

unchangeable laws, He is discharged from governing the world." Mr. Spencer cited Mr. Gladstone as "a conspicuous exponent of the anti-scientific view,"—we should suppose with perfect propriety. Not so, the Premier tells us. He does not know what "evolution" and "unchangeable laws" mean; and, if he did, he does not possess the knowledge requisite to judge of their truth. As for the inferences attributed to evolutionists, we have no doubt they would be repudiated by Darwin, Spencer and Wallace. Mr. Gladstone asks whether, if he had said that the abuse of

liberty has produced crime, and that of law and order despotism, he could be held to be a foe to liberty, law or order? Certainly not, but the illustration is not apposite. As a statesman, Mr. Gladstone knows what liberty is and what law and order mean; and he may legitimately frame an argument about them. In the other case, however, he confesses his ignorance of the truth or even meaning of the premisses, and states, as conclusions from them, inferences scientific men would repudiate.

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## BOOK REVIEWS.

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ROMANCE OF OLD COURT-LIFE IN FRANCE. By Frances Elliot. New York: D. Appleton & Co. Toronto. Adam, Stevenson & Co.

Since the iconoclastic pen of Niebuhr commenced its assault on the exquisite legends of old Rome, he has had so many imitators that some people have come to regard "The Romance of History" as little more than an unmeaning phrase. This work, however, will help to remind them that those who lived and died in other days were men and women of like passions with ourselves—a fact which the egotism and philosophy of our day seem inclined to forget. Mrs. Elliot tells us that in all she has written she has "sought carefully to work into dialogue each word and sentence recorded of the individual, every available trait of peculiarity of character to be found in contemporary memoirs, every tradition that has come down to us." The field of her labour extends from the times of Francis I. to the death of Louis XIV. It is a period rich in historic romance, and she has used her materials so as to give us a most charming book. Francis I., the opening character of the work, seems to us to be dealt with rather gently in reference to the perjury whereby he secured his release at the hands of Charles V., but the picture presented of the love between him and his sister Marguerite is deeply touching. In general, indeed, the loves portrayed are by no means of a "sisterly" nature; but we need scarcely say that none need fear to meet anything calculated to shock even the most sensitive delicacy. Nor is the book altogether made up of love episodes. Almost all the leading characters in French history during the period reviewed are brought before us. Some of the deeds of Catherine de Medici, including the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, are painted in a manner which rouses the fiery indignation which they must always be calculated to

excite, though the account of the death of that awful woman makes one feel inclined to murmur a prayer that her sins may not be laid to her charge. The portrait of Henry IV. and Gabrielle d'Estrees is probably the most delightful in the book. In a few words, Mrs. Elliot thus brings the head of the Bourbon dynasty before us:—"A man who called a spade a spade, swore like a trooper, and hated the parade of Courts; was constant in friendship, fickle in love, promised anything freely, especially marriage, to any beauty who caught his eye; a boon companion among men, a libertine with women, a story-teller, cynical in his careless epicureanism, and so profound a believer in 'the way of fate' that, reckless of the morrow, he extracted all things from the passing hour." The contrast between him and his son Louis XIII., is one calculated to provoke a smile; but the story of the love-scene between the latter and Louise de Lafayette must excite the respect even of cynics and women-haters for that saintly girl. Richelieu and Mazarin also figure on the pages of Mrs. Elliot, who maintains that Anne of Austria led the former to believe that she was in love with him, thereby inducing him to array himself in a mountebank's dress and dance a *bolero* in proof of his own affection. The picture of Mazarin in his gallery shortly before his death, is calculated to bring vividly before us the nakedness in which man enters the world and must leave it. After these the loves of Louis XIV. appear on the scene. The accounts of his amours with Louise de la Vallière and Madame de Montespan, and of his marriage with Madame de Maintenon, are deeply interesting, but can scarcely fail to lower the monarch in the eyes of every right-thinking reader. A book which thus traverses the history of the Court-Life of France during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, al-