

he has found himself unexpectedly in the selfsame place, whence he proceeded. He has travelled in a circle, wherein he has gathered only the fruits of a paltry mental exercise; he has, in fine, but added another to the numerous failures on record of similar attempts made by greater and abler minds. The origin of moral evil must ever remain an unsolved question; a question of infinite depths which Infinite Wisdom alone can explore.

We turn with a feeling of relief from this somewhat pretentious volume to the brief consideration of a meritorious production of home talent and enterprise.

We have more than once before met with Mr. Borthwick as a compiler, and have as often recognized his excellence in that particular branch of literary labour. It is with pleasure, therefore, that we find him again before the public in connection with a work of considerably greater magnitude than his previous publications.

To say the least of Mr. Borthwick's "*Cyclopædia of Battles*," (\*) it is carefully and ably edited, and will form a valuable addition to Canadian literature.

In rendering the *Iliad* (†) into English verse Sir John Herschel has performed a labour of love. Possessing a mind deeply imbued with a sense of the delicate and refined beauties, and the wild and rugged picturesqueness of Homer, he has accomplished his work throughout with striking care and fidelity. He is happiest, however, in his treatment of those gentler subjects which present so beautiful contrasts to the bolder and more impetuous delineation of forensic and martial strife. In this delightful little sketch of a scene upon the shield,

"Next was there shown a field of corn deep waving, where reapers,  
Each with his sharpened sickle in hand, were securing the harvest.  
Handful by handful it sunk to their sturdy strokes, and in order  
Lay the cut bundles. These into sheaves the binders were tying.  
Three were the binders of sheaves, with attendant boys, who the reapers  
Followed, gathering the handfuls of corn in their arms, to supply them  
Fast as they tied up the sheaves. Apart stood the master in silence  
Leaning upon his staff, and with joy surveying the produce.  
Under an oak, where an ox was slain, the heralds attendant  
Harvest rites performed, and a feast prepared, while the maidens  
Sprinkled the meat with plenty of barley flour for the reapers."

It is Homer, still fresh in the memory, who paints with master hand the picture, although the pure and simple English of the translation reminds us that the Chian bard lived and sung whilst yet the number of the centuries was comparatively small.

\* The Battles of the World; or a Cyclopædia of Battles, Seiges, &c., &c. By the Rev. D. Borthwick. Montreal: John Lovell. 1866.

† The *Iliad* of Homer, translated into English Accentuated Hexameters. By Sir John F. W. Herschel, Bart. London: Macmillan. 1866.