THE GREAT ENIGMA.

A BLAST AGAINST MODERN SCEPTICISM.

THE GREAT ENIGMA. By William Samuel Lilly. 8vo, pp. liv.—334. D. Appleton & Co.

In his dedicatory letter to Lord Halifax the author of this book declares that it "is of the nature of an 'argumentum ad hominem'" addressed to a class of readers practically outside the Christian pale. It is an inquiry, from their point of view, into the tenableness of the religion which for more than a thousand years has supplied the foremost nations of the world with an answer to The Great Enigma of human existence. Unquestionably, a feeling that this answer will no longer suffice is very widely prevalent. The professed teachers of religion, from Leo XIII to "General" Booth, whatever their differences, agree in confessing that its hold over the modern mind is rudely shaken. The question of questions now before mankind is whether "the good Lord Jesus has had his day," and must be numbered among the dead gods, or whether He is, as we believe, in very truth, "alive for evermore, and His life the light of men." Mr. Lilly, however, does not follow the beaten track in matters of religious controversy, and it is in great part the originality of his method which constitutes the impressiveness of his argument.

He takes what he considers typical examples of modern Atheism and Agnosticism, as for instance Renan as the type of literary criticism, and Herbert Spencer as the type of scientific criticism, and undertakes to show that their positions are fatally defective. His argument is close, sinewy and virile, and while the acute reasoner in following him may possibly discover weak places here and there, the general effect of his reasoning is decidedly powerful. His attack is in effect directed against the sceptical and materialistic tendencies of the modern spirit, and therefore it is an assault all along the line, while superficially directed toward a few of the most prominent modern sceptics. Whether, indeed, the modern spirit is really amenable to such influences is a question which time only can decide: but the force, acumen and boldness of the author's argument must in any event be conceded, while his fluent rhetoric, the aptness of his illustrations and the compactness of his reasoning will compel admiration and interest.

By a happy provision he has prefixed to his book a copious summary, by glancing through which the impatient reader may in a comparatively short time master the main contents of the work, and understand at least the gist of the arguments. Mr. Lilly holds that "there are really, in good logic, only two answers besides Theism to the Great Enigma: Atheism and Agnosticism; by Atheism being meant the dogmatic denial of God, and by Agnosticism the mental attitudes of doubt, suspension of judgment, nescience concerning Him. And of Agnosticism there are two varieties: the merely critical and negative, which maintains that we cannot know whether or not a Divine noumenon exists: and the scientific or affirmative, which asserts His existence, but denies that He can be human." By an Atheist the author means "one who dogmatically denies the existence of a First Cause or Creator of all things ruling the universe and holding moral relations with mankind." This form of disbelief he would consider so irrational as not to need answering or considering; "but there is a very practical consideration which invests Atheism with much importance. It is among the masses, who are 'as incapable of thinking as they are of flying,' and to whom political power has everywhere passed, or is passing, that the propagandists of Atheism are most active and most successful."

As an illustration of the boldest form modern Atheism has assumed, Mr. Lilly cites Monteil's "Catechism du Libre Penseur." This work is divided into three portions, and deals respectively with God, Religion and Morals. God, it teaches, is "an expression, the exact value of which is the material world, and All is matter." It proceeds to state that "the divine individuality is a lie"; that "we ought not to believe in the existence of the individual named God whom most religions have presented to us," because "such a God has no existence," and that "since everything belongs to the material order, the soul does not exist." The Catechism urges its readers to "abandon religion completely, and take refuge in Philosophy—the product of all reason and the source of all morality." The Philosophy so recommended amounts to this: "that man is naturally good; that the passions are the true guides of human life; that their gratification is the true end of human life, and that other life there is none." As to morality, that, says M. Monteil, is "the sentiment which prescribes to us prudent conduct, and is determined by the reason": the reason, it would appear, being "nothing but phosphorus." From these and the like statements Mr. Lilly argues that those who employ them "are training the coming generation to believe that the answer to The Great Enigma is not moral, but material: to put aside faith in the Divine as a senseless and servile superstition: to find the rule of right and wrong in self-interest; to see in ethics only a regulation of police: to acquiesce in physical fatality, and to practise a brutal egoism."

Critical Agnosticism the author has elected to examine through the writings of M. Renan. Of him the author says that, "like so many others in this age, in unlearning Christianity he unlearned Theism. He illustrates, in a very striking manner, Cardinal Newman's doctrine that to deny revelation is the way to deny natural religion." As regards Renan's criticism of the origin of the Bible, Mr. Lilly may surprise some orthodox readers, for he virtually yields the whole question, saying, "it must be frankly admitted that if Christianity depended upon a pseudo-scientific view of certain venerable documents, formed at an unscientific period, and irreconcilable with the conclusions of true science, Christianity would be doomed. But," he continues, "to suppose Christianity founded upon that collection of ancient documents called the Bible is historically false. It is certain that no authorized New Testament canon existed until the latter half of the second century. It is equally certain that the mission of the Author of Christianity was not to promote the formation of a volume, which, long centuries after, should become 'the religion of Protestants,' but to establish a society. The Bible is, in fact, the creation of the Catholic Church, from which other varieties of Christianity have received it. And the Catholic Church, while declaring it in all matters of faith and morals divinely inspired throughout, has never pronounced how far that inspiration extends—has never formally committed herself to 'the traditional thesis,' which has come down from uncritical ages."

