attempts to reconcile the irreconcilable; let him rather rest at a point where faith supplements instead of conflicting with reason; and with the reverence, more especially his own, which forbids him to close his soul against the spiritual influences he dimly but intensely feels around him, let him combine that other form of reverence, born of the loyal search for scientific truth, which equally forbids all premature claim to have pushed back the boundaries of the unknown.*

ERNEST MYERS.

III.—CONWAY'S SACRED ANTHOLOGY.

The Sacred Anthology, a Book of Ethnical Scriptures. Collected and edited by Moncure Daniel Conway. London: Trübner and Co. 1874.

WHEN Demetrius Phalereus was forming the royal library at Alexandria, he recommended Ptolemy Philometor to procure from Jerusalem a copy of the laws of the Jews. Whether or not we trust the plea of their divine origin with which Josephus has credited him,† it seems clear that the great confluence of religions in the third century B.C. at the meeting-point between the East and West, was beginning to attract considerable attention. How far Demetrius carried his intention of "making a collection of all the books throughout the world," it is no longer within the power of the historian to trace. Had the communities of Hindus and Persians been sufficiently numerous, it is possible, as Ewald

* Since writing the above, I have been interested to find the following passage in Mr. J. S. Mill's Autobiography (p. 39). Speaking of his father, James Mill, he says: "He found it impossible to believe that a world so full of evil was the work of an Author combining infinite power with perfect goodness and righteousness. His intellect spurned the subtleties by which men attempt to blind themselves to this open contradiction. The Sabæan or Manichæan theory of a Good and an Evil Principle, struggling against each other for the government of the universe, he would not have equally condemned; and I have heard him express surprise that no one revived it in our time. He would have regarded it as a mere hypothesis; but he would have ascribed to it no depraving influence."

† Jos. Ant. xii. 4.

has suggested,* that the sacred writings of these races also might have been gathered and translated at the same time. The opportunity, however, slipped away, and no further efforts seem to have been made in the study of comparative religion. But the influence of the wide culture of the Alexandrian schools was not wholly lost, and re-appears in the first Apologists for Christianity. The doctrine of the "Spermatic Word" enabled them to look with genial eyes upon every attempt to arrive at the knowledge of divine things: they did not desire to claim for one race alone the exclusive possession of the oracles of God; they eagerly welcomed the testimonies to their own truths which had fallen from the lips of the wise and good in other ages and in other lands; "whatever things," affirmed Justin Martyr, "have been rightly said among all men are the property of us Christians;† and Clement attributed inspiration to Plato or Cleanthes as readily as to Moses or Isaiah.‡ The fall of Rome, the Mohammedan conquests, the decay of Western learning, all contributed to disperse completely what little interest had ever been felt in the Oriental faiths; and Protestantism in its turn, founded on the finality of the Bible, reversed the scepticism of the Pharisees of old, and was unwilling to believe that any good thing could come from anywhere but Nazareth. Only here and there some mind of rarer insight and elevation, like Cudworth's, detected the broken harmonies of a "symphony of religions" which it was reserved for a later day to rescue from the confusion of tongues in which it at first appeared wholly lost.

In India, indeed, the experiment had been already tried. In the sixteenth century, the Emperor Akbar gathered round him at his court at Delhi, Jews and Christians, Brahmans and Zoroastrians. Week by week the learned of all denominations assembled at the palace to discuss the most intricate questions of theology. Nights and days alike were spent in investigation, and the august student displayed a spirit of inquiry which was in truth fundamentally opposed to every Islamitic principle, and excited the gravest disapproval of one of the contemporary historians of his reign. The result of the imperial researches was in the highest

* History of Israel, Vol. V. p. 251. † Second Apology, xiii.
‡ Cohort. vi.

degree disastrous in the eyes of this worthy Mohammedan. "There gradually grew, as the outline on a stone, the conviction in his heart that there were sensible men in all religions"! Well indeed might the believer ask, "If some true knowledge were thus everywhere to be found, why should truth be confined to one religion, or to a creed like the Islam, which was comparatively new, and scarcely a thousand years old? why should one sect assert what another denies? and why should one claim a preference without having superiority conferred on itself?"*

