

And at once he proceeds to state the recognisable marks of the Spiritual life of man. These marks are four in number: First, the recognition of God as a *Personal God*; next, *communion* with this Personal God; thirdly, *love*; and lastly, the *consciousness of Redemption*. In the recognition, in the order, in the exposition of these four distinguishing marks of the spiritual life, we cannot but think that an unusual ability is displayed. But we must not do more than touch upon them now. For our present purpose it is enough to note the firmness with which Professor Rooke asserts their existence, and the confidence with which he appeals for their verification to the consciousness of every spiritually-minded man.

Seeing, then, that the believer differs from the unbeliever so momentarily that the difference cannot be described as one of degree but of kind; so that he has passed into a third and higher sphere of conscious life, the unbeliever being left behind in the second and lower,—how is it that the

unbeliever does not recognise this? Why is it that it has not an overpowering effect upon him? The old answer remains, and receives new verification every day, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Professor Huxley has heard of your spiritual sphere, and that the entrance door is theologically designated "Justification by faith." He comes before you as the applauded champion of a mighty band of unbelievers, and he says, "Justification by faith? The man of science has learnt to believe in justification by verification." What answer can you give him? Will you show him the white robe of Dean Alford, the gracious manner of Baptist Noel, the tender compassion of Thomas Guthrie? You might as hopefully set a superior dromedary, who has heard that there is a mind in man, to read Dean Alford's Commentaries. The natural *man* receiveth not. "Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven."

A Neglected Poem.¹

BY THE REV. JOHN TAYLOR, D.LIT., M.A., WINCHCOMBE.

It would be a mere truism to say that many poems of real merit have been written within the last twenty years, but have found a sadly small number of readers. The pearls which skilled divers have brought up from the deep have been cast on the common rubbish-heap. The supply of poetry, good, bad, and indifferent, has been greater than the demand. Those who would welcome the good have more than once been so nauseated by the poems which they were unfortunate enough to peruse, that they have come now to turn away from any fresh productions save those which bear the hall-mark of an acknowledged master. On the other hand, there are lovers of good poetry who have on their bookshelves one or two small volumes written by men

who are not even included amongst Mr. Traill's "Minor Poets," but are able repeatedly to give to their readers the pleasure which genuine thought and fit expression impart. Whether Mr. A. Eubule-Evans has suffered from the cause already referred to, whether, indeed, his work belongs to a higher class than we have hitherto indicated, the readers of this paper will have some opportunity of judging. If they incline to the more flattering verdict, they will have the countenance of authorities who are not without weight.

The two versions of *Through Dark to Light* do not differ widely from each other. The first was published anonymously, and attracted the attention of men whose "kindly welcome encouraged the author to prefix his name" to the new edition. In it he omits some portions and adds others, besides recasting, in another metre, what he justly deems

¹ *Through Dark to Light*. Remington & Co., 1882. New edition. Wyman, London, 1886. *The Curse of Immortality*. Macmillan, 1873.

the most important section of the poem. Of this change of metre we shall have something to say below. Meanwhile, we wish merely to point out the idea of the whole and the arrangement of the component parts. A rainstorm at the seaside, with the gloom and depression attendant on it, arouses those pessimistic thoughts concerning human life, its meaning and its destiny, which lie not far from the surface in the hearts of the men of our time. The objects near at hand, the bird in its cage, the pictured face of a fair woman, suggest inquiries which cannot be satisfactorily answered, and kindle hopes which quickly die down into leaden-eyed despair. Even the fondly-loved child makes him think of the sad contrasts between the happiness of childhood and the disappointments of mature age—

“A day for the child must come,
When, strangled by lean Despair,
The voice of delight grows dumb.”

Then there is an Interlude, in which Fate and Love contend, Love having the last word—

“A time may come when dark shall flower in light,
And purblind trust give place to perfect sight.”

The second part of the poem is called forth by the sunshine which follows the rain. The life of the higher animals now brings its suggestions. The dog, with its almost human sympathies, is more helpful to the thinker than the caged bird, although it lead us no further than the question—

“Which is the better—the bright
Brief life that can only see?
Or the life which, spurning sight,
Has faith in the things to be?”

Then we reach a higher level. The pictured woman is replaced by the living wife, whose unselfish love seems to bear in itself the promise of a better hereafter, a journey “through time to life’s hope-lit West.” But a picture of the Christ excites thoughts that range farther and soar higher than the rest, reconciling at once many of the contradictions of existence, and kindling a sure hope that the still outstanding ones shall be resolved. The Christ-picture is the climax; a swift, brief *Sursum Oculos* is all that need now be said.

