

LITERATURE.

REVIEW OF NEW BOOKS.

"Glimpses of Animated Nature," by J. W. O'Neill, published by Charles Dallmer, is a gaily-bound and handsome volume, with a bright colored lithograph for a frontispiece, and embellished with numerous wood engravings. Descriptions are given of animals, birds, fishes, reptiles, insects, etc., with sketches of their peculiar habits and characteristics. The work has been compiled from the writings of Buffon, Goldsmith, Bigland, Wood, Godwin, and other eminent sources, and the endeavor has been to present a great variety of information in a shape suited to the capacity of all readers. There are not many boys who would not be delighted with such a book as this for a Christmas present.

From James K. Simon, No. 29 South Sixth street, agent for Philadelphia, we have received the second volume of the "Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature," prepared by Rev. John McClintock, D. D., and James Strong, D. D. Published by Harper & Brothers. This volume consists of 933 pages, and the subjects treated commence with "Cah" and end with "Dysentery." Numerous woodcuts serve to explain references to various matters of architecture, custom, domestic life, etc., and at the end a full list of the articles is given. This cyclopedia when completed will be one of the most valuable works of the kind ever published. Great care has been taken to make it as perfect as possible, and all the articles already written are revised de novo as the work goes through the press, and the latest literature, in new books as well as in the journals of all nations, is consulted in this revision.

From Charles Dallmer we have received "Prayers for the Use of Families," selected from various sources, and with a preliminary essay, together with a selection of hymns by Rev. Albert Barnes. This selection of prayers and hymns is so well known that it needs no particular commendation. The present edition is handsomely bound, and a portrait of Rev. Albert Barnes is given as a frontispiece.

"The Boy at Bramley" and "Joanna Darling; or, the Home at Breakwater," by Virginia F. Townsend, are two volumes of the Breakwater series, published by Loring of Boston. Miss Townsend is a favorite writer, and she understands the art of weaving an entertaining story. Her publishers have done their part in good style, and we commend these books to those who wish to give their children reading that will be entertaining as well as instructive.

"Onward" is the title of a new magazine conducted by Captain Mayne Reid, the first number of which we have received from Turner Brothers & Co., No. 506 Chesnut street. Captain Reid states that it is his desire to make this a first-class, high-toned magazine of original literature, and embellished with attractive illustrations printed on fine toned paper. Captain Reid, who is well known as a popular writer for the young, will contribute largely to its pages. The contents of the January number are as follows:—"The Lost Sister," three chapters; "The Magney;" "O Sing Me the Song;" "Christmas Day in a Dead Wood;" "I Think of Thee;" "A Daunting Dragon;" "A Journey Underground;" "Christmas Kisses;" "A Young Irish Diana;" "The Land of the West;" "A Southern Journal;" "The Yellow Chief," a romance, five chapters; "Things Worth Thinking of;" "Trifles;" Book Reviews, etc.

"The Lady's Friend," published by Daason & Peterson, commences its sixth volume with the January number. A large colored fashion plate, patterns for all kinds of fancy works and numerous illustrations, make this an attractive number. The contents are varied and interesting, and the conductors of the magazine seem determined to make it even more popular than heretofore.

Superior Beings.

Every now and then one comes across the path of a superior being—a being that seems to imagine itself made out of a different kind of clay from that which forms the coarser ruck of humanity, and whose presence crushes us with a sense of our own inferiority, exasperating or humiliating, according to the amount of natural pride bestowed upon us. The superior being is of either sex, and of all denominations; and its superiority comes from many causes, being due sometimes to a wider grasp of intellect, sometimes to a loftier standard of morals, sometimes to a better birth or a longer purse, and very often to the simple consist of itself which simulates superiority, and believes in its own superiority. The chief characteristic of the superior being is that exalted pity for inferiority which springs from the consciousness of excellence. In fact, one of the main elements of superiority consists in this sublime consciousness of private exaltation, and of the immense interval that separates it from the grosser condition it surveys. Rivalry is essentially angry and contentious, but confessed superiority can afford to be serene and compassionate. The little people who live in that meagre sphere of their mental or social, with which not one point of its own extended circle comes in contact, are deservingly all pity, and are below anything like active displeasure. That they should be content with such a meagre sphere seems inconceivable to the superior being, as it contemplates its own enlarged horizon with the complacency that belongs to a dweller in vastness. Or it may be that its own world is narrow; and its superiority will then be that it is high, safe, and exclusive, while its pity will flow down for those poor wayfarers who wander afield in broad latitudes, and know nothing of the pleasure found in reserved places. In any case the region in which a superior being dwells is better than the region in which any other person dwells.

