

THE ROMAN EMPIRE B. C. 29—A. D. 476.

By H. Stuart Jones, M.A. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1908. Pages 476. Price \$1.50.

The series of brief popular histories known as "The Story of the Nations" has been known to the public through some of its volumes for two or three years. The present volume belongs to that series and is marked by the general characteristics of the other volumes. The effort has been made to set forth in story form the leading events, characteristics and tendencies of imperial Rome from its rise to its downfall in the West in 476 A. D. The volume is, of course, inadequate for any thorough knowledge of the empire's history. In the last half century some of the world's greatest minds have labored upon periods or departments of the subject without feeling that they had exhausted the field. Nor is the object of this volume to give detailed information. But for the purpose of acquiring a vivid, life-like conception of the emperors and other men who led, and of the life of the masses of the people, this work is admirable. The author has made use of the special studies of the great masters. He has a clear and interesting style, he treats all phases of the life of the people and of the state. Numerous excellent cuts of statues, reliefs, public buildings and other objects of interest to the story assist through the eye to a better understanding of the subject. The volume is also provided with some clear and good historical maps, some genealogical and chronological tables and a satisfactory index which materially increases its value.

W. J. MCGLOTHLIN.

A GUIDE TO THE STUDY OF CHURCH HISTORY.

By W. J. McGlothlin, Ph.D., D.D., Professor of Church History in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. Baptist World Publishing Co., 1908. Pages 264.

If this book is to be judged according to its author's purpose, it must be pronounced admirable. It does not profess to be a History of the Christian Church, but a "guide" to the study of Christian history. And a guide is what a student needs above all things, for most books give him very inadequate help to-

wards the appreciation of the relative values of things. To get the true historical perspective is the most difficult, as it is the most important, thing for the beginner; and that is exactly what this Guide will enable him to do. While it is an outline, it is much more than an outline; for the facts are so grouped and interpreted as to make their significance much clearer than is usually done in much more extensive and elaborate works. It is indeed a marvel that Dr. McGlothlin has been able to compress so much into so small a compass; many a more pretentious manual tells three times more without telling half so much. The philosophic insight into the meaning of events, shown by their grouping and hinted interpretation—often of necessity no more than a hint could be given; the candor with which facts are told and the fairness of the deductions drawn; the clearness of statement in spite of extreme brevity and condensation—these are conspicuous features of the book. Intended primarily for students of theological seminaries, as an introduction to the literature and a basis for lectures, the Guide will be a helpful book to many others, ministers and laymen, who would like to make some acquaintance with Christian history, but have not known how to begin.

The author has wisely avoided in such a book the introduction of controverted matters, and the expression of his own opinion about things in doubt. Hence there is hardly anything to which exception is likely to be taken by a reader or student. The one defect of the book—if one may so name a feature that it shares with every manual on the subject—is the inadequate treatment of the last century, the most wonderful century in the history of Christianity since the first. But it must be admitted that it is far easier to point this out than it would be to provide a cure; the difficulties in the way of adequate treatment of this part of the subject are well-nigh insuperable.

HENRY C. VEDDER.