Mr. Lilly next proceeds to examine Renan's position against miracles. Renan held that a supernatural fact is impossible because it would be an infraction of the order of the universe, a violation of law. To this it is answered that "everything depends upon what is meant by 'order of the universe,' 'law.' The invincible prejudice against the miraculous, now so common, is, in truth, an expression of that abounding materialism which denies the spiritual principle in man and in nature, and which, identifying law with physical necessity, issues in physical fatalism." "What are miracles," the author inquires, "but events in the world with the laws of whose working we are, and must always remain, utterly unacquainted?" "That such events have occurred, and do occur, seems absolutely certain; and when intelligent men are found dogmatically asserting that they do not occur, we can only suppose that these dogmatists have not looked into the evidence, or that they are under the influence of a first principle, which disqualifies them for weighing it." On the whole, therefore, "the criticism whereupon M. Renan founded the Agnosticism of which we have taken him as a typical exponent, is inadequate to support the vast edifice of doubt which he reared upon it."

Scientific Agnosticism is much viewed through the medium of Herbert Spencer. To this writer's philosophic system close attention is paid, and particularly to his fundamental doctrines; that of Causation; of the Relativity of Knowledge, and of the Unknowable. As to the first of these Mr. Lilly holds that "the unity of natural forces is by no means established, and the correlation of mental and physical forces is a mere nude hypothesis. No equivalence can be shown between neurosis and psychosis; nor can life and energy be brought under Mr. Spencer's doctrine of the Persistence of Force, which, as taught by him, is an amalgam of physical dogmatism and metaphysical error." Of the doctrine of Relativity of Knowledge our author observes: "As Mr. Spencer's erroneous theory of relativity has led him to label the Supreme Object of knowledge unknowable, so a true theory of relativity would have saved him from the antinomies in which he is hopelessly involved in regard to this matter. The more the manifold relations of things are examined, the more clearly are they seen to be rational; they testify of Objective Reason. Mr. Spencer's Scientific Agnosticism is an outrage upon reason. He puts aside the self-affirmation of the intellect—those 'a priori' or necessary truths which are laws of thought because they are absolute uniformities, intuitively known as self-evident—and these are the primary sources of all knowledge: they are 'what God eternally thinks.' In them, and not in any collocation and displacement of molecules, is the ultimate basis of metaphysics."

No doubt some of these ideas may be styled too daring and aggressive. Mr. Lilly, however, is bent on carrying the war into Africa, and the man who to-day undertakes the serious defence of religion must be prepared to champion the spiritual side of human nature very boldly and in a truly catholic spirit. To see how far our author is willing to go in this direction, however, his chapters on mysticism must be read, and they will assuredly well repay perusal. This whole subject has during the present century become so obscure to the generality, it has been so densely befogged with the ever-growing materialism of the age, that mysticism has almost come to be synonymous with imbecility. Thinkers as little religious as the great pessimist Schopenhauer did not, it is true, fall into the shallow and vulgar error. But modern physical science has, directly or indirectly, lent its aid to the condemnation of a little understood matter. Thus Mill, in his "Logic," says that "whether in the Vedas, the Platonists or the Hegelians, mysticism is nothing more nor less than ascribing objective existence to the subjective creations of our own faculties, to mere ideas of the intellect."

Upon this Mr. Lilly remarks: "Surely this is a tyrannous 'ipse dixit,' if ever utterance deserved to be so called. Why should I believe, upon the authority of those who confessedly do not speak as experts, that the choice specimens of human wisdom and virtue in all ages have been wrong when they thought themselves to be holding communion with supersensible Realities? Is not their own account of the matter as credible as the hypothesis that they were given over to a strong delusion to believe a lie, that their highest vision was but a turning about in their own thoughts, as in the void inane? No; when the spirit is perfectly master of itself, when passion and interest are stilled for the moment, when there is a combined ease and energy of thinking which cannot be mistaken for vacancy of mind, I defy a man to believe that the intentions of which he is conscious are illusory or merely objective." And whence do these sages derive their mental influence? "It is precisely in proportion as they do not argue that they are convincing; the secret of persuasion is theirs in a transcendent degree which no analytical philosopher has ever possessed. It is the easiest thing in the world to hold up their imaginations, their ecstasies, their visions and revelations to scorn as intellectual intoxication or mental disease. The hard, the impossible thing for one who has held high converse with the sages of the 'Upanisheds,' with Platinus, with Jelal, with St. Teresa, is to believe that what their great souls accounted the prime and only Reality was wholly unreal." Not that Mr. Lilly believes the highest revelations and teachings of mysticism to be transferrible, for he says: "The feeling of the greatest saints has always been, 'Sacramentum regis abscondere bonum est.' It is good to conceal the secrets of the King, and one reason why this is good is because that Divine Search cannot be congruously conveyed in the language of sense perception. . . . To attempt to render the noumenal in phenomenal symbols is of necessity to refract it, for the laws of the mind impose their own form upon ideas. The straight staff must seem bent when we view it in the pool. . . . The looking-glass of the human understanding cannot but reflect sensuous images."

The whole of this chapter deserves to be read attentively, for in it is to be discerned the author's most real and potent answer to the prevailing materialism of the day. His final chapter leaves us less impressed than what has gone before. It is on the whole somewhat inconclusive. Ingenious, no doubt, and eloquent, but with less ring of conviction in it than characterizes the extremely penetrating and eloquent discussion of mysticism. The book altogether is very strong, powerfully and tellingly written, and containing truths needing to be told perhaps more than ever.