These questions have not yet wholly ceased to perplex some minds nearer home. Vague and indefinite ideas about revelation still obscure "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world;" and it is probable that no better contribution to liberal theology could be made at the present day than a collection of the best utterances of morality and faith produced by other races and creeds such as Mr. Conway has aimed at compiling. In the East alone, the labours inaugurated by Anquetil du Perron and Sir William Jones a century ago, have already proved marvellously fruitful; and the study of comparative philology has paved the way for the no less important study of comparative religion. The soundness of the scholarship of Sir William Jones remains, we believe, unimpeached, and those who have followed in his steps have simply extended, without having to correct, his discoveries. Du Perron's work, however, has not stood equally well the test of subsequent explorations in the same field. His unwearying energy and splendid devotion brought the Zend Avesta to light; but the progress which has since been made in the knowledge of Zend has to some extent thrown doubt upon the trustworthiness of his translation; and as Mr. Conway gives his readers no precise marginal references, it is to be regretted that he has nowhere stated how far he has availed himself of it. But the Brahmanic and Zoroastrian religions are not the only Oriental faiths which have established themselves on sacred books. Within fifty years Buddhism has generated a literature which threatens to rival its own canon in voluminousness; and the writings of Lao-tsze and Confucius

* Badaoni, quoted by Max Müller, Introduction to the Science of Religion, p. 89.

are yielding up their meaning to the indefatigable determination of recent investigators. From Mr. Conway's catalogue of authorities, however, we miss some familiar names, such as those of Eugène Burnouf and Stanislas Julien; nor can it be said that this miscellaneous list at the end of the volume compensates for the want of exact indications of the sources from which the separate passages have been derived.

The materials which modern inquiry has placed at the disposal of the compiler of a sacred anthology, are indeed embarrassing from their extent and variety. But if they are to throw any light on the inner relations of different religions to one another, they ought to be carefully sifted and methodically grouped. These requirements we cannot think that Mr. Conway's collection satisfactorily fulfils. It appears deficient in principles both of choice and of arrangement. A glance at the subjoined table* will shew the range of nationalities which have contributed to it. Mr. Conway has wisely passed the limits which he seemed at first sight to impose on himself by the use of the term "Scriptures," and has for the most part drawn his "testimonies" from a much wider area. But it is to be regretted that he has adhered to the canonical restrictions in some cases and not in others. The numerous Persian poets who supply so many charming fancies and wise apothegms would no doubt be the first to disclaim the faintest supposition of rivalry with the Prophet, yet here they meet on equal terms. Three millenniums divide the Dabistan from the Zend Avesta, but in Mr. Conway's pages they stand side by side; the fables of Hito-

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* The following table is a rough classification of the passages ascribed to each religion or nationality:

Persian (Mohammedan)	185	Sabæan	3
Hindu (Brahmanic)	140	Tartar	2
Hebrew, Old Test. including the Apocrypha	105	African	1
		Chaldæan	1
Christian	102	English	1
Buddhist	49	Japanese	1
Arabian (Mohammedan)	44	Russian	1
Chinese	40	Syrian	1
Parsi	30	Theurgists	1
Talmud	12	Unknown	1
Scandinavian	12		
Egyptian	4	Total	740
Turkish	4		

padesa take their place along with the hymns of the Rig Veda and the laws of Manu; and the chronicles of Ceylon are on a par with the sermons of Buddha. The cordon, which is relaxed for the Mohammedans and the Parsis, the Brahmans and the Buddhists, is tightly drawn for the Christians, whose literature is apparently regarded as complete with the last book of the New Testament. Yet it may be doubted whether, among ordinary readers, Augustine, Tauler, and Pascal are so much better known than Sadi or Vémana, as to justify their entire exclusion; and if the Imitatio Christi was too familiar, some of the old Latin hymns might have represented a spirit of devotion unknown in the East. It is probably the same fear of intruding upon his readers what they were already acquainted with, which has led Mr. Conway to ignore the poets and philosophers of Greece and Rome altogether. Happily this dread did not compel the psalmists and apostles to be silent also; but no other cause could have kept out Homer and let in the Eddas. Yet Sophocles is at least as well worth reading, and almost as little read, as Hafiz; it is difficult to see why Marcus Aurelius should be unheard while Vladimir II. is permitted to speak; the extracts from the Gospels, under the head of the "Ethics of the Intellect," might well have been supplemented with passages from the Apology of Socrates; Plutarch or Seneca could have furnished maxims quite as good as those of Turkey, Japan, or England; and in the section entitled "Sanctions," we look in vain for one of Plato's wonderful myths, such as that of Er the son of Armenius. Nor can we think that Mr. Conway does justice to the oldest civilisation in the world, in omitting all reference to the Egyptian "Book of the Dead." It may be that the doctrine of immortality appears there in a form too pronounced for his taste; but the remarkable conceptions of personal and social duty implied in the confessions of the soul before the forty-two assessors in the "Hall of the Two Truths" deserve recognition in any work which is designed like this to secure a wider appreciation for "the converging testimonies of ages and races to great principles." The mystic sayings of Hermes Trismegistus"* are pallid and obscure by the side of the vows and aspirations of the funeral ritual so touchingly called the "Book of the Manifestation to Light."

* CLVII.

