

SPECIAL
ARTICLES

Our Contributors

BOOK
REVIEWS

AN EASTER THOUGHT.

By Desta E. Brown Woods.

Through the chill November days, a mother was mourning for the fair, little children she had lost. Low, pitiful moans were followed by great convulsive sobs, or by the loud, fierce walls of uncontrolled grief. Sometimes she grew calm and even smiled in a fitful way only to be again shaken by a paroxysm of grief that tore her very heartstring and made us shudder, as we sat by her quiet firesides and listened to this old, old cry of a Rachel, who refused to be comforted. Sometimes she burst into passionate weeping at others she shed the slow, sad tears of utter despair. Then when grief had spent itself, eliminating every speck of color from her costume, and draping herself in deepest mourning of fleecy white, she settled down to her silent grief.

Oh, Mother Nature, beautiful are you in your sunny moods, terrible in your uncontrollable grief, but majestic in your quiet dignity, sorrow. Pure, calm and regal, you inspire alike the poet's fancy or the painter's vision. Wise are you too in your choice of mourning; for surely it is wisdom to portray the purity of your dead, rather than the black grief within you.

But, Mother Nature, why this stormy grief? Why even this quiet sorrow? Your mourning is only for a few, brief months; then you shall again clasp the fair, little flower-children to your great mother-heart. Surely you know this, for you already smile in anticipation of this glorious resurrection. Then how foolish you are, Mother Nature, to give way. But no, I may not chide! We of the human family are yet more foolish. We sob and mourn as one flower-face after another fades from our vision. We even go a step further and wonder if after all there is a reunion with our loved ones when every year we are permitted to witness this great, resurrection of your children, Mother Nature. We too mourn for we too have loved, but we also would drink deep of the faith that is gladdening your features. Just a little farther on, that Great Easter awaits us when our flowers shall once more be within our clasp. Ah! Some of those dear flowers, when last we saw them, were faded by the hot blasts of toll, and the chill winds of sorrow; but pure, fresh and fair shall they bloom in the Eternal Spring-time.

Chesterville, Ont.

"PAIN, RATHER THAN MIRTH."

Editor Dominion Presbyterian: Referring to the story of the Jews flocking to Palestine the Philadelphia Westminster says: "It would long be welcome news to the lovers of the Catskill and Shawangunk regions that all the New York Jews were going back to the Holy Land." Had this appeared in a "secular" journal a Christian might smile at it,—but even then the flippancy should excite pain rather than mirth. The thoughtful Christian, knowing the glorious promises that shall be fulfilled when God's chosen people are restored to the land He has given them, would indeed welcome the fact that they were "going back." But to men of the world—"lovers of the Catskill and Shawangunk regions"—the portent might well be regarded with awful dread.

ULSTER PAT.

It is not sufficient that we have some doctrinal knowledge of Christ, or that we make a profession of faith in Him; but we must hearken to His word and obey Him.

GOLDWIN SMITH ON CROMWELL.

In 1859 when Goldwin Smith became Regius Professor of History at Oxford he delivered an inaugural address, from which we make the following extract:—

King George I. or his minister, was not the first of English rulers who had endeavored to draw direct from the University a supply of talented and highly educated men for the service of the state. I almost shrink from mentioning the name which intrudes so grimly into the long list of the Tory and High Church Chancellors of Oxford. But it was at least the nobler part of Cromwell's character which led him to protect Oxford and Cambridge from the leveling fanaticism of his party, to make himself our chancellor, to foster our learning with his all-pervading energy, and to seek to draw our careless youth to councils which it must be allowed were always filled, as far as the evil time permitted, with an eye to the interest of England, and to her interests alone.