WATERLOO.

A NEW HISTORY OF THE CAMPAIGN.

THE CAMPAIGN OF WATERLOO. A Military History. By John Codman Ropes. 8vo, pp. 395. Charles Scribner's Sons.

AN ATLAS OF THE CAMPAIGN OF WATERLOO. By John Codman Ropes. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Mr. Ropes has long been known as a military critic of force and perspicuity, and his reputation in this direction will certainly be heightened by his latest work, which is, perhaps, the most thorough and impartial critique of the campaign of Waterloo that has been written. No excuse is needed for the fresh discussion of events which had issues so momentous: and while the literature of the Waterloo campaign was formidable as regards bulk more than half a century ago, the fact remains that the disputes and arguments of that time had left undetermined many important points, to the clearing up of which military historians might with profit address themselves. Moreover it is only comparatively recently that it has been possible to get at the whole truth of the campaign. For thirty years after Waterloo, as now appears, Marshal Grouchy, to save his own reputation, suppressed a vital fact and lent his aid to the spread of misrepresentation. And this was not the only source of confusion and error.

Much has to be said by Mr. Ropes in explanation of the many palpable misstatements concerning the battle of Waterloo by Napoleon himself at St. Helena. No historian could take a milder or more indulgent view of these errors than does Mr. Ropes. His hypothesis is that Napoleon's quick imagination, always working at the very top of pressure, was apt to confound distinctions between things actually done as ordered to be done, and things the doing of which might seem to be necessarily included in the general programme. So, thinks Mr. Ropes, the great soldier was apt to think that he had really ordered and caused to be done things which perhaps he left to the intelligence of his lieutenants, who did not always justify his confidence in the keenness of their perceptions. No doubt this theory may be the true one. It is, at all events, ingenious and skilfully worked out.

Mr. Ropes sets aside at an early stage of his inquiry the old idea that in the campaign of Waterloo Napoleon's genius was under a cloud. Never in his career, the author holds, was his mind in more vigorous working order, his plans better laid, or his attention given to the work before him more persistently. But once during the campaign—at Quatre-Bras—Napoleon suffered from physical fatigue. A certain lassitude marked his actions. He neglected vital precautions. And later, he could not retrieve what he had lost. Yet the really fatal blunders were not those of the commander, unless, indeed, the sending away of Grouchy at all can be so regarded. It was Grouchy and Ney between them who are mainly responsible for the catastrophe of Waterloo; the one by his dull-wittedness and the other by his rebellious defiance of his chief's direct orders. This is the opinion of Mr. Ropes, and it is, like all his positions, supported with great ability. Yet others may still think, as others have long thought in the past, that the errors of Napoleon in the Waterloo campaign were very grave, and that they contributed largely to bring about the loss of the battle.

Mr. Ropes does not hesitate to say that the retention of Grouchy with the rest of the army would almost certainly have insured the overthrow of Wellington at Waterloo; and it must be admitted that in such circumstances the Iron Duke would have been in a perilous case. Even as it was, more blunders on the part of the French Imperial Guard were required at the close of the day to save the British army from being overwhelmed. Had La Haye Sainte been attacked in the only way which offered a certainty of success; had the charge of the Imperial Guard been differently conducted; had the French cavalry been used to better advantage; it certainly seems credible that the English and allies must have been swept from the field before Blucher could arrive; in which event, of course, history would have been very different from what it is, and St. Helena would probably have no legend. Mr. Ropes holds that the disasters which befell the French were nearly all attributable to the fact that the Emperor was compelled to bestow all his attention upon the Prussians under Bulow; and that while he was so occupied Ney was doing all the harm his hot head and by no means clear brain could bring about.

It was by no means the first time that Napoleon had trusted his famous lieutenants, but it was precisely the time when he could not afford to be mistaken in his trust, and, as the event proved, he was fatally mistaken. Ney might have retrieved the mistakes of Grouchy. Grouchy might have counterbalanced the errors of Ney. But nothing of this happened. On the contrary, the two sets of calamitous blunders reinforced one another, and the effect was cumulative and ruinous. At the last panic seized the troops which had been led so recklessly to the slaughter by Ney, and then even Napoleon became powerless to deal with them: was, in fact, himself overcome by their mad rush and borne from the field he was still trying to save.

But it was then too late. "Sauve qui peut!" was the general cry, and Wellington fixed the fate of the day when he gave that historic order: "Let the whole line advance!" In dealing with the Duke's share in the great campaign Mr. Ropes criticises his preparations with considerable pungency, and certainly his statements fully warrant the conclusion that Wellington was as nearly as possible taken by surprise at Waterloo. That he was misled as to the preparedness of his troops by the mistakes of his chief-of-staff is not to be doubted. He, in his turn, misled Blucher, and upon these misstatements he based his dispositions for the battle. So serious did the results of this inaccurate knowledge of the numbers and propinquity of the available forces threaten to be, that in all probability nothing but the equally serious blunders of the French could have saved the situation. The English fought stubbornly and well. No troops could have done better. And their commander displayed wonderful grasp of the situation, taking instant advantage of every chance to get ahead. But Wellington did right to pray that day for "night or Blucher," for his reserves were all used up, and his best troops terribly mauled long before the Prussians were signalled in the distance.

