

delivered in Westminster Abbey and before the University at Oxford, as well as for his courageous and liberal policy as Dean. He who so frequently pronounced the verdict of public opinion upon great men as they passed away is said to have uttered just before his death, the following words about himself: "I have laboured to make Westminster Abbey more and more a great centre of religious and national life, and I have done this in a truly liberal spirit without regard to the narrow limitations of creed or dogma." These words aptly describe the great work of his life. His funeral in the Abbey was a sign of the public estimate, being attended by distinguished men of all shades of creed, political opinion and nationality.

In Theodore Benfey, of Göttingen, Germany has lost another great scholar: like Bernays he was of Jewish parentage. He did much to enlarge the boundaries of Sanskrit philology, and gave the last years of his life to the preparation of a Vedic grammar. Among his claims to the gratitude of scholars may be mentioned his decipherment of the cuneiform inscriptions and his discovery that European fables are to be traced not to an Indian merely, but to a Buddhistic source. He was celebrated for his witty sayings, one of which was, that England produced great scholars in spite of her universities.

Three books lately published in England are interesting as signs of the times. Oscar Wilde's volume of Poems may be regarded as the evangel of the new creed of Æstheticism differing from other gospels in coming after, instead of before, the cult it seeks to establish. The author who lives in London is of Irish birth and is generally supposed to have been the original of one of *Punch's* amusing society characters. His attitude in regard to current thought is indicated by the following lines from one of his sonnets:

"In dreams of Art
And loftiest culture I would stand apart,
Neither for God, nor for his enemies."

It may be unnecessary to remind my readers that, this school regard Keats as their forerunner and ideal, and Mr. Wilde makes so much use of the works of this poet and others, as seriously to impair his claims to originality. His Poems have caused much difference of opinion, the *Academy* reviewer (Oscar Browning) maintaining that with "stern self-discipline there is no boyish dream of fame or ambition which he may not at some time satisfy." The *Athenæum* on the other hand considers that "work of this nature has no element of endurance, and Mr. Wilde's poems, in spite of some grace and beauty, as we have said, will, when their temporary notoriety is exhausted, find a place on the shelves of those only who hunt after the curious in literature. They may perhaps serve as an illustration in some chapter on the revival in the nineteenth century of the Gongorism of the sixteenth."

In "the Prophecy of St. Oran and other Poems" by Mathilde Blind we have an attempt to express in poetic forms the doctrines of the English Positivists. Such an endeavour was made before by George Eliot and produced at least one poem of great beauty ("O may I join the choir invisible"). The present volume is said to have great poetic merits, though the legend of Oran rising from the tomb to declare to St. Columba and his followers that