

REVIEWS

THE CLOUD ON THE SANCTUARY. By COUNCILLOR VON ECKARTSHAUSEN.
William Rider and Son.

We shall be very sorry if any of our readers misses this little book, a translation from the French translation of the German original into the pretty broken English of Madame de Steyer.

It was this book which first made your reviewer aware of the existence of a secret mystical assembly of saints, and determined him to devote his whole life, without keeping back the least imaginable thing, to the purpose of making himself worthy to enter that circle. We shall be disappointed if the book has any less effect on any other reader.

The perusal of the notes may be omitted with advantage. N.

THE BUDDHIST REVIEW. Quarterly. 1s.

Unwilling as I am to sap the foundations of the Buddhist religion by the introduction of Porphyry's terrible catapult, Allegory, I am yet compelled by the more fearful ballista of Aristotle, Dilemma. This is the two-handed engine spoken of by the prophet Milton !*

This is the horn of the prophet Zeruiah, and with this am I, though no Syrian, utterly pushed, till I find myself back against the dead wall of Dogma. Only now realising how dead a wall that is, do I turn and try the effect of a hair of the dog that bit me, till the orthodox "literary" † school of Buddhists, as grown at Rangoon, exclaim with Lear : "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is To have an intellect !" How is this ? Listen and hear !

I find myself confronted with the crux : that, a Buddhist convinced intellectually and philosophically of the truth of the teaching of Gotama ; a man to whom Buddhism is the equivalent of scientific methods of Thought ; an expert in dialectic, whose logical faculty is bewildered, whose critical admiration is extorted by the subtle vigour of Buddhist reasoning ; I am yet forced to admit that, this being so, the Five Precepts ‡ are mere nonsense. If the

* *Lycidas*, line 130.

† The school whose Buddhism is derived from the Canon, and who ignore the degradation of the professors of the religion, as seen in practice.

‡ The obvious caveat which logicians will enter against these remarks is that Pansil is the Five Virtues rather than Precepts. Etymologically this is so. However, we may regard this as a clause on my side of the argument, not against it ; for in my view these are virtues, and the impossibility of attaining them is the cancer of existence. Indeed, I support the etymology as against the futile bigotry of certain senile Buddhists of to-day. And, since it is the current interpretation of Buddhistic thought that I attack, I but show myself the better Buddhist in the act.

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Buddha spoke scientifically, not popularly, not rhetorically, then his precepts are not his. We must reject them or we must interpret them. We must inquire: Are they meant to be obeyed? Or—and this is my theory—are they sarcastic and biting criticisms on existence, illustrations of the First Noble Truth; *reasons*, as it were, for the apotheosis of annihilation? I shall show that this is so.

THE FIRST PRECEPT.

This forbids the taking of life in any form.* What we have to note is the impossibility of performing this; if we can prove it to be so, either Buddha was a fool, or his command was rhetorical, like those of Yahweh to Job, or of Tannhäuser to himself:

“Go! seek the stars and count them and explore!
Go! sift the sands beyond a starless sea!”

Let us consider what the words can mean. The “Taking of Life” can only mean the reduction of living protoplasm to dead matter: or, in a truer and more psychological sense, the destruction of personality.

Now, in the chemical changes involved in Buddha’s speaking this command, living protoplasm was changed into dead matter. Or, on the other horn, the fact (insisted upon most strongly by the Buddha himself, the central and cardinal point of his doctrine, the shrine of that Metaphysic which isolates it absolutely from all other religious metaphysic, which allies it with Agnostic Metaphysic) that the Buddha who had spoken this command was not the same as the Buddha before he had spoken it, lies the proof that the Buddha, by speaking this command, violated it. More, not only did he slay himself; he breathed in millions of living organisms and slew them. He could not eat nor drink nor breathe without murder implicit in each act. Huxley cites the “pitiless microscopist” who showed a drop of water to the Brahmin who boasted himself “Ahimsa”—harmless. So among the “rights” of a Bhikkhu is medicine. He who takes quinine does so with the deliberate intention of destroying innumerable living beings; whether this is done by stimulating the phagocytes, or directly, is morally indifferent.

How such a fiend incarnate, my dear brother Ananda Metteya, can call

* Fielding Hall, in “The Soul of a People,” has reluctantly to confess that he can find no trace of this idea in Buddha’s own work, and calls the superstition the “echo of an older Faith.”

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him "cruel and cowardly" who only kills a tiger, is a study in the philosophy of the mote and the beam! *

Far be it from me to suggest that this is a defence of breathing, eating, and drinking. By no means; in all these ways we bring suffering and death to others, as to ourselves. But since these are inevitable acts, since suicide would be a still more cruel alternative (especially in case something should subsist below mere Rupa), the command is not to achieve the impossible, the already violated in the act of commanding, but a bitter commentary on the foul evil of this aimless, hopeless universe, this compact of misery, meanness, and cruelty. Let us pass on.

THE SECOND PRECEPT.

The Second Precept is directed against theft. Theft is the appropriation to one's own use of that to which another has a right. Let us see therefore whether or no the Buddha was a thief. The answer of course is in the affirmative. For to issue a command is to attempt to deprive another of his most precious possession—the right to do as he will; that is, unless, with the predestinarians, we hold that action is determined absolutely, in which case, of course, to command is as absurd as it is unavoidable. Excluding this folly, therefore, we may conclude that if the command be obeyed—and those of Buddha have gained a far larger share of obedience than those of any other teacher—the Enlightened One was not only a potential but an actual thief. Further, all voluntary action limits in some degree, however minute, the volition of others. If I breathe, I diminish the stock of oxygen available on the planet. In those far distant ages when Earth shall be as dead as the moon is to-day, my breathing now will have robbed some being then living of the dearest necessity of life.

That the theft is minute, incalculably trifling, is no answer to the moralist, to whom degree is not known; nor to the man of science, who sees the chain of nature miss no link.

If, on the other hand, the store of energy in the universe be indeed constant (whether infinite or no), if personality be indeed delusion, then theft becomes impossible, and to forbid it is absurd. We may argue that even so temporary theft may exist; and that this is so is to my mind no doubt the case. All theft is temporary, since even a millionaire must die; also it is universal, since even a Buddha must breathe.