The critique of Mr. Ropes is characterized by a penetration, a lucidity and a catholicity beyond all praise. It is so clearly written that the lay reader can follow it from beginning to end with unflagging interest, and the atlas of maps which is designed to accompany the history furnishes every possible aid to the student. Until recently Siborne's "History of the Waterloo Campaign" was held in high estimation by military critics, but Mr. Ropes has been able to demonstrate that Siborne was led into several important errors, and that even when the truth was made manifest he did not always accept it with the candor to have been expected in the circumstances. In this volume, however, we have a history of the Waterloo campaign which seems almost absolutely free from partisanship and prejudice of any kind; which is based upon a most thorough examination both of all the authorities extant, and of the country which was the scene of the campaign; which betrays no pre-accepted theory, involves no enmities, but is just what it pretends to be, namely, an honest, straightforward and thorough study, undertaken with a single eye to the ascertainment of the truth. It is, we think, a work of which the authors may well be proud, and which must take its place as standard, if not as decidedly the best history of the campaign of Waterloo, without delay or doubt.

CRIMINOLOGY.

A DIFFICULT AND IMPORTANT SUBJECT.

CRIMINOLOGY. By Arthur MacDonald. With an Introduction by Dr. Cesare Lombroso. 12mo, pp. 416. Funk & Wagnalls Company.

The author of this work has prepared himself for the study of criminology by investigations which may almost be termed exhaustive. Beginning with special courses in the University of Rochester, Princeton and Andover Theological Seminaries, Union Theological Seminary, Harvard University, Johns Hopkins University, University of Berlin, University of Leipsic, University of Paris, Universities of Zurich and Vienna, and Clark University, Worcester, Mass., he proceeded to visit and examine the principal prisons and penitentiaries in England, France, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Italy and the United States. In order to penetrate as far as possible the criminal mind, he had himself locked in the cells with criminals, and in every possible way he sought to investigate the problems presented by this difficult and important subject.

Notwithstanding all this preparation and experiment, however, it must be said that Mr. MacDonald's book, clear and thoughtful as it certainly is, leaves an impression of ineffectiveness. This, however, must in fairness be ascribed to the complexity of the problems presented. The difficulties of dealing with crime are more and more generally recognized as the work of criminology is pushed as it has been during the last generation. A really enormous literature has grown up around the subject, as is very strikingly shown in the extensive bibliography (the first of its kind) which constitutes an important feature of this volume. The general tendency of this literature, which represents an immense amount of patient and intelligent research, is to throw into strong relief the main inherent difficulties of the problem with which society everywhere is called upon to deal. Society in the first place makes its own criminals. But, having made them, it is unable to control, much less to cure, them. The State cannot discriminate nicely between the several classes. It must act broadly and generally, so far as can at present be seen. It may indeed effect some good perhaps by employing the principal of indeterminate sentences, which the most experienced penologists have combined in approving. But it cannot deal with the individual criminal as the latter ought to be dealt with; nor would the structure of society render it possible to carry out such individual reforms.

The criminal as a rule enters the world handicapped by heredity. He is the scapegoat who carries the sins of past generations. His mental and physical aptitudes both impel him toward crime. It is in his blood, and generally it is also in the very air he breathes. All his early associations tend to familiarize him with it; all his inherited propensities urge him to adopt it as his vocation. And society can do no better for its own protection than to lock him up in company with some hundreds of other men whose lives have been moulded by the same sinister influences. Mr. MacDonald in this volume reaches the conclusion that every prison ought to be a reformatory. Well and good. But, first, should not the efficiency of the existing reformatory plans be put beyond question? Do any of those systems really meet the evils they are aimed at? Do they, in actual practice, reform the criminal? It seems to us that this is the crucial question, and that it should be settled conclusively before going any further in experimentalism.

Statistics upon this vital point are difficult to find. What percentage of the criminals who have been through any of the modern reformatory systems continue to be law-abiding persons subsequently? How many of them return to crime? Many, we know, have done so through sheer desperation, hounded by society, refused honorable employment, thrust away when they sought it, tracked and exposed by the police, treated as lepers wherever they turned. Of course this is not the fault of any reformatory plan; none the less must it be taken into account in estimating the prospects of such systems. If reform ceases at the prison door, and the freed prisoner is instantly flung back into an atmosphere of temptation made doubly dangerous by a general suspicion which issues in general inhumanity, what can be the prospect for real and lasting diminution of crime anywhere?

Education, say many reformers, will do nearly everything. But here the education which blights and ruins begins at the cradle, and by the time the child is old enough to read its character (already vitiated by heredity) is formed for evil. Mr. MacDonald's pages furnish abundant evidence of this, and pitiable enough most of the stories are. There would, indeed, seem to be little or no hope for a large proportion of criminals. Born tainted, reared in an atmosphere of immorality, how can they be saved from what seems their predestined fate? As a matter of fact we know that a large percentage of them fall and remain fallen, and society is in the main responsible for these wrecked lives. The questions which arise to daunt and bewilder the serious student of criminology go, indeed, to the very roots of civilization. They constitute an indictment which, sooner or later, will have to be pleaded to. They may afford the basis of a judgment which cannot be escaped.

