The Open Court.

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AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF THOMAS JEFFERSON.

The subjoined letter was written to the Rev. Benjamin Waterhouse, an eminent Unitarian minister at Cambridge, Mass. Mr. Jefferson speaks of himself as a Unitarian, but he was what might have been described in later years, as a "Parkerite." There is preserved in the home of Jefferson's descendants in Virginia, near Monticello, a richly bound volume once belonging to that President, in which he had pasted side-by-side passages cut from the Greek and English New Testaments, such passages being exclusively the teachings of Jesus. It is tolerably certain that Jefferson, while not believing in the supernatural, was hopeful of Unitarianism. He and John Adams,—President and Vice President, representing antagonistic political poles,—used to attend the preaching of Dr. Priestley in Philadelphia. In the later years of their lives there was sufficient unity of religious opinion to draw the former leaders of hostile parties together, and they indulged in a voluminous correspondence. The allusion to John Adams in this letter is very remarkable. Adams was eight years older than Jefferson, who was in his 82d year when the letter was written. These two ex-presidents had mainly carried the Declaration of Independence, on the 50th anniversary of which they both died,—a unique historical coincidence. A picturesque circumstance of the University of Virginia, concerning which Jefferson writes, is that this first purely secular college in Christendom was built on one of the old glebes which the Revolution and republicanism had wrested from the English church establishment in Virginia.

"Monticello, Jan'y. 8, '25.

"Dear Sir:

"Your favor of Dec. 20 is received. The Profes-
"sors of our University, 8 in number, are all en-
"gaged. Those of antient and modern languages are
"already on the spot. Three more are hourly ex-
"pected to arrive, and on their arrival the whole will
"assemble and enter on their duties, there remains
"therefore no place in which we can avail ourselves of
"the services of the revd. Mr. Bertrum as a teacher.
"I wish we could do it as a Preacher. I am anxious
"to see the doctrine of one god commenced in our
"state. But the population of my neighborhood is
"too slender, and is too much divided into other sects
"to maintain any one Preacher well. I must there-
"fore be contented to be an Unitarian by myself,
"altho I know there are many around me who would
"become so if once they could hear the question fairly
"stated.

"Your account of Mr. Adams afflicts me deeply;
"and I join with him in the question, Is existence,
"such as either his or mine, worth anxiety for its con-
"tinuance. The value of life is equivocal with all its
"faculties and channels of enjoiment in full exer-
"cise. But when these have been withdrawn from us
"by age, the balance of pain preponderates unequiv-
"ocally. It is true that if my friend was doomed to a
"paralysis either of body or mind, he has been fortu-
"nate in retaining the vigor of his mind and memory.
"The most undesirable of all things is long life; and
"there is nothing I have ever so much dreaded.
"Altho' subject to occasional indispositions, my health
"is too good generally not to give me fear on that
"subject. I am weak indeed in body, scarcely able
"to walk into my garden without too much fatigue.
"But a ride of 6, 8, or 10 miles a day gives me none.
"Still however, a start or stumble of my horse, or
"some one of the many accidents which constantly
"beset us, may cut short the toughest thread of life,
"and relieve me from the evils of dotage. Come when
"it will it will find me neither unready nor unwilling.
"To yourself I wish as long a life as you choose and
"health and prosperity to its end."

"Th. Jefferson.

"Superscription
"Doctr. Benjamin Waterhouse
"Cambridge, Mass."

PROFESSOR SEELEY'S NATURAL RELIGION.

BY ELLIS THURTELL.

The author of "Ecce Homo" is one of the most interesting literary philosophers of the present time. It has been for long a perfectly open secret that he is no other than Mr. J. R. Seeley, Professor of Modern History at Cambridge. His "Natural Religion" is now just ten years old: and nothing seems to have

been added to its substance since its first publication. Much has however been accorded it in popularity and influence. And small is the wonder. For the book has all the characteristics that chiefly appeal to a period producing an ever-increasing number of men and women at once sceptical of "antique fables, beautiful and bright," and confident that these may be replaced by modern facts through which even beauty and brightness may be accorded all the consideration that is their due.