Of hardly less importance, however, than the selection of the ethnical Scriptures is their classification. If the object is to enable the reader to compare together different types of religion, the quotations ought surely to be arranged according to the faiths from which they spring; and extracts taken from works separated by a long range of time should be set as far as possible in chronological order, so as to exhibit the phases of development through which any particular religion has passed. Mr. Conway, however, has preferred a division by subjects rather than by creeds; and has gathered his materials under the somewhat Emersonian titles of "Laws," "Nature," "Character," "Conduct of Life," and the like. An arrangement of this kind might have been advantageously combined with a classification according to religions, if a few well-defined orders of thought had been adopted. The opening section of "Laws," however, contains precepts upon every variety of virtue, and deals largely with "Charity," "Love," and "Humility;" between "Wisdom" and "Knowledge," "Religion," "Theism," and "Worship," it is somewhat difficult to draw any clear line; and these headings do not facilitate the inquirer in ascertaining whether any given passage is included. This task is, indeed, rendered harder by the absence of any table of sources. To each extract a title is prefixed, and of these, it is true, a list is supplied; but (to take instances only from the Christian Scriptures) not every one would seek for the parable of the owner of the vineyard and his two sons* under the designation, "The Established Church," nor would many divine that "Demand for a Cause" signified the story of the young ruler who went away sorrowful, having made what Dante called "the great refusal." To any one, therefore, who takes up the volume for the first time, the index of titles is almost useless; and the book is simply a mass of citations, many of them of high moral and religious value, but unavailable for critical comparison, and beyond the reach of verification.

Mr. Conway has apparently, however, desired to provide his readers with some little apparatus which should help their judgment, and has accordingly appended a series of Chronological Notes on the various works which have supplied him with quotations. But the information imparted

* With the connected discourses, Matt. xxi. 23—32.

must be said to be exceedingly meagre: to those who are already acquainted with Oriental literature it is superfluous, while to the uninitiated it is tantalisingly inadequate. The Chinese books are dealt with first; but though Lao-tsze and Confucius* were the founders of religions entirely distinct, no hint is afforded us of their divergence. The list of Parsi writings extends over a period of three thousand years, but we look in vain for any estimate of the relations between the Zend Avesta and the Dabistan at its two extremes. It would be perhaps needless to discriminate the Sáma Veda and the Yágur Veda from the Rig Veda (the Atharva Veda does not appear at all); but some indication of the epic character of the Râmâyana and the Mahâbhârata would have been acceptable. But the obliteration of all distinctions between the authoritative books of an established religion and works of poetry or history, ought not to have caused any confusion between the literatures of rival faiths. Among the Hindu writings, however, between the Vedas and the laws of Manu, three works are enumerated which are not Hindu at all, but Singhalese—not Brahmanic, but Buddhist. The Mahâvamsa, placed by Mr. Conway about B.C. 477—459, is a kind of royal chronicle, different parts of which bear different dates. The language in which it is written is not the Sanskrit of the Vedas, but the Pali of the Buddhist Scriptures. The author or compiler of the first thirty-seven chapters was Mahânâma, the uncle of Dhatusena, king of Ceylon from 459 to 477 A.D.; the next section, written by a priest named Dharmakirti, carried down the history to 1267; and a third hand has concluded it at 1758. The Raja-Waliya, which Mr. Conway ascribes to the fourth century B.C., is of uncertain age; but the oldest portion of it is probably not so old as the corresponding part of the Mahâvamsa. The same date is affixed to the Raja-Ratnâkâra, though the Singhalese in which it is written is of a more modern form than that of the Raja-Waliya already named. The author was a certain Abhaya-Râja, who lived about the middle of the sixteenth century of our era! Even Upham's translation, included by Mr. Conway among his "principal authorities," if not altogether trustworthy, would at least

* Mr. Conway separates them by an interval of a century and a quarter. Max Müller, however, and other writers speak of them as at any rate during a part of their lives contemporary.

have enabled him to assign these works to their proper place among the Buddhist writings, subsequent to the collection of the "Three Baskets."*

The Hebrew and Christian Scriptures hardly meet with more satisfactory treatment. Of the Pentateuch we are told that "the tendency of modern criticism is to the conclusion that a large number of very ancient fragments, historical, legendary and poetic, were sifted, fused, or to use Ewald's expression, compounded, into the books which we now have; and that they assumed their present shape in the eleventh century B.C." The primitive document which lies at the foundation of the books of Genesis and Exodus may possibly be ascribed to the period of Samuel, or placed a little later than that of Solomon. But if Mr. Conway had taken the least pains to acquaint himself with the views of Ewald, he could hardly have overlooked the fact that that great historian, in common with the vast majority of recent critics, postpones the completion of the Pentateuch till after the composition of the book of Deuteronomy, which he assigns to the seventh century.† Nor have subsequent investigators contented themselves with leaving the question there. Prof. Russell Martineau, in accordance with the views of some of the Dutch scholars, has shewn in the pages of this Review‡ that there is good ground for believing that a large portion of the Levitical legislation did not come into existence before the return from the captivity. If the Pentateuch is thus brought to the front too early, the book of Job seems not admitted till too late. Its date is, it is true, somewhat difficult to determine: Mr. Conway, however, adopts a view of its origin

