

TALKS ON BOOKS.

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such necessarily in intellect, yet a dwarf, as such, does not call for worship. The Anglo-Saxon equivalent for a "klikk" is a dry cough at the beginning of each sentence, and I have heard that from men who were not physical dwarfs.

A Scotch friend, with whom I have enjoyed many a pleasant talk in Canada, has sent me a book that is not quite new. But it is new to me, and the same, probably, to most of my readers. Its author is Andrew Lang, the genial critic, against whose "snaviter in modo" but "fortiter in re" sides many bumptious young critics have bunted their billy-goat heads in vain. He is remembered and feared by the American scribbler whom wrath has overmastered. Yet no coward dread seizes my soul as I proceed to review "Custom and Myth." The region into which he has ventured is one that I have long made my own. Mr. Lang is too polite to have contempt for anybody, but he has no faith in Max Muller's view that mythology is a disease of language, nor in that of Sir George Cox and his German friends, that it is a personification of the heavenly bodies and other objects and powers of nature. When Mr. Gould's "Arcadia" was in existence, I indicated, in its columns, the close resemblance of a Basque story, told by the Rev. Wentworth Webster, of the French Pyrenees, to a Dakota one told by the Rev. J. Owen Dorsey, of Indian Territory, and argued their common origin. Mr. Webster suggested that Basque sailors might have carried the story to America, although the Dakotas are an inland people; and Mr. Dorsey, also in a letter to me, stated that the narrator of the legend was a French half-breed. In the minds of certain illogical persons, who were in doubt