* The argument that "the animals are our brothers" is merely intended to mislead one who has never been in a Buddhist country. The average Buddhist would, of course, kill his brother for five rupees, or less.

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THE THIRD PRECEPT.

This precept, against adultery, I shall touch but lightly. Not that I consider the subject unpleasant—far from it!—but since the English section of my readers, having unclean minds, will otherwise find a fulcrum therein for their favourite game of slander. Let it suffice if I say that the Buddha—in spite of the ridiculous membrane legend,* one of those foul follies which idiot devotees invent only too freely—was a confirmed and habitual adulterer. It would be easy to argue with Hegel-Huxley that he who thinks of an act commits it (*cf.* Jesus also in this connection, though he only knows the creative value of desire), and that since A and not-A are mutually limiting, therefore interdependent, therefore identical, he who forbids an act commits it; but I feel that this is no place for metaphysical hair-splitting; let us prove what we have to prove in the plainest way.

I would premise in the first place that to commit adultery in the Divorce Court sense is not here in question.

It assumes too much proprietary right of a man over a woman, that root of all abomination!—the whole machinery of inheritance, property, and all the labyrinth of law.

We may more readily suppose that the Buddha was (apparently at least) condemning incontinence.

We know that Buddha had abandoned his home; true, but Nature has to be reckoned with. Volition is no necessary condition of offence. "I didn't mean to" is a poor excuse for an officer failing to obey an order.

Enough of this—in any case a minor question; since even on the lowest moral grounds—and we, I trust, soar higher!—the error in question may be resolved into a mixture of murder, theft, and intoxication. (We consider the last under the Fifth Precept.)

THE FOURTH PRECEPT.

Here we come to what in a way is the fundamental joke of these precepts. A command is not a lie, of course; possibly cannot be; yet surely an allegorical order is one in essence, and I have no longer a shadow of a doubt that these so-called "precepts" are a species of savage practical joke.

Apart from this there can hardly be much doubt, when critical exegesis has done its damndest on the Logia of our Lord, that Buddha did at some time

* *Membrum virile illius in membrana inclusum esse aiunt, ne copulare posset.*

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commit himself to some statement. “(Something called) Consciousness exists” is, said Huxley, the irreducible minimum of the pseudo-syllogism, false even for an enthymeme, “Cogito, ergo sum!” This proposition he bolsters up by stating that whoso should pretend to doubt it would thereby but confirm it. Yet might it not be said “(Something called) Consciousness appears to itself to exist,” since Consciousness is itself the only witness to that confirmation? Not that even now we can deny some kind of existence to consciousness, but that it should be a more real existence than that of a reflection is doubtful, incredible, even inconceivable. If by consciousness we mean the normal consciousness, it is definitely untrue, since the Dhyanic consciousness includes it and denies it. No doubt “something called” acts as a kind of caveat to the would-be sceptic, though the phrase is bad, implying a “calling.” But we can guess what Huxley means.

No doubt Buddha’s scepticism does not openly go quite as far as mine—it must be remembered that “scepticism” is merely the indication of a possible attitude, not a belief, as so many good fool-folk think; but Buddha not only denies “Cogito, ergo sum”; but “Cogito, ergo non sum.” See *Sabbasava Sutta*, par. 10.

At any rate Sakkyaditthi, the delusion of personality, is in the very forefront of his doctrines; and it is this delusion that is constantly and inevitably affirmed in all normal consciousness. That Dhyanic thought avoids it is doubtful; even so, Buddha is here represented as giving precepts to ordinary people. And if personality be delusion, a lie is involved in the command of one to another. In short, we all lie all the time; we are compelled to it by the nature of things themselves—paradoxical as that seems—and the Buddha knew it!

THE FIFTH PRECEPT.

At last we arrive at the end of our weary journey—surely in this weather we may have a drink! East of Suez,* Trombone-Macaulay (as I may surely say, when Browning writes Banjo-Byron †) tells us, a man may raise a Thirst. No, shrieks the Blessed One, the Perfected One, the Enlightened One, do not drink! It is like the streets of Paris when they were placarded with rival posters:

* “Ship me somewhere East of Suez, where a man may raise a thirst.”
R. KIPLING.

† “While as for Quilp Hop o’ my Thumb there,
Banjo-Byron that twangs the strum-strum there.”

BROWNING, *Pachiarotto* (said of A. Austin).

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Ne buvez pas de l'Alcool !
L'Alcool est un poison !

and

Buvez de l'Alcool !
L'Alcool est un aliment !

We know now that alcohol is a food up to a certain amount ; the precept, good enough for a rough rule as it stands, will not bear close inspection. What Buddha really commands, with that grim humour of his, is: Avoid Intoxication.

But what is intoxication ? unless it be the loss of power to use perfectly a truth-telling set of faculties. If I walk unsteadily it is owing to nervous lies—and so for all the phenomena of drunkenness. But a lie involves the assumption of some true standard, and this can nowhere be found. A doctor would tell you, moreover, that all food intoxicates : all, here as in all the universe, of every subject and in every predicate, is a matter of degree.

Our faculties never tell us true ; our eyes say flat when our fingers say round ; our tongue sends a set of impressions to our brain which our hearing declares non-existent—and so on.

What is this delusion of personality but a profound and centrally-seated intoxication of the consciousness ? I am intoxicated as I address these words ; you are drunk—beastly drunk !—as you read them ; Buddha was as drunk as a voter at election time when he uttered his besotted command. There, my dear children, is the conclusion to which we are brought if you insist that he was serious !

I answer No ! Alone among men then living, the Buddha was sober, and saw Truth. He, who was freed from the coils of the great serpent Theli coiled round the universe, he knew how deep the slaver of that snake had entered into us, infecting us, rotting our very bones with poisonous drunkenness. And so his cutting irony—drink no intoxicating drinks !

When I go to take Pansil,* it is in no spirit of servile morality ; it is with keen sorrow gnawing at my heart. These five causes of sorrow are indeed the heads of the serpent of Desire. Four at least of them snap their fangs on me in and by virtue of my very act of receiving the commands, and of promising to obey them ; if there is a little difficulty about the fifth, it is an omission easily rectified—and I think we should make a point about that ; there is a great virtue in completeness.