* See "Le Bouddha et sa Religion," by M. Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, pp. 327, 328. We do not know exactly what use has been made by Mr. Conway of Upham's translation; but its grave deficiencies might have been corrected by the work of Turnour, which, though incomplete, is of far higher value. The further dates assigned to such books as Dhammapada (246 B.C.) and Kuddhaka Pâtha (250 B.C.) must likewise be received with some caution. The White Lotus of the Good Law is also referred to the year 246 B.C.; it is not, like Dhammapada and Kuddhaka Pâtha, included in the "Three Baskets" acknowledged in Ceylon, which do not appear to have been reduced to writing till about 88 B.C; it is in Sanskrit, not Pali; but it does not seem possible to fix the year of its production with precision.—As I have been unable to resort to standard works on this subject, I must express my obligations for the greater part of my information to T. Rhys Davids, Esq., late of Ceylon.

† History of Israel, I. p. 127, IV. p. 220, sqq.

‡ Theol. Rev. for Oct. 1872, p. 474, sqq.

which prevents him from finding a place for it till after the Jews had been brought in contact with some of the nations of the East in the sixth century. In the margin of the section "Sorrow and Death," where an abridgement of it appears,* he characterises it as "Hebrew or Persian." This designation is explained in the Chronological Notes by the statement that it is a version probably of a Persian form of a Brahmanic story of similar character. As well might we say that Hamlet was a "version" of a French form† of a Danish tale. If there be any book in the Old Testament which bears the stamp of strong individual genius, surely it is the book of Job. It stands entirely outside of the limits of pure Mosaism, but it is Semitic and not Aryan. Its author was not shut up in the domestic politics or faith of Israel; but it was from the wisdom of Teman and the civilisation of Egypt that he drew much of his argument and his imagery. The Satan who presents himself among the sons of God bears no resemblance to the Zoroastrian Ahriman; and the story of his ineffectual endeavours to prove that Job did not "serve God for nought" may have been the common property of the wide East as that of Othello was of Europe, but it needed a Hebrew Shakspeare to weld it into the earliest, and in some respects the greatest, tragic drama of the world. With the same want of critical perception (as we must consider it), Mr. Conway cites the opening and the closing chapters of the book of Isaiah as if they all alike came from the same pen; and upon this principle compiles into one passage verses from oracles against Philistia, against Moab, and against Babylon, separated by nearly two centuries. The result is described as "The Tyrant's Fall."‡ For this, perhaps, the wretched divisions of our English Bible are in part responsible; but this plea does not excuse a similar treatment of some of the Psalms. Who would think it fair if some continental collector were to put together stanzas from Milton, Wesley, and Faber, and present the compound as a specimen of an English hymn?

We may pass over Mr. Conway's notices of the Septua-

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* P. 393, sqq.

† That of the novelist Belleforest.

‡ DCX., made up apparently from Is. xiii. 2, 3, 11, 12, xiv. 7, 12, 16, 26, 30, and xvi. 5.

gint and the Apocrypha, as they are of slight importance;* but graver issues are raised by his views of the growth of the New Testament. The Apocalypse, the book of Acts, and the Epistles of Paul, are the only books which he saves for the first century. The judgment which treats the book of Revelation and the letters of Paul as the earliest Christian documents which we possess, is no doubt a sound one; but its correctness seems almost fortuitous, for the next sentence sweeps away the Epistles to the Ephesians, the Galatians, the Colossians, and Timothy (together with that to the Hebrews and those bearing the names of Peter, James, John and Jude), as of uncertain date and apocryphal authorship. Why the Epistle to the Galatians should be thus boldly struck out, we are at a loss to conceive; the hardiest critics (with the exception of Bruno Bauer†) have never ventured to impugn its authenticity; and it is difficult to know on what grounds it should be thrown overboard while the Epistle to the Philippians is retained. A still stronger reversal of accepted decisions is to be found in the priority assigned to the book of Acts. If there is any point on which all schools are agreed, it surely is that this book supplemented, instead of preceding, the Gospel of Luke. Mr. Conway, however, thinks otherwise. In virtue, perhaps, of the narrative of the voyage of Paul to which the use of the first person lends so fresh an air, he reserves a place for this work among the earliest productions of the primitive church. The four Gospels are all relegated into the second century, that of Matthew being referred to its first quarter, that of Mark being set down near its last, while intermediate positions are provided for those of Luke and John. This theory, however, brings down the composition of the Gospel of Mark hazard-