John Stuart Mill has somewhere said: "All move-"ments, except directly revolutionary ones, are headed "not by those who originate them, but by those who "know best how to compromise between the old opin-"ions and the new." And Mr. J. R. Seeley has taken the spirit of the maxim entirely to heart. There is indeed a passage in the preface to his second edition that far out-Mills John Mill. In it Professor Seeley actually says: "I have always felt, and feel now as "much as ever, that my ideas are Christian. I am "surprised that any one can question it." Well, compromise of this kind must seem to many, at first sight, better described by a stronger and less complimentary name. And there are certainly some men who would, on reading such a confession of faith in such a place, have flung the book containing it into their limbo of literature found wanting and for sale. I am free to confess that a hasty impulse of the sort did momentarily scud across my own mind. To have let the little volume be borne away by this passing gust of perhaps pardonable impatience would have been to do a great injustice to its writer, and to involve upon its intended reader a genuine loss. But to say this, is not to allow that so extreme a case of compromise is either justified by the facts admitted, or consistent with the spirit of free investigation everywhere displayed. The one hopelessly jarring note in an otherwise wholly harmonious volume is, to my ear, struck by this passage, and by others like it scattered through the book. But with such disappointing discords I do not now propose to be concerned. Indeed Professor Seeley's Christianity has been so thoroughly purged of all supernaturalism that it in no way collides, as Christianity, with any discovery of exact science, or any speculation of positive philosophy. So that his theory of Natural Religion can quite well be put beside those of the most purely secular writers of the present day, and judged as being one of theirs.

Who, or what then is the object of the religious feeling championed in this remarkable and charming volume? It is not the Deity of the Churchman. Neither is it the Humanity of the Comtist. It *is* the Nature of the man of science who believes in Nature only. And this belief is declared to be theism, and to involve theology. "If we will look at things," says Professor Seeley, "and not merely at words, we shall soon see "that the scientific man [believing in no revelation] "has a theology and a God, a most impressive theol-"ogy and a most awful and glorious God. I say, that "man believes in a God who feels himself in the pres-"ence of a Power which is not himself, and is im-"measurably above himself, a Power in the contem-"plation of which he is absorbed, in the knowledge of "which he feels safety and happiness. And such now "is Nature to the scientific man." There is moreover another cementing tie between the theologian and the naturalistic devotee of science, besides the realisation of some pervading and stupendous Power. "A true "theist," proceeds our author, "should recognise his "Deity as giving him the law to which his life ought "to be conformed. And here it is that the resem-"blance of modern science to theology comes out "most manifestly." Admiration, awe, and even affection are claimed as amongst the feelings of the purely scientific contemplator for the infinite and eternal Universe that is his study. Even too the sense of personal connection between a worshipper and the object of his adoration cannot be denied to the truly enthusiastic searcher after Nature's Secrets. "He "cannot separate himself," we are reminded, "from "that which he contemplates. Though he has the "power of gazing upon it as something outside him-"self yet he knows himself to be a part of it."

To such association of man with the scheme of Universal Being we can cordially assent. But can we follow our lucid and persuasive author any further? Can we allow that distinction between philosopher and theologian which we had imagined as becoming clearer and more cogent every day to be so completely set aside? Can we admit that Pantheism and Theism are after all but different names for an identical idea? If compromise at any intellectual cost is to be our goal, such questionings may indeed give us some pause. But policy and politely evasive speaking set aside, surely the voice of pure philosophy—seeking truth only even in its sternest phase—must give out a prompt denial to these pleasant dreams.

Professor Seeley, in point of fact,—scrupulously fair to his opponents, and quick to catch the scope of their objections—has put the following words into the mouths of the "many religious men" who will inevitably, as he foresees, dispute his view. "We want to "make atheists believe in God," he hears them say, "and you do it, not by changing their minds, but by "changing the meaning of the word God. . . . Away "with these plausible distinctions which would make "it impossible for any rational being ever to be an "atheist." This imagined attack is met by a curious and subtle discussion as to the true meaning of Atheism. "An atheist in the proper sense of the word,"

Professor Seeley replies, "is not a man who disbe-"lieves in the goodness of God, or in his distinctness "from Nature, or in his personality. These disbe-"liefs may be as serious in their way as atheism, but "they are different. Atheism is a disbelief in the *ex-"istence* of God—that is a disbelief in *any* regularity "in the Universe to which a man must conform him-"self under penalties." And again that man only is allowed to be an atheist who is "without God, because "without a law."

Now here we come down upon the core of that Natural Religion which is the subject of this most thought-provoking little volume. It is a belief in the reign of law throughout the natural world. But can this belief—common to all who insist on taking the modern naturalistic as opposed to the mediæval super-naturalistic view of the Universe—can this sheerly scientific belief in cosmic order be accurately described as theistic, theological, or religious? I, for one most strongly hold that it cannot.

