

(Written for the Canadian Illustrated News.)

STANZAS.

(From the French of Lamartine.)

TRANSLATED BY JOHN READE.

I.

Once said I in my heart, "What shall I do with life?  
Of the one who went before shall I pursue the trace?  
And shall I imitate the follies of my race,  
As the unconscious lamb seeks the predestined knife?"

II.

One seeks upon the sea for wealth and happiness:  
The cruel wave engulphs his bark and his desires;  
And on the breast of fame, to which his heart aspires,  
Another dies, deceived by shadows of success.

III.

Making men's passions serve to aid his enterprise,  
Another founds a throne and mounts it but to fall;  
In lap of love reclined, another looks for all  
The joys that life can give in some fair woman's eyes.

IV.

Slumbers the indolent in famine's gaunt embrace;  
The ploughman guides his plough while meditates the sage;  
The warrior loves to slay the foe in his rage,  
And by the wayside waits the beggar in his place.

V.

And whither tend they all? They go where goes the leaf  
Which winter's icy breath chases in cruel play;  
Thus, whatsoever their lot, the throngs of men decay—  
Time sows and gathers them and lays them, sheaf by sheaf.

VI.

'Gainst time they strove in vain—'tis time that conquers all—  
As a stream swallows up the sand upon its banks,  
So in death disappear their fleeting, shadowy ranks—  
They saw the light; they died. Lord! have they lived at all?

VII.

For me, my soul will sing the Lord whom it adores  
Or in the city's din, or in the desert's calm,  
By riverside or sea, whatever I do or am,  
At sunset or when morn the golden light restores.

VIII.

The faithless earth exclaims, "Who is this Lord of thine?"  
'Tis He whose spirit dwells unseen in every place,  
Of whose august step measure the bounds of space,  
He by whose power alone sun, stars, and planets shine;

IX.

He who from nothing formed this earth so fair and bright,  
And in the mighty void the world's foundation laid,  
He who the boundless sea to know its bound has made,  
He at whose glance divine burst forth the glorious light;

X.

He unto whom all days and seasons are as one—  
Eternal, uncreate, changeless and without peer,  
To whom all time is now, to whom all things are here,  
To whom the years account for all that they have done;

XI.

He only is the Lord. Let my tongue ever sing  
Unto the sons of men the glories of his name;  
As long as life remains, His praise let me proclaim,  
As on a harp of gold, attuned in every string.

NEW BOOKS.

A MANUAL OF POTTERY AND PORCELAIN, for American Collectors. By John H. Treadwell. Published by G. P. Putnam & Sons, New York.

The present volume will be found very valuable to a collector of fictile wares, and useful to the student as one of the oldest and probably the most important branches of the industrial arts.

With a remark of the author, in his preface, we heartily concur that there is a brilliant æsthetic future awaiting the North American continent, and we can share in the hope that even this generation may witness the time when the arts both fine and useful, with the growth of intelligence and taste, shall absorb the minds of our people and draw them away from the unworthy and intoxicating pursuits which too much occupy them to-day. This volume of Mr. Treadwell's is a fitting one to assist in the consummation of so desired a thing as the increased knowledge of and love for ceramic art; dating as it does from the time when the cry of Nimrod's people was "Let us build a city and tower, and make us a name;" and to that of Rhampsinitus, the King of Egypt, who, according to Herodotus, employed clay seals to secure his treasure inviolate; and again, to the time of Demaratus, a father of Tarquin, who, according to Pliny, brought the art of pottery (1050 B.C.) into Etruria, from which country has been handed down to us those beautiful *Etruscan* vases with paintings and sculptured designs commemorative of the fabled achievements of the heroic ages, the labours of Hercules, the adventures of Theseus, the valourous acts of the Amazons, and the renowned events of the Trojan history. Descending to the most beautiful Majolica ware so highly prized by all collectors, and of which the genuine pieces are

"As rare  
As wings upon a cat  
Or flowers of air,"

more especially the *amatorii* or love plates, bearing the portraits of the ladies to whom they were presented, with inscriptions calculated to express the affection of the donor—some of these portraits painted by Maestro Giorgio Andreoli at Gubbio, and the immortal *Raffaello* at Urbino; and, still later to the time of Wedgwood, at Burslem, whose exquisite cameo ware—copies of modern and antique classical subjects—may be pronounced among the most beautiful and perfect that ever existed.