* To "take Pansil" is to vow obedience to these Precepts.

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Yes! Do not believe that the Buddha was a fool; that he asked men to perform the impossible or the unwise.* Do not believe that the sorrow of existence is so trivial that easy rules easily interpreted (as all Buddhists do interpret the Precepts) can avail against them; do not mop up the Ganges with a duster; or stop the revolution of the stars with a lever of lath.

Awake, awake only! let there be ever remembrance that Existence is sorrow, sorrow by the inherent necessity of the way it is made; sorrow not by volition, not by malice, not by carelessness, but by nature, by ineradicable tendency, by the incurable disease of Desire, its Creator, is it so, and the way to destroy it is by the uprooting of Desire; nor is a task so formidable accomplished by any threepenny-bit-in-the-plate-on-Sunday morality, the "deceive others and self-deception will take care of itself" uprightness, but by the severe roads of austere self-mastery, of arduous scientific research, which constitute the Noble Eightfold Path.

O. DHAMMALOYU.

JOHN DEE. By CHARLOTTE FELL SMITH. Constable and Co. 10s. 6d. net.

It is only gracious to admit that this book is as good as could possibly have been produced on the subject—the publishers are cordially invited to quote the last fourteen words, and now I can finish my sentence—by a person totally ignorant of the essence thereof.

Dee was an avowed magician; Miss Smith is an avowed intellectual prig. So she can find nothing better to do than to beg the whole question of the validity of Dee's "actions," and that although she admits that the Book of Enoch is unintelligible to her. Worse, she retails the wretched slanders about me current among those who envied me. I was certainly "wanted" for coining. I happened to have found the trick of making gold at a very early age, but had not the sense to exploit it properly; and when I got any sense I got more sense than to waste time in such follies. The slander that I deluded Dee is as baseless. Again and again I tried to break with him, to show him how utterly unreliable it all was. Only his more than paternal

* I do not propose to dilate on the moral truth which Ibsen has so long laboured to make clear: that no hard and fast rule of life can be universally applicable. Also, as in the famous case of the lady who saved (successively) the lives of her husband, her father, and her brother, the precepts clash. To allow to die is to kill—all this is obvious to the most ordinary thinkers. These precepts are of course excellent general guides for the vulgar and ignorant, but you and I, dear reader, are wise and clever, and know better.

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kindness for me kept me with him. God rest him ; I hear he has been reincarnated as W. T. Stead.

For one thing I do most seriously take blame, that my training was too strong for my power to receive spiritual truth. For when the Holy Angels came to instruct me in the great truths, that there is no sin, that the soul passes from house to house, that Jesus was but man, that the Holy Ghost was not a person, I rejected them as false. Ah ! have I not paid bitterly for the error ? Still, the incarnation was not all loss ; not only did I attain the Grade of Major Adept, but left enough secret knowledge (in an available form) to carry me on for a long while. I am getting it back now ; with luck I'll be a Magister Templi soon, if I can only get rid of my giant personality. You may say, by the way, that this is hardly a review of a book on my old master, silly old jossler ! Exactly ; I never cared a dump for him. He was just a text for my sermon then ; and so he is now.

EDWARD KELLEY.

STRANGE HOUSES OF SLEEP. By ARTHUR EDWARD WAITE. William Rider and Sons. 12s. 6d. net.

I have always held Arthur Edward Waite for a good poet ; I am not sure that he is not a great poet ; but that he is a great mystic there can be no manner of doubt.

"Strange Houses of Sleep," conceived in the abyss of a noble mind and brought forth in travail of Chaos that hath been stirred by the Breath, is one of the finest records of Mystical Progress that is possible to imagine.

I may be biased in my judgment by this fact, that long ago when first my young heart stirred within me at the sound of the trumpet—perchance of Israfel—and leapt to grasp with profane hands the Holy Grail, it was to Mr. Waite that I wrote for instruction, it was from him that came the first words of help and comfort that I ever had from mortal man. In all these years I have met him but once, and then within a certain veil ; yet still I can go to his book as a child to his father, without diffidence or doubt ; and indeed he can communicate the Sacrament, the Wafer of his thought, the Wine of his music.

And if in earthly things the instructions of his Master seem contrary to those of mine, at the end it is all one. Shall we cry out if Cæsar for his pleasure commandeth his servants to take one the spear and the other the net, and slay each other ? Is not service service ? Is not obedience a sacrament apart from its accidents ?

However this may be, clear enough it is that Mr. Waite has indeed the key to certain Royal Treasuries. Unfortunately, just as to face the title-page he gives us the portrait of a man in a frock-coat, so within the book we have the

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Muse in a dress-improver and a Bond Street hat. Never mind ; even those who dislike the poetry may love to puzzle out the meaning.

Detailed criticism is here impossible for lack of two illusions, time and space ! I will only add that I was profoundly interested in the final book, "The King's Dole." No mystic who is familiar only with Christian symbolism can afford to neglect this Ritual.

Vale, Frater !

A. C.

THE CLEANSING OF A CITY. Greening and Co. 1s. net.

"Wherefore I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven ; for she loved much : but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little."

JESUS CHRIST.

"But this German woman, pretending to defend the cause of virtue, and to warn women against the perils of the day, produces a book ('The Diary of a Lost One') which it is defilement to touch. . . . Before I had skimmed fifty pages I found my brain swimming ; I nearly swooned."

REV. R. F. HORTON, D.D.

This book should be printed on vellum and locked up in a fire-proof safe in the British Museum, Great Russell Street, W.C. ; so that future ecclesiastical historians and ethicists may learn into what a state of mental menorrhagia the adherents of the Christian Church had fallen at the commencement of the twentieth century.

The "cleansing" part of the business seems to consist in pumping filth into everything that is clean. We are not allowed to talk of leg because every leg adjoins a thigh : soon we shall not be able to put a foot into a boot without first looking to see if some nasty mess has not been deposited in it, and why ? Because foot adjoins leg ! Moreover, foot suggests walking, and walking, like the name of the Rev. Horton, D.D., suggests prostitution—at the thought of this we swoon.

Most of the contributors to this cesspit, like the Rev. Horton, have "D.D." after their names. Dr. Bodie has informed us that "M.D." stands for "Merry Devil" ; perhaps he can also enlighten us as to the true meaning of these two letters ?

