

## MISCELLANEOUS.

### AN EPITAPH OF ANCIENT ROME.

*To the Editor of The Open Court:*

In reference to the epitaph you quote in your article "Mysticism and Immortality" in the June number of *The Open Court*, permit me to call your attention to the following taken from a book by Prof. F. F. Abbott of Princeton University, *Common People of Ancient Rome*, page 90: "I was not, I was. I am not, I care not." (*Non fui, fui, non sum, non curo.*) This sentiment was so freely used that it is indicated now and then merely by the initial letters, N. F., F., N. S., N. C.

It seems that William Kingdon Clifford must have been acquainted with old Roman epitaphs.

I understand that Professor Abbott got his data from the book by G. W. Ven Bleek, *Quae de hominum post mortem condicione doceant carmina sepulcratia Latina.*

PERRY B. PRESTON.

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### BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.

VITAL PROBLEMS OF RELIGION. By the Rev. J. R. Cohu. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1914. Pp. 289. Price, 5 shillings net.

Every generation has to settle the religious problem over again according to the world-conception that has become dominant, and the rector of Aston Clinton, Rev. J. R. Cohu, presents us with his solution which is backed up by an introduction from the pen of the Lord Bishop of S. Asaph. Mr. Cohu's solution will be satisfactory to a large number of thinking men who are Christians at the bottom of their hearts and try to save as much of their creeds as possible. In this sense Mr. Cohu goes over the field of religious ideas and endorses the principles in great outlines without entering into the details, and at the bottom of these principles he finds the thought that if evolution is traceable in the world and if nature is ordained by law, it is an indication that an intellectual being dominates it, and that the leading ideas of Christianity must be true. We will epitomize his book in extracts characteristic of the different arguments here proposed. Mr. Cohu says:

"Definitions are always troublesome, and religion is the most troublesome of words to define. It has to cover every shade and grade of soul-attitude, from palæolithic man's thrill of shudder in the presence of earthquakes and primeval-forest dangers, right up to the heart-experience of a Christ. And for the religious sense to awaken, either in savage or philosopher, all that is needed is to be alive to the facts and mysteries of life. In the presence of an immense universe, evil and death, the same religious shudder thrills savage and philosopher alike, and forces a sigh which is the birth of prayer. 'Out of the deep I cried unto Thee, and Thou heardest me.' (Page 15)...."

"If we are to find the clue to the sphinx-riddle of existence, we must seek it, not in material nature or through science, but in the human heart. Personality is the gateway through which we must pass to all true knowledge of God, man, nature, if we are to see them as an organic whole (31)....

"Surely, this unity of plan, this sense of values, this onward and upward tendency to ever higher ends, one and all contradict Haeckel's explanation of evolution as 'a redistribution of matter in motion under the influence of blind force.' When we see stones carefully cut into shape and put into place and emerging into a cathedral, we do not speak of the process as a redistribution of matter in motion under the influence of blind force; we look upon the cathedral as the expression of an artist's idea. Professor Dewey is right. Admit evolution, and you must admit intelligence, will and purpose in and behind this evolution as its driving-power and its key. The universe is one scheme, and mind is the meaning of it (60-61)....

"The God nature reveals is only an indwelling God closely akin to the God of pantheism, and, as already said, we want more than an idealized world-reason or world-soul. We want a God who is transcendent as well as immanent, and we shall never grasp his immanence till we grasp his transcendence. And it is only through the door of our reason and conscience that we can escape from the semi-pantheism of nature (86)....

"Man's personality is ever one and the same, creative, self-conscious and self-directing. Our heart and mind and will are the soul's faculties or channels of self-expression, and, as proceeding from one and the same soul, you never find them apart. Our personality has an ideal which it presents to us as a categorical imperative. This ideal is ever with us and shows us 'the face of our birth,' the self God means us to be. Thus it makes us dissatisfied with what we actually are, and creates the soul-hunger or unrest we all feel. Man, if he is to obey the soul's categorical imperative and achieve its ideal, must have freedom of will. He must be able to be and to do what he knows he ought to do and to be. Besides our conscious self, we also have a larger self which we call our subconscious or our subliminal mind (154-155)....