* Mr. Conway places the version of the Septuagint in the year 250 B.C. It is, however, clear that the translation was not made all at once; but the point is of minor interest except as it helps us to fix the date of the book of Wisdom, the author of which seems to have been acquainted with the Greek rendering of the Pentateuch and Isaiah. The period assigned by Mr. Conway (B.C. 250—300) would thus appear to be too early.—The "four books of Esdras, ranging from B.C. 150—31," are in reality only two. The Vatican MS. contains two books of Esdras, the first being the book known by that name in our Apocrypha, and the second being the canonical Ezra. In the Vulgate, however, the canonical Ezra stands first; Nehemiah is designated the second book of Esdras; what we know as the first book of Esdras follows in the third place; and the so-called second book, of which no Greek text exists, comes fourth and last.

† Davidson's Introduction to the New Testament, I. p. 101.

SECOND EDITION, NOW READY.

THE SACRED ANTHOLOGY

A BOOK OF ETHNICAL SCRIPTURES.

BY MONCURE DANIEL CONWAY.

Trübner & Co., Ludgate Hill.

The second edition of this work contains an Index of Authors, in addition to the Index of Subjects, List of Authorities, &c., and the Chronological Notes have been carefully revised. The book contains 740 Readings from the Asiatic and Scandinavian Sacred Books and Classics, arranged according to subjects in 480 pages royal 8vo, with marginal notes.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

It is certainly instructive to see the essential agreement of so many venerated religious writings, though for depth of meaning and classicality of form none of them approaches the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. The idea of the work is an excellent one, and Mr. Conway deserves great credit for being the first to realise it.—*Westminster Review.*

It remains for us to point out some of the remarkable coincidences in the principles of morals and religion which Mr. Conway's diligence and tact have brought together. Hillel and Confucius enunciated the same warning in almost the same words—"What you do not wish done to yourself do not to others." Beneath a tropic sky, the flamingoes and green parrots suggest the same lessons as the ravens and lilies of the field upon the hills of Galilee. A few words sum up with unsurpassed pathos the parable of the virgins—"A poor man watched a thousand years before the gate of Paradise; then, while he snatched one little nap it opened and shut."—*Theological Review.*

Few more valuable contributions have been made to the popular study of comparative theology than Mr. Conway's "Sacred Anthology," well fitted to serve as a volume of devout reading to those who choose without theological forethought or afterthought to apply it to that use. To the more speculative student, it curiously illustrates at once the different genius of the various nations of the world, and the identity of human nature in its apprehension of the loftiest topics of faith and morals. Few can read it without feeling their mental horizon enlarged, and without a deeper sense of the common humanity that lies at the basis of the differences by which history, climate, and civilisation disguise men and nations from each other.—*Daily News.*

The book may fairly be described as a bible of humanity, and as an ethical text book it might well be adopted in all schools and families where an attempt is made to instil the highest principles of morality apart from religious dogma. He has produced a work which a great number of people have long been desiring to possess, and which is likely to mark a distinct epoch in the progress of ethical culture.—*Examiner.*

The result is most interesting. For the first time, an English reader may judge for himself of the moral and religious merits of writings which heretofore have been to him only venerable and shadowy abstractions. We shall be much surprised if every reader does not lay it down in a better mental frame than was his when he took it up. It teaches charity and toleration, and makes men less spiritually arrogant. It is not without even greater lessons to those who have ears to hear.—*The Echo.*

The "Sacred Anthology" should find a place on every library shelf. It is a bible free from bigotry, and were an Universal Church ever established, might fairly be a lesson book for that church. The labour expended by Mr. Conway in editing, abridging, and selecting, can hardly be fairly estimated. We can heartily recommend it to Freethought Societies as a volume in which they may find readings otherwise inaccessible to them.—*National Reformer.*

The principal authorities for the beautiful thoughts and precepts so skilfully collected by the editor, are given at the close of the volume, to make his work as complete as possible. Mr. Conway also publishes chronological notes, and it is scarcely necessary to say that his views with regard to the dates of our sacred books differ considerably from those adopted by orthodox divines.—*The Pall Mall Gazette.*

A very slight examination of the volume will show that it is indeed a valuable anthology of the scriptures of all races. As complete and entertaining a volume as one would wish to read.—*The Bookseller.*

It will be seen that all the sacred books of mankind have their principal features in common; that the differences between them are not of essential nature, but of degrees of manner and style, and that an inspired spirit variously modified and expressed breathes through all. Mr. M. D.

