

ing away towards "The Old Faith and the New," his final work. Dr. Abbott's reply to Mr. Spedding is of the bitterest kind. Certainly on two points—Bacon's treatment of Essex, and his giving judgments in Chancery at the dictation of Buckingham—the doctor appears to have the best of it.

The *Fortnightly Review* opens with a review of "The New Domesday Book," by the Hon. E. L. Stanley. He proves beyond question that half the soil of England is owned by not more than 4,500 persons, allowing for double entries. The division of land in Scotland is also considered, the general conclusion being that "the welfare of the country demands that land should be freely bought and sold." The writer advocates the assimilation in all respects of real to personal property; the prohibition of settlements of land on all unborn persons; and the abolition of the game-laws, or at least their very great restriction. Mr. Horace White contributes a paper on "The Financial Crisis in America," which is rather historical than suggestive. These periodical disasters he regards as resulting entirely from speculation, and as peculiarly Anglo-Saxon disorders. Mr. Bridges' "Early Autumn on the Lower Yang-Tze" is a graphic and lively sketch of Chinese life in and about Shanghai. The domestic life, agri-

culture, and religious habits of the Chinese are sketched with a free hand, the background being the gorgeous scenery of "the flowery land."

Mr. Leslie Stephen contributes "An Agnostic's Apology," in which he attempts to give to all men a reason for the no-faith which is in him. Those who believe in God and immortality, not to speak of revelation, he styles, by a twist in phraseology, Gnostics. His creed is briefly this, that outside the phenomenal world we can know nothing with certainty. He points at some length to the extraordinary dilemmas to which the "Gnostics" are reduced in attempting to show a sure foundation for their so-called spiritual knowledge, and enlarges also upon the innumerable diversities of opinion existing amongst them. "The Gnostics," he says, "are at least bound to show some ostensible justification for their complacency. Have they discovered a firm resting-place, from which they are entitled to look down in compassion or contempt upon those who hold it to be a mere edifice of moonshine? If they have diminished by a scruple the weight of one passing doubt, we should be grateful: perhaps we should be converts. If not, why condemn Agnosticism?" The other papers in the number are of mere local interest.

FINE ART.

EXHIBITION OF THE ONTARIO SOCIETY OF ARTISTS.

THIS Society, now in the fourth year since it received its baptismal name, having taken possession of its new rooms on King Street, is to be congratulated upon having at last acquired also a permanent local habitation. That it has a long and prosperous career before it, there is every reason to believe; and that its present quarters, commodious and suitable as they now are, will, before many years have elapsed, be found too contracted for the expansive growth of their occupant, we also hope and believe. The Exhibition given during the past month was, it is stated, the most successful yet held in every material respect—in the number of subscribers to the Art Union, in the number of visitors to the Exhibition, and in the number and value of the sales. In the Exhibition itself, the improvement was not so marked. The water colours undoubtedly were, on the whole, in advance of those of any previous year; but the oils have been surpassed in one or two former exhibitions, a falling off probably due to the Philadelphia Exhibition having attracted a number of the best pictures of the year. Under these circumstances it might be well to hold another Exhibition in the fall, when the paintings now at Philadelphia

could be exhibited alongside the best of those comprised in the recent Exhibition.

Taking the Exhibition as a whole the most striking thing which forced itself upon the notice of even the casual observer, after a general survey, was the woful lack of ideas. With few exceptions—the number of which might almost be counted on the fingers of both hands—the whole two hundred and thirty were simply sketches from nature, undoubtedly faithful and meritorious for the most part, but still mere bits of scenery—field, wood, rock, and water. Now, M. Taine is no doubt right when he declares that the fundamental idea at the bottom of all art is imitation. But it is none the less true that imitation is not of itself sufficient, otherwise a wax figure by Madame Tussaud would be a finer work of art than the Venus of Praxiteles. A man might have the hand of a Michelangelo for drawing, the eye of a Titian for colour, and that of a Rembrandt for *chiaro-oscuro*, and yet be little better than a mere mechanical manufacturer of pretty pictures. At the back of the eye which sees and the hand which executes, there should be a heart to feel and a brain to conceive. These are the supreme necessi-