

tune to be much criticized, and with that mild arrogance which is his leading characteristic, he adds, "and it is not in my nature to dispute on behalf of any opinion, even my own, very obstinately."

This is a fine temper for a critic, nay it is invaluable, and he possesses it in an eminent degree, but it is not the temper of a dogmatist. Now "Literature and Dogma" is the title of one of his works, the one which he thought fit to popularize by publication in a cheap form, and of which he was specially proud. It was to be presumed, that when he wrote under this title that *he* would represent "Literature." This presumption is soon corrected, when we find on the one hand, that the old Hebrew Prophets, merely used the word "Go!" as a literary accommodation for "*A stream of tendency not ourselves which makes for righteousness*," and on the other hand, that our literary critic has suddenly become a dogmatic Theologist. We doubt if Saul among the Prophets was a spectacle were inclined to make one smile. We do not know what account has been given of this strange phenomenon; we have not heard that any Samuel poured oil upon his head, though some such circumstance must undoubtedly have taken place. At any rate Mr. Arnold hereaffords us a very good example of that considerate class of men, who seem to think that their friends would find them very dull, if their preaching and practice were always in perfect accord. This book has the virtue of being intensely amusing if you are fortunate enough to have caught any of that "*sweetness and light*" which characterizes the easy urbanity of this child of Greece "who does not care to dispute very obstinately on behalf of any opinion, even his own." We would like to know, if only for the sake of curiosity, how this gentle dogmatist arrived at his axiom, that "*Miracles do not happen*."—The italics are his own.—If this means that miracles do not now happen as far as *he* is aware, what logical bearing has such an opinion on an argument tending to show that miracles never did and never could happen. If it means that Mr. Matthew Arnold does not believe in miracles, in what capacity does he italicize the statement "*and miracles do not happen*." We might for a moment suppose that it was some new discovery of modern science, but science declares that she knows nothing of universal negatives. If then experience can not prove such a statement, perhaps reason can, but on appealing to the philosophers we found that they knew nothing certainly about miracles, in fact they seemed to have a decided leaning towards the idea that miracles have happened. Since therefore neither reflection nor experience could have given Mr. Arnold this information, we fall back on the only hypothesis left open to us, Mr. Arnold must have become a theosophist; but we fear that this is "*aberglabue invading*." However this may be, he has carried his secret with him to the grave. Perhaps like Dives—in this respect—he has already wished to send us a message, but has found, as Dives found, "that miracles *may* not happen."

As a poet we love him, as an essayist he is charming, as a critic he fascinates us, but as a dogmatist—well perhaps, when he speaks as a dogmatist, it is not worth his while to dispute very obstinately on behalf of his opinion.

E. C. C.

IMPERIAL FEDERATION.

No one who has followed, however cursorily, the movements in Canadian politics for the past year can doubt that a crisis in our country's history is rapidly approaching.

The question upon every one's lips is, what is Canada's future to be? It is a question that will soon have to receive a decisive answer. It is one which will not be answered for us, but which we shall have to answer for ourselves. Every one here will or may have a vote. It is our boast that every one of requisite age, and character shares in the government of his country. There is then manifestly an obligation upon us all to endeavour to study intelligently so far as we have time and opportunity at least the broader issues of national action. Democracy is not necessarily a good thing in itself. To say that because we are democratic therefore we are enlightened, and free, is absurd. If our democracy is ignorant, if it is uninterested, or if it is the slave of passion and party spirit, then democracy is an evil. It is not because we believe that under any circumstances, democracy is the right thing, that we are democratic, but because we believe that the people, as a whole, are sufficiently enlightened and interested in the welfare of the country. A moral obligation, I repeat, rests upon all who have a vote and intend to use it, to think, to study politics, that is, the science of government, the affairs of the state. If this is true at all times, how much more so, when we stand upon the brink of what may almost be called a revolution.

I have said that a crisis in our affairs of state is rapidly approaching. But rapidly is a relative term. In a man's life it may be a month or a year. In a nation's life, ten, twenty, or thirty years may elapse before the crisis is worked out. If then, this question is one in which all should take profound interest, how much more is this the case with those who are young. Every one who has reached what the prayer book styles the years of discretion should begin to think about the welfare of his country, the good of his fellow citizens. In a question of this kind to say that we know nothing about it, leads to the retort,—then you ought to begin to know something about it. To say:—I didn't want to know anything about it proves that the person, whoever he may be, rich or poor, educated or uneducated, is unfit for, and ought not to have, or having, ought not to exercise his vote.

There is never a standstill in a country's any more than in an individual's life. A country is continually growing either stronger or weaker, developing itself either in an upward or downward direction. But just as there are