

organised life in contradistinction to the unorganised spontaneity of the manifestations of chemical and mechanical movements.

While thus we are glad to state that we can accede to Mr. Salter's views as to the way in which life builds itself up, we disagree with him in his suggestions as to the possible immortality of the form of life that is reached in consciousness. Mr. Salter believes that "there is no inherent necessity" for the cessation of consciousness in death. He does not controvert the position maintained by *The Open Court*, that the essential feature of a man's character is not the material of which it is built, nor the vitality which is indispensable for its manifestation, nor feeling nor consciousness in general; but the concrete and definite form of life, of vitality, and of feeling or consciousness. Form is not a nonentity, but it is the most important and the most real feature of reality. The immortality of man's soul is constituted by a preservation of its form, and we can definitely trace how the form of man's soul is preserved, not only in his own life but also in the development of the race. If consciousness is supposed to be an independently parallel factor, not a feature, an accompaniment of other features (viz., the physiological changes), of man's life, we have the old dualism in a new and only slightly modified conception, which would render the problem more intricate and more mysterious than ever. But our contention is that a very definite and very satisfactory theory of immortality can be established upon a purely monistic basis, with exact scientific arguments.

The main difficulty of the new view consists in the lack of a full comprehension as to the reality of form. Man is by nature so materialistic that he shrinks from the belief that purely spiritual facts are spiritual, viz., formal, and endeavors to attribute to them some kind of a sublimated substance; yet they are real enough without being material, but it takes time to appreciate the truth of it.

COLUMBUS AND TOSCANELLI.

The celebrated Florentine astronomer of the fifteenth century, Paolo Toscanelli, has always been considered as the first person to launch on the world the idea of the discovery of America. Every writer on the subject, without exception, awards him this merit, and for this it was that a monument has been raised to his memory in his native city. This universal opinion is based on the statement made by the early biographers of Columbus—his son Fernand and Las Casas—that the discoverer of America had been in correspondence with Toscanelli concerning the grand conception, that the learned Florentine had approved his project and that, in order to encourage and enlighten him, had sent him a copy of the letter and map said to have been addressed by the latter in 1474 to a monk named Fernam Martins, belonging to the Privy Council of King Afonso of Portugal. The purpose of this pretended letter and map was to show the monarch that the true route to the East Indies was West, across the Atlantic, and not East by doubling the Cape of Good Hope. The map, which no longer exists, traced this route, while the letter, which has been preserved by the Columbus family, expatiates on the advantages offered by the new over the old course, and labors to show how easy of accomplishment it is.

Mr. Henry Vignaud, the scholarly First Secretary of the United States Embassy at Paris, where he has been the invaluable lieutenant of our diplomatic representatives in France for more than thirty years, from the days of Minister Washburne down to those of the present incumbent, General Porter, has just completed, after many years of labor in the quietude of his superb collection of Americana

kept in his country-house near Paris, an important historical and critical volume,¹ which examines this whole subject in a most thorough and judicial manner.

The aim of Mr. Vignaud's work is to prove that the authenticity of Toscanelli's map, letter, and correspondence with Columbus, has been too readily accepted, and that there are many and very good reasons for believing that Toscanelli did not write the letter of 1474, that he did not make the map which accompanied it,—that both are forgeries,—and that he never had any intercourse with Columbus whatever. Mr. Vignaud goes still further and shows that Columbus's grand conception had quite another origin than the supposed suggestions and advice of this Italian savant, and that the real purpose of the document wrongfully attributed to him was to hide the true source of this conception. THEODORE STANTON.

PARIS, August, 1901.

BOOK NOTICES.

HYPOTHESIS FOR A CEPTACLE THEORY. By *Oren B. Taft*. Chicago: The Lakeside Press. 1900.

The problem of the soul is its unity, and Mr. Oren B. Taft has invented the new name "ceptacle" for it, meaning thereby that which is the "relating of itself to itself within itself in anything." It stands for unity in plurality and produces the consciousness of identity in the ego. The ceptacle, it is claimed, and perhaps rightly so, is "a nature-fact," the question is only whether or not it exists as an entity in itself and without the relations which constitute it. The author seems to take the latter view: at least he describes the origin of ceptacles and their preservation in the development of life. The term "ceptacle" is subject to criticism, because it seems to imply the separate existence of a vessel (a receptacle) and its contents, and that the author does not seem to mean. Another term of doubtful usefulness is the word "intelligence-matter," but the application which is made of it goes far to justify its introduction. Mr. Taft says:

"The first eighteen verses of the chapter of the Gospel of St. John, we take it, is a fundamental statement, from the Christian point of view, of the Spiritual Idea—God in man. From this Ceptacle point of view it will accord equally well as a statement of Antecedent, realising Itself to Itself in its own expression where Idea is 'Flesh' as Intelligence-Matter in evolved human body. The Idea in both is that in Intelligence-Matter it realises its Being as its everlasting Self. Here it is embodied in the individuality of Jesus Christ. In the fulness of this development in this individual Ego-Identity, it knows its Being in an At-One-Ness with itself, as its own Antecedent or Father."

We add that the author is not a philosopher by profession but a business man, being the president of the Pearson-Taft Land Credit Co., which position involves great responsibility and circumspection. And the business world of Chicago knows that Mr. Taft fully deserves the confidence and credit which form the cornerstone of his flourishing business. Philosophers may not find in the book a

¹ *La lettre et la carte de Toscanelli sur la route des Indes par l'Ouest*. Adressées en 1474 au Portugais Fernam Martins et transmises plus tard à Christophe Colomb. Etude critique sur l'authenticité et la valeur de ces documents et sur les sources des idées cosmographiques de Colomb. Suivie des divers textes de la lettre de 1474 avec traductions, annotations et fac-simile. Par Henry Vignaud, premier secrétaire de l'ambassade des Etats-Unis, vice-président de la Société des Américanistes de Paris, vice-président du XII. Congrès des Américanistes, membre de la Société de Géographie de Paris, de la Société des Antiquaires de Worcester, de l'Association Historique de Washington, etc., etc. Paris: Ernest Leroux, éditeur, 28, Rue Bonaparte.