The author of "Natural Religion" identifies, in the sentence cited above, "a disbelief in the existence of God," not with a disbelief in God's distinctness from Nature, but "with a disbelief in any regularity in the Universe." Now at this point I must regretfully part company with our far-seeing and light-giving guide. By "existence of God" I *do* imply, contrary to Professor Seeley, existence apart from Nature. And by "regularity in the Universe" I do *not* imply, as does Professor Seeley, a regulating God. We have ample evidence already of a general reign of law: and even where order seemed to our ancestors the least apparent, chaos is being gradually reduced to cosmos by careful scrutiny and acute experiment. The majestic regularity of nature is everywhere disclosed, or being disclosed before our eyes. But where is the regulator in nature whom some assume? Nowhere, so far as I can see, or can even learn that others really see—conjecture and aspiration put apart, as altogether incompetent to prove.

The supposed opponents among religious men are surely justified on philosophic grounds in their adjuration: "Away with the plausible definitions which "would make it impossible for any rational being ever "to be an atheist." Many most rational and morally irreproachable beings do hold that we have no knowledge of any Power outside the powers of nature. And that all ascriptions of observed order, or apparent disorder to God or Devil are simply idle efforts at reversing scientific methods, by attempting to explain the known through the unknown. Some of those who so think prefer to describe themselves as agnostics, some as pantheists, some as atheists; while some avoid any of these names. The most unpopular of all these designations is that of atheist. Is this the reason that it is the most uncommon? Is it that the choice of title is usually determined rather by a timid spirit of compromise than by a sturdy eagerness for naked truth?

I am not now concerned to show that atheist is the proper name for everyone who refuses to call himself a theist. But I do wish to express the firm conviction that there is nothing in atheism from which the naturalistic contemplator of the Universe should shrink. Carlyle unfortunately gave a fresh lease of life to much illiberal thinking and loose talk about men who, in Professor Seeley's sense, were far less atheistic than himself. But the whirligig of time has brought round its revenge. And Carlyle now stands pilloried, in the opinion of the rationalistic generation which Darwins and Herbert Spencer have done so much to raise, for these very blunders of blank negation and despairing scepticism, because of which he so persistently castigated the leading naturalistic writers of his own and of a previous day. For theirs in general was the saving faith that Carlyle strangely lacked, but of which Professor Seeley has given so profound and impressive an account—the faith in that nature-truth whose separate features are to be first found out by science, and then formulated by philosophy into the guiding principles of life.

The author of "Ecce Homo" indeed holds by the dualism underlying even the most pantheistic conception of a regulated universal order. He meets a necessarily monistic atheism not with rhetorical exaggeration and abuse, but with such sweet reasonableness as comes like a benediction upon all. We cannot choose but listen. For a moment we are even tempted to lay down our weapons and make common cause with a peace-harbinger of such persuasive power. However this may not be. Peace to the pioneers of progressive thought can only come after the struggle and succeeding victory. The maxim that "the laws of nature are the thoughts of God" can only truncate the question whose real solution is thus given up and not supplied. To Professor Seeley we read "it is evident that in knowing nature we do precisely to the same extent know God." "It is evident" has been said to usually mean "I do not see how I am to prove." And this is to my mind its meaning here. At any rate I fail to grasp the necessary connection between the two terms of knowing nature, and of knowing God. The connection, it seems to me, can only be produced by the obvious artifice of em-employing God and nature as terms that are to all intents synonymous. But this would be mere paltering with words. As it is I can no more accept a deity or Godity creating, or regulating nature, than I can accept a vitality supporting life. Nature we know, and life we know: but what are these entities behind them but the shadows they themselves are casting—though,

unlike material objects, with diminishing distinctness before the ever increasing light?