Penology is not, and perhaps never can be, an exact science. It deals with the fluctuating ethical influences which control that great mystery, the human heart. The deeper its problems are probed, however, the plainer does it appear that any really successful scheme of criminal reform—any scheme, that is, which will diminish crime by curing the disposition to it—must proceed upon principles not less catholic than those of medicine. And it is truly a therapeutic system that is needed—one which will at once prevent the propagation of the criminal diathesis, and will remove the conditions under which the criminal disposition grows and flourishes. But, it may be said, all this seems to involve something not less formidable than a world reformation. And that is the simple truth. The world has for ages been paltering with the dark problems which underlie social organization. It has when possible covered them up and ignored them. But they will not remain ignored. They thrust themselves always into view, and become more menacing the more they are neglected. At the present time there is a sincere disposition to examine them frankly and to find, if that be possible, a solution of them. Mr. MacDonald's book is a contribution in this direction, but while the spirit is excellent and the method scientific, no candid reader can fail to see that the difficulties in the way are tremendous, and that some of the most imperative preliminaries of practical and enduring reform appear, thus far, to be unattainable.

LITERARY NOTES.

Dr. Georg Ebers, being a wise financier as well as an entertaining novelist, doesn't intend to let other people make money out of the interesting narrative of his experiences on this round world. He wants it himself. He has therefore taken Time by the forelock and is about to publish his autobiography. The American edition will be brought out by Appleton.

Mr. Richard Hovey's elegy on T. W. Parsons, the poet, is to be published in book form by the D. Lothrop Company. It is called "Seaward." A portrait of Parsons will accompany it.

Mr. Kipling writes to Mr. Heinemann that "the minute a publisher stirs to do anything, every author whose books do not sell howls 'Barabbas!'"—a statement which seems to be at once vague and sweeping.

Dr. Rolfe says in "Poet-Lore" that the original manuscript of "Locksley Hall" (or one of the original manuscripts) "is in the possession of a gentleman in Massachusetts, to whose father it was presented by the author many years ago. It has some interesting variations from the published poem, but the owner is pledged as his father was, not to allow these to get into print, though he occasionally shows them in confidence to his intimate friends. I shall not tell who he is, for obvious reasons. When at Aldworth this last summer I asked Mr. Hallam Tennyson if he was aware of the existence of this manuscript. He replied that he was, and gave me some particulars concerning it which I had not learned on this side of the ocean."

In some selections from various hitherto unpublished letters of John Ruskin, quoted by "Poet-Lore," we find this characteristic sentence, "There is no way in which that verse—'The Fool hath said in his heart, No God'—was ever so completely fulfilled as in the modern idea that political economy depends on iniquity instead of equity."

Professor T. R. Lounsbury has finished his edition of Chaucer's "House of Fame," and it is going through the press of Ginn & Co. The same publishers announce a collection, "English Poets of the Seventeenth Century, from Donne to Dryden," edited by Professor Briggs, of Harvard.

A book which promises to be of much value to students of the Bible is now in the Cambridge University Press. It is a collection of popular articles on the history and archaeology of the Bible, and it is to be called "The Cambridge Companion to the Bible." The various articles have been written by distinguished scholars, whose aim has been to incorporate the latest results, both of criticism and exploration, to show how the composite material of the text was gathered together; to explain the relation of the several books to one another, and to give a continuous narrative of the religious history of Israel. When bound up as a supplement to the Reference Bible, the whole will constitute "The Cambridge Teachers' Bible." The work will include a glossary of Bible words, a concordance, and an entirely new set of maps.

Mr. John Addington Symonds has had an unusual experience with an Edinburgh compositor. One of this eminent author's books was in course of printing when this Scotch compositor, not feeling quite satisfied with the moral tone of the "copy," wrote to Mr. Symonds in The Tyrol, communicating his scruples as to proceeding with its composition. The Ballantynes dismissed the printer; but Mr. Symonds sent him a courteous note in answer to his letter.

There are pleasant lines in a recent English poem addressed to Jane Austen—a poem rejoicing in "this quaint, old-fashioned voice," as country-folk, who "dinned with the pavement's clash and roar"

Through April's hedgerows hear again
The blackbird's whistle in the lane.

"The Saturday Review" has actually praised an American book! The work which has stirred the tip-tilted English weekly to this strange action is Captain Mahan's powerful book on "The Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire." "This is a book," says the critic, "which every Englishman should read with pleasure, modified by some prickings of shame. The pleasure will be caused partly by the intrinsic merits of Captain Mahan's own work; but as, with all due thanks to the author, we may be permitted to say, in a still greater degree by the singularly commanding figure made by England in the story told here with so much lucidity and spirit. That the figure is so commanding in these pages is also in a certain measure one of Captain Mahan's merits; for if England supplied the matter, we have to thank his skill as an interpreter and expositor for the form. The prickings of shame of which we have spoken will be felt by every patriotic and fairly instructed reader when he reflects that it should have fallen to an American naval officer to give what we have no hesitation in describing as the first adequate demonstration of the controlling part played by the English navy in the great revolutionary wars, of which the campaigns of Napoleon, and his schemes of universal conquest, were only the later part."

Mr. Richard le Galienne, in his new little book of verse, takes a grieved and discouraged view of the poetic trade. "What shall I sing," he asks, "when all is sung?"

What shall I sing when all is sung,
And every tale is told,
And in the world is nothing young
That was not long since old?

Why should I fret unwilling ears
With old things sung anew,
While voices from the old dead years
Still go on singing too?

A dead man singing of his maid
Makes all my rhymes in vain,
Yet his poor lips must fade and fade,
And mine shall kiss again.

Why should I strive through weary moons
To make my music true?
Only the dead men knew the tunes
The live world dances to.

