

Could it be possible that she was not and had never been more than a vision? Had nothingness re-engulfed and forever effaced her? I longed to sleep again so that I might see her; the thought that she was an illusion, nothing more than the figment of a dream, caused me great dejection and almost overwhelmed me with hopelessness.

"And it took me a very long time to forget her; I loved her, loved her tenderly, and the thought of her always stirred into life an emotion that was sweet but sad; and during those moments every thing unconnected with her seemed colorless and worthless. It was love, true love with all its great melancholy and deep mystery, with its overwhelming but sad enchantment, love that, like a perfume, endows with a fragrance all it touches; and that corner of the garden where she had appeared to me and the old flowerless rosebush that had clasped her in its branches awakened in me, because of her, agonising but delicious memories." P. c.

BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.

FROM WHENCE, WHAT, AND TO WHAT END? Being a Narrative Life of Man. By *Frederick Wollpert*. New York: Peter Eckler, Publisher. 1901. Pages, vii, 75. Price, 25 cents.

The title of this book seems to indicate that the author would discuss the problem of the origin and destiny of the soul; but the real subject of discussion is the problem whether or not suicide under special conditions would be allowable. The tenor of the book is partly agnostic, partly positively infidel, and many passages will be apt to shock religious people. The author is frequently sarcastic, but behind his sarcasm there is a serious background which solicits sympathy with the gloom and melancholy of a distracted soul. It is a pity that the book does not tell us anything of the author's life history, for it would afford a key to the notes of despair which ring through its pages.

The author says in the preface: "When a survey of the field is taken, it is found that instead of civilisation being a detriment unto the thought of suicide, it encourages it, rather than being a barrier; for as civilisation and knowledge increase, a longing for a freer activity of thought increases, and intensifies the smallness of this sphere."

Church institutions are regarded as invented merely for "the enslavement of the ignorant." "Individuals claiming to be divinely appointed for the extension of the original and divine word, have ever had but one object in view; and that is, the enslavement of the ignorant; and in their endeavors they have had recourse to all manner of pious frauds. As stated, the one universal object of the priesthood, of whatever worship, is deception."

Neither is there solace in evolution. Our author does not see forward, but backward; he does not see that man rises higher, but grows melancholy at the idea that he has risen from below. He says: "All the higher forms of living beings, including man, are descendants of some lower and extinct forms, which have become extinct in the gradual struggle for life; thus the process has gone on until the present species have been evolved." He growls at religion because it condemns suicide, and the theological argument is set forth as follows: "God being the Creator of all, man cannot commit self-destruction, lest he err greatly, and defy the laws of his Lord and Creator." The God of the Old Testament is especially objectionable to the author. The book abounds in passages such as these: "It has been demonstrated, again and again, that Jehovah is the breaker of his own laws.

Justice, honesty, mercy, and the truth, have been wilfully slaughtered by this great God, and then how is it possible for man to defy laws that are broken by the Head that enacted them. Such laws are not the embodiment of the truth, and available for the betterment of man, but are rather a nonsensical medley of mouthed words, being of no worth."

The first of the Ten Commandments, on account of its jealousy, is spoken of as "graphically outlining the littleness of God."

Christianity fares little better than the Mosaic faith, for "The Christian faith is nothing but a solid extract of Oriental doctrines, and nothing else."

The existence of a spiritual soul is purely an assumption of theology; but not even "science, the expounder of so many truths, can by direct evidence prove that there is such a thing as an immortal something, or soul, within the human being"

The result of the book is summed up in the last paragraph, page 75, which reads as follows: "And as to whether self-destruction is a crime or not, it has been graphically outlined that this is the inborn right of every individual. It is true, man should take into consideration the duty that he owes to wife, child, friend, and society. As long as man can be of use in the world, he should remain and add to the comfort of those he loves, but when the day draws nigh that finds him naught but a wreck upon earth, or one bound to the bed of suffering, or one whose every thought is in search of far greater knowledge, and which knowledge is only to be gained beyond this sphere, then as the Narrative defines, let him consider his position, and cast the die."