Now where the idea of God has become—as in so many minds it unquestionably has—the simple shadow, not indeed of a name, but of the one intense and all-pervading reality of nature, what place is there for any natural religion? None truly at all. Nothing but a natural philosophy remains. Nor must we ever dream we actually need that which the truth, as it is in nature, has at last shown us to be a shadow after all. It is the substance only that we positively require for nourishment. And the *wants* of an earlier time, surviving even to our own, must not be taken as the measure of our imperative and present *needs*. These wants, no doubt, seem justified by some of the tenderest teachings we have known. They seem to nestle closely to some of the purest and sweetest spots of natures that are not all sweet and pure. And they have had—nay they yet have—what we still may call poetically a sanctifying charm. No healthy intellect can deny all force to reasonable pleading for a religion and a God. There are those who can claim continued possession by a religious sentiment that seems not practically to interfere with the perfectly bold and unbiassed pursuit of nature—knowledge. It is in theory only that they appear to any of us as falling at all behind that foremost line of philosophic thought which inevitably leads even the hindmost on. They on their part—Professor Seeley's beautiful exposition is a most welcome proof—look with real regard, and an almost pathetic regret upon the comrades whose ears are deaf to spirit-voices that still supply encouragement to them. We and they must certainly at every halt clasp hands. Yet none the less is "Pure Philosophy" our only battle-cry, though "Real Religion" be still conjoined to this in theirs.

CAPITAL AND LABOR.

Frank Walker and his friend Charles Allen, two engineers on one of our great inland roads went to a labor meeting to hear an agitator of renown. The speech was very effective and the orator pleased the audience. He spoke of the great hopes of the future when labor shall be easier and the laborer shall rule the world. He denounced capital in every form as that which gives power to him who owns it to enslave and control men so that they must work for him and help him to increase his wealth.

The address was over and several speakers followed the orator of the evening, debating with him and criticising the measures he proposed for the future welfare of society. His theory was some kind of nationalism and his adversaries of anarchistic sentiments made the debate very hot. But he came out victorious, at least in the opinion of his own followers. He was never embarrassed for whenever he failed in argument he made his escape by fierce denunciations of the rich and a storm of applause invariably rewarded him whereupon he looked fiercely around and sat down with an air of scorn as if he had challenged a man who did not dare to fight.

When the two engineers went home Charles said to Frank:

"I do not yet quite understand how the laborer can be benefited by the elimination of the capitalist from society. May be the labor question is like the perpetual motion question an insolvable problem. But if it is to be solved at all, it seems to me, that none of the speakers who took part in the debate touched the salient point. Suppose capital were abolished, and we were living in that blessed state where all the land belongs to the community so that we might keep a cow grazing on the common and go out hunting to shoot a deer for breakfast, would we, the laboring class be benefited by the change? Scarcely! We would be little better off than are the Indians now, the 'free children of nature' who are not enslaved by capitalism."

"You do not understand the idea," replied Frank. "It is that society shall own all the capital and we become possessors of the common wealth of machinery and all the implements of production as well as mines, forests, fisheries, and all the other natural opportunities."

"Don't talk to me of that Utopian proposition. It is impossible in itself. I would rather serve a company or a private capitalist than society at large. Look to the undignified conditions of our political life. Consider that the offices of the government are given to those who control votes and not to those who would serve the people best. Do you think that the mass meeting we have just attended is morally or mentally competent to appoint railroad engineers, or any other workmen in any of the departments of our complicated system of industry? The capitalist, even if he be a relentless egotist appoints the man who will do the work best."

"And who does it cheapest," interrupted his friend.

"Well, that may be. I agree with you that we must work for the improvement of the laboring classes. We ought to seek for higher wages and that is always the gist of the social question, lighter work, fewer hours, more pay! What I mean to say is this that the real social remedy is a matter of slow development; the trouble is not a disease that can be cured by a panacea. All the propositions to cure our ills by tearing down the institutions of society and building them up again according to another plan are only so many hindrances to the recognition of the real problem. This loose talk about how the future society

should be arranged is a waste of words. There are men who get excited about it as if they had made a motion and the vote on it was to be taken to-morrow, while in fact the whole scheme is visionary."

"But the cause of labor must be promoted," Frank ventured to suggest.

"Of course it must," replied Charles, "but it cannot be promoted either by destroying or nationalising capital which latter would almost amount to the former considering that nationalised capital would be rapidly wasted by bad management. All the schemes of labor reformers, so far as I know of them, lead back to barbarism; instead of proposing progress, they point back to past stages which ought by this time to be regarded as gone by and done with forever."

"Can you suggest a way to bring about progress?" asked Charles with irony.

"Not I," said Charles.

"Aye, there's the rub," was Frank's sarcastic remark. "Criticising is easy. So long as you know no better, let our reformers think of and propose their schemes. They work and aspire for labor; they accomplish something and that is better than nothing. They attempt at least approximations of our ideals."