Every lover of art will do well to add this attractive volume, or manual of pottery and porcelain, to their library. We can truly say we have derived much pleasure from its perusal, and we can most heartily recommend it to any one who desires to be familiar with the history of one of the most interesting art-studies.

Dr. Colby's Pills cure Dysentery. Dr. Colby's Pills are painless in operation.

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SPIRIT OF THE ANCIENT MYTHOLOGY.

From having a different creed of our own, and always encountering the heathen mythology in a poetical and fabulous shape, we are apt to have a false idea of the religious feeling of the ancients. We are in the habit of supposing, whatever we allow when we come to reason upon the point, that they regarded their fables in the same poetical light as ourselves; that they could not possibly put faith in Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto; in the sacrifice of innocent turtle doves, the libation of wine and the notions about Tartarus and Ixion.

Undoubtedly there were multitudes of free thinkers in the ancient world. Most of the Greek poets and philosophers appear to have differed with the literal notions of the many.\* A system of refined theism is understood to have been taught to the initiated in the celebrated mysteries. The doctrines of Epicurus were so prevalent in the most intellectual age of Rome, that Lucretius wrote a poem upon them, in which he treats their founder as a divinity; and Virgil in a well known passage of the *Georgics*, "Felix qui potuit, &c.," exalts either Epicurus or Lucretius as a blessed being who put hell and terror under his feet. A sickly temperament appears to have made him wish, rather than be able, to carry his own scepticism so far; yet he insinuates his disbelief in Tartarus in the sixth book of his epic poem, where Æneas and the Sybil, after the description of the lower world, go out through the ivory gate, which was the passage of false visions.† Caesar, according to a speech of his in Sallust, derided the same notions in open Senate; and Cicero in other parts of his writings, as well as in a public pleading, speaks of them as fables and impertinence,—"*inceptis ac fabulis*."

But however this plain dealing may look on the part of the men of letters, there is reason to believe that even in those times, the people in general were strong upon points of faith. The extension of the Greek philosophy, may have insensibly rendered them familiar with latitudes of interpretation on the part of others. They would not think it impious in Cato and Cicero to have notions of the Supreme Being more consistent with the elevation of their minds. But for themselves, they adhered, from habit, to the literal creed of their ancestors, as the Greek populace had done before them. The jealous enemies of Socrates contrived to have him put to death on a charge of irreverence for the Gods. A frolic of the libertine Alcibiades, which to say the least of it was in very bad taste,—the defacing the statues of Mercury,—was followed with important consequences. The history of Socrates had the effect, in after-times, at least in the ancient world, of saving philosophical speculators from the vindictive egotism of opinion. But even in the days of Augustus, Ovid wrote a popular work full of mythological fables; and Virgil himself, whose creed perhaps only rejected what was unkindly, gave the hero of his intended popular epic, the particular appellation of Pious. That Augustus should pique himself on the same attribute, proves little; for he was a cold-blooded man of the world, and could play the hypocrite for the worst and most despotic purposes. Did he not now and then lecture his poetical friends respecting their own appearances with the world? There is a curious ode of Horace (Book 1, Od. 34), in which he says he finds himself compelled to give up his sceptical notions, and to attend more to public worship, because it had thundered one day when the sky was cloudless. The critics are divided in their opinion of his object in this ode. Some think him in earnest, others in jest. It is the only thing of the sort in his works, and is, at all events, of an equivocal character that would serve his purpose upon either side of the question.

