

enough to add *one-sixth* to the velocity, never could be responsible for so prodigious a result. As well might we expect an ant beneath the ponderous foot of an elephant to exert sufficient strength to throw the huge beast down. We confess that, when we read and gloried in that very delightful work of George Eliot, it never occurred to us that any principle of acoustics was involved in the lines above quoted. But could small air-waves given off from one note of a flute tend to so great a result, when a much louder and shriller tone, giving off waves with more force, would have had no effect at all? But about the law itself—the working of it—if it is impossible to explain it consistently on the wave hypothesis, how will the corpuscular stand? Supposing that a true sympathetic attraction exists in every sound-producing body for every other sound-producing body which has a unison or synchronous vibration, is there anything inconsistent or difficult to accept here? Surely not more than in the attraction of a magnet to iron. In what way a loadstone overcomes the inertia of iron, causing it to change places, no scientist can tell. Yet nothing is more certain than that some kind of substantial currents pass off from the magnet and seize hold of the iron, or we wouldn't have the visible and corporeal result of *lifting* which occurs, as most certainly a movement can't be produced by *nothing*; and simple undulations won't answer, because a magnet moves and lifts iron through an intervening substance, as *e. g.*, palatinum, gold, or sheets of water. Which is the more mysterious? Why acknowledge that one can't be explained and then inconsistently try to fathom the other? It is easily proved that the sympathetic vibrations of a unison body are not caused by the air-waves sent off from the actuating string or fork. If any one is curious enough to try the experiment, let him hang two pendulum balls synchronously, *i. e.*, with short rods of equal length—place them closely together so as not to touch, and start one swinging rapidly—the air-waves thrown off may equal those of a ticking pendulum, but so long as no tone is produced by the one set in motion, the other will remain quiescent.

I have spun out this article to much greater length than I intended, and humbly crave pardon for not confining myself to half the space—especially as some may think it an altogether unnecessary waste of time and paper on an uninteresting subject. But it is one that *should* be interesting, and one, moreover, unlike the waves of air, very difficult to *condense*. One objection I must answer before closing. It is asked, "How can a sounding body emit corpuscles without gradually diminishing its own substance and wearing away?" A simple reference to *odour*—which is acknowledged to be atomic—should be a sufficient answer. A grain of musk left out would scent up a very large area of still atmosphere without losing any perceptible amount of its bulk. And the scent from a fox's foot has been keen enough to guide a dog correctly hours after the fox passed, and with even a steady breeze blowing across the track.

SOME ASPECTS OF ÆSTHETICISM.

BY R. T. NICHOL, B. A.

"THE LUKIAN.—This fruit is of a hot and humid nature. To those not used to it it seems at first to smell like rotten onions, but immediately they have tasted it they prefer it to all other food. * * *

"The pulp is the eatable part and its consistence and

flavour are indescribable. A rich, butter-like custard highly flavoured with almonds gives the best general idea of it, but intermingled with it come wafts of flavour that call to mind cream-cheese, onion-sauce, brown sherry and other incongruities."—*Wallace's Malay Archipelago*, ch. v., p 75.

In the above passage Mr. Wallace furnishes us, I think, with a very apt simile of æstheticism. Nothing more composite, more many-sided, alternately admirable and disgusting, do I know of. At once a synonym for the happy virtue of discrimination and the folly of senseless imitation, it may command our entire respect or deserve our scorn. And this will be determined by the meaning we assign to the word itself. To begin, then, let us be strict, if pedantic, and remember its etymology—*αἰσθησις*—perception—nicety of discernment, the characteristic of a *connoisseur*—a "cunning" person—(I am tempted a step farther in philology)—a *koenig*, a king. And of what a kingdom! If we consider man as compounded of bodily, mental, spiritual, then the second of these is the æsthete. All those emotions of the mind—all those noble senses by which the beauty of the outer world is apprehended and enjoyed—the colour which thrills, the sound which kindles, the odour which acts as a talisman of memory—all these are the *matter* of the science of Æsthetics. It has to do with their development, their perfecting, their quickening, their maintenance in perfectness. And why should the care for these be regarded with scorn? It is not indeed of equal importance, nor of such surpassing excellence as that which deals with the spiritual life—that marvellous "hidden life of the soul"—hid with CHRIST in God—which has power to lift those who follow it above the world, nay, above self—to merge all their personality in another—to fasten them with entire self-forgetfulness in ceaseless contemplation of infinite perfection—of whose votaries, one who has best written of it, represents the Divine Master Himself as saying, that "being lifted up above themselves, and carried out of love of themselves, they are wholly set on the love of ME, in Whom also they rest with enjoyment."

This is the highest life of all; nor can we wonder that when pursued without interruption, it so engrosses all powers as to leave no capability of appreciation for any other. We all know the story of S. Bernard, who, after walking all day long by the lovely Lemane Lake, was found at evening to ask where he was, having been quite oblivious of all exterior surroundings.

It is not surprising that those who have been on the Delectable Mountains, and walked in the Land of Beulah, where the "shining ones" also walk, who have "beheld the King in His beauty, and the land that is very far off," should care not for the beauty of any transitory thing. We cannot imagine that even "her magnificence, whom all Asia and the world worshipped," and the choruses of the vestals, awoke a single emotion of pleasure or admiration in the heart of the Apostle, who had