

BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.

EAST LONDON VISIONS. By *O'Dermid W. Lawler*. London: Longmans Green & Co. Pp. 305. Price 6s. net.

The pseudonym under which this author writes is an anagram of his name Edward Willmore, preferred originally because of the autobiographical character of the book. The element of autobiography is not in literal exactness of external incidents so much as in its portrayal of the author's own early attempts at the solution of spiritual difficulties. The book has something of the character of a novel and much of the fascination of one, but the *dramatis personae* are allegorical and form an elaborate symbolic system to which Mr. Willmore expects later to furnish a key in order to show the important world-meanings involved. In his preface he says that "the significance of the story with its visions will best be understood when it is considered as an essay of values, an attempt to show the supremacy of the Christian religion, though not as commonly understood." A glimpse of his method and purpose may be gleaned by the following paragraph from the preface: "The writer portrays the conflict between a new soul and an old world, and the efforts that that soul makes to construct some spiritual floating ark, or even only seaworthy life-belt, against the deluge of scepticism that threatens to submerge the highest landmarks of the modern world. In his life, indeed, he is at first entirely unpractical, and an example to avoid. But he seeks for Truth. The type of Truth afforded us in these pages is undoubtedly the Star Lady. Her Christmas candle in its toy-candlestick is possibly some forgotten aspect of the light of Christianity itself. She offers him food—truths which at first he is unprepared and unworthy to accept. All things fall into wreck. He declines the ardent advances of the Lady of Venice, a voluble yet secondary character, typifying the world of affluent commerce and civilization, which he may accept largely on his own terms, even to modify, will he but make the compromise and forego Truth. Sophonisba—symbol of humbler toil and content—for her too he is unfitted, has really no love for her, but only velleity; though she (and this is again significant) announces with simple directness her own love for the Star Lady, who is Truth."

Still these explanations can not give any adequate conception of the charm of personality and descriptive detail which the pages contain. Many bits of East London life and atmosphere have the literary quality and richness of flavor of those of De Morgan and Arnold Bennett. The almost poetic charm of the book combined with its evident sincerity of purpose has made for it a wide circle of friends both in England and in this country. Prof. C. J. Keyser, of Columbia University, takes occasion to refer very incidentally in a lecture on mathematics before a congress of mathematicians to "the brilliant author of *East London Visions*."

Mr. Willmore has some very insistent ideas of religious reform and desires to form an organization. To this end he has written a second book more popularly didactic, which will appear soon under the title *The Call to Life*. He addresses public meetings in the streets of London in his spare time and here he has been successful in discovering sympathetic spirits who will soon form the nucleus doubtless of a large organization. Their *Credo* they call "The Bond of Truth" and in its message of love, helpfulness and service it is good for all to read: "Our creed, or belief, is contained in the words 'Our

Father.' God is, at the least, 'The Power not ourselves that makes for righteousness.' The Bible is not the Divine account of man, but priceless human accounts of the Divine. Bibles are still to be written. God's Word is within us. There ought to be no paid ministers. Any man or woman who wisely helps others is a minister. Religion means the organization of life—putting human life in order, as it ought to be. It consists in practical justice, kindness, unselfishness. The true church includes various committees for mutual help. We look forward to the manifestation of Christ (a spiritual ideal) in the sense of a nobler humanity. For this ideal we ought to work, and sacrifice ourselves, and prepare a house for the Son of Man. By house is meant environment. We have nothing to do with other churches or political systems, but we respect all sincere people. There is a judgment in Eternity. Each person is judged by character. Each must render an account. Freedom means discipline, rectitude, the service of the Lord. There is no other freedom." ρ

AUTHORITY. By *A. v. C. P. Huizinga*. Boston: Sherman, French & Co., 1911.
Pp. 265. Price \$2.25 net.

The Rev. A. v. C. P. Huizinga here explains the functions of authority in life in its relation to legalism in ethics and religion. He condemns the opposition to authority as voiced by the representatives of the Religious Liberals who convened in Boston in 1907, where Dr. George A. Gordon declared "The loss sustained by the Christian world through the reign of authority is incalculable." Dr. Gordon demanded for a true development of inner life the absence of outward restraint. He demanded that we must strike out along our own lines, if we are to be true to ourselves. The very idea of personality, of responsibility, of private initiative, of individual significance, the entire personal equation opposes itself to any pressure of external restraints.

Our Mr. Huizinga stands up against this individualism and proclaims an authority which is ultimately the authority of a personal God who makes known his will in revealed religion. In his announcement of the book, our author says that "God is made to appear in revelation as the final authority in all the forms of truth in which our faith may abide:" The truth appears to lie between the two extremes.

There is most certainly a cure above the demands of the individual and the personal equation should be subject to the eternal laws of nature, but the authority in science as well as in ethics is not of an individual or personal kind. It is the authority of both, which religiously speaking is the only true God, and if there were an individual God being he would be superior to any ego deity which governs the world as a king rules a country. Mr. Huizinga is decidedly right as to the extreme conception of the pragmatic individual now so common in our days, but he is decidedly one-sided in the way in which he so easily accepts the traditional conceptions of a revealed religion where the nature of authority is regarded as of a personal nature.