Obviously the author suffers from an acute attack of *melancholia religiosa*, or what means the same, *irreligiosa*. While we may grant him the maxim for which he contends, that under definite circumstances (which happily are very exceptional) man has a right over his own life, the book is a symptom of a sorely troubled mind; and far from criticising it, we feel it were better to advise the author to take courage again, to live within the living present, and to cease fostering gloomy thoughts. Life has its charms still, and there is no need of exaggerating the terrors of death.

P. C.

MATHEMATISCHE UNTERHALTUNGEN UND SPIELE. By *Dr. W. Ahrens*. Leipzig, Teubner. 1901. Pages, 428. Price, 10 marks.

Ever since Claude Gaspar Bachet, in 1612, published the first edition of his *Problèmes plaisants et délectables qui se font par les nombres*, France has taken great interest in the amenities of arithmetic. Bachet's famous work has gone through five editions, and Mersenne, Mydorge, Ozanam, Montucla, and Guyot, followed by numerous writers in the nineteenth century, have carried the work beyond the merely amusing, into the domain of the scientific. The most prominent of the French writers of our generation, Lucas, did not live to complete his projected publications upon the subject, but the contributions that he did make were so numerous and valuable as to place him among the first writers upon the subject.

England and Germany, while contributing to the amusing side of mathematics in the past, have done little in recent years in the way of publishing distinctive works upon the subject. Rouse Ball has written the only valuable book that has appeared in England in three generations. Germany has done even less, Schubert's *Mathematical Essays and Recreations*, first published in scattered form and afterwards collected into a work of three volumes, Leipsic, 1900 (English translation of selections from these essays by T. J. McCormack, The Open Court Pub.

Co., 1899) being the only recent critical work, until the appearance of the one under review.

Recognising the need of another work that should give a general view of the field, Dr. Ahrens has undertaken the task, and he has performed it in such way as to deserve high praise. His is no such trivial work as that of Vinot, which appeared in Paris in 1893, nor is it like the somewhat more elaborate *Récréations arithmétiques* which Fourrey published two years ago and of which the second edition is just out. It is more like the treatise of Lucas, the most scholarly and elegant of the modern writers upon the subject; but at the same time it is no servile copy. The author has already contributed to the literature of the subject; he is inventive; his insight into the science is clear, and his style has that conciseness joined to interest that makes German mathematics so much more attractive than the dry English or the prolix French.

The work is divided into twenty-three chapters, the scope of which may be gained from a few titles: *Erschwerte Ueberfahrten* (the problems of the jealous husbands, the switching of the trains, and others of this class); Tait's problem (on arranging coins in rows and columns), Systems of numeration; *Umfüllungsaufgaben* (first suggested by Tartaglia in the form of dividing 8 liters of wine equally between two friends, the only measure being the full 8 l. and a 5 l. cup and one of 3 l.); the Eight Queens' problem; the Knight's problem; Magic squares; Kirkman's problem of the school girls; the Problem of Josephus; the Bridges and Labyrinths; the Map coloring problem; the 15-puzzle; Paper-folding, based on Sundara Row's work.¹

One of the most valuable features of the work is the bibliography. The history of the several problems is given, with footnotes setting forth the sources of information. The first of the two valuable indexes gives a very complete bibliography of the subject from about 1530 to the present time.

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Mr. Henry Wood had added another volume to his successful mystical productions. It bears the title: *The Symphony of Life; a Series of Constructive Sketches and Interpretations*. It is largely a skilful presentation of the doctrines of Christian Science disguised under the appellations "Higher Therapeutics," "Metaphysics" (shades of Aristotle and Kant, to what a bathos hath not this word sunk!), the "New Thought," etc., etc. As for this new thought, it is in reality so ancient as to antedate history, but in the modern psychological investigations of "suggestion," etc., it has found a foothold for its vagaries, which have been pushed far beyond what the common sense of the animistic savage could ever have dreamt of. Apart from its mysticism and spiritualistic bent, the book is, however, a sincere and deeply religious production. (Boston: Lee & Shepard. 1901. Pages, 300. Cloth, \$1.25.)

