

and yet saw enough of its tribulations and anxieties to prevent him from falling a prey to shallowness. He was as great as he was happy, and as gifted as successful. He added treasures to the spiritual heirloom of our ancestors that will remain valuable possessions of mankind for all time to come.

P. C.

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### BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.

GRAINS OF SENSE. By *V. Welby*. London: J. M. Dent & Co. 1897. Pp. 146.

The distinguished authoress of this pretty little volume has devoted much thought to that department of philosophy which deals with the significance of words, and been instrumental in many ways in the furthering of research designed to lead to the clarification of language. The students of correct expression will welcome therefore the appearance of the booklet, which we may say contains in a popular but exact form the philosophical confession of faith of Lady Welby. The great spiritual and practical need of the times, according to the authoress, is to develop immensely the power of significant communication between mind and mind, as distinguished from the physical mechanisms of communication. 'We encourage geographical explorers; let us extend the conception and encourage explorers of the expression-world, sending out well-equipped expeditions into the polar regions of meaning. Let us have laboratories of experimental language. We have already shorthand; let us have short-tongue and short-mind—a larger proportion of meaning to expression, more economy in words, more fulness of thought. To this end, the further application of the principle of the alphabet is suggested, the aid of indicative symbols, typographic or pen gesture on the analogy of mouth-gesture, symbolic art-words composed of art-letters, etc., etc. The enormous time which we spend on learning the spelling of the English language is contrasted with the little time or no time which we spend on acquiring the meanings of the language and in giving precision to these meanings. The way to a rational spelling-reform is pointed out and the potency of the English language as a world-speech after appropriate modification is emphasised. *Apropos* of the wranglings of purists and cranks over reforms in orthography we have the following sense-laden words: "So rigid about the letter and so lax about the spirit: so careful of the petty points of fashion, so careless of the greater points of import: so jealous for the sanctities of convention, so tolerant of the desecration of the inner shrines of speech: so fastidious on what signifies less, and so indifferent on what most of all signifies,—Significance."

We agree perfectly with the general opinions advanced by the authoress. Surely the present development of civilised language is "arbitrary in the bad sense, and capricious, casual, incoherent, chaotic," but considering the invention of printing, the advantages of popular education, and the tremendous increase in the speaking and writing population of modern times, it is hardly more so than it was in the past. The authoress is too hard on "bulls." All living language is built on the corpses of dead bulls. The bulls of the past are the classic expressions of the present. It is not likely that the rustic clowns of ages gone by, from whose speech the creators of literary language must have drawn their material, were less prolific in the delivery of bulls than the unthinking and superficially educated public of to-day. That colossal bull of the French language, the double negative,

which doubtless originated in a loose grammatical solecism similar to a very common slip among vulgar English-speaking people to-day, illogical as it may appear on the face of it, is still absolutely harmless in its present usage, never gives rise to obscurity, and is even cited by logicians as a piece of natural testimony that a double negative is not necessarily an affirmative. Bulls should not be permitted to make language, but the fact is, if we can judge from present data, that language was as much bovine in its origin as it is in its more conscious making to-day.

Most of that which Lady Welby has to say upon this subject, and some of the examples which she gives, are pertinent and should be heeded. But some of them are strained and we cannot regard the criticism of the title of "The Descent of Man" as anything else than a piece of quibbling. The word "descent" is not a metaphor but the description of an actual fact, and should not be contrasted with "ascent," which has a moral and teleological connotation quite foreign to the objective spirit and purpose of Darwin's inquiry. Much that Lady Welby suggests would lead to the gradual banishing of analogy and metaphor altogether from language, a consummation which, seeing that mathematical abstraction and that concise description without analogy which science demands as its ideal is beyond the reach of the ordinary mind, can be considered as scarcely less than chimerical. "Invisible light" may be paradoxical, but to the child studying physics, far from being confusing, it is luminously suggestive and instructive. It is far easier to extend and correct or contradict an old view than to manufacture a new one, valuable as the last process may be for perfected science. It is contradictory to speak of a flattened sphere, yet it is the method of knowledge and conveys far more to the mind of a child than the correct mathematical expression. The method of scientific discovery is the method of *continuity*, consisting in the adaptation of old concepts to new needs, and it is not until perfect familiarity with a given province of thought has been gained that we can invest it with that high abstract and mathematical form which is the ideal of the Universal Real Character that philosophers so ardently long for.