ANTOINETTE BOUVIGNON.

THE LIFE OF JOHN DEE. Translated from the Latin of DR. THOMAS SMITH by WM. ALEXR. AYTON. The Theosophical Publishing Society. 1s. net.

Wm. Alexr. Ayton's preface to this book deserves a better subject than Dr. Thomas Smith's "Life of John Dee," which is as dreary dull as a life crammed so full of incidents could be made. In fact, if Dr. Smith had collected all Dr. Dee's washing bills and printed them in Hebrew, the result would scarcely have been more oppressive ; anyhow it would have been as

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interesting to read of how many handkerchiefs the famous seer used when he had a cold as to ponder over the platitudes of this rheumy old leech.

Never since reading "Bothwell" and "Who's Who" have we read such ponderous and pedantic pedagogics. The translator in his preface informs us that Moses and Solomon were adepts; verily hast thou spoke, but thou, Wm. Alexr. Ayton, art greater than either, to have survived such a leaden task as this of putting Dr. Smith's bad Latin into good English; at the completion of it you must have felt like Jacob when "he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost!"

MATTER, SPIRIT, AND THE COSMOS. By H. STANLEY REDGROVE. William Rider and Sons. 2s. 6d.

Big fleas have little fleas
Upon their backs to bite 'em;
Little fleas have smaller fleas,
And so *ad infinitum*.

This book consists of reprinted articles from the *Occult Review*, and some of them are quite entrancing, especially chapter i. "On the Doctrine of the Indestructibility of Matter," and chapters v. and vi. "On the Infinite" and "On the Fourth Dimension."

In the first chapter Mr. Redgrove tries to prove that though matter *cannot* be destroyed, its form can be so utterly changed that it can no longer be treated as such. He illustrates his theory by quoting Sir Oliver Lodge's "knot tied in a bit of string." So long as the knot is, matter is; but when once the knot is untied, though the string remains, the knot vanishes. This, however, is a most fallacious illustration, for, as Gustave le Bon has shown, the destruction of matter implies more than a mere change of "form"; it is an annihilation of gravity itself, and therefore of substance as we understand it. Matter, he shows, goes back unto Equilibrium. But what is Equilibrium? "Nothingness!" this eminent French man of Science declares: "Absolute Nothingness!"

In chapter v. the author points out that as there is an infinite series of infinities, to make Space the "absolute infinite" is the merest of assumptions; he follows up this assertion by declaring that each dimension is bounded by a higher. Thus, the Second Dimension is contained in the Third, and so the Third in the Fourth, *ad infinitum*; each dimension being infinite in itself, and yet contained in a higher, which is again infinite. Thus we get infinity contained within infinity, just as $\cdot 7$ is contained in $\cdot 8$, and $\cdot 8$ in $\cdot 9$; and yet $\cdot 7$ is infinite, and $\cdot 8$ is infinite and $\cdot 9$ is infinite, yet there are not three infinities but one infinite, &c. &c.

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THE MANIAC. A realistic study of Madness from the Maniac's point of view. Rebman Limited. 5s. net.

Only maniacs are recommended to read this book ; its dulness may bring them to their senses. For the first chapter is like the second, and the second like the third, and the third like the fourth, which almost proves the Athanasian Creed ; for all chapters are but one chapter, which is infinitely dull and dismal. In fact this "realistic study" might well have been translated from Dr. Thomas Smith's "Life of John Dee," and goes a long way to prove Mr. Stanley Redgrove's theory of concentric infinities.

The heroine is a lady journalist, unmarried, and on the wrong side of thirty—there's the whole tragedy in a nutshell. Stimulating work, and thirty years of an unstimulating life. Cut off the first syllable from "unmarried," and this unfortunate lady, in spite of Karezza and the Order of Melchisedec, would never have imagined that she had been seduced by a fiend, or have afflicted us with her dreary ravings.

Therefore we advise—Marry, my good woman, marry, and if nobody will have you, well then, don't be too particular, for anything is better than a second book like this !

BATHSHEBAH TINA.

I found "The Maniac" both entertaining and instructive, a very valuable study of psychology. It is so far as I know the only really illuminating book on madness ; and I strongly recommend its perusal to all alienists, psychologists, and members of the grade of Neophyte. It throws an admirable light on the true nature of Obsession and Black Magic.

Two things impressed me in particular. (1) The statement that the arguments held with a patient never reach his consciousness at all, despite his rational answers. This phenomenon is true of my own sane life. I sometimes chat pleasantly to bores for quite a long time without any consciousness that I am doing so. (2) The statement that medical men have no idea of the real contents of a madman's mind. I remember in the County Asylum at Inverness ("Here are the fools, and there are the knaves!" said an inmate, pointing to the city) a man rolling from side to side with an extraordinary regularity and rhythm of swing, emitting a long continuous howl like a wolf. "Last stage of G.P.I." said the doctor ; "he feels absolutely nothing." "How interesting!" said I ; and thought "How the deuce do you know?" I shall be very glad when it is finally proved and admitted that the consciousness is independent of the senses and the intellect. Hashish phenomena, madness phenomena, magical and mystical phenomena, all prove it ; but old Dr. Cundum and young Professor Cuspidor, who can neither of them cure a cold in

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the head, say it isn't so! The "Imbecile Theologians of the Middle Ages" are matched by the imbecile cacologians of our own. I repeat, a very valuable book; a very valuable book indeed.

FRA : O. M.

SELF SYNTHESIS. A means to Perpetual Life. By CORNWELL ROUND. Simpkin, Marshall and Co. 1s. net.

This is a suggestive little book by a man who revolves a matter in his mind before he writes of it, and whose common sense never quits the hub of his thoughts. Mr. Round never rolls off down a side street, but always keeps to the high road between them all. He does not, so at least we read him, wobble more towards mysticism than towards materialism. He believes that a perfect equilibrium between the Subjective mind—S, and the Objective mind—O, produces the Individual mind, which he symbolises as being neither round nor square, but a simple I or line, connecting the S and O. This I is the self-renewing link between these two, which, when it is truly balanced, renders death the most unnatural, in place of the most natural event, that we may expect once we are born.