"No, they do not," retorted Charles,—"I do not mean to say all of them, but at least those I have listened to—they do not. If they did I should be satisfied, but they actually lead in the wrong direction; they put us back. They are not better, they are worse than nothing, they are retrogressions and put us back."

"If you know what puts us back, you ought to know what puts us forward, and you ought to show us the way to go."

"*I* ought not, but history ought to do so. Let a man who is familiar with the present conditions of labor study history, and history will reveal the secret. Have we not actually progressed? Partly by fighting the capitalist and enforcing fewer hours of toil, easier work and higher pay, but all those struggles would have availed nothing had not capital grown rich enough to make the concessions. Capital is the milch cow of labor and instead of trying to kill her we ought to help her to give more milk. The richer and more powerful capital is, the easier it will yield to our conditions, while on the other hand the poorer and the more wretched laborers are the less resistance can they oppose to oppression."

"Then you concede that we ought to fight capital?"

"I concede or rather I maintain that we ought to struggle for a constant improvement of our conditions. This can not only be done merely by demanding higher wages, but also by enabling capital to pay higher wages. I go farther still. The solution which history and the present situation offer is that laborers become capitalists. Being capitalists, even small capitalists, they become share holders in the wealth of the community; and the better off a laborer is, the higher wages can he demand. But if we wish to become capitalists we must save and not waste, we must not break the bottles when we have emptied them, after the manner of Powderly, in order to make a scarcity of bottles, and thus increase the demand of labor, but we must live economically and save."

"Well, my dear fellow, you want us to acquire the same habits for which we blame the oppressors of mankind. No, that won't do. A laborer is an honest man, but a capitalist is a drone among the bees. I read of late in the back number of the *Twentieth Century* that if a laborer saves money and buys one of these magic papers, as the editor of that journal called it, which draw interest, he thereby becomes detestable. So far as he is a laborer, he is praiseworthy and honest, but so far as he is a capitalist, he is a barnacle to society!"

"Nonsense!"

"Nonsense? So say all the capitalists! You say nonsense because you have no better argument."

"I have arguments enough, but the best argument is that if you tried to live up to those principles, the result would be lamentable."

"If the result would be lamentable that would prove at best that it is a lamentable world we live in and not that the principle is wrong. Don't you recognise that there is an ideal realm superior to the world? Principles are ideals."

"Well, I give in; if your ideal principles are the criterion of superiority, then the whole world is wrong and if we fare ill with our principles, it is the worse for the world."

* * *

A few days later Frank and Charles visited a scientific lecture on evolution which liberal minded members of our progressive churches had established for an almost nominal entrance fee.

"This lecturer," said Charles to his friend, "reminds me of our discussion on capital and labor. Man has grown out of the animal world exactly by becoming a capitalist in soul-treasures."

"That is again one of your odd ideas. How will you make that out?"

"What is capital? It is labor stored up for making further labor more effective. One might imagine that labor done has been done and is used up for ever. But no! It can be made serviceable to the future. We can actually make it live after the work is over. Build a road, a bridge, a railroad-bed, and travelling will be easier forever after that. We can hoard labor up and use it to double and treble the returns of other work. Capitalising is making labor immortal. It con-

tinues to yield a rich harvest; it brings regularly its returns."

"Well, and how do you apply this principle to the evolution of man?"

"The first human beings among the anthropoids were exceptions as much so as are the capitalists exceptions to-day. They of course were more powerful than their less fortunate brothers, and it is very likely that they exercised their power over them, which may have given cause to much jealousy. But there was little use in decrying this condition; the others had to follow their example and acquire the same kind of capital until all humanity became like them so that the whole species man stands now high above the rest of the animal world as the big millionaire in soul-values."

Frank looked at his friend who continued meditatively:

"I see a future dawning on mankind that will be as much grander than the present state as is the present over the anthropoid era. I expect that this grand future will have not only a higher civilisation in store for us, but also a fabulous capital of comfort, prosperity, and wealth. The princes of our Saxon ancestors about a thousand years ago lived not as well or as comfortably as you and I live to-day; and we are laboring men who live upon the work of our hands. Thus the laborer will enjoy in that distant future the comforts of our millionaires."

"That certainly is the aim we all pursue," exclaimed Frank, "and if your method of attaining it were wise, I should say that our labor agitators should rather work in that direction, and they will, as soon as they see it as you do."

