

Talks about Books.

THE Open Court is a weekly journal of which Dr. Paul Carus of Chicago is the editor, and it professes to be devoted to the work of conciliating religion with science. Dr. Carus, the son of an evangelical Lutheran minister, is an Hegelian and pretty far off on the left wing. He is a monist, recognizing the unity of all existence, and making real existence and thought two phases of the manifestation of the All. With this Pantheism he hopes to reconcile the Secularists and the liberal-minded Christians. Dr. Carus' attitude is dignified, courteous, conciliatory. He believes in religion but not in that religion which is based on the revelation made by an incarnate God and risen Saviour, which science proves a delusion. Nevertheless in the December number of the Open Court, his first article is on the Conquest of Death, the text of which is "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." The last words of the article are "Religion is the conquest of death." You are so far right, good Dr. Carus, and it is to be hoped that the God in whom you so imperfectly believe as the mere sum of all existence may lead you, out of all the metaphysical rubbish your imagination has accumulated to be a veil between your soul and the Father in heaven, back to the faith of your pious father in his German fatherland. In some things you are not far from the kingdom of God, and in your kindly reverential spirit might teach lessons to many Christians. Philosophy helped Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria. Cicero's Hortensius was useful to Augustine, and Schleiermacher and Neander were stimulated by Plato in the direction of spirituality. But as a rule, whether to prove the existence of God or to lead to faith and holy living, metaphysics have been sadly inoperative. The secularist you want to catch will not take your bait, for the hook of this present evil world is not only in his jaws but deep down in his heart where the fool says there is no God. There is a passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews on the conquest of death worth considering, which brings the Absolute, the Unconditioned, the source of the phenomenal All, nearer than any philosophy can: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

In ethics, says Dr. Carus, man must regulate his conduct so as to be in