The opinions of the ancients upon religion may be divided into three general classes. The great multitude believed anything; the very few disbelieved everything; the philosophers and poets entertained a refined natural religion, which, while it pronounced upon nothing, rejected what was evidently unworthy of the spirit of the creation, and regarded the popular deities as personifications of its various workings. All these classes had their extravagancies in proportion to their ignorance, or viciousness, or metaphysical perplexity. The multitude whose notions were founded on ignorance, habit, and fear, admitted many absurd and some cruel imaginations. The mere man of the world measured everything by his own vain and petty standard, and thought the whole goods of the universe a scramble for the cunning and hypocritical. The over-refining followers of Plato, endeavouring to peep into the nature of things by the mere effort of the will, arrived at conclusions visible to none but their own yearning and impatient eyes, and lost themselves in the ethereal dogmatism of Plotinus and Porphyry.

The greatest pleasure arising to a modern imagination from the ancient mythology, is in a mingled sense of the old popular belief and of the philosophical refinements upon it. We take Apollo and Mercury and Venus as shapes that existed in popular credulity, as the greater fairies of the ancient world; and we regard them, at the same time, as personifications of all that is beautiful and genial in the forms and tendencies of creation. But the result, coming as it does, too, through avenues of beautiful poetry, both ancient and modern, is so entirely cheerful that we are apt to think it must have wanted gravity to more believing eyes. We fancy that the old world saw nothing in religion but lively and graceful shapes as remote from the more obscure and awful hintings of the world unknown, as physics appear to be from the metaphysical, as the eye of a beautiful woman is from the inward speculations of a Brahmin, or a lily at noon-day from the wide obscurity of night-time.

This supposition appears to be carried a great deal too far. We will not inquire in this place, how far the mass of mankind, when these shapes were done away, did or did not escape from a despotic anthropomorphism; nor how far they were driven by the vaguer fears and the opening of a more visible eternity, into avoiding the whole subject rather than courting it; nor how it is that the nobler practical religion which was afforded them has been unable to bring back their frightened

\* It is remarkable that Æschylus and Euripides, the two dramatists whose faith in the national religion was most doubted, are said to have met with strange and violent deaths.—The latter was torn to pieces by dogs belonging to Archelaus, King of Macedonia, 406 B. C.; and the former killed by a tortoise which an eagle let fall upon his bald head, in mistake for a stone, and so fulfilled an oracle, according to which he was fated to die by a blow from heaven. These exits from the scene look very like the retributive death-beds which the bigots of all religions are so fond of ascribing to one another.

† Did Dante forget this, when he took Virgil for his guide through the Inferno?

theology from the angry and avaricious pursuits into which they fled for refuge. But setting aside the portion of terror, of which the heathenism partook in common with all faiths originating in uncultivated times, the ordinary run of pagans were perhaps more impressed with a sense of the invisible world than the same description of men under a more shadowy system. There is the same difference between the two things as between a populace believing in fairies and a populace not believing. The latter is on the high road to something better, if not drawn aside into new terrors on the one hand, or mere worldliness on the other. But the former is led to look out of mere worldly common-places about it twenty times to the other's once. It has a sense of a supernatural state of things, however gross. It has a link with another world, from which something like gravity is sure to strike into the most cheerful heart. Every forest to the mind's eye of the Greek was haunted with superior intelligencies. Every stream had its presiding nymph, who was thanked for the draught of water. Every house had its protecting gods, which had blessed the inmate's ancestors, and which would bless him also if he cultivated the social affections, for the same word which expressed piety towards the gods expressed love towards relations and friends. If in all this there was nothing but the worship of a more graceful humanity, there may be worships much worse as well as much better. And the divinest spirit that ever appeared on earth has told us that the extension of human sympathy embraces all that is required of us, either to do or foresee.

