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Church of England, and accepts the Articles, the Creeds (even the Athanasian) and the Prayer Book, in a sense which is quite satisfactory to his own mind. The fact is an interesting example of the possible pliability of a vigorous and an honest intellect, but hardly a contribution to the scientific knowledge and clearness of thought of by-standers. Mr. Hutton may very well plead that we ought not to look for completeness of exposition in a volume of essays which are avowedly occasional; and we admit, with the utmost frankness, the justice of his plea. But we cannot help thinking that it belongs to the genius of this school of Broad-church thinkers to lay great stress on a few pregnant ideas, and to decline the task of bringing them into mutual order and proportion. Only if it be so, they must be content to look at their form of belief as only a phase of transition, it may be of very temporary duration, towards a clearer and more scientific, if not a deeper and a simpler, faith.

There is much in the form of Mr. Conway's "Earthward Pilgrimage,"* and also in its wealth of allusion and its tone of earnest scepticism, which reminds one of Mr. Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*. At all events, we imagine that Mr. Carlyle is a writer with whom Mr. Conway would very willingly be associated, and from whom he has probably drawn a portion of his inspiration. The conception of the book is that of honest revolt against the religious attitude depicted by Bunyan in his *Pilgrim's Progress*. The author affects to place himself in the position of that celebrated Pilgrim, and describes the weariness that at length came upon him after sitting on a purple cloud with a golden trumpet, and the eagerness with which he sought to exchange the region of idle worship for the so-called City of Destruction with its earnest work. The Interpreter by whom he is accompanied gives an unsparing exposure of Christian doctrine as ordinarily taught in England; and the succeeding chapters are continued in the same key. In the chapter called *An Old Shrine*, the author takes as his text the inauguration of the Archbishop of Canterbury. He went to the ancient city "to witness the consecration of a plain old Scotch gentleman to

* *The Earthward Pilgrimage*. By Moncure D. Conway. London: John Camden Hotten. 1870.

the task of presiding over the work of maintaining in Great Britain the worship of a dead Jew." "The Thirty-nine Articles shall mean many things, but one thing definitely shall they mean: thirty-nine pieces of money to him who shall betray Reason for them." In a chapter called *Contrivance*, he criticises as vain and needless the effort made by the Rev. James Martineau and others to preserve to Theism "the great religious heart and history of Christendom." He affirms,

"— that every religious form or rite was once real, every watchword of conservatism was once the watchword of radicalism, all things old were once new. The Litany, idly repeated by happy-hearted youth, who yesterday were at croquet and cricket, was the outburst of stricken hearts amid convulsions of nature, war, plague, and famine: uttered now, it is the mummy of a revival, set up where a real one is impossible. The first silent Quaker meeting was accidental; the emotion of that hour is vainly sought for by the formal imitations of its silence. And so the rantings, shoutings, love-feasts, communions, baptisms, are attempts to recover the ecstasies of shining moments by copying the superficial incidents that attended them,—attempts as absurd as the famous fidelity with which the Chinese manufacturers imitated the tea-set they were required to replace, even to the extent of preserving all the cracks and flaws of the originals."—"That which calls itself conservatism adheres to forms that must become fossil, whereas any true conservatism must rescue the essence by transferring it to forms which have their life yet to live."*

In the chapter on *Voltaire*, it is rather a one-sided comparison, to say the least, to place him in the same class with "the greatest freethinker who ever trod the earth, whose death-cry was, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'" A terrible freethinker's end! Yes, every drop of his blood was paid for free thought!† In a chapter called *The Rejected Stone*, commencing with a striking report of theological discussions under the railway arches at *St. Pancras*, he says:

"What convictions have we corresponding to those which sculptured the Phidian *Jove* or the *Milonian Venus*, or painted the great Italian pictures, or built *St. Peter's dome*? None. Then for the present no real Art. The one thing we really believe in is *Scepticism*: this is the inspiration of our Science, of our

* Pp. 102, 103.