"If history proves anything, it is that an absolute idea is being evolved in the universe. Whatever the language in which we express this idea, whether we say, with Matthew Arnold, 'there is a power not ourselves that makes for righteousness,' or with Tennyson, 'through the ages an increasing purpose runs,' or, with Christ, call it 'the coming of the Kingdom of God,'—we agree that, in and through men, God is working for a definite end (193-194)....

"Jesus Christ is Son of Man and Son of God. Essentially one in nature with God and man, Jesus in his own self realized the at-one-ment of man with God. He is the first-born among many brethren. In him dwelleth the grace and truth and love of God bodily. God was in him reconciling the world unto himself. Through the spirit of Jesus God is drawing all men unto himself to rise to the fulness of their stature as sons of God. Jesus is our Way, our Truth, our Life.

"There is a Holy Catholic Church, a communion of saints, and a baptism of the spirit for the remission of sins." (282).

Thoughtful though Mr. Cohu's expressions are he will not be regarded as helpful to those who look for an adjustment of the difficult questions which modern science has forced upon the Christian believer. He does not recognize

the weight of scientific arguments, and to the question "Are the facts of science objective facts?" he replies with a decided "No" (p. 120). He argues that the only objective facts we know are our sensations and thoughts. All our other knowledge is only inferred from these. On the other hand he answers the question, "Are the assertions of religion mere make-belief?" as follows: "Here my facts are real objective facts. But personality, or the human heart and mind and will, is precisely the field of religion. Therefore the facts of religion, far from being mere make-believe, are objective facts far more real than those of science, Q. E. D."

The result is that he deems the religious problem answered by allowing science to be satisfied with its own insufficiency. He says (pages 114-115):

"The old view works out right in practice, and that is the best test of value. Of what earthly use are these metaphysical hair-splittings? I prefer sober English common-sense to metaphysics made in Germany."

Mr. Cohu agrees with Tyrrell when he says (page 238):

"We want no religion of intellectualism that buries its head in the clouds of the abstract and substitutes the absolute for the Babe of Bethlehem or the Man of Calvary." Mr. Cohu adds: "An accurately defined intellectual creed would rob worship of all warmth and beauty, and probably rob simple souls of their faith."

The application of this principle is expressed on page 236 as follows:

"'Revise our creeds,' is one of the popular cries to-day. God forbid! These old creed-makers wrought better than they knew. They may not have formulated, signed, sealed and delivered articles of faith for all time, but in the Nicene Creed they came so near it that modern thought endorses its every word, with the possible excision of two words ('virgin,' 'third'). It is the most inspired piece of writing outside the Bible." κ

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SECOND CHARACTERS OR THE LANGUAGE OF FORMS. By the Right Honourable Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury. Edited by *Benjamin Rand*, Ph. D., Cambridge: University Press, 1914. Pp. 182. Price 7s. 6. net.

Miss Jourdain's article in the June *Open Court* on "The Boldest of the English Philosophers" will call to mind the third Earl of Shaftesbury's place in the world of English art and criticism. The *Second Characters* (which followed his better known work *Characteristics*) contains four treatises: A Letter Concerning Design, a Notion of the Historical Draught of Hercules, The Picture of Cebes, and Plastics. This last treatise is made up of 23 small essays. In his preface Dr. Rand says: "Like Plato, Shaftesbury realized that you must surround the citizens with an atmosphere of grace and beauty if you desire to instil noble and true ideas in the mind. And animated by the inspired purpose of reviving and elevating art, particularly in England, his remaining strength was steadfastly applied to the production of *Second Characters*."

Shaftesbury writes to an intimate friend, Sir John Cropley, with regard to his own tastes and his conception of his mission: "My own designs you know run all on moral emblems and what relates to ancient Roman and Greek history, philosophy and virtue. If anything be stirred, or any studies turned this way, it must be I that must set the wheel agoing and help to raise the spirit... My charges turn wholly, as you see, towards the raising of art and the improvement of virtue in the living, and in posterity to come." ρ