Imagine the feelings with which an ancient believer must have gone by the oracular oaks of Dodona, or the calm groves of the Eumenides, or the fountain where Proserpine vanished under ground with Pluto, or the great temple of the Mysteries at Eleusis, or the laurelled mountain of Parnassus, on the side of which was the temple of Delphi, where Apollo was supposed to be present in person. Imagine Plutarch, a devout and yet a liberal believer, when he went to study theology and philosophy at Delphi, with what feelings must he not have passed along the woody paths of the hill, approaching nearer every instant to the presence of the divinity, and not sure that a glance of light through the trees was not the lustre of the god himself going by.

This is mere poetry to us, and very fine it is; but to him it was poetry and religion, and beauty, and gravity, and hushing awe, and a path as from one world to another.

With similar feelings he would cross the ocean, an element that naturally detaches the mind from earth, and which the ancients regarded as especially doing so. He had been in the Carpathian sea, the favourite haunt of Proteus, who was supposed to be gifted above every other deity with a knowledge of the causes of things. Towards evening, when the winds were rising, and the sailors had made their vows to Neptune, he would think of the old "shepherd of the seas of yore," and believe it possible that he might become visible to his eyesight, driving through the darkling waters, and turning the sacred wildness of his face towards the blessed ship.

In all this there is a deeper sense of the other world than in the habit of contenting oneself with a few vague terms and embodying nothing but Mammon. There is a deeper sense of another world precisely because there is a deeper sense of the present, of its varieties its benignities, its mystery. It was a strong sense of this which made a modern poet give vent to his impatience at seeing the beautiful planet we live upon, with all its starry wonders about it, so little thought of, compared with what is ridiculously called *the world*. He seems to have dreaded the symptom, as an evidence of materialism, and of the planets being dry, self-existing things, peopled with successive mortalities and unconnected with any superintendence or consciousness in the universe about them. It is abhorrent from all we think and feel that they should be so, and yet Love might make heavens of them if they were.

"The world is too much with us. Late and soon,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;  
Little we see in nature that is ours;  
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!  
This sea that bares her bosom to the moon;  
The winds that will be howling at all hours,  
And are upgathered now like sleeping flowers;  
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;  
It moves us not. Great God! I'd rather be  
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn,  
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;  
Have sight of Proteus coming from the sea,  
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn."

To PREVENT SUNSTROKE.—The first thing is to watch for its premonitions. We know a hot day when we see it. And the sun is always felt to be oppressive to the brain and general system before the seizure takes place. Be warned. Seek the shade. Don't attempt to fight with the great forces of nature.

But the specific preventive of sunstroke will be found in the copious use of cold water before the heat has affected the system—as cold water and ice are also the best restoratives, in medical hands, after a sunstroke has occurred. This sad visitation, so common every year on this continent, is seen to be the fruit of carelessness—a needless infliction. Take a handkerchief. Dip it in cold water and wring it out. This, placed in the crown of the hat, and its moisture renewed from time to time, will be found an effective prevention. A sponge would answer equally well, and would keep moist longer. Persons necessarily exposed to the rays of the sun should drink a glass of water from time to time, and also bathe the hands and face in cold water. It would be convenient if more of our towns and cities had drinking fountains. We may add that the white K-pi, imported from India, is a valuable protection; the white scarf twisted round the hat not half so valuable, for it leaves the crown exposed. If the above directions were generally followed, sunstrokes would be almost unknown, and every newspaper may assist in promoting this desirable end by giving them currency.

Abbé Jallabert, a canon of St. Geneviève, Paris, has written a book with the singular title, *Le Catholicisme avant Jésus-Christ*, in which he tries to prove that the belief and traditions common to pagans, Jews, and Christians draw their origin from what he calls primitive revelation. According to him the same symbols are found in all nations; their worship is identical in all its essential parts; the traditions conveyed in the Sibylline verses, Hermes Trismegistus, and Zoroaster, include the general expectation of a redeemer, and show the fundamental unity of dogmatic and moral belief in Asia and Europe. No doubt M. l'Abbé Jallabert may be called an Old Catholic with a vengeance.