Conway has contributed a real service to an enlightened view of this subject by his "Sacred Anthology," a book which we commend to the attention of all who are accustomed to speak of the bible as the only word of God.—*The Inquirer.*

Such of our readers as may have studied a remarkable book, *India in Greece,* which appeared some twenty years ago, are well aware of the extent to which Indian rites and customs after having been transported to Greece, and thence re-exported to Italy, have become permanently imbedded in the Romish system. Indeed, we believe there is scarce a Popish notion, emblem, or ceremony that may not be distinctly traced to a Pagan source. However, if the original have come from thence, thence also may be derived an anecdote that may somewhat tend to diminish its ill effects. For among the wise Hindoo aphorisms (as rendered in Mr. Moncure Conway's recent book), we find the following, which some amongst us might ponder with advantage at the present time:—"Sányásis (? Hindu Rits) acquaint themselves with particular words and vests; they wear a brick-red garb and shaven crowns; in these they pride themselves; their heads look very pure, *but are their hearts so?*" "Religion which consists in postures of the limbs (mark this ye clergy of St. Alban's, Holborn) is just a little inferior to the exercises of the wrestler." "In the absence of inward vision boast not of oral divinity." We are not sure that Vishnu's philosophy would not compare favourably with that of Pio Nono.—*The Rock.*

Many years ago, Philip Bailey, of "Festus," announced as forthcoming a book entitled "Poetical Divinity," the object of which was to show by quotations from the bards of all time, that they all held substantially the same creed which we presume was held by Festus himself—Pantheism *plus* Universal Restoration. This book never has appeared, but Mr Conway's is arranged on a somewhat similar plan, and is altogether a volume of such a unique yet delightfully varied character that it must commend itself to readers of every sort. We have seen already the eyes of a rather strictly orthodox person glistening with eager delight over many of the maxims and beautiful little moral fables with which it abounds. —*The Dundee Advertiser.*

It would be impossible that such a book, even if it were comparatively carelessly done, could be without interest; but Mr. Conway's task has been most conscientiously performed, and it will be found of the greatest possible value, for it casts a strong light upon many matters which are frequently in discussion.—*The Scotsman.*

Mr. Conway has conferred a signal service on the literature of Theism by publishing for the first time a comprehensive collection of some of the best passages from the ancient scriptures of different nations. A few years ago we, in the Brahmo-Somaj, made an humble effort in that direction, which resulted in the issue of a small book of theistic texts now in use during service in most of our churches. Mr. Conway's excellent publication is on a far grander scale, embraces a wider variety of subjects, and extends its selection through a much larger range of scriptural writings than we could command.—*The Indian Mirror.*

There is, I suppose, no book in existence quite like it, perhaps none on the same plan and of equal scope. He who found no higher use for the book would rejoice in it as a handbook for scriptural quotations not otherwise readily accessible, as the number of volumes from which they have been brought together sufficiently proves. There is nothing we more need mentally than a tinge of Orientalism, something to give a new bent and scope to minds fed perpetually on the somewhat narrow and practical literature of the Western races. Mr. Conway, with his eager poetic instincts, his warm feeling and wide sympathies, is a good guide to those in search of what is most impressive to the imagination or stimulating to the sensibilities.—"G. W. S.," in the *New York Tribune.*

A SIGNIFICANT BOOK.—Significant of what? Of interest in the religious life of men who are outside the pale of Christianity, of that "sympathy of religions" which has lately found in the missionary lecture of Max Müller in Westminster Abbey an exhibition which might well strike terror into High Church dignitaries, of a growing faith that the attitude of Christianity towards the other great religions of the world is not wholly that of a teacher, but may be that of a pupil; of this, at least—we trust of much beside.—*Rev. John W. Chadwick, in the "Liberal Christian," New York.*

He then read a few sentences from a book called "Sacred Anthology," which work, he said, was a compilation from the religious works of all nations, some older than our bible: the book he should leave on the desk as his bequest to the society.—*Report of an Address by A. Bronson Alcott, Esq., at the opening of a new hall in Massachusetts.*

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ously late; nor are we aware of any strong grounds for postponing it till after the appearance of the fourth Gospel.

Altogether it must be said that the value of the book before us is needlessly impaired by these rash remarks. For the general purposes of comparative religion, it is unnecessary to enter into the "results of modern criticism" of the Christian Scriptures. Their position in the history of thought is sufficiently well known to enable their contents to be correctly estimated by the side of the Vedas or the Koran without any previous determination of the authorship of Epistles or the order of the Gospel narratives. The inversion of a couple of books of the New Testament is of light consequence compared with the transposition of writings belonging to one language or religion into another a millennium or so too soon; but such critical lapses throw an air of inexactness over the whole work, and somewhat detract from our appreciation of the genial sympathy which has evidently directed its preparation. It may be hoped that in a future edition Mr. Conway will substitute for his Chronological Notes an introduction such as he well knows how to write, which may pass in rapid review the genius of each great faith, assign to the various phases of its development the books respectively belonging to them, and thus assist his readers in taking a general survey over the wide field through which he is so admirably qualified, by the range of his own reading and the delicacy of his perceptions, to be their guide.