Two new volumes have appeared of the series *Les Grands Philosophes*, edited by the Abbé Piat. One is on Malebranche, by Henri Joly, editor of a series of *Biographies of the Saints* mentioned before in *The Open Court*; and the other is on St. Augustin, by Abbé Jules Martin. (Paris: Félix Alcan. Pages, respectively, xii, 289 and xvi, 400. Price, each, 5 francs.)

¹An American edition of Sundara Row's book by Beman and Smith is now in preparation, Chicago, The Open Court Pub. Co.

Dr. Élie Halévy has undertaken in a work of two volumes recently published by Alcan, of Paris, the restoration of the utilitarian philosophy of Bentham, which was at once social, juridical, constitutional, and economical in character. The titles of the volumes are: (1) *La Jeunesse de Bentham*, and (2) *L'Évolution de la Doctrine Utilitaire de 1789 à 1815*. In the first volume, he has treated in a very interesting manner of the life and intellectual development of Bentham; in the second, he has expounded the evolution of utilitarianism from 1807 to 1815; in the third, forthcoming, volume he will treat of philosophical radicalism, which is the term applied to Bentham's system of thought. (Vol. I., pages x, 439. Price, 7 francs 50. Vol. II., pages, iv, 379. Price, 7 francs 50.)

Philosophical students will be interested in learning of the publication of a history of metaphysics, by M. Charles Renouvier of the French Institute, a well-known writer on philosophical questions and a thinker of more than ordinary distinction. He has formulated the great fundamental problems of philosophy and followed out their development and destinies throughout the ages, not omitting at the end to put forward solutions of his own, as these have taken shape in his doctrine of Neo-criticism. It is a remarkable fact that the work contains an index. (*Histoire et Solution des Problèmes Métaphysiques*. Paris: Félix Alcan. 1901. Pages, ii, 473. Price, 7 francs 50.)

The second edition has been published of the *Variétés philosophiques* of J.-P. Durand (De Gros), which is an attempt to go to the bottom of the central problems in metaphysics and to apply the results of the inquiry to the reinforcement of the foundations of physiology, medicine, psychology, ethics, and sociology. The work has very practical ends in view and is an ardent appeal for a reconstruction of the ethical and religious forces of society. M. Durand (De Gros), whose recent death was greatly regretted, was an independent thinker, and his works offer much material for reflexion and assimilation. (Paris: Félix Alcan. 1900. Pages, xxxii, 333. Price, 5 francs.)

M. Ribot, professor of psychology in the Collège de France and now at last Member of the French Institute, has recently published another of his delightful psychological treatises, with some of the translations of which the old readers of *The Open Court* are familiar. The present work is devoted to a subject of the greatest intrinsic interest, viz., creative or constructive imagination, and M. Ribot has used the fascinating material here presented to the best advantage. (*Essai de l'Imagination Créatrice*. Paris: Félix Alcan. 1900. Pages, vii, 304. Price, 5 francs.)

While on the subject of psychology, we might also note the appearance of a volume of the proceedings of the Fourth International Congress of Psychology, held in Paris during the Exposition of 1900. The volume contains the addresses of the president, delegates, and members of the Congress, and reprints of essays and papers, in English, German, and French. (Paris: Félix Alcan. 1901. Pages, iii, 799. Price, 20 francs.)

The June number of the *Revue de Synthèse Historique* contains a review of the *History of Geometry* by Paul Tannery and a review of Christian Greek literature by A. Puech, also an article on the Classification of the Sciences and History, by M. Xéropol. (Paris: Librairie Léopold Cerf.)