The book of Lady Welby is full of sententious and aphoristic utterances which fully justify its title *Grains of Sense*. We can recommend it unqualifiedly as containing matter which every thinking person should heed, and in view of the present state of linguistic anarchy in our own country, where all expression is running riot and the popular language achieves developments in a decade that formerly would have required centuries, Lady Welby's advice and admonitions are very timely and will afford parmaceti to many an inward linguistic bruise. T. J. McC.

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The *Psychologie des Saints* is the interesting theme to which HENRI JOLY has devoted one of the volumes of the novel series *Les Saints*, of which he is the editor. This unique series is published by Victor Lecoffre, Rue Bonaparte, 90, Paris, and already comprises in small, neat, 12mo. volumes, at the low price of two francs each, the following subjects: *Saint Augustin*, by Ad. Hatzfeld; *Sainte Clotilde*, by G. Kurth; *St. Augustin de Cantorbéry et ses compagnons*, by R. P. Brou, S. J.; and *Le Bienheureux Bernardin de Feltre*, by M. E. Flornoy. The remaining volumes are to be written by other well-known Catholic professors and scholars of France; the spirit of their composition is to be that of loving admiration and faith both for their subject and for the truth. M. Joly himself has already studied the psychology of Lower Organisms, of Genius and Crime, so that he brings to his task considerable training. He is opposed to the view which

reduces all the manifestations of the human mind, the lowest as well as the highest, to the action of aimless and determined forces, and which sees in crime only a disease and in genius and sainthood only marked and erratic expressions of the spiritual organisation. He believes that we are all made of the same clay, that we all have our places on different rungs of the same ladder, which issues from the same fundamental nature and rises ever nearer to God. It will be seen that his *Psychology of the Saints* is not a study in pathological psychology as the same would be treated by many of his French contemporaries. He rejects the current definitions of mysticism as being the inverted pole of rationalism, despair at achieving anything like reason, and defines it as the pure love of God. This mysticism is the first step to sainthood. While the book contains much good analysis, the real *Psychology of the Saints* still remains to be written.

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We and many of the readers of *The Open Court* owe our deep sympathy to Mr. G. J. Harney, who is now lying extremely ill at his home at Richmond-on-Thames, England. Mr. Harney is the last surviving leader of the great Chartist movement and was a warm personal friend of the late Gen. M. M. Trumbull. A man of sterling character and exceptional intellectual ability, he has through a long lifetime been the champion of liberty and progress, and much that has been done in this direction in England during the last half century, has been due to his and his co-workers' labors. Mr. Harney has always been a friend and great admirer of *The Open Court*, and in his brilliant and witty reviews in the *Newcastle Chronicle* has frequently commented on its work with appreciation and interest. He contributed some time ago a fascinating article to *The Open Court* on Abbé Lammenais the Roman Catholic clergyman who was bold enough to take Christianity seriously. We have not failed to urge Mr. Harney to write again for *The Open Court*, but his health failing, he was unable to accede to our solicitations. We print the following extract from a letter from Mrs. Marie Harney, which tells of her husband's sad condition :

"Mr. Harney bids me thank you for your kind sympathy for him. As you are aware, he has been, and still is, very ill. He was slowly getting better ; a sudden relapse occurred from which, however, he seemed recovering when another set-back from which he is now suffering, reduced him to the verge of the grave. For the past ten days he has been in great pain, living simply on liquid food, in small quantities. The doctors seem unable to do him any good. If able to take solid food, there is good hope of recovery ; if unable, he bids me tell you his days are numbered. He furthermore desires me to add, that he wishes he could live in order to show his gratitude to his kind friends. He regrets also that he can do nothing now for *The Monist* and *The Open Court*. If spared he will make amends for his silence at present."

Mr. Harney has a great number of friends on both sides of the Atlantic, and if good wishes could cure his disease he certainly would most speedily recover and rise from his bed to a life of renewed activity and usefulness.

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