METHUSELAH.

THE CASE FOR ALCOHOL. Or the Actions of Alcohol on Body and Soul. By ROBERT PARK, M.D. Rebman Limited. 1s. net.

Dr. Park is an old friend of ours; we enjoyed his masterly translation of Ch : Féré's "The Pathology of Emotions," and his various writings in the days of the old *Free Review* and *University Review*, when J. M. Robertson was worth reading, a review (by the way) which was assassinated by the purient pot-scourers who would put a pair of "pants" on Phœbus Apollo, and who presumably take their bath in the dark for fear of expiring in a priapic frenzy at the sight of their own nakedness.

Dr. Park in this most admirable little treatise declares that Alcohol is one of "the good creatures of God"; and that Alcohol is a poison is only true relatively.

"It is not true of the stimulant dosage. It is true of it as a narcotic, in narcotic dosage." . . . "So the objection to the use of Alcohol, because in overdosage it is a poison, is not only futile, but stupid."

Further, Dr. Park writes :

"The burden of responsibility must lie upon the person who so misuses his means. Tea, tobacco, coffee, and beef-tea are frequently so misused, but we hear of no socio-political organisations for interfering with the liberty of individuals in regard to the use of these, or trespassing on the rights of traders and purveyors thereof."

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"Alcohol," Dr. Park declares, "is a food," and not only a food, but an excellent one at that. Put that in your pipes and smoke it, ye Baptist Bible-bangers—but we forget, you do not smoke, in fact you do nothing which is pleasant; you spend your whole lives in looking for the Devil in the most unlikely places, and declare that the only remedy against his craft and his cunning is total immersion in tonic-water and pine-apple syrup.

F.

AN INTERPRETATION OF GENESIS. By THEODORE POWYS.

This is a most mystical interpretation of the most beautiful of the books of the Old Testament. It consists of a dialogue between the Lawgiver of Israel and Zetetes, who is not exactly the disciple, but rather the Interpreter of the Master's words. Thus it commences :

The Law-giver of Israel :

"In the beginning the Truth created the heaven and the earth."

Zetetes :

"The life that is within and the life that is without, are not these the heaven and the earth that the Truth created?"

Whether the author intends to weave into his interpretation the doctrines of the Qabalah we are not certain, but time after time we came across curious allusions. Thus on p. 3: "Within myself when the truth divided the light from the darkness wisdom arose" . . . "and I knew that every atom of our great Mother giveth light to other atoms . . .". P. 4: "The truth in man is the light of the world. This we have known from the beginning, and we shall know it unto the end . . . and the Mother gave unto man her breasts. And man guided by the light within him did eat and was glad." P. 6: "The tree of Life belongeth unto the Father, it groweth in the Mother, but because darkness is still in man he may not eat thereof, but the Truth of the Father that is within man, that Truth may eat and live."

The philosophy of this little book shows that Darkness alone is not evil, and that neither is Light good. Both are beyond: but the mingling twilight begets the illusion of duality, the goodness and wickedness of things external.

It is a little volume which one who reads will grow fond of, and will carry about with him, and open at random in quiet places, in the woods, and under the stars; and it is a little book which one learns to love the more one reads it, for it is inspired by one who at least has crept into the shadow of God's Glory.

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EVOLUTION FROM NEBULA TO MAN. By JOSEPH McCABE. Milner and Co. 1s.

Mr. McCabe has written another little book on evolution: how many more of these small, small, small volumes are to appear? The subject seems a tall order for 128 pages. However, let us be thankful there are not more.

The most interesting fact that we can discover in it, or at least the only one really original, is, that Erasmus Darwin was born in 1788. This makes him only thirty years younger than his son Charles; and yet these are the good people who make such a fuss about Ahaziah being two years older than his father Jehoram!

THE R. P. A. ANNUAL, 1910. 6*d.* net.

From the cover of this review we learn that it contains "A striking Poem" by Eden Phillpotts, whose name evidently tokens his true occupation: it is called "From the Shades," and might well remain there. Phillpotts informs us that it was "inspired (!!!) by the spectacle of Paul's statue which now stands on the triumphal pillar of Marcus Aurelius at Rome." We have read of many crimes attributed to this unfortunate saint by modern free-thinkers, but none equal to this.

Poor Faustina! We can imagine any self-respecting girl taking to drink and the street to save herself from such an ethical prig of a husband as the Phillpottian Marcus. Listen. The Emperor is ousted by the Saint, the statue of the latter being reared upon the pedestal of the former; this evidently annoyed the Stoic, for we find his hero worming about in his shroud—where Paul evidently could not get at him—and saying: "sucks to you," or to quote:

"A man named Paul
Now darkles where aforetimes they set me,
Keep thou my pillar, Paul; I grudge it not,
Plebeian-hearted spirit . . ."

just as if Paul could help it!

Outside sudden jars on the ears like "my eyes" and "a euthanasia," and platitudes like "Now Pontifex is Cæsar, but no more is Cæsar Pontifex"; and esoteric jabs presumably at poor Faustina, such as: "That biting thing is only precious in the tart . . ." we find some masterly twaddle, regular Phillpotts:

"Two thousand years of fooled humanity,
Christ, they have prostituted thee and raped

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Thy virgin message till at last it stands
No more than handmaid to their infamy."

{Phillpotts really means harlot, but he is afraid of shocking the inhabitants of
Torquay.)

"Some flight of years
And the inevitable, tireless hand
Gropes and grips fast, and draws it gently down—

To sublimation. . . ."

What in the name of Narcissus is this all about ?

And yet Mr. Ford Madox Hueffer takes for one of his recent texts : "We have not got a great Poet." Well here at least is one, who, if he can do nothing else, can Phillpotts !

THE MARTYRDOM OF FERRER. By JOSEPH MCCABE, R. P. A. 6d.

One of the most remarkable points about this interesting brochure is, that no sooner was Señor Ferrer dead than out it came as speedily as if it had been blown from the muzzle of one of his executioner's rifles. It is a true and straightforward account of a man who did not support the blasphemy laws, and who would not have sneaked and shuffled about the Boulter prosecution.