Cromwell's name is always in the mouths of those who despise or hate high education, who call in public emergency for native energy and rude common sense—for no subtle and fastidious philosophers, but strong, practical men. They seem to think that he was really a brewer of Huntingdon, who left his low calling in a fit of fanatical enthusiasm to lead a great cause (great, whether it were the right cause or the wrong) in camp and council, to win Dunbar against a general who had foiled Wallenstein, to fascinate the imagination of Milton, and by his administration at home and abroad to raise England, in five short years and on the morrow of a bloody civil war, to a height of greatness to which she still looks back with a proud and wistful eye. Cromwell, to use his own words, "was by birth a gentleman, living neither in any considerable height, nor yet in obscurity;" he was educated, suitably to his birth, at a good classical school; he was at Cambridge; he read law; but, what was much more than this, he, who is supposed to have owed his power to ignorance and narrowness of mind, had brooded to madness over the deepest questions of religion and politics, and as a kind of Hampden and an active member of Hampden's party, he held converse on those questions with the profoundest and keenest intellects of that unrivalled age. And therefore his ambition, if it was treasonable, was not low. Therefore he bore himself always not as one who gambled for a stake, but as one who struggled for a cause. Therefore this great soldier loved the glory of peace above the glory of war, and the moment he could do so, sheathed his victorious sword. Therefore, if he was driven to govern by force, he was driven to it with reluctance, and only after striving to govern by nobler means. "Therefore he kept a heart above tinsel, and, at a height which had turned the head of Caesar, remained always master of himself; therefore he loved and called to his council board high and cultivated intellect, and employed it to serve the interests of the state without too anxiously inquiring how it would serve his own; therefore he felt the worth of the universities, saved them from the storm which laid throne and altar in the dust, and earnestly endeavored to give them their due place and influence as seminaries of statesmen.

Those who wish to see the conduct of a real brewer turned into a political chief should mark the course of Santerre in the French Revolution. Those who wish to see how power is wielded without high cultivation and great ideas, should trace the course of Napoleon, so often compared with Cromwell, and preferred to him—Napoleon, the great despiser of philosophers—and ask whether a little of

the philosophy which he despised might not have mitigated the vulgar vanity which breathes through his bulletins, and tempered his vulgar lust of conquest with some regard for nobler things. It would indeed be a flaw in nature if that which Arnold called the highest earthly work, the work of government, were best performed by blind ignorance or headlong force, or by a cunning which belongs almost as much to brutes as to man. The men who have really left their mark in England, the founders of her greatness from Alfred to the Elizabethan statesmen down to Canning and Peel, have been cultivated in various ways; some more by study, some more by thought; some by one kind of study, some by another; but in one way or another they have all been cultivated men. The minds of all have been fed and stimulated, through one channel or another, with the great thoughts of those who had gone before them, and prepared for action by lofty meditations, the parents of high designs.

AN INTERESTING EXTRACT.

From a letter from Dr. Robertson to his wife, dated from Winnipeg, March 16th, 1874, we quote the following life-like incidents. "We left here Tuesday morning, Mr. Fraser (a brother minister) and myself, with a snail-paced horse. Got as far as White Horse Plains, twenty-six miles from Winnipeg. The day was clear but frosty and we got on well. Next day we stopped at a tavern to water Mr. Fraser's horse. I went into the supposed bar-room to warm. Found at the door quite a strong smell—saw a stove and a couple of calves warming themselves at it, milk-pails and a general litter on the table. Faced left about and saw another calf at the foot of a flight of stairs with a litter of straw, and thought I was there long enough and had seen enough. Mr. Fraser comes in after me, takes in the whole situation at once. A door opens at the rear of calf-parlor and the kitchen stove is seen in full blast. The host informs us that he entertains bovine and not human guests for the present, and we leave ruminating over the beauties of prairie scenery. Got dinner in good style at Poplar Point, about seventeen miles from any houses. Charley was fed some barley but did not eat it. Felt afraid he was going to give out, but he did very well. Rather an amusing incident occurred. We both got out of the cariole and let the horse go on. He walked slowly, and when we came up to him we gave him two or three cuts and sent him on his way rejoicing. This was done several times, the horse trotting away for some distance and then slackening up till we overtook him. At last when he would see us coming near he would run off before he got up to him. Finally we got tired and wanted to ride, but Charley felt shy, and when we called "Whoa!" he would start off and leave us behind. This was very amusing for a time, but when we began to contemplate walking all the way it was serious. We stole up quietly behind Charley, and before he saw, Mr. Fraser got so near that although Charley started off, Mr. Fraser got a hold of the cariole behind. After some running he managed to leap on board and stopped him."—Life of Dr. Robertson, by Ralph Connor, Upper Canada Tract Society, Toronto.

A heart divided between God and mammon, though it may trim the matter so as to appear plausible, will, in the day of its discovery, be found guilty.