Mr. Frederick A. Ober's book, "In the Wake of Columbus," is coming from the press. Its title indicates clearly enough its subject—a careful account of a journey taken in the track of the admiral. It will have many illustrations. Mr. Ober, by the way, clings to the conviction that Watling's Island was the first land on this side of the Atlantic to be discovered by Columbus.

The "Omar Khayzam Club," founded in London not long ago, is said to be increasing in numbers and influence. It is sardonically pointed out that well-known men in art and letters thereat assemble, partly for the purpose of delivering neat speeches in praise of Omar Khayzam—and each other.

In one of the letters of Flaubert, just published, occurs this passage: "The main thing in the world is to keep one's soul in a lofty region far from the slimy depths of industrialism and democracy. The cult of art inspires pride, and one has never enough pride." To Mrs. Tennant he wrote: "There is just one rule for artists: Be as regular and orderly in your life as a business man, so that you may be violent and original in your works."

Mr. J. L. Robertson declares that the line "like angels' visits, few and far between," was "conveyed" by Campbell from Blair; and that Burns also borrowed many things from the author of "The Grave."

Forthcoming books, now on the Macmillan press, are S. Dana Horton's volume, "The Duke of Wellington's Plan, and Other Papers," and Henry James's collection of stories entitled "The Real Thing."

A FEW VALENTINES.

(These Valentines are printed from advance sheets with the distinct understanding that they shall not be read until the 14th inst.)

CLEVELAND TO MURPHY, JR.

Oh, Murphy, let me call you mine,
My tender heart is ready
To take you for its Valentine
If you will let it, Eddie.
Believe me 'tis an A. 1 -heart,
Strong, saccharine and steady,
Dear Eddie!

But yesterday you found me coy—
You know you did, you sweet, you;
I branded you "that man" from Troy,
I tried my best to beat you;
But what's a little thing like that
Since now I fondly greet you,
Dear Eddie!

Would you your Grover like to please,
His love confirming ever?
Oh, then, confirm my nominees,
And I'll desert you, never.
Agreed! Then you're my Valentine
And naught our hearts shall sever,
Dear Eddie!

NEW-YORK TO BROOKLYN.

If thou wilt but come to me, Brooklyn, Brooklyn,
I'll love thee like sixty and never will vex thee
Thy weal will I serve with supremest devotion,
If only, my own, thou wilt let me annex thee!

My heart eager swims to thee, Brooklyn, Brooklyn,
Though the East River waves have the coldness of zero.
'Twas thus that Leander, that daring, damp lover,
Went courting his sweetheart, the ravishing Hero!

Thou art my one Valentine, Brooklyn, Brooklyn,
Ah, deep with thy manifold charms I am smitten,
Our troth let us plight on thy beautiful bridge-way—
Pray give me your hand and don't give me a mitten!

My passion's a lava stream, Brooklyn, Brooklyn,
That's rushing red hot from the depths of a crater,
Thou knowest, my dear, as The Great I am greeted,
But blessed with thy love I'll be hailed as The Greater!

Were the two of us one, O Brooklyn, Brooklyn,
How fair would be shining the future's vast vista,
Then smile on my suit nor confound me by saying,
"Excuse me, New-York, I can be but thy sister!"

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER BOY TO THE KEELEY MOTOR.

"There is no joy but calm."

O mighty moveless motor, here's to thee,
One touch of halting makes us kin, we know,
No gadder thou, thou'rt never on the go,
And hence, my dear, thou'rt much admired of me.
Whene'er thy famous name I hear or see,
I rest awhile, to let my bosom glow
With fervent admiration—here's to we,
Or here's to us, just as the case may be.
I've stayed my steps—while rushing with a letter—
That I might sonnetize my ardent thanks:
Thou see'st our brother snail and goeth him better;
Thine is a record which his own outranks:—
O, Valentine, thou dost my heart firm fetter,
Thou favorite child of slowness, aye her Nancy Hanks!

E. ELLERY TO CRISP.

(Explaining a Dinner Incident.)

I.

Speech is but silvern, and its coins, alas!
Too often are tabooed—they cannot pass,
And men remark, as on their ears they fall,
"Ah, don't—desist—pray stop—Oh, hire a hall!"
Not so with silence: from its mints outpour
Coins fashioned solely from the gold's pure ore,
No awkward discount e'er their scutcheon mars,
They pass as current as the current stars—
Aye, bright and beautiful they ever gleam
As Grover hallowed in a Mugwump's dream!

II.

Now, Crisp, attention! When I saw thee last
Thy classic features were with gloom o'ercast;
Thou took'st on awful, fierce upbraiding me;
And yet, my dear, I did my best by thee!
No silvern recognition, love, was thine
(Speaking of love, thou art my Valentine);
I did not summon thee, it is my boast,
To speak responsive to some tattered toast;
Oh, no; said I, "Dear Crisp, I could not rest
If I should fail to have thee at thy best,
Firm in thy mouth an ample gag I hold,
Speech is but silvern, thou shalt give us gold!"

P. S.

Upon my word I really, truly like thee:
Pray tell me how this frank amende does strike thee.

THE MAN BEHIND IT TO THE THEATRE BONNET.

If you my valentine would be,
Come off!
For o'er your heights I cannot see—
Come off!
Oh, check yourself with Beauty's wrap,
Or rest yourself on Beauty's lap,
Or change yourself into a cap—
Come off!

When I a costly seat engage,
Come off!
I'd really like to see the stage—
Come off!
But as it is I vainly stare—
The view is hid, I can but swear—
Oh, tell me, Bonnet, is it fair?
Come off!