To characterize the author's position we will quote from his chapter on Roman Catholicism, "Cardinal Gibbons says in 'The Faith of our Fathers': 'It should be borne in mind that neither God nor His Church forces anyone's conscience. To all he says by the mouth of his prophet: "Behold I set before you the way of life and the way of death" (Jer. xxi. 8). The choice rests with yourselves,' he is addressing only the non-Roman Catholic. For as a

Roman Catholic bishop wrote to a Calvinistic friend of mine: 'The Catholics,' it has been said, 'rely on the inspired men, not on an inspired book.' And the canonicity of the Holy Scriptures is held to rest solely on the authority of the Roman Catholic Church."

Cardinal Gibbons discusses the standpoint of Protestantism in the following manner:

"Let us see whether an infallible Bible is sufficient for you. Either you are infallibly certain that your interpretation of the Bible is correct or you are not. If you are infallibly certain, then you assert for yourself, and of course for every reader of the Scriptures, a personal infallibility which you deny to the Pope, and which we claim only for him. You make every man his own Pope. If you are not infallibly certain that you understand the true meaning of the whole Bible—and this is a privilege you do not claim—then, I ask, of what use to you is the objective infallibility of the Bible without an infallible interpreter."

We agree with the author that pure subjectivism such as represented by paganism which gives to the personal equation an undue prominence is wrong and insists on the objectivity of an authority, but this objective authority is the authority of science as stating with careful investigation the facts of any case under discussion in formulas, the so-called natural laws, or in the outcome of correct reasoning, such as we have in mathematics, arithmetic, geometry and logic. The authority of the multiplication table is intrinsic, and does not rest on the personal authority of the teacher or even of an individual God. In fact the multiplication table itself is part and parcel of the divinity that sways the world.

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SOURCE OF THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION. By *Edouard Dujardin*. Translated by *Joseph McCabe*. Chicago, Open Court Publishing Co., Pages 307.

This is a critical history of ancient Judaism, thus recognizing only the one source for Christian tradition. It is prefaced by a brief note on Jewish history and literature which contains a map of Palestine and a chronological and synchronic scheme illustrating the history of Judaism. The work is divided into three parts of which the first, "The Law," treats of the early days of Jewish history, the Esdras school, and the Pentateuch; the second, "The Prophets," treats of the birth of prophetism, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the two Isaiahs and the imperialist revival; and the third discusses "the Apocalypses" from the early hymns in the synagogues to the time of the Dispersion. A series of brief appendices covers certain details which would have interrupted the unity of the text. The topics include the name "Israel," the Samaritan Pentateuch, the "imperialist" theory of the composition of the Mosaic books, the Pentateuch "Documents," Simeon the Just, etc. The volume was translated for the Rationalist Press Association of England.

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Mr. Charles Kirkland Wheeler, the author of *A Hundredth Century Philosophy*, has criticized Kant in a book entitled *Critique of Pure Kant, or A Real Realism vs. A Fictitious Idealism, in a word the Bubble and Monstrosity of the Kantian Metaphysic*. Kant is dead and Mr. Wheeler is his grave

digger. We wonder that Kant whose "utter absurdity" and "utter silliness" is here determined could ever have risen into prominence. It is to be feared that other thinkers have misconstrued Kant and have put some sense into his philosophy which either is not there or Mr. Wheeler has been unable to discover. It would be pathetic to think that Mr. Wheeler would have to wait for the hundredth century until his philosophy will be accepted by the world.

The frontispiece shows the portrait of Mr. Wheeler in his study and he appears there as a sympathetic person with a kind and mild expression, abundant white hair and white whiskers of English cut. The peaceful character of his exterior does not show his vigorous philosophical iconoclasm. κ

The Bhaga, the most important book of Brahmanism, the Song of the Blessed One, or in Sanskrit Bhagavadgita, has been frequently translated and reproduced in almost all languages, especially in English and in German. The task is a very difficult one on account of the ponderous terms of Brahman religion, and the interpretation of the philosophy back of it.

An important addition to the literature of the Bhagavadgita, is the new translation which has been made by the most prominent Vedanta scholar of our age, Prof. Paul Deussen, whose German translation has been published by F. A. Brockhaus of Leipsic, under the title *Der Gesang des Heiligen* (price 3 marks, bound 4 marks). The book is comparatively small for it consists of 132 pages and is not burdened by long philosophical explanations. The preface offers only the most incidental explanation of the Brahman religion as expressed in the Vedanta. κ

Among the University of Michigan Studies there is a Humanistic Series which has its place in the body of human knowledge, although the subjects treated seem in this busy rushing age to belong to the realm of the unessential. Some of the titles in the series for 1911 are as follows: The Myth of Hercules at Rome, by John Garrett Winter; Autobiographic Elements in Latin Inscriptions, by Henry H. Armstrong; A Study in Latin Abstract Substantives, by Manson A. Stewart; The Usage of *Idem*, *Ipse* and Words of Related Meaning, by Clarence L. Meader. ρ

In a short work entitled *La Réincarnation, la métempsychose et l'évolution physique, astrale et spirituelle* (Paris: Dorbon Aimé, pp. 250, price 3 fr. 50) Dr. Papus (Dr. G. Encausse) undertakes to discuss the phases of reincarnation "from the passage of physical cells into other physical bodies to the return of the immortal spirit into a new body." The book is written from a purely occultist and theosophical standpoint. ρ

Correction: Mr. Arthur MacDonald, of Washington, D. C., writes us that in his article on "The Mentality of Nations" in the August *Open Court* the heading of the last column of Table 2 should read, "Number of Persons to Each Copy per Issue of Newspapers and Periodicals." This should also be the heading to the last three items in the last column of Table I.