

"work of creation, and her delight is with the children of men." *Solomon and Solomonic Literature*. By M. D. Conway. Chicago: The Open Court Pub. Co. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co. Pp., 248. Price, \$1.50 (6s.).

THE MONK.

BY J. L. M'CREERY.

A pious monk, in mediæval days,
 Within the confines of his narrow cell
 Fell on his face and passionately prayed:
 "O Being infinite and immanent,
 "Pervading Spirit of the Universe—
 "If aught there be in earth or heaven besides
 "A figment by tradition handed down,
 "A vast Nonentity, to which we cling'
 "With fierce tenacity because we shrink,
 "From saying, 'Death is an eternal sleep'—
 "If Thou hast said, 'Ask and ye shall receive,'
 "Or promised to the heavy-laden soul,
 "'Come unto me and I will give thee rest,'
 "Grant me, O God, some token that Thou art,
 "Lest I should perish in my unbelief:
 "I weary of this world of vanities,
 "Its transitory and illusive joys,
 "Of my own ceaseless and ignoble strife
 "To gather bubbles to my cheated arms;
 "I long for the Eternal and the True,
 "I thirst for Peace, and Holiness, and Thee."

As gently as the faint but growing dawn
 Displaces darkness from the face of earth,
 About the monk a tender glory grew;
 He seemed to be no longer in his cell;
 As tenuous as the spiritual world
 Had been before to his material eyes,
 Such gossamer were the monastery walls
 To his illumined spiritual sense,
 And he afloat upon the pulsing waves
 Of an ethereal infinitude.

Then from the glory came a Voice that said:
 "My son, lo, I have waited for thee long;
 "Have heard thy cry, 'O what and where is God?'
 "As though a bird should ask, 'Where is the air?'
 "Thou wert enveloped in the Great I Am,
 "But knew it not, because thy sense was dim:
 "I am thy Life—there is no other life;
 "I am the central and surrounding Source of Light;
 "I am the Fountain of all forms of Joy;
 "I am thy faithful never-failing Friend;

" I am a Father's ever-watchful care ;
 " I am a Mother's brooding tenderness ;
 " I am thine Elder Brother by thy side ;
 " I am at once thy Bridegroom and thy Bride ;
 " Naught comes to thee that cometh not from Me :
 " I love thee with an everlasting Love—
 " But can not give thee light, nor love, nor joy,
 " Beyond what thou art willing to receive.

" Behold the many-chambered Nautilus :
 " A dweller, at her choice, in different realms,
 " Sometimes, when skies are bright and seas are calm,
 " She leaves the darkness of her native depths,
 " Floats to the surface and outspreads her sail,
 " Rides on the ocean's gently heaving breast,
 " Rejoicing in the light and warmth of day.
 " Had she remained for life where she was born,
 " Content to delve in the primeval slime,
 " Creeping in caves a hundred fathoms deep,
 " No ray of sunshine could have reached her there,
 " No breath of summer filled her tiny sail :
 " God's radiance bathes the universe in vain
 " For thee, unless thou rise into the light "

The monk beheld, and heard ; and filled with awe
 And sweet and solemn peace, he fell asleep.

Next night again the pious monk lay down,
 And prayed : " Come thou divine and glorious One,
 " Thrill me again with new-found happiness ! "
 But prayed in vain ; impenetrable gloom
 Surrounded him—grew deeper as he prayed.
 " Alas ! " he cried, " God hath forsaken me,
 " Or my experience was but a dream ! "
 And then he fell upon his face and wept.

But through the darkness came a still, small voice :
 " Remember, son, the tenor of thy prayer :
 " It was for happiness. Thou turned from God,
 " Thy narrow purpose centered on thyself ;
 " If thou wouldst see the light, look up, not down ;
 " Look out, not in—for selfward all is dark ;
 " And God reveals himself unto the soul
 " That seeketh not its own delight, but Him."

In time the pious monk this lesson learned ;
 And when he had forgot to care for joy,
 Enamored of the highest excellence,
 In love with Justice, Truth, and Holiness,
 And filled with tender pity for his kind,
 Again the golden glory filled his cell :

"Dear Lord," he cried, athrill with ecstasy,
 "Thou knowest that I love Thee—stay, O stay!"

Then at the monastery's outer gate
 He heard the ringing of the outer bell;
 He hastened thither, and in waiting found
 A beggar, weary, hungry, and in rags;
 He led the stranger in, and gave him food,
 And washed his feet, and bade him stay till morn,
 Then sought again his cell with eager haste.
 The formless glory had assumed a shape,
 A radiant and smiling angel now,
 Who said, "Well done; if thou hadst waited here,
 "When duty called thee, I could not have stayed;
 "But as thou turnest from thy highest joy
 "To serve the lowest of thy fellow-men,
 "I come to dwell with thee forevermore."

BOOK-REVIEWS.

AN ETHICAL SUNDAY SCHOOL. A Scheme for the Moral Instruction of the Young.
 By *Walter L. Sheldon*, lecturer of the Ethical Society of St. Louis; author
 of "An Ethical Movement." London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., Ltd.
 New York: The Macmillan Co. 1900. Pages, 206 Price, 3s.

Mr. Walter L. Sheldon, lecturer of the Ethical Society of St. Louis, has here given us a first rough sketch of his scheme for the moral instruction of the young as carried out by him in recent years with the congregation of his city.

It has been Mr. Sheldon's endeavor to reverse the process customary in the average Sunday School; in his scheme the teaching of religious conceptions so called is made to come at the end of the course, while the elements of morality are taught at the beginning. It has not been his intention to antagonise the existing religious beliefs, but to supplement them by more methodical and more persistent religious school-work. The religious services consist of responsive exercises which deal with great ethical truths, as the traditional Sunday schools deal with theological truths. These responsive exercises are intoned by the superintendent or the teachers, and are answered by the school. To us, most of these lack the note of time-honored seriousness, or shall we say, emptiness, of the traditional exercises; for example, the refrain "We are glad to be alive." Songs are then sung, and various religious and secular pictures are exhibited and contemplated for the purpose of "teaching the vague sense of the Infinite lurking in the minds of the young." One of the main features of the course of ethical instruction as here designed is precisely the establishing of "this background of sentiment," the desire to "associate the sentiments belonging to the Eternal, the Infinite, the Absolute, with the distinctions between Right and Wrong, with the thought of the Moral Law—but not to use these words so that they shall become hackneyed." This "background of sentiment," Mr. Sheldon admits, might have comparatively little value if it stood by itself; its significance comes in only when it is connected with other work, which is the rearing of an ethical superstructure upon this foundation of vague poetical and æsthetic feeling. A further help for associating this "solemn mystical feeling about the Eternal and the Absolute, with the teachings of moral-