

Original Poetry.

CONSIDERATIONS ADDRESSED TO MODERN BLASPHEMERS.

On reading the MONTHLY TELEGRAPH series of the New York Tribune, in the "Church" of April.

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Our Monthly Review.

THE SKETCHES—THREE TALES; by the authors of "Amy Herbert," "The Old Man's Home," and "Hawkstone." New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1848.

The history of this volume is thus told in a prefixed advertisement. "It was suggested, as a Christmas amusement, that one of a party should draw a series of sketches, which the rest should severally invent, into some short story or description. Subsequently a proposal was made that a volume so framed should be published, with a view to increasing the funds for the erection of a Church and schools at Bonchurch, in which all the contributors felt a common interest." Thus the letter-press is illustrative of the drawings; and it is amusing to mark the different uses which the several writers make of the respective objects delineated by the artists.

But something much higher than mere amusement is to be gleaned from this gentle and graceful little book. Interesting as mere narratives, the tales, as we might have expected from the characters of the writers, are all a practically devoted person rising and we cannot fancy any right-minded person rising from their perusal, and declaring that his head had been idly or unprofitably occupied. In particular would we instance *The Lost Inheritance*, as containing lessons, from the study of which many an over-fond ambitious parent might rise.

"A sadder and a wiser man." Trusting that not a few of our readers will peruse *The Sketches* for themselves, we will not trench upon their gratification, by anticipating the plots of the narratives. In our paper of last week we noticed an extract from *The Lost Inheritance*, which conveys a very pleasing impression both of the manner and matter of the work.

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Great credit is due to Messrs. Appleton for the style in which they have produced this volume. The illustrations are beautifully executed, and the paper and letter-press such as would do no credit to the typographical reputation of London or Edinburgh.

THE ORDINATION GIFTS: A Sermon preached at St. Peter's Church, Auburn, on the Second Sunday in Lent, 1848; by JOHN WILLIAMS, D.D., Rector of St. George's, Schenectady, Auburn. Alden & Markham.

This discourse, which was delivered at the Lenten Ordination held by the Bishop of Western New York; will, we think, to the well-earned reputation of the reverend author, whose name cannot be unfamiliar to our readers. There is much affectionate eloquence in the concluding address to the candidates for the Diaconate, which we have great pleasure in subjoining.

"I would fain hope that I have led your thoughts to subjects not inappropriate to this day and service, so memorable to each one of you. It is the Lenten Ordination season of the Church from earliest days. For the last week, from hearts that you know not, and that never will be known to you, from hearts that beat in all the lands of earth, prayer has been made to God in your behalf. From the high Cathedrals of the Mother land, from among the palms of the Eastern Indies, from the far off islands of the ocean, from the ice-bound regions of the north, from the wide prairies and deep forests of our western world, one mighty, wrestling prayer, has been sent up to God, for His blessing upon those who are this day to be ordained to holy functions in His Church. And you, almost before this solemn sound has died upon your ears, you stand here, to receive at the hands of a successor, handed on in one unbroken line from Jesus Christ himself. And here where one honored and godly Prelate laid down the Pastoral staff, which now—in that spiritual line of the Christian, never dies—another bears, of whom I will speak to you, but that the presence of the living forbids the tribute which the memory of the dead permits; here I say, amid such memories, such thoughts, you are to take those awful and unchangeable vows, which you can render up in safety to none but God, and with your dying breath. You will go forth from these walls sworn to God's service, and with the weary, though not uncheerful way of your vocation stretched out before your spirit's eye. Can we ask for you better gifts to aid you in your duties, than the "word of wisdom," the "word of knowledge," and the gift of faith? Can we give you a more solemn charge, than that you should always cultivate them with earnest care, and with unceasing prayer? No, brethren, we cannot. For all time you will find in them the great weapons of your warfare; and if in lonely silent hours, when at the sight of its responsibilities and its infinities the soul grows dark; when the searching trial comes, and all neglect and sinfulness, then if the first two fail, as fail they will, Faith will come in with holy discipline, a strengthening angel to the soul; and bid you to bear up, and forbid you to despair. No! we need ask for you little beyond these. God grant then that you may find all the gifts, all powers, all graces of your earthly being, and all the strings of your earthly labour, issuing and setting, in the calm, unbounded, everlasting love of God!"