On finishing this book we almost exclaim : "Bravo, Ferrer !" but our enthusiasm was seriously damped when on opening the *Literary Guide*, we read that Miss Sasha Kropotkin has stated in the *The Westminster Gazette* that Señor Ferrer's books on comparative religion "are quite similar in thought and tone to those published in England by the Rationalist Press Association." If so—
Viva Alfonso !

THE HAND OF GOD. By GRANT ALLEN. 6d.

Grant Allen is always exciting, and this posthumous volume of essays quite keeps up his reputation of being the G. A. Henty of Rationalism. We remember reading "The Woman who Did" a dozen and more years ago now, shortly after having closed "A Child of the Age"—both in the delightful Keynote Series. And what a difference ! Rosy Howlet, a lazy rosebud, a little sweet-heart and nothing else, but Herminia Barton—Lower Tooting with a dash of Clement's Inn. "As beneath so above."

HISTORY OF CHEMISTRY. By SIR EDWARD THORPE, R.P.A. Vol. I. 1s.

HISTORY OF ASTRONOMY. By GEORGE FORBES, R.P.A. 1s.

Excellent ! In every way excellent ! After munching through all this heavy pie-crust, we are beginning to feel like little Jack Horner when he pulled out the plum. If only schools would adopt these most interesting little histories,

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in place of cramming a lot of ridiculous formulæ and equations down children's throats, they might become places where time is not altogether wasted.

Twenty years ago I remember learning some two hundred chemical formulæ, the only two which I can remember now being H_2S , because I emptied a bottle into my tutor's desk, and H_2SO_4 , because I poured some on his chair to see if it would turn his trousers red, with the result that what lived beneath mine turned very pink shortly after he had discovered who the miscreant was. How I should have learnt to love Chemistry instead of hating it, if I had been taught from Sir Edward Thorpe's little book! There is more elementary education in chapter iv.—The Philosopher's Stone—than ever I learnt in five years with Newth and Thompson; and after all, should not school teach us to love knowledge instead of hating it? should not school teach us the pretty little fables of great men's lives that we can use them in our conversation afterwards, rather than scores of musty dry-as-dust facts, which can only help us to pass dry-as-dust and useless examinations?

Give us more of these, Mr. Watts, dozens more, and we will forgive you "From the Shades." Best wishes to these little volumes, may you sell a million of each, but "in the sunlight," please.

A. QUILLER.

THE SURVIVAL OF MAN. By SIR OLIVER LODGE. Methuen. 7s. 6d. net.

One of the most unfortunate results of the divorce between Science and Religion has been the attempt of each of the partners to set up housekeeping for itself, with the most disastrous results. I shall not run my simile to death, but I shall explain how this train of thought began in my mind.

Sir Oliver's book is mainly a defence of the Society for Psychical Research, and a plea for more scientific investigation of psychic or spiritistic phenomena; and it seems to the reviewer that a scientific society that needs a defence at all, after nearly thirty years' work, has confessed itself to be largely a failure.

Sir Oliver Lodge, and indeed Spiritualism generally, suffer enormously from their lack of knowledge, from their being devoid of theory.

Phenomena! Phenomena! Phenomena! Until the noumenon behind is obscured and disbelieved in and explained away.

This is what makes modern spiritualism so hideous and Qliphothic a thing, and "psychic researchers" such bad mystics.

There is nothing in the book under review that is fresh—nothing that was not known forty years ago—see Emma Hardinge Britten's "Modern American Spiritualism"; nothing that was not commonplace yesterday—see the current issue of *Light*.

The real Occult knowledge of Plato, of Paracelsus, of Bœhme, of Levi,

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was based upon theories whereby all the phenomena of modern psychism had their place, and were awarded their proper value.

The pseudo-occultism and watery mysticism of the modern spiritualistic philosophers—we call them by this noble title by courtesy—is due to their complete lack of knowledge.

What serious student of religion and occultism cares for the vapourings of Ralph Waldo Trine, the philosophising of the Rev. R. J. Campbell, the poetry of Ella Wheeler Wilcox? The prototypes of these people are utterly, or almost utterly, forgotten. One recalls now with how much difficulty the names of the Rev. H. R. Haweis, of A. J. Davis, of Lizzie Doten! For there is no virtue in those who have strayed from the path to linger among the Shells of the Dead and the demons of Matter.

The line of tradition is unbroken, and the way is straight and hard; too hard for “mediums” and New Thoughtists, whose spiritual capital consists of falsehood, and sentimentality, and sham humanitarianism.

Sir Oliver Lodge is always careful and painstaking and entirely honest; he is probably as well fitted to carry on his S.P.R. work as any student in England.

And to those who are unacquainted with the phenomena of spiritualism, “The Survival of Man” is as useful a book as could be read. But to the student of religion its value is *nil*, because the occult knowledge is *nil*.

In fairness it should be added that this review is written from the point of view of a mystic; to spiritualists the book will be welcome as yet another “proof” of “spirit-return,” “thought-transference,” and so on.

V. B. NEUBURG.

This book is a singularly lucid and complete statement of the work of many noble lives. We believe that the S.P.R. has taken up a most admirable position, and wish greater success to their work in the future. If they would only train themselves instead of exercising patience on fraudulent people, whose exploits no sane person would believe if God Himself came down from Heaven to attest them, they might get somewhere.

A. C.

THE KEY TO THE TAROT. By A. E. WAITE. W. Rider and Sons, Limited.

Mr. Waite has written a book on fortune-telling, and we advise servant-girls to keep an eye on their half-crowns. We have little sympathy or pity for the folly of fashionable women; but housemaids need protection—hence their affection for policemen and soldiers—and we fear that Mr. Waite’s apologies will not prevent professional cheats from using his instructions for their frauds and levies of blackmail.

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As to Mr. Waite's constant pomposities, he seems to think that the obscurer his style and the vaguer his phrases, the greater initiate will he appear.

Nobody but Mr. Waite knows *all* about the Tarot, it appears ; and he won't tell. Reminds one of the story about God and Robert Browning, or of the student who slept, and woke when the professor thundered rhetorically, "And what *is* Electricity?" The youth jumped up and cried (from habit), "I know, sir." "Then tell us." "I *knew*, sir, but I've forgotten." "Just my luck!" complained the professor, "there was only one man in the world who knew—and he has forgotten!"