The outline sketched above will show that *Through Dark to Light* is constructed on genuinely dramatic lines. We must now endeavour to give some idea of the manner in which the details of the plan are carried out.

Remembering that the first half of the book represents the gloomier views which overshadow so many minds, and is intended to represent them with uncompromising plainness of speech, it will probably be admitted that the following lines describe clearly a fairly frequent mood, and that the imagery fits the thought—

“For the purple peaks of bliss,
In the future’s haze we pant;
In the reaches vague of time
A corner we hope to find,
Where the smile of a sunnier clime
May cozen life to be kind.
Alas! at a shadow we clutch;
Our hopes are miraged in blood—
They hoped from to-day as much
Who, where we now stand, once stood,
And the morrow for which we pray
To shed a glow on our path,
No sooner becomes to-day,
Than it breaks in storms of wrath.”

Or take this, in a different metre, as the expression of an ice-cold doubt which has often clung around the heart of those who have been bereaved—

“Beside a human heart methought I stood
And watched its throbs;
Marked how it leaped in mirth’s impulsive mood,
Or swelled with sobs.
By it stood one whose fanciful disguise
Showed baldness through;
He could not dupe my euphrasy-purged eyes—
’Twas Time, I knew.
He held a hammer and he smote the heart;
A cry was heard—
The cry of one who feels some sudden smart
And gasps a word.
Again Time smote—again the heart-strings yearned
To make reply;
Thrice were they smitten, and they thrice returned
The self-same cry.
At the first stroke the cry was ‘Love’; and so
‘Love’ at the next:
And at the third still only ‘Love,’ although
Love sore-perplexed.
Time raised his hammer once again and smote;
I held my breath;
The heart was broken; from an unseen throat
Came the cry: ‘Death!’”

In a very different vein are the lines addressed to his child—

“My love, how old are you now?
The question’s too hard for you;
Only a mother, I trow,
This mintage of time stamps true.
Dates are to men but as signs
That sever desolate tracts
Of being, and keep in their lines
The turbulent crowd of facts.”

To woman they come with the flood
 And flush of the heart's perfume,
 Fragrant with lives in the bud
 And loves that survive the tomb.
 When was the little one born?
 When did the long-lost die?
 Ask of a woman, nor scorn,
 As trivial, her quick reply.
 For the sword of life is keen
 For her with maternal smart,
 And the wound-prints of love have been
 Deep-scored in her tender heart."

Many readers of this paper would appreciate the canto entitled "The Priests," in which are photographed two types of ministers of religion who fail to help them that are puzzled by the riddle of life. The self-indulgent man, a mere "priest of earth's good things," who himself has never known "The martyrdoms of the mind and the soul's despairing moan," is not even consulted by the doubter. To the gloomy ascetic, whose "dark message" only adds to the gloom, the virtue of sincerity is not denied, but the power to comfort the troubled is. Why has not Mr. Evans reprinted this "photograph" in his second edition? Does he think the clergy too thin-skinned to bear telling of the hindrances to their usefulness? There are many of them who so know the difficulties of belief that they almost shrink from using the Collect for S. Thomas's Day,—“Grant us so perfectly, and without all doubt, to believe in Thy Son Jesus Christ,”—and yet so know the preciousness of faith regained, that they would endure much to help the Thomas of their flock. Matthew Arnold's

“Nor fetch, to take the accustomed toll
 Of the poor sinner bound for death,
 His brother doctor of the soul,
 To canvass with official breath

The future and its *viewless things*—
 That undiscovered mystery
 Which one who feels death's winnowing wings
 Must needs read clearer, sure, than he!”

is painful reading, because it is written from the standpoint of the "superior person." Mr. Evans is too grimly in earnest for us to take offence.

We have not space to follow all the stages by which faith and hope are reached anew, but it is impossible to leave unnoticed the insight displayed in treating as the penultimate stage that revelation of human love which comes through the true union of human hearts. I think it was Chateaubriand who said that a little child sees the

love of God in its mother's eyes. Assuredly, when childhood and youth are passed, the men who are mated with true women have often found in woman's unselfishness the window opening upon the Absolute Unselfishness of God—

“And now, though the flowers are crushed
 Of our Spring by life's advance,
 And the early bloom is brushed
 From the cheek by change and chance,
 The fruit of our heart is formed
 And fit for our daily food,
 And the love that our youth once warmed
 Still ripens the years for good.”