HAWKSTONE: A Tale of and for England in 1841—in two volumes; third American edition. New York: Stanford & Swords.

It is not disputed, we believe, that the employment of fiction as the vehicle of truth, in the form of religious tales, has done much to promote just thinking and godly living. It must be confessed, however, that the religious novel, if it be not managed by a mind at once serious and experienced, discerning and devout, will exert many of the evil influences which pertain to the secular novel. There are novels, professing to be no more than secular writings, which yet are really religious,—full of noble conceptions, pious aspirations, and devotional feeling. There may be novels, on the other hand, claiming to be religious; but as extravagant, notwithstanding, and as sentimental,—as likely to pervert and mislead, as many modern romances. Whether it be right to inculcate truth through the medium of fiction, is a question, we think, which can be readily disposed of. Let truth be the conspicuous object, and fiction the subordinate feature; truth the presiding genius—so to speak—of the narrative, and fiction no more than the quiet, dutiful handmaid; let this rule be observed, and truth will derive from the cautious and reverent services of a chastened imagination, many an attractive adornment which it is allowable for her to wear.

"Hawkstone" is an able, an eminent work. We have no doubt that it stands higher in public estimation than any other production of the same class of literature. The author enunciates, in a peculiarly fearless way, his opinions—which are always perfectly distinct, express, and unflattering—concerning matters which affect most nearly the welfare of the Church and the nation. On such topics of warm discussion many, of course, will dissent from his views; many would harshly condemn them; but none, we think, will deny, that never were sentiments of any kind, on any subject, propounded with greater clearness, ability, and energy. The main design of the work is to show that there is but one remedy—and that quite equal to the emergency—for the national troubles of England: the firm and honest maintenance of the Church by the clergy, the laity, and the government, as a divine institution, and possessing in itself alone the spiritual care of the whole people; as the only instrument employed by the Great and Good Shepherd, to lead his flock into green pastures and by pleasant waters; to alleviate their trials and to heal their disensions. It is shown that recent legislation,—the legislation boastfully identified by a self-styled "Conservative" Premier, with the necessary "progress of the age,"—a legislation essentially democratic and ruthlessly innovating; it is shown that a legislation of this sort, is only calculated to plunge the nation into deeper distress; that it has utterly failed in adjusting the relations between agriculture and manufactures; that it exists in virtual contempt of what before all things must be consulted, and sought after,—God's honour and God's blessing; without which there is no wisdom in those who govern, and can be no happiness and peace amongst those who are governed. The intrigues of Romanism—carried on more particularly through the Jesuits—to dispossess England of her spiritual birthright, are powerfully exposed; and it is shown that the Italian scheme of fraud and oppression and cruelty, can only be baffled by the steadfast assertion of the rights of the Church; the faithful declaration of the commission which God has given her, and will not suffer any self-constituted religious society to take out of her hands. Hawkstone is a thriving town; in days of yore a sober village, distinguished by no great animation of any kind, and not living very ardently either to the world or to God. But the lethargy is shaken off, and with a terrible revulsion. Manufactories are built; speculation pours into it like a flood; the population multiplies; and sin and misery increase. The responsibilities and the difficulties of the Church are enhanced; and to meet this augmented burden, there are only two clergymen,—the Rector of the parish, who is disabled by bodily infirmities, and his ill-paid Curate, a young man of sincere piety and excellent intentions; who wishes to do all in his power to counteract the evil.

Who could preach an Ordination Sermon in Auburn, and not remember Holbert?

So bright the march of that outdazzling star, Which shed its kindling beams so wide and far, That pilgrims press, where still they latest rest, And kiss thy soil, sweet Auburn of the West.

I quote from memory and may therefore not have done full justice to these sweet lines.

Original Poetry.

CONSIDERATIONS ADDRESSED TO MODERN BLASPHEMERS.

On reading the MONTHLY TELEGRAPH series of the New York Tribune, in the "Church" of April.