Why, Mr. Waite, your method is not even original.

When Sri Mahatma Agamya Paramahansa Guru Swamiji (late of H. M. Prisons, thanks to the unselfish efforts of myself and a friend) was asked, "And what of the teaching of Confucius?"—or any one else that the boisterous old boy had never heard of—he would reply contemptuously, "Oh, him? He was my disciple." And seeing the hearer smile would add, "Get out, you dog, you a friend of that dirty fellow Crowley. I beat you with my shoe. Go away! Get intellect! Get English!" until an epileptic attack supervened.

Mr. Waite, like Marie Corelli, in this as in so many other respects, brags that he cares nothing for criticism, so he won't mind my making these little remarks, and I may as well go on. He has "betrayed" (to use his own words) the attributions of some of the small cards, and Pamela Coleman Smith has done very beautiful and sympathetic designs, though our own austerer taste would have preferred the plain cards with their astrological and other attributions, and occult titles. (These are all published in the book "777," and a pack could be easily constructed by hand. Perhaps we may one day publish one at a shilling a time!) But Mr. Waite has not "betrayed" the true attributions of the Trumps. They are obvious, though, the moment one has the key (see "777"). Still, Pamela Coleman Smith has evidently been hampered; her designs are cramped and forced. I am infinitely sorry for any artist who tries to draw after dipping her hands in the gluey dogma of so insufferable a dolt and prig.

Mr. Waite, I believe, is perfectly competent to produce indefinite quantities of Malted Milk to the satisfaction of all parties; but when it comes to getting the pure milk of the Word, Mr. Waite gets hold of a wooden cow.

And do for God's sake, Arthur, drop your eternal hinting, hinting, hinting, "Oh what an exalted grade I have, if you poor dull uninitiated people would only perceive it!"

Here is your criticism, Arthur, straight from the shoulder.

Any man that knows Truth and conceals it is a traitor to humanity; any

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man that doesn't know, and tries to conceal his ignorance by pretending to be the guardian of a secret, is a charlatan.

Which is it ?

We recommend every one to buy the pack, send Mr. Waite's book to the kitchen so as to warn the maids, throw the Major Arcana out of window, and play bridge with the Minor Arcana, which alone are worth the money asked for the whole caboodle.

The worst of it all is : Mr. Waite really does know a bit in a muddled kind of way ; if he would only go out of the swelled-head business he might be some use.

But if you are not going to tell your secrets, it is downright schoolboy brag to strut about proclaiming that you possess them.

Au revoir, Arthur.

ALEISTER CROWLEY.

It is an awkward situation for any initiate to edit knowledge concerning which he is bound to secrecy. This is the fundamental objection to all vows of this kind. The only possible course for an honest man is to preserve absolute silence.

Thus, to my own knowledge Mr. Waite is an initiate (of a low grade) and well aware of the true attribution of the Tarot. Now, what I want to know is this : is Mr. Waite breaking his obligation and proclaiming himself (to quote the words of his own Oath) "a vile and perjured wretch, void of all moral worth, and unfit for the society of all upright and just persons," and liable in addition to "the awful and just penalty of submitting himself voluntarily to a deadly and hostile current of will . . . by which he should fall slain or paralysed as if blasted by the lightning flash"—or, is he selling to the public information which he knows to be inexact ?

When this dilemma is solved, we shall feel better able to cope with the question of the Art of Pamela Coleman Smith.

II.

THE VISION. By MRS. HAMILTON SYNGE. Elkin Mathews. 1s. 6d. cloth.

It was with no small degree of pleasurable anticipation that we picked up a volume by the distinguished authoress of "A Supreme Moment" and "The Coming of Sonia." The first vision, alas ! was an atrocity after Watts, R.A., out we persisted.

Chapter i. is jolly good.

Chapter ii. might have been better with less quotation.

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Chapter iii. is first rate. Mystics can only conquer the Universe when they can prove themselves better than the rest of the world even in worldly things, and that by virtue of their mystic attainment.

We cannot, however, subscribe to her doctrine of the agglutination of the Vrittis to the Atman, save only in due order and balance in the case of the adept. Yet we would not deny the possibility of her theory being correct.

In chapter iv. she puts a drop of the Kerosene of Myers into her good wine.

In chapter v. we begin to suspect that the authoress's brain is a mass of ill-digested and imperfectly understood pseudo-science; yet it ends finely—our task is to learn “how to love”—and we refer the reader to Mrs. Synge's other books.

Chapter vi. is more about James. We love our William dearly, but we hate to see dogs trotting about with his burst waistcoat-buttons in their mouths. But the clouds lift. We get Ibsen, and Browning, and Blake; and end on the right note. Oh that Mrs. Synge would come and take up serious occultism seriously; leave vague theorising and loose assertion, and her “larger Whole” for our “narrow Way!”

CHRISTOBEL WHARTON.

THE TRAGIC LIFE-HISTORY OF THE MAN WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE. By FRANK HARRIS. 7s. 6d.

It has always been a source of harmless amusement, in our leisure hours, to watch our learned men grappling with Shakespeare. To study him, the Knower of man's heart, they have withered their own; to interpret the Witness of Life, they have refused to live, and, surrounded by a thousand foolish folios, have sat gloomily in the mouldering colleges of Oxford, or walked the horrid marshes of Cambridge, and produced uncounted pages of most learned drivel.

Frank Harris had another way than that. He took life in both hands and shook it; he made his own study of the heart of man, enlarging, not restricting, his own; and many a night has he lain under the stars on the savannah or the sierra, with Shakespeare for his pillow.

His result is accordingly different. His knowledge of Shakespeare is a living, bleeding, Truth; there is no room in his great heart and brain for the lumber of the pedants.

More, Frank Harris is himself a creative artist, a Freeman of the City of God, and knows that as there is no smoke without fire, so is there no speech without thought.

Whenever a poet writes of something that he does not know, he makes a

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botch of it ; whenever a poet gives detail, and gives it right, he has probably observed it directly. There is nothing in *Hamlet* which need make us think that Shakespeare was ever in Denmark ; but from the description in *King Lear* it is likely that he knew Dover.