It remains to point out as briefly as possible some of the remarkable coincidences in the principles of morals and religion which Mr. Conway's diligence and tact have brought together. Hillel* and Confucius† enunciated the same warning in almost the same words,

"What you do not wish done to yourself, do not to others;"

and the Arab sages supply a similar repetition‡ of the more pointed Hindu proverb,

"Do not force on thy neighbour a hat that hurts thine own head."§

To return good for evil ceases to be a virtue peculiarly enjoined on (would that we could also say practised by)

* XXVII. † X. ‡ XII. § XLI.

Christians; for the followers of Lao-tsze are bidden to "recompense injury with kindness;"* the Buddhist finds in Dhammapada the command,

"Let a man overcome anger by love; let him overcome evil by good; let him overcome the greedy by liberality, and the liar by truth;"†

and Mohammed assigns the deeper reason already revealed by Jesus,

"For God loveth that you should cast into the depths of your souls the roots of his perfections."‡

All class distinctions are abolished, and the foundations of universal brotherhood are laid by the simple question of Vémana,

"Of what caste is He who speaks in the pariah?"§

In this vast circle, however, particular duties are not to be lost in general obligations, and Indian wisdom provides in a breath for the aged and the young:

"Educate thy children; then thou wilt know how much thou owest thy father and mother;"‖

for servants—

"What sort of master is that who does not honour his servants while they discharge their duty? . . . . By taking up the whole time of a servant, by increasing expectation, by denying reward, the ill-disposed master is recognised. Favourable discourse to a servant, presents that denote affection, even in blaming faults taking notice of virtues, these are the manners of a kind master. He who knows how to consider his servants, abounds in good ones;"¶

and for animals.** Beneath a tropic sky, the flamingoes and green parrots†† suggest the same lessons as the ravens and the lilies of the field upon the hills of Galilee; and the Persian poet discloses the same source of hidden wealth as Christ:

"Place your affections on the Creator of the universe: that will suffice."‡‡

From this quarter, also, comes a tale of a treasure hid in

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* DXCIX. † CCCCLXXXI. ‡ CCCXLI. § CCCCXLIV.
‖ CCXXXIX. ¶ CCCLXI. ** CCCXXVIII. †† CCCCLXVII.
‡‡ DCLIV.

a field,* which relates that the finder, unlike the buyer in the gospel story, insisted on sharing his discovery with the original owner, who in his turn refused to receive it; and a few words sum up with unsurpassed pathos the parable of the virgins:

"A poor man watched a thousand years before the gate of Paradise. Then, while he snatched one little nap—it opened, and shut."†

From the far North rings out a note of blended caution and trust in human nature:

"No one is so good that no failing attends him, nor so bad as to be good for nothing;"‡

while a Chinese proverb compresses into one brief maxim the art of living with others:

"When alone, think of your own faults; when in company, forget those of others."§

In spite of this advice, however, divisions may be inevitable here; but in the future, if Mohammed's insight is correct, they shall disappear:

"All have a quarter of the heaven to which they turn them; but wherever ye be, hasten emulously after good; God will one day bring you all together."‖

Should any hapless soul be left to struggle with an adverse destiny, one spirit, at any rate, was ready to bear it company even in its conflicts and its pains, for, in one of the finest extracts of the book, Kwan-yin, a Fo (Chinese Buddhist) prophetess, answers by implication the "comfortable" doctrine of the sovereign mercy of God in the torments of the damned, and declares:

"Never will I seek nor receive private individual salvation, never enter into final peace alone; but for ever and everywhere will I strive for the universal redemption of every creature throughout all worlds. Until all are delivered, never will I leave the world of sin, sorrow, and struggle, but will remain where I am."¶

But her self-imposed privations shall at length have an

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* DLX. † CCCCLXXVIII. ‡ Saemund's Edda, CCCCLXX.
§ CCCCLXXXIV. ‖ LXXXIV. ¶ CCCLIII.

end, if the Arabian saying (relating, it is true, to a wholly different order of conceptions) may be trusted:

"In the last day, when all things save paradise shall have passed away, God will look upon hell, and in that instant its flames shall be extinguished for ever."*

It must be confessed, however, that we have here morality, sometimes "touched with emotion," and sometimes destitute of it, rather than religion. And so far as Mr. Conway's extracts enable us to judge, it appears that religion, in the sense of personal communion with God, finds more fervent expression in the Semitic than in the Aryan mind. This is observable even in the treatment of nature, which is but the vesture of the unseen Will. The metaphysical phrases of the hymns to Brahma† and Vishnu‡ do not thrill us like the joyousness of the hundred and fourth psalm; and it is to the Koran that we must go to strike another note in the same chord of sympathy with universal life.