I want you for my valentine—
Come off!
To me you are a thing divine—
Come off!
Wouldst thou thy dazzling charms enhance
And to my heart of hearts advance?
Then give me, here behind, a chance—
Come off!

Oh, list to duty's pleading voice—
Come off!
So shall my hampered eyes rejoice—
Come off!
Let not a love of incense sway you;
Shrink from the public gaze I pray you.
Oh, Bonnet, Bonnet, dear, what say you?
Come off!

UNCLE SAM TO LILIUOKALANI.

Sweet Liliuokalani!
Dear Liliuokalani!
Turn not away
From me, I pray—
Oh, stay with me, my darling, stay,
Sweet Liliuokalani!

Come, Liliuokalani!
Fair Liliuokalani!
Just lean on me,
And I'll agree
Your Knight to be,
Great mistress of Pacific's sea,
O Liliuokalani!

Ah, Liliuokalani!
Say, Liliuokalani!
And have you thought
If I you court
You really ought
To tell me what you're called for short?
O Liliuokalani!

O goddess great of Liberty!
My goddess great of Liberty!
Now talk not pert,
Nor treat me curt,
And don't look hurt,
Or say that I'm an awful flirt,
O goddess great of Liberty!

O goddess great of Liberty!
My goddess great of Liberty!
I love you still,
And always will,
My heart you fill,
But then I something owe to Lili,
O goddess great of Liberty!

O Lilly, you're a loolah girl,
In fact a Honolulu girl,
So on the sly—
No goddess by—
Sub rosa I "
This valentine at you will shy,
Sweet Liliuokalani!

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THE CHRONICLE OF ARTS.

EXHIBITIONS AND OTHER TOPICS.

CURRENT AND COMING EVENTS—THE ETCHING CLUB—A PAINTING BY TURNER—THE NEW PLATE AFTER THE "ATHENAEUM," WASHINGTON.

New-York is now in the full tide of its artistic season. Every one of the larger galleries has, or is to have this week, an exhibition holding, and the minor galleries are also active in the field. At the Academy the Water Color Society and the Etching Club are meeting with prosperity, as figures given below will attest. At the Fifth Avenue Art Galleries is the Richmond collection, reviewed elsewhere in The Tribune to-day, and the loan exhibition at the Fine Arts Society's building, which is also treated on another page, opens to the public to-morrow. The latter is to last for one month. On Tuesday, at the American Art Galleries, there will be a press view of the Orientalia belonging to a German ambassador, announced a short time ago, as well as of what is described as the "Robert J. Wickenden collection." The exhibition of Evert van Muyden's work, promised by Mr. Keppel, will presumably be opened soon. From the Sharp Art School we have received word that Mr. W. L. Fraser will lecture in its rooms, at No. 744 Broadway, on "Illustration," on the evening of the 22d.

Following is a partial list of the pictures sold at the water color exhibition since our last announcement on this head was published: "The Solo," by W. V. Birney, $150; "A September Garden," by W. H. Gibson, $150; "Spring Days," by A. Parton, $150; "Repose," by C. F. Pierce, $150; "An Arrangement in Yellow," by C. W. Parrish, $50; "Quiet Day in a Harbor," by C. T. Chapman, $125; "Sympathy," by C. Crum, $175; "Elise," by F. Fowler, $150; "At the Boat Builders', Venice," by H. P. Smith, $275; "September Moonrise," by J. H. Moser, $275; "Abandoned," by C. Parsons, $125. One hundred and thirty-three pictures have been sold for $14,107. The Etching Club's sales since the opening day have reached a total of $805.

The Etching Club is progressing steadily, though not, perhaps, with extraordinary rapidity, along the path marked out for itself on the comparatively recent remodelling of its plan of campaign. The producers of mere quantity, in blocks to suit the vitiated taste of a certain contingent of dealers and private buyers, have been suppressed, and the producers who uniformly try for quality, and sometimes get it, have the annual exhibition to themselves. Last year it was so and this year there is not a plate in the corridor at the Academy which could be rejected on the score of that erstwhile besetting sin of the club, bald story telling committed in a bald, mechanical style. It must be discouraging to those members who are working hard to make the exhibitions successful that some of the strongest artists in the club have not lent their aid upon this occasion. Messrs. Bacher, Platt, Lathrop and Pennell and Mrs. Moran are conspicuous by their absence. But the etchers who have set this exhibition on its feet have performed their task well. Mr. Alden Weir's portraits, Mr. Schilling's landscapes, and the studies of scenes about New-York by Mr. Mielatz are all works in which refined and original taste is seconded by cleverness of execution. A cordial greeting is always to be extended to the artist who has a sympathetic eye for the picturesqueness residing in a city's streets and who has the hand to reproduce it. There are no more interesting etchings in this collection than those by Mr. Mielatz of the entrance to the Brooklyn Bridge, Castle Garden and subjects of a similar sort. They report a little too much, and we think a more stenographic, more curtly suggestive as well as a somewhat lighter touch would improve Mr. Mielatz's art. But as it is it has sincerity to recommend it, and though it is not fully developed, it is not weak. While we prefer it in the outdoor subjects it must be added that the most satisfactorily finished of Mr. Mielatz's plates is No. 79, a dry point of some annunciation lilies, grouped around a cross. Of Mr. Robertson K. Mygatt's work it is possible to speak in very favorable terms. It is uncommonly firm in line—the touch frequently suggests the crisp force of the burin—and in two little landscapes, "Day Dream, Housatonic River," and "Study of Willows, Stockbridge," the treatment of foliage and tree-limbs and twigs has a charm of elegance which is full of promise. Plates by Mr. T. R. Manley and Mr. Reginald Coxe show some capacity in the application of painter-like feeling to problems of etching. They show also an imperfect command of pure and strong linear effects, effects which are rare indeed in this exhibition, for although many of the American exhibitors are clever, none is a downright master, save, possibly, Mr. Alden Weir, and he persists in remaining a master in embryo. A couple of pretty designs by Mr. Church are included in the exhibition, and there are plates by Mr. R. F. Bloodgood, Miss Cassatt and Miss Billaye which stand out among their fellows. The foreign group, which is as usual a feature, is this season composed of two of Legros's finest works, the "Death of a Vagabond," and a stormy landscape; a seine sketch by Norbert Goeneutte, a soft-ground plate by "Old Crome," and a beautiful little landscape by Andrew Geddes, who had a curiously Rembrandtish way with him. Altogether there are 149 etchings in the exhibition, which is worth seeing, and in some respects worth remembering. That it may not be forgotten, the club has issued another of its illustrated and handsomely printed catalogues.