"As soon as the laborer has grown to be a capitalist, he has gained his independence. While at present the wage earner seeks for the employer, the employer will under these altered conditions seek for his laborers. Then, wage earners will not so much compete with wage earners, as employers will compete with employers to secure workmen; and they will no longer pay the lowest price for labor, but the highest price the business will afford."

Frank nodded assent. "That would be an arrangement of society," he said, "in which the laborer would find justice."

Charles continued:

"But this state of society, if my view be sound, can never be brought about by any panacea of our reformers, neither by a single tax nor by Mr. Bellamy's Nationalism, nor by tearing down the present order of society, and rebuilding it according to utopian plans of any description, but simply by patient labor, economic habits, by improved education and by increasing the wealth of mankind. It is not a matter of measures but of action. The road lies before us, it is the same road on which we have traveled. We have not to retrace our steps but to go on undaunted." P. C.

MOUNTAIN CLIMBING.

(Written in the English Lake District.)

BY ALVAN F. SANBORN.

If you desire a well-known point to reach,
Some tourist's Mecca quickly to attain,
The beaten high-roads you will not disdain
To follow, nor to con what guide-books teach
Assiduously; but if not, as a leech,
You suck your knowledge from another's brain,
You'll brave the wilderness and reck nor pain
Nor danger, though your dearest friends beseech
You tarry with them. In this unctuous world
If you desire an easy prosperous course
You'll do as others do unquestioningly.
For, if you try discovery, you'll be hurled
Outside society's pale, the mightiest force
At your command can't change this destiny.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HYMNS.

To the Editor of The Open Court:

SIR:—Doubtless Gen. Trumbull is not in the way of hearing or reading hymns. Nevertheless, with cheerful confidence he evolves the camel from his inner consciousness, and announces that a certain well known specimen is a "harsh and fiery" production. One might as well apply these epithets to the Lord's Prayer:

"The Son of God goes forth to war,
A kingly crown to gain;
His blood-red banner streams afar:
Who follows in His train?
Who best can drink His cup of woe,
Triumphant over pain,
Who patient bears His cross below,
He follows in His train.

"A noble army, men and boys,
The matron and the maid,
Around the Saviour's throne rejoice,
In robes of light arrayed.
They climbed the steep ascent of heaven,
Through peril, toil, and pain;
O God! to us may grace be given
To follow in their train."

That is to say, as expressed in your own admirable remarks on faith, in the same number,—"He who is faithful will conquer." Conquer what? His own weakness of will, his temptation to disloyalty to truth, his readiness to let comfort instead of character get the upper hand. "Christian mythology," like all others, is that dramatising, consciously or otherwise, of the movements of our inner life which has always resulted when "morality is touched with emotion" and becomes religion. What is Christ's blood-red banner but the "heart within, blood-tinctured with a veined humanity"—as Mrs. Browning sings:

"Like Him with pardon on his tongue,
In midst of mortal pain,
He prayed for them that did the wrong:
Who follows in his train?"

And this is the harsh and fiery chant which is supposed to incite to deeds like that of the Liverpool mob. "It is well to be a free-thinker, but it is likewise well to have a respect for facts," as John Fiske says in his war volume. As to the performance in the

Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul, one is tempted to borrow Charles Lamb's apology for a particularly cloudy and unintelligible discourse of Coleridge's, and say that being a cathedral, "it must have its fun." LOUISE KENNEDY.

Concord, May 5, '92.

[The above letter was sent to *The Open Court* through one of its esteemed contributors who referring to the same subject writes as follows :]

"My own feeling is simply regret that General Trumbull should thus have weakened the force of a just rebuke. The idea of conquering Palestine is atrociously immoral, and has always been so. The vow of the Knight Templar is simply a pledge to commit murder. The mutual understanding of the Knights that this pledge is to be repudiated saves them from being murderers at heart, but only by making them hypocrites. The wickedness of making vows that are not meant to be kept cannot be rebuked too sternly. F. M. HOLLAND."

[Gen. M. M. Trumbull's reply reads as follows :]

I think that Mrs. Kennedy is right, and that I, myself, instead of the hymn, was "harsh and fiery." She is also right in supposing that I erred through ignorance of what I was talking about. I had never heard the hymn that I described as "harsh and fiery," and I had never read a word of it except that opening line, "The Son of God goes forth to war." From that I built up the entire hymn, as Cuvier used to build up any animal you chose to call for if you would give him the smallest bit of its bone for a beginning. This feat is possible in anatomy, but unsafe to attempt in poetry.

