

REPROOF.

For shame, dear friend! renounce thy canting strain!
 What wouldst thou have a good great man obtain?
 Place—titles—salary—a gilded chain—
 Or throne of corses which his sword hath slain?
 Greatness and goodness are not means, but ends!
 Hath he not always treasures, always friends,
 The good great man?—three treasures, love and light,
 And calm thoughts, regular as infant's breath;—
 And three firm friends, more sure than day and night—
 Himself, His Maker, and the Angel Death.

The "Ancient Mariner" and "Christabel" stand in a class by themselves. They deserve to be studied, as is finely shown by Mrs. Olyphant in her "Literary History of the Nineteenth Century," as illustrations of the fact that a supernatural element in poetry is essential to its deepest mood.* Too few readers of the "Ancient Mariner" have noticed the remarkable quotation with which it is prefaced. It is taken from the works of the ingenious and eloquent Thomas Burnet, author of the "Sacred History of the Earth." "Facile credo, plures esse Naturæ invisibiles quam visibiles in rerum universitate sed horum omnium familiam quis nobis enarrabit, et graduo et cognationes et discrimina et singulosum numera? Quid agunt? Quæ loca habitant? Harum rerum notitium," etc., etc.

It is quite hopeless to argue with the men who are always insisting that poetry must prove something. The "Ancient Mariner" is vague, mystical, full of a weird supernaturalism and as a study for the imagination not easily surpassed. What imagery!

Or wedding guests! this soul hath been
 Alone on a wide, wide sea;
 So lonely 'twas that God Himself
 Scarce seemed then to be.

And no one can appreciate the divine ending of the poem in the following lines who has not again and again steeped himself in its spirit:

"He prayeth well, who loveth well
 Both man and bird and beast.
 He prayeth best, who loveth best
 All things both great and small;
 For the dear God, who loveth us,
 He made and loveth all."

"Christabel," says Mrs. Olyphant, "is a romance of Christianity—a legend of the saints." It is a presentation of the never-ending conflict between good and evil, innocence and moral foulness, perfect purity and contagious vice, when Christabel, the impersonation of heavenly-mindedness, is all unaware of what evil pain is in Geraldine, the first witch. "Never," to quote again from Mrs. Olyphant, "was there a higher or more beautiful conception." It is a companion to

* Vol. 1, pp. 243, *et seq.*