Eugene Jettel is a landscapist of Austria, trained there and in France, and working mainly, we believe, in the latter country. A score or so of his paintings at the Avery gallery will make him more familiar than he is to American amateurs. They are accompanied by a note, printed in the catalogue, which in a very sanguine manner hints that Jettel is the peer of Cazin and Mauve. To the impartial reviewer it may be permitted to doubt this. Painting in a light key, depicting the fresh greens of rich meadow land and the transparent surfaces of still streams and ponds, Jettel obtains artistic effects, with a delicate kind of beauty in them. Some of the French landscapes in this collection, Nos. 6, 11 and 16, to mention the best, are truthfully done and are original in style. They have atmosphere, moreover. The newcomer—for although one or two of his paintings have been brought to this country before, he is a newcomer—is a colorist and brushman of undoubted merit. Yet his originality is not strong, there is no racy interest in his handling, and he does not strike us as a particularly brilliant acquisition. Reichard's gallery should be visited for the sake of seven pictures by Mr. Winslow Homer, which are there for a short time prior to their departure for the Chicago Fair. They include some of his oils of hunting scenes in the Adirondacks, and of fishermen in their dories on the Grand Banks, besides coast scenes, such as the well-known "Sailors Take Warning," with its blood-red luminary. All have been seen before, but can never be seen too often, even those with defects. Further down the avenue, in Mr. Macbeth's window, is a study of sunlit surf, by Mr. Bicknell, who does not often provide a sensation, but has this time put a glow into his picture that will not leave any regret in the mind of whoever crosses the roadway to see it.

A Turner of the first magnitude is a rarity in the shops. But then so is a Turner of poor quality. Even in his studies and unimportant pictures he is the wizard that he is in his most rounded dreams. The Venetian fantasia which is at present on exhibition in the rear of Bouton's bookstore on Twenty-eighth-st. ranks as a Turner with much that that implies, though it may not rank with the masterpieces of the National Gallery. The Salute, prominently, and the Doge's Palace dimly, figure in it. The point of view from which the picture was executed is not easily identified, for much of the architecture is vaguely painted in and the topography of the composition does not check readily with the topography remembered of the city. Still this does not matter. Turner's Venice always recalls Mr. Pater's phrase. It is not so much fact as it is imaginative sense of fact, and architectural details in the picture at Bouton's are forgotten for the sake of the throbbing coloration. It is a fine piece of sensuous painting, loosely, sketchily, but for all that brilliantly executed.

Some American hotels have long rivalled private residences in luxuriousness, and latterly a few of them have been made artistic in a way that private owners might imitate. The Hotel Imperial has some ceiling and wall decorations by Dewing, Maynard and Abbey which any connoisseur would be proud to possess. In the new Hotel Waldorf there are some decorations of a high character, which it will be interesting to study when they shall all have been completed and their surroundings reduced to order. Now the interior of the building is a chaos. Mr. Low has done a large ceiling for the ladies' reception-room, the ballroom has three panels in the ceiling by Mr. Frank Fowler, in the cafe there is a charming frieze and mediaeval German figures by Mr. Maynard, and in the dining-room Mr. F. Crowninshield has adorned the ceiling and overmantel with painted decorations. There are stained glass and formal decoration about the building by Mr. Maitland Armstrong.

We have received from Messrs. Knoedler & Co. a proof of the photogravure referred to in this place last Sunday as having been executed by Elson & Co., of Boston, after the "Athenaeum" Washington, of Gilbert Stuart. A good reproduction of this portrait or of the Lansdowne full length now in Lord Rosebery's possession is the best memorial of Washington that any one could find, and the reproduction before us is very good indeed. Stuart's portraits of Washington have the distinction of being as artistic as they are veracious. The pictorial beauty of the Boston painting would preserve it from oblivion though its subject were of no interest whatever to mankind. This new plate reproduces its textures, its delicately graded lights and darks, and its style. We hope it will prove a popular success. The black and white portrait of Washington is an inferior thing as a rule. This one has been made by a mechanical process, but not by any means in a mere mechanical fashion. It has been tastefully gotten up, with nothing on the margin in addition to the small copyright legend, save a reproduction after a pen sketch of Stuart by himself.