Mr. Evans must be allowed to tell in his own words what it was that brought back perfect calmness to the troubled spirit—

THE CHRIST-PICTURE.

I.

A face, in whose every line
 The painter struggles afresh
 To touch to issues divine
 The mortal fabric of flesh.
 Was ever a face did wear
 Such wealth of woe in the eyes?
 Was ever a face did bear
 Such tokens of sacrifice?
 Gaze at the chaplet of thorn—
 Meet crown for the mocker's mood—
 Mark how the temples are torn
 And starred with the starting blood.
 The hope of the world is there;
 The hope no time can destroy;
 The hope that sees in the tear
 The rainbow promise of joy.”

From the starting-point which this picture furnishes he passes to that unveiling of the nobler things in human nature which is given in the Life and Death of the Christ—

“Oh! were it only to show
 What glory our life can crown

 Only to prove that there dwells
 In deepest depths of the soul
 A something of love that tells
 That love is our destined goal:

 Oh! this to us men were much—
 An isle of green in the waste,
 Which the wanderer's feet scarce touch
 Ere his lips sweet waters taste.”

But the cross is much more than this. It is the revelation of the unity, the solidarity of humanity; the connecting link between earth and heaven; the response to the universal yearning after advance;

the pledge of perfect sympathy: in all these it is the manifestation of the love of God. These are not thoughts which have occurred to no other mind, but in our author's pages they stand in their proper relation to those ideas and that knowledge belonging to our own day which are sometimes deemed incompatible with them. One example of this must suffice—

"If science the soul would fret
That the thought by the thing is shaped,
And never a being yet
From the clutch of his age escaped,
We dare not with Truth contend,
Remembering this alone:
The God who designed our end
Hath marked our way to His throne—
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If a life by the lives around
Has a share of its freedom shorn,
From the womb of this truth profound
What a lesson of truth is born!
For we learn that mankind is one,
In spite of the severing flesh;
And the deed by a brother done
Lives in our deed afresh.
The vesture of life clings whole,
Unrent round this sunlit ball—
A thread for each single soul,
And love the pattern of all."

It is possible that this way of putting things, this recognition that "truths in manhood darkly join," may compel the attention of men whose scepticism has been much more radical than that of the former half of this poem. And there can be no doubt that those who have not really lost their hold on the historical Christ, but are passing through the gloom of a temporary eclipse, will be helped on their way to the light again as well by the truth as by the beauty of the Christ-Picture.

We have reached the limit of our space, and can only add one or two words. First, our quotations have been from the first edition. The stater metre of the second edition is more suited to the theme, but there is more freshness and life in the original lines. Secondly, although the verse is almost uniformly smooth and flowing, and the metre suitably varied to accord with the subject-matter, there are words and uses of words which grate somewhat harshly on the ear. Thirdly, the poem, "The Curse of Immortality," Mr. Evans's version of the story of the Wandering Jew, is regretfully left unnoticed in this paper. The plot is bold, and, unless the present writer is mistaken, some of Mr. Evans's best verse is contained in this short drama.

M. Charles Secretan the Lausanne Professor of Philosophy in Paris.

BY M. HENRI HOLLARD.

ONE of the most regrettable consequences of the political and financial scandals that have recently been disturbing Paris has been a remarkable falsification of the ideas prevalent throughout Europe concerning the state of the public mind in France. And it is not surprising that, while scandalous affairs are occupying so large a share of attention, people living outside the country should almost lose sight of the peaceable and normal aspects of our national life. Allow me, then, to give you some account of an event which, though it may have attracted little notice outside France and Switzerland, is, in the eyes of those interested in the march of ideas,—especially of religious ideas,—a matter of high importance and a true sign of the times. I refer to the invitation

addressed by the philosophic world of Paris to M. Charles Secretan, the distinguished professor of Lausanne, to appear before a select academic audience, and defend his philosophical and religious point of view. This invitation was accepted by the aged master as a mission, and he started for Paris, notwithstanding all the work on his hands, his advanced years, and the exertion to be anticipated in conducting a discussion in the midst of a society so animated.

I do not forget that in speaking to Englishmen and Scotsmen I ought to offer something more than a mere affirmation concerning the character and standing of M. Secretan, perhaps the most vigorous, certainly the most original, thinker of the French-speaking countries at the present day.