† Pp. 253, 254.

clamour for more education, of our democracy ; they are all the utterances of the clear and vigorous Misgiving which distinguishes this age."*

It may comfort some readers to find that the author is not, at all events, an infallible prophet, for in the chapter called the Pilgrim's Last Reflections, he remarks, though his book was published only last year :

"Already it seems doubtful if the West can see another Wellington or another Napoleon I. It requires warlike ages to produce such men ; and such ages require peoples capable of being thoroughly drilled and massed."†

We must find room for the following passage from the conclusion :

"There is a story of the Holy Grail which the Laureate has passed by, but which we may remember. In the days when men wandered through the world seeking that cup, made of a single precious stone, holding the real blood of Christ, a Knight left England to search for the same in distant lands. As he passed from his door, a poor sufferer cried to him for help. Absorbed in his grand hope, the Knight heeded him not, but went on. He wandered to the Holy Land, fought in many wars, endured much, but found not the precious cup ; and at last, disappointed and dejected, he returned home. As he neared his own house, the same poor sufferer cried to him for help. 'What dost thou require?' asked the Knight. The aged man said, 'Lo, I am perishing with thirst.' The Knight dismounted and hastened to fetch a cup of water. He held the half-clad sufferer in his arms, raised his head, and proffered the water to his parched lips. Even as he did so the cup sparkled into a gem, and the Knight saw in his hand the Holy Grail, flushed with the true blood of Christ. And you, my brothers, may wander far, and traverse many realms of philosophy and theology, to find the truth which represents the true life-blood of the noblest soul ; but you shall find it only when and where you love and serve as he did. If you can but give to the fainting soul at your door a cup of water from the wells of truth, it shall flash back on you the radiance of God."‡

Even from the very fragmentary description of the book which we have been able to give, it will be perceived that it is strong meat for men of full age, rather than milk for babes. There is, we think, a good deal of paradox, arising

* Pp. 335, 336.

† P. 397.

‡ Pp. 405, 406.

from the violence of the writer's reaction from what he regards as antiquated creeds and superstitions ; but the book is full of suggestive thoughts, poetically and pointedly expressed ; and though to a thoughtful and judicious reader he may sometimes seem extravagant, one-sided and unfair in his statements and representations, the general impression left by the whole is that it is the earnest and healthy scepticism of a man of real genius. A vigorous mind will be none the worse for the rough handling of many approved maxims and professions of faith. At the same time, there is something to be said in favour of that religious attitude which the author sets out with condemning. However needful and noble a duty it may be in this present world to contend with evil in its various forms of suffering and sin, the very repose and refreshment which we habitually seek among congenial minds in our domestic and social circles, direct our aspirations to a future sphere where suffering and sin will be unknown. We can conceive of work and progress without the necessity of painful strife with evil. Moreover, we cannot help feeling doubtful how far the general realization of the author's views and tone of thought would really tend to the formation of that generous devotion to holy duty which we are accustomed to reverence as the ideal of a Christian character, and which the author himself admires and commends. Certainly it is most strikingly exemplified by many of those whom he regards as held in bondage to superstitious creeds. We cannot help fearing that the ultimate result of the emancipation for which he contends would be an Epicurean, rather than a spiritual, condition of mind. Mr. Conway adopts as the motto of his title-page a maxim from Confucius : "Respect the gods, but keep them at a distance." Surely that soul has attained to a higher and holier region of thought and life, which habitually rejoices to feel, with Jesus, "I am not alone, for my Father is with me."

A careful inquiry into the theology of the New Testament must be valuable to every candid mind, whether it agrees or not with the conclusions arrived at. Such a work is the translation of Dr. Van Oosterzee's Handbook.* Defin-

* The Theology of the New Testament. A Handbook for Students. By the Rev. J. J. Van Oosterzee, D.D. Translated from the Dutch, by Maurice J. Evans, B.A. London : Hodder and Stoughton.