"Hast thou not heard how all in the heavens and in the earth uttereth the praise of God? The very birds as they spread their wings? Every creature knoweth its prayer and its praise."§

The relations between Deity and his creatures are those of reason rather than affection; their quality is that of light, not warmth. It is the Mohammedan traditions‖—even in their Persian dress, for the genius of religion triumphs over nationality—which exhibit with most beauty the deep sense of the abiding presence of God, to which the habit of prayer, in the bazaar, on the river-bank, or by the road-side, as well as in the mosque, bears such touching witness. Spiritual religion is not, indeed, ignored. Hindu pilgrimages gave birth to the pungent protest,

"Going to holy Benares will make no pig an elephant;"¶

and the land of the fakirs further humiliates ritualism with the quiet saying,

"Religion which consists in postures of the limbs is just a little inferior to the exercises of the wrestler."**

But only here and there do we seem clearly to touch the "higher pantheism" which blends in one the spiritual forces

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* DCCXV. † C. ‡ CII. § CLI.
‖ CLXVI., CLXVII. ¶ CLXIV. ** CCXXVIII.

of the universe, without however destroying the individuality of the soul. Of this, the following passage of the Zend Avesta may serve as an example:

"God appears in the best thought, the truth of speech and the sincerity of action, giving through his pure spirit health, prosperity, devotion and eternity to this universe. He is the Father of all truth."*

It is natural, therefore, that of the language of penitence, of consciousness and confession of sin, there should be little trace among the Aryan hymns. The Vedic prayer, "to be united by devout meditation with the Spirit supremely blest and intelligent,"† contains no provision for the wounded and struggling conscience; the passionate utterances of the fifty-first psalm would be unintelligible to the mystics of the far East; even in the midst of the sorrow and misery by which he is surrounded, it is by his own strength that man is to rise to higher things—it is by the path of intellectual enlightenment rather than by that of moral conflict that his progress is to be made; and so the whole range of Aryan literature does not appear capable of producing anything like the parable of the Prodigal Son.

The last section of Mr. Conway's book is entitled "Sanctions." Its general purport is to illustrate the well-known couplet,

> "Our acts our angels are, or good, or ill,
> Our fatal shadows that walk by us still."‡

But how far this unseen attendance will follow us, is left obscure. "Let the motive be in the deed," it is well said in the Bhagavat Ghita;§ and Rama truly declares that

"Virtue is a service man owes himself: though there were no heaven nor any God to rule the world, it were not the less the binding law of life."‖

The belief in immortality need not, however, be confounded with "otherworldliness;" and we are surprised that the intense moral conviction which formerly shaped itself into

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* CXVII. † CLXX.

‡ See in particular the four vivid pictures from the book of Ardai Viraf, the Persian Dante (one of which, however, has strayed a long way from its companions), DCXXXVII., DCCXXVII., DCCXXX., DCXXXII.

§ DCLXVI.

‖ DLVI.; the whole passage is of remarkable force and elevation.

the doctrines of heaven and hell, and now re-appears as the striving after perfection, receives no fuller recognition as the prophecy of an endless destiny. It is not at least for want of testimonies. The oldest monuments of human thought,* the ripest genius of human wisdom, the deepest insight of human love, have all contributed their choicest fruits to nurture the faith of an undying life. The noblest races, and minds which seem to stand above race and belong to mankind, have found in this hope the spring and the spur of all aspiration, and the prospect of the solution of problems indeterminable here. The new philosophy may perhaps be summed up in the words of Omar Khèyam (eleventh century, A.D.), with which Mr. Conway closes his selection:

"Resign thyself, then, to make what little paradise thou canst here below; for as for that beyond, thou shalt arrive there, or thou shalt not."

But it must at any rate be remembered that on this great theme the "symphony of religions" does not in reality thus fade away in a doubt.

J. Estlin Carpenter.

IV.—THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION FOR 1872-73.

There are not many subjects on which the press has been more busy during the last few years than on all the various topics which have arisen in connection with plans for National Education. Government returns of the most comprehensive nature extending over many volumes, reports as to educational methods adopted at home and abroad, the publications of associations founded for the promotion of antagonistic principles, volumes published by earnest workers in defence of their own plans and criticising the opinions and proposals of others, pamphlets and leading articles without number—all shew how deep an interest is felt in

* We have not space to multiply quotations from the Egyptian Book of the Dead, the Hindu Vedas, or the Iranian Zend Avesta, to say nothing of Plato.