich uses in his dissertation, testing it critically in various ways and finding it accurate at every point. On the basis of this investigation, he maintains that Priscillian was orthodox. The crime of the unhappy man was that he held informal meetings with his people, and that he encouraged the laity to take part in the exercises, women as well as men. He was also unduly inclined to asceticism. The democratic character of his work and the rigor of his life, which was misinterpreted as a pretense, brought upon him suspicion, persecution, and death.

FRANKLIN JOHNSON.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO.

THE AGE OF CHARLEMAGNE. By CHARLES L. WELLS. New York: Christian Literature Co., 1898. Pp. 500. \$2, *net*.

By the age of Charlemagne is usually understood the pivotal period between the seventh and the tenth centuries—two bright and stirring centuries between two dark ones.

It has been said that "the age of Charles the Great is more cele-