Take a superior being who has made up a private account with truth, and who has, in his own mind at least, unlocked the gate of the great mysteries of life, and got to the back of that eternal *cui bono* forever confronting us. It does not in the least degree signify how the key is labelled; it may be High Church or Low Church, Swedenborgianism or Positivism. The name has nothing to do with the thing; it is the contented certainty

of having unlocked the great gate at which others are only hammering in vain which confers the superiority, and how the thing has been done does not affect the result. Neither does it disturb the equanimity of the superior being when he meets with opposing superior beings who have also made up their private accounts with truth, but in quite another handwriting and with a different sum-total at the bottom of the page; who have also unlocked the gate of the great mysteries, but with a key of contradictory words, while the gate itself is of another order of architecture altogether. But then nothing ever does disturb the equanimity of the superior being; for, as he is above all rivalry, so is he beyond all teaching. The meeting of two superior beings of hostile creeds is only like the meeting of the two blind kings in the story, each claiming the crown for his own, and both ignorant of the very existence of a rival. It may be that the superior being has soared away into the cold region of spiritual negation, whence he regards the praying and praising multitudes as going to church and believe in Providence as grown people regard children who still believe in ghosts and fairies. Or it may be that he has plunged into the phosphorescent atmosphere of mysticism and an all-pervading superstition; and then all who hold by scientific law, and who think the test of common sense not absolutely valueless, are Sadducees who know nothing of the glorious liberty of the light, but who prefer to live in darkness, and make themselves the agents of the great Lord of Lies. Sometimes the superior being goes in for the doctrine of love and impulse, as against reason or experience, holding the physiologist and political economist at grotesques absolutely devoid of feeling; and sometimes his superiority is shown in the application of the hardest material laws to the most subtle and delicate manifestations of the mind. But on which side soever he ranks himself—as a spiritualist to whom reason and matter are stumbling-blocks and accursed, or as a materialist denying the existence of spiritual influences at all—he is equally secure of his own superiority, and serene in his own conceit. That there should be two sides to any question never seems to strike him; and that a man of another creed should have as much right as himself to a hearing and consideration is the one hard saying impossible for him to receive. With a light and airy manner of playful contempt—sometimes with a heavy and Johnsonian scorn that keeps no terms with an opponent—the superior being meets all your arguments or batters down all your objections; sometimes, indeed, he will not condescend even so far as this, but when you express your adverse opinion just lifts up his eyebrows with a good-humored kind of surprise at your mental state, but lets you see that he thinks you too hopeless, and himself too superior, to waste powder and shot upon you. It is of the nature of things that there should be moles and that they would be egles; so much the worse for the moles, who must be content to remain blind, not seeing things patent to the nobler vision.

The superior being is sometimes a person who is above all the passions and weaknesses of ordinary men; a philosopher, or an etherealized woman dwelling on serene Olympian heights which no clouds obscure, and where no earth-fogs rise. The passions which shake the human soul, as tempests shake the forest trees, and warp men's lives according to the run of their own lines, are unknown to these Olympian personages, and they cannot understand their nature. They look on these tempestuous souls with a curious analytical gaze, according to the direction of the agony through which they pass, and wonder why they cannot keep as calm and quiet as they themselves are. They sit in scornful judgment on the mysterious impulses regulating human nature—regulating and disturbing it—and think how perfect all things would be if only passions and instincts were out of the great plan, and men and women were left to the dominion of pure reason.