I thank Mrs. Kennedy for exposing my blunder, and for teaching me the hymn. I see nothing objectionable in it when explained; and by the way, that is the trouble with so many hymns; they are so deeply religious that they have to be spiritualised by explanations before their moral meaning can be seen. For example, let us look at the opening lines of the hymn in controversy :

> "The Son of God goes forth to war,
> A kingly crown to gain;
> His blood-red banner streams afar;
> Who follows in his train?"

Those lines in spite of their "harsh and fiery" sound, are mild and peaceful when read by the light of the succeeding verses and the explanations of Mrs. Kennedy. My excuse for giving them a "harsh and fiery" character is that I found them in martial company, doing military duty, and stimulating warriors who flashed their naked swords in the very church itself when the Apostles creed was read.

It is not at all certain that the Knights Templar, marching on a new crusade against Palestine would allow those opening lines to be qualified by the succeeding verses, or by Mrs. Kennedy's explanations. The whole performance that I criticised was theatrically warlike, and I thought that the hymn was chosen for its military sound. Ignorant of the hymn itself, I was easily misled by its opening words, when I found them in such company. Mrs. Kennedy's definition of "Christ's blood-red banner," may be poetically and sentimentally correct, but it is not historically true. In the hands of the Knights Templar, "Christ's blood-red banner" had no such meaning. It was the symbol of slaughter, and its religious appeal was "Death to the Saracen."

Mrs. Kennedy thinks that I am not "in the way of hearing or reading hymns"; and here she is right again. I relish the sarcasm, for it has to me a pleasant flavor. The reason why I neglect the study of hymns is that I was brought up on them; and the first coin that I ever owned I earned by committing a hymn to memory. In my childhood I was pampered so much on hymns that in my later years, I have kept as far as possible out of the way of hearing them. I readily admit that many of them are very beautiful and very good: and they have had the good sense to attach themselves to sweet and melodious music; but I think that most of them are selfish and self-righteous, and religiously false.

M. M. TRUMBULL.

BOOK REVIEWS.

THE PROFESSOR AND OTHER POEMS. By the author of "Moods," "Times and Days," etc. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co. Ltd. 1892.

These verses breathe a truly poetical spirit and their author is not only a poet but at the same time a man of thought. We cannot agree with many of the views and sentiments he expresses but some of his ideas will, no doubt, find an echo in many aspiring hearts. The poem "Doubts and Duty," describes most graphically and perhaps copied from life the state of mind of a clergyman who having lost his faith in the creed of the church still remains in his position, now accusing himself, and now justifying his attitude.

He says :

> "But is there more of harm than merit in't?
> Although I doubt, I doubt if doubting's good
> For all mankind. Perhaps delusion's best
> For all the common toilers on the earth,
> Whose trivial round and irksome daily task
> May well be lightened to them by the thought
> Of better times than these, or place than earth.
> . . . . . .
> I teach the Creed I vowed that I would teach.
> I do not say this Creed is but a lie—
> Whoso believes it holds what cannot be,
> And desecrates his sacred temple, Thought,
> By harboring in its shrine a paltry lie.
> I do not preach my inmost thought of all,
> But outer thoughts, which, sound and sweet enough
> Although the heart is rotten, cannot harm.
> . . . . . .
> I have emoluments, these comforts here—
> . . . . . .
> All this I have connected with this trust
> Of saving souls. True, I might give them up,
> Refuse to take a penny since my thoughts
> Have straggled from the Church's stolid rock.
> . . . . . .
> I cannot, as it is, convince myself
> But that more evil would be done to all
> If I were, for the scruples of my brain,
> To cease to preach that I have ceased to hold.

The poem closes with the following consideration :

> Remember, it is not you I'd convince;
> Your Conscience cannot be a guide to mine;
> It is myself that I have got to shew
> That I am doing right, not doing wrong,
> And if there be a right and wrong at all,
> Which for the present purpose I concede,
> I have convinced myself that right is done
> By staying in the fold, and preaching truth,
> Which, as you say, I know to be a lie."

