

## Talks on Books.

THE Talker hardly knew himself, the impoverished scribe of former years, when the peremptory ring of the messenger boy was followed by the advent to his study of a large parcel of books for review. Yet must he be honest, and admit that authors and publishers are not flocking for recognition to the pages of *The Journal* as they ought to do. No: it is the zeal and industry, prompted by a kind consideration for the Talker, of the Editor-in-chief that have provided the literary pabulum. He has laid under contribution our distinguished graduate, the Rev. J. K. Fraser, B. A., Mr. Chapman, the bookseller of 2407 St. Catherine street, and I know not what other obliging friends. This is a manifestation of the spirit of enterprise which should make the *Journal* in all its features a great success.

Professor James Seth, of Brown University, a brother of Professor Andrew Seth of Edinburgh, issued some time ago a study of *Ethical Principles*, a well printed book of 450 odd pages published by Blackwoods. This is a valuable contribution to Ethical Science and also to Apologetic. It consists of an introduction and three parts which deal severally with the Moral Idea, The Moral Life, and The Metaphysical Implications of Morality. In his

Introduction he states that "The task of Ethics is the discovery of the central principle of moral or spiritual life," and, in opposition to evolutionists and agnostics, he proposes to assume the task by the metaphysical, as opposed to the so-called scientific method, not however neglecting psychology. Under the first part he discusses three types of ethical theory, Hedonism or the Ethics of Sensibility, whether it land in pleasure or in utility, Rigorism or the Ethics of Reason in its various forms of Cynicism, Stoicism and Christian Asceticism, and Eudæmonism or the Ethics of Personality, which is virtually the realization of the spiritual end for which man was created. As a devout Christian philosopher Professor Seth is a Eudæmonist in Ethics, in other words a cultivator of the good spirit. The second part treats of the Moral Life individually in the negative sphere of self-discipline and the positive of self-development or culture, and socially in regard, first to the private exercise of justice and benevolence, and second, to the exercise of these virtues by the state. In the discussion of the last of these subjects there is much to interest the reader as the author seeks a *via media* between despotism and anarchy. The Metaphysical Implications of Morality are Freedom,