

power between the Crown and the Commons which marked the era of the Commonwealth; the crisis that brought doom to the Stuarts and led to the Revolution of 1688; Parliamentary Government under the first two Georges—the ministries of Walpole, Chatham, and Pitt; the tragical disaster in English history, the rupture between England and her American colonies; the national contest with Napoleon; and finally the era of Parliamentary reform and its fruits. On all these topics Mr. Goldwin Smith discourses in a most illuminating manner, worthy of his high reputation as a scholar and thinker. The literary progress of the nation is only occasionally referred to, as are matters military, industrial, and social, the aim being to linger nowhere nor to weary the reader by taking up matters of minor detail. The attention is centred throughout on the evolution of the nation politically, and upon the Church's varying course in relation to the State. Now and then are to be met with some striking bit of portraiture in king, priest, or cabinet minister; but nothing is ostentatiously intruded for rhetorical effect or to mar the quiet and impressive course of the on moving narrative. The volumes, as a whole, are a contribution of surpassing interest in English history, and the author deserves unstinted praise for the achievement, which we deem the fit crown of a long and strenuous life.

Equally thoughtful and impressive is Professor Smith when writing of matters within the domain of religious, especially of speculative, thought. Here he has given readers a number of momentous volumes from his pen, besides a wealth of articles in the magazines treating of problems of the highest interest to human minds, some of which have become in our day the themes of not a little political debate. To a mind so acute as his, the Professor at times is a somewhat disturbing force when he touches those controverted topics which have been so much the outcrop of the age, especially since the era of "Essays and Reviews" and the promulgation of

the doctrine of Evolution. He is, nevertheless, always fair and dispassionate, as well as reverent; and while he does not talk effete orthodoxy to an age of reason and critical investigation, he is "sound" and assuring enough to believe in a Power of good akin to, though immeasurably higher than, human goodness, which is manifested in the universe, and which predominates over evil. He at the same time urges that it is the duty of all, whatever may be beyond our ken, to trust, apart from any superstition, in a God and a hereafter, and to run with resignation the full career of duty, in the hope that, if we do, it will be well for us in the sum of things. Other perturbing aspects of the religious problems of the day, though his outlook is keen and wide within the limits of the impenetrable veil, he does not fail to mark, but rather to emphasise, the changes of thought which latter-day Science has brought about, though he urges us to trust the normal indications of our moral nature and our bodily sense, and thus sounds an altruistic note; while pointing out, however, the difficulties of placing reliance wholly upon the Scriptures as the charter of man's faith and belief. That there are difficulties, many and perplexing, in the theistic conception of the universe and our relations to it and its Author, we all know, and must admit. Evolution has altered our views concerning many things, and biblical criticism has put a new aspect upon our interpretations of many parts of Revelation. But these facts only prove that the world is still advancing, and that the human mind has not reached its full development. There is hence little justification for being dogmatic, far less braggartly sceptical, in regard to things whereof we are ignorant. Better, surely, the hope rather than the denial and the doubt, and more comforting, as well as more seemly, the temper and spirit of confiding trust. This, obviously, is the attitude of Mr. Goldwin Smith, and the spirit in which he writes of religious topics.