We do not doubt that this picture is true to life. There are a great number of clergymen who "doubting doubt if doubting's good," and stay in the fold because of the negative argument that they cannot convince themselves "but that more evil would be done," if they cease top reach what has become to them a lie. The quoted lines remind us of an article that appeared some time ago in *The Monist*, (Vol. II, No. 2, p. 278) under the title "The Clergy's Duty of Allegiance to Dogma and the Struggle Between World-Conceptions"

There also the proposition is upheld that "Clergymen who have grown liberal should not leave the church." But the argument is very different; nor is it said that these liberal clergymen should continue to preach the old dogmas which have become to them untrue. The church or any of the churches is not founded to make propaganda for absurd dogmas. The church has been

founded to teach ethics and these ethics are based on what at the time of the church's foundation appeared to be absolute truth. The purpose of the church is deeper than its dogmas, indeed, religious dogmas are but an attempt at formulating the truth, and a clergyman's duty of allegiance is first to truth, to the real purpose of the church, and not at all to dogma, although mistakenly he has been bound by men who could not distinguish between them to teach the latter instead of the former. It is the duty of clergymen who have progressed with the time and have overcome the untenable notions of antiquated dogmas to stay in the church and to make their influence felt to broaden the spirit of the church. If the church removes them from their position, they yield to the authority at present in power, but they should not yield without a struggle, to be conducted on their part modestly but firmly, with reverence toward their authorities, with tact and decency, but fearlessly and bravely, for they are fighting not only for their personal interests but for the progress of mankind, they are fighting for the holiest treasures of the church—for truth.

The poet is a pessimist that would have been a delight to Schopenhauer, and many of his verses are extremely gloomy. As an instance we quote several lines from "A Mummy at the Feast."

"Egyptians had a mummy at their feasts,
To keep the present temperate in its joys
By thought of the to-morrow, which is stark,
. . . . . .
No mummy's needed to apprise grown men
That Death's within the ambit of our laugh,
That his cold breath mixes with our hot sighs.
. . . . . .
Remind me of the grave! Nay, if you will
Give me mnemonics for my benefit,
Recall my memory to this pleasant hour,
In which you laugh, I cannot even smile.
Mummy! There are more mummies at my feast
Than living men! The world's a charnel-house,
And all the laughter comes from ignorance
Of the grim guests which sit about the board,
But which I hob-a-nob with. Death itself
Is here beside me! Why his trophies vaunt?
There's not much need to take my thoughts to him,
He has already often ta'en my heart,
And it is buried underneath the sod
Which smiles in daisies mocking at my woe.
These epitaphs are only half the truth,
There are more buried there than yet are dead."

κρς.

LECTURE ON THE BIBLE. By Rev. *Charles Voysey*. Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Co.

The present is the fifth edition of Mr. Voysey's pamphlet, with which is now published by way of introduction a few remarks by the Rev. Herbert Taft Root, intended to supply the constructive element in which the lecture is deficient. Mr. Voysey's object is to prove the fallibility of the Bible by reference to some of the "contradictions" it contains. These he divides under the three heads of, passages which attribute to God feelings or conduct unworthy of Deity; passages which directly or indirectly inculcate wrong-doing or bad motives in man; and passages illustrating the human error and infirmity of Jesus. So far as it goes the work is on the whole well done, but it is doubtful whether so slight a contribution to Biblical criticism can be of much real service for the advancement of truth. Mr. Root's remarks are good. He well says that a written revelation of God once for all is a manifest impossibility while human nature remains as it is. He adds truly that "all nature is a revelation of God, never varying, never false or contradictory, but differently apprehended by the different onlookers." In attempting to explain the mystery of evil in the universe "each sincere seeker in every age seems able to give such explanation as justifies the common faith of all the good, high or low in intellectual status, in the fixed principles of goodness and order." Ω.

THE PRISON. A Dialogue. By *A. B. Brewster*. London: Williams & Norgate. 1891.

We have in this book a dialogue between four characters designated as a supernaturalist, a neo-Christian maiden, a positivist, and a wise man. It turns on the supposed discovery of a manuscript written by a man condemned to solitary confinement, who records from day to day the thoughts which come into his mind. The idea intended to be developed appears to be, that the unity of the individual is made up of two principles, the animal and the divine. The belief in the supernatural does not entail the determination of a supreme principle nor of the right path, and religion is distinct from ethics. Animal sympathy is the main source of right conduct. The notion of God is a form of self-consciousness, arising from the possession of the divine principle, which necessitates eternal existence. This commences only with the dissolution of self, whose earthly task is "to tame wild life and caress it into beauty." The author has treated a mystical subject with considerable ingenuity, but with, we fear, little practical result. Ω.

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CONTENTS OF NO. 248.