

MISCELLANEOUS.

BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.

Rev. Alfred W. Martin, Minister of the Seattle Society for Universal Religion, has written a thoughtful essay on *Immortality and Modern Thought*, in which he dwells on old and new conceptions of immortality, in four chapters: (I) Foundation for the Faith in Immortality; (II) Do We Earn Immortality? (III) Popular Abuses of the Faith in Immortality and Its Supreme Use; (IV) Life Here in the Light of Life Hereafter.

J. C. Hinrichs of Leipsic has just published *The Songs of an Egyptian Peasant*, collected and translated into German by Heinrich Schaefer, into English by Frances Hart Breasted. The English edition that lies before us contains one hundred and thirty-four poems of Mahmūd Mohammed el-'Itr, a fellah of the higher type who serves as a watchman of the Administration of the Antiquities in the Desert of Saqqara. The book is illustrated, (though not printed on good paper), the frontispiece being the Fellah-poet sitting before his tent, gun in hand. The other illustrations picture scenes in Egypt, landscapes, popular types, etc. Most of the poems are of a religious character, but the collection contains also songs of love, philosophy, and kindred topics.

Bill Hickman, the Danite chief of Utah, has written his confessions in a book with explanatory notes by J. H. Beadle, which was first published in 1872; and the Shepard Publishing Co., 22 State St., Salt Lake City, Utah, have republished the book at the price of \$1.00 per bound copy, and 50 cents in paper.

We are in receipt of a fine tribute paid to Muriel Strode by a member of Rabbi Hirsch's congregation, Mr. Walter Scott Rosenbaum, son of Mr. J. Rosenbaum, well known in Chicago business circles. It is interesting to notice how Miss Strode's *Little Book of Prayer* has been approved of by thinking men representing so different, and indeed opposed views as those of a Christian clergyman and one of the leaders of the Freethought movement. Jews belong to a third class in which progressiveness is combined with a conservative spirit. Mr. Rosenbaum writes as follows:

"My *Little Book of Prayer* is an heirloom—the original possessors were the old inspired prophets. Sacredly it has come down through the centuries, embedded in and ascending with the soul of man. It is the spirit of truth—

divine legacy immanent in the human soul, endlessly reverberated from one generation to another, expanding and enriched in its infinite course.

"*My Little Book of Prayer* is the Æolian harp, the soul of emancipated man, a literature of feeling rather than of thought, of heart-beats rather than cerebrations: It is, in a measure, as strikingly the ripened heritage of the ages as Shakespeare's soul or Darwin's mind. Nations, not individuals, beget genius; Miss Strode's book is an incontrovertible evidence of the continuous evolution of nations—and man.

"The prayers are timely. Through man's upward struggle the essence of prayer has been changed, and the prayers of yesterday are gone with its snows. Anthropomorphism, with all it implies, and self-mortification, have become anachronistic. Prayer to-day earns its holy name only in proportion as it incorporates truth—Modern prayer is winged to the God within. (Quoting Miss Strode) 'I am the supplicant and I am the God that answers prayer. I prayed for deliverance and to prove the efficacy of prayer, I became my own deliverer.'

"Though there may be 'A destiny that shapes our ends, rough-hew them as we will,' yet Miss Strode's invigorating philosophy impels the thought that the ends themselves are of our own choosing. The book is a revelation to the individual of the worlds that are his—not for the asking but for the trying—and it not only stimulates but inspires him to make the trial."

Count Leo Tolstoy has communicated to the Parisian Journal *Le Matin* his views concerning the present condition of Russia. He declares that the possibility of a great national revolution is excluded. Judging from Russia's past he would expect only a palace-revolution. He himself would not have advocated the convening of the *Zemstvo Sobor* although he approves of it. This institution, however, would help the Czar only to learn of the wishes of the people, or more especially of the peasants, but he does not believe that any man coming from the higher circles of life will venture to discuss any matters of importance at its meeting. For every one knows that in that country there is some one upon whose humor it depends whether or not everything that is said there is to be ignored. Thus the result will be that the *Zemstvo Sobor* will be incapable of bringing about any reform. Nevertheless, according to Tolstoy reforms are inevitable, and he feels convinced that before the year closes many features of the physiognomy of Russia will be thoroughly changed. It is especially noticeable that Tolstoy in the present complication regrets nothing more than the irreconcilable hatred of the two parties which are at present pitted against each other. The crimes of the government are the main cause of this intolerable situation. "And yet," adds the great reformer, "there is a book, the doctrines of which can procure the happiness of all. It is the Gospel, the best of all socialistic works, and in the Gospel we read, 'There shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in divers places.... And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.' The condition of happiness lies in the communal possession of the earth."

We have asked Professor Carruth to write an article on "Schiller's Religion," which will presumably appear in the next number of *The Open Court*.