But they do not take into their account the world as it is, and the things that are utterly unable to strike anything like a balance between the good and evil wrought both by the tempests of soul and by those of nature. They only know that storms are inconvenient, and that for themselves they have no need for such convulsions to clear off stagnant humors, nor are they made of elements which kindle and explode at the contact of such or such materials. And if they know nothing of all this, why then should others? If they can sit on Olympian heights serene above all passion, why should not the whole world sit with them, and fogs and fires be conditions unknown? When this kind of superior being is a woman, there is something pretty in the sublime assumption of her supremacy, and the sweeping range of her condemnation. Sheltered from temptation and secure from danger, she looks out on life from the serene heights of her safe place, and wonders how men can fail and woman fall before the power of trials of which she knows only the name. Her circulation is languid and her temperament phlegmatic, and therefore the burning desire of life which sends the strong into danger, plunges into sin, is as much unknown to her as is the fever of the tropics to a Laplander croning in his snow-hut; but she judges none the less positively because of her ignorance, and, as she looks into your quivering face with her untroubled eyes, lets you see plainly enough how she despises all the human frailties under which you or yours may have tripped and stumbled. Sometimes she rebukes you loftily. Your soul is sore with the consciousness of your sin, your heart is weak with the pain of life; but the superior being tells you that repentance cannot undo the evil that has been done, and that to feel pain is weak. The superiority which some women assume over men is odd. It is like the grave rebuke of a child, not knowing what it is that it rebukes. When women take up their parable, and ensnare men for the wild or evil things they do, not understanding how or why it has come about that they have done them, and knowing as little of the inner causes as of the outer, they are in the position of superior beings talking unmitigated rubbish. To be sure, it is very sweet and innocent rubbish, and has a lofty air about it that redounds with a more or less presumption; but there is no practical harm in what they say than there is in the child's rebuke when its doll will not stand upright on sawdust legs, or eat a crumb of cake with its waxen lips. This is one reason why women of the order of superior beings have so little influence over men; they judge without knowledge, and condemn without insight. If they could thoroughly fathom man's nature, so as to understand his difficulties, they would then have moral power if their aims were higher than his, their principles more lofty, their practice more pure. As it is, they have next to none and the very men who seem to yield to them most go only so far as to conceal what the superior being disapproves of; they do not change because of her greater weight of doctrine.

Men show themselves as superior beings to women on another count, intellectually, rather than morally. While women rebuke men for their sins, men snub women for their follies; the one wields the spiritual, the other the intellectual, weapon of castigation, and both hold themselves superior, beyond all possi-

bility of rivalry, according to the chance of sex. The masculine view of a subject always imposes itself on women as something unattainable by the feminine mind; and nine times out of ten brings them to a due sense of their own inferiority, save in the case of the superior being, to whom of course the masculine view counts for nothing against her own. But even when women do not accept a man's opinions, they instinctively recognize their greater value, their greater breadth and strength. Perhaps they are out against their hardness, if he is a political economist and they are emotional; or for their lower morality if he goes in for universal charity and latitudinarianism, and they are enthusiasts with a clearly defined faith, and a belief in its infallibility. There are wide tracts of difference between the two minds, not to be settled by the *ipse dixit* of even a superior being; but in general the superiority of the man makes itself more felt than the superiority of the woman. While one talks the other acts, and snubbing does more than condemnation.—London Saturday Review.

GROCERIES, ETC.

DESICCATED



COD FISH.

NOTICE.

We hereby give notice that AN INJUNCTION HAS BEEN OBTAINED by the Court of Common Pleas for the City of New York, in a suit against JAMES A. STEVENSON & COMPANY, Agents of CUM-TONG & RAND, restraining them, their agents and servants, from using in any manner the words "DESICCATED COD FISH."

A suit has also been commenced in the United States Circuit Court against several parties for infringement of "CUTLER'S PATENT" for desiccating fish.

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