In the hands of an acute critic this method is perfectly reliable ; and Mr. Harris's familiarity with the text, his power of concentration and his sense of proportion, have made it possible for him to see Shakespeare steadily and see him whole.

We are perfectly convinced of the truth of the main theory which Frank Harris presents, the enslaving of his gentle spirit by the bold black-eyed harlot Mary Fitton, and we are even shaken in that other hypothesis which attributes to Shakespeare the vice of Cæsar, Goethe, Milton, Michael Angelo, and of so many other good and great men that time and space would fail us to enumerate them.

Yet Mr. Harris only shakes the fabric of proof ; he cannot the foundation—instinct.

And it is strange that he, the friend of Oscar Wilde through honour and dishonour, has not perceived the amazing strength of the theory propounded in "The portrait of Mr. W. H." Surely this theory should have been lashed and smashed, had it been possible. For where there is no definite evidence, we must accept the theory which contains least contradiction in itself.

Now, there is nothing monstrous in the supposition that Shakespeare was great enough to understand and feel all the overmastering passions which enrapture and torment, enslave and emancipate mankind ; it would have been astonishing had he not done so. Oscar Wilde's theory does not explain Rosalind and Tamora and the dark lady of the Sonnets ; but Frank Harris forgets the ambiguous Rosalind and Viola and Imogen, or at least fails to attach to them the immense importance which they are bound to possess for any one who is capable of emotional sympathy with such modern writers as Symonds, Pater, Whitman, FitzGerald, Burton, Wilde, Bloomfield, and a hundred others.

Everything is significant to sympathy, nothing to antipathy ; and if sometimes sympathy o'erleaps itself and falls on the other, seeing a camel where there is only a cloud, the error is rarely so great as the opposite. We cannot help thinking that in this one instance Frank Harris has emulated Nelson at Copenhagen.

He will forgive us for dwelling on the one point of disagreement where the points of agreement are so many, where we gladly welcome his book as the sole real light that has ever been shed upon the life and thought of Shakespeare, the light of Frank Harris's soul split up by the prism of his mind

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into wit, style, insight, intelligence, pathos, history, comedy, tragedy, that adorn his book.

As for Staunton, Sidney Lee, Raleigh, Garrett, Bradley, Halliwell-Phillips, Fleay and the rest, their learning is lumber and their theories trash.

A. C.

The *English Review* was enlivened in November by a brilliant article on The Law of Divorce from the fascinating pen of Mr. E. S. P. Haynes.

While sympathising to a large extent with the writer's learned views so lucidly expressed, we are of opinion that there is no middle course between the extreme position of the Catholic Church, that marriage is so holy a bond that nothing can break it, and to accept and even to encourage fornication rather than tamper with it, and the other extreme of allowing a marriage to determine as soon as the parties desire it, proper provision being of course made for the welfare of any offspring.

The problem is really insoluble so long as sexual relations give rise to bitter feeling of any sort. Polygamy is perhaps the most decent and dignified of the systems at present invented.

But the present degrading and stupid farce must be ended.

As things are in these islands to-day, nine-tenths of all divorces, at least in good society, are the result of cheerful agreement between the parties. Adultery on both sides is so common that a genuine grievance is as rare as a truthful witness.

In a case that recently came under my notice, for example, the nominal defendant was really the plaintiff. He had compelled his wife—for sufficient reason—to divorce him by the threat that unless she did so he would break off friendly relations with her. Next came a weary struggle to manufacture evidence, the plaintiff's lawyers keeping up the irritating wail: "Lord — is so strict. *We must have more adultery.*" So the already overworked defendant was kept busy all the summer faking fresh evidence to satisfy the morbid appetite of a Scotch judge, while at the same time he was obliged to hold constant and clandestine intercourse with his own wife, lest she should lose her temper and withdraw proceedings!

This may have been an exceptional case—we hope so. But that any such mockery can take place anyhow and anywhere is a scandal and a reproach to the nation whose laws and customs make it possible.

We hope to hear much more from Mr. Haynes, and that he will throw fearlessly the whole weight of his genius and energy into the cause of radical reform of these monstrous and silly iniquities.

ARIEL.

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THE QUEST. No. II. J. M. Watkins. 2s. 6d.

This periodical is the dullest and most sodden slosh possible. No one should fail to buy a copy ; a perfect bedside book.

R. N. W.

We beg to apologise for having referred in our last number to G. R. S. Mead, Esquire, B.A., M.R.A.S., as Mr. G. R. S. Mead, B.A. B.A. (Baccalaureus Artium) is indeed the proud distinction awarded to our brightest and best intellects. M.R.A.S. does not mean Mr. Ass ; but is a mark of merit so high that dizzy imagination swoons at its contemplation. We grovel.

A. C.

PARACELSUS. Edited by A. E. WAITE. Two vols. Wm. Rider and Son. 25s.

The only edition of the great mediæval occultist, the discoverer of opium, hydrogen, and zinc. Mr. A. E. Waite in this as in his other translations is altogether admirable, adding a delightful wit to ripe scholarship, and illuminating comment to rational criticism.

A. C.

THE OPEN ROAD (Monthly. C. W. Daniel) is apparently the organ of Mrs. Boole. We leave it at that.

A. QUILLER.

THE BLUE BIRD. Translated by ALEXANDER TEXEIRA DE MATTOS. Methuen. 1s. net.

Was it merely an unfortunate accident ? As I opened the book my eye fell on these words : "They are my apples and they are not the finest at that ! . . . They will all be alike when I am alive." . . . My memory of the play—sole comrade of my wanderings in the Sahara—said no ! no ! So I turned up the passage, and read—"Toutes seront de même quand je serai vivant."

My memory was right, and Mr. de Mattos had completely failed to grasp the sense of a simple sentence of eight easy words.

I did not continue my inquiry.

A. C.

AN APOLOGY FOR PRINTING HONEST REVIEWS

THE Editor of THE EQUINOX is well aware of the tendency of modern journalism to print only favourable reviews of books, and to praise on the recommendation of the Advertisement Manager rather than that of the Literary Adviser. But he believes that this policy defeats its own end, that praise in THE EQUINOX will really sell copies of the book receiving it, and that appreciation of this fact on the part of publishers will result in the enrichment of his advertising columns.