

they rendered in making civil and religious liberty possible for us. As Dr. Schaff says, "toleration is a modern virtue." Other defects in the character of John Calvin are mentioned. "He was passionate, prone to anger, censorious, impatient of contradiction, intolerant towards Romanists and heretics, somewhat austere and morose, and not without a trace of vindictiveness." Regrettable and unlovely as these features of character are in anyone, in Calvin's case they are but the dark shadows in an otherwise luminous picture. His great and heroic virtues and splendid endowments more than counterbalanced these palpable defects.

John Calvin had not a strong physique, neither did he enjoy robust health; he was not naturally courageous, but so great was the force of his indomitable will and the power of conviction that even the most formidable dangers were faced with invincible courage and determination. It was not in the power of his bitterest foes to make him quail. His intellectual power is beyond question, and it is conceded that he was the peer of the master minds of that age, prolific in great men. The deeply religious and moral character of Calvin was recognized by friend and foe alike, its reality and power gave him an influence over others rarely attained, and his evident sincerity was apparent in his life as it is equally manifest in his writing. Another feature that enabled him to acquire and maintain his great ascendancy was a thorough unselfishness. "He soared," says Dr. Schaff, "above filthy lucre and worldly ambition. His only ambition was that pure and holy ambition to serve God to the best of his ability. He steadily refused an increase of salary, and frequently also presents of every description, except for the poor and refugees, whom he always had at heart and aided to the extent of his means." Cardinal Sadolet, who, in passing through Geneva incognito, called on Calvin, "expecting to find Calvin rich as a bishop, he found him poor as an apostle." John Calvin must have had a lovable side to his nature, for otherwise we could not account for the warm affection entertained for him by the leading spirits of the Reformation. They had their differences, and in those days controversial amenities were few, but even those who opposed some of his views with vehemence respected and loved the man. The instruments that God employs in the advancement of His truth are not perfect, but they have earned the lasting gratitude of ages to come for the blessings they have been the means of procuring for their fellow-men.

SPENCERIAN ETHICS.

PROFESSOR JAMES IVERACH, D.D., of the Free Church College, Aberdeen, who was a delegate to the Presbyterian Council in Toronto, has a short paper in the new number of the *Critical Review*, in which he discusses Herbert Spencer's "The Principles of Ethics." It shows that he clearly comprehends the system propounded by the eminent philosopher, and finds it radically defective and peculiarly unsatisfactory. Another instalment of Herbert Spencer's great work has just appeared, bringing the completion of his series of great works in which his system of philosophy is expounded. If the distinguished author's life is spared long enough to enable him to accomplish his great task, it will be a monument from the materialistic side of the trend of nineteenth century thought. There is no question that the writings of Herbert Spencer have exerted a wide and in many instances anything but a salutary influence on the fundamental opinions governing life and conduct. The philosophy of Herbert Spencer, however valuable and suggestive in certain lines, is essentially non-religious. The system that eliminates religion and a divine sanction for morals, however profound and elaborate it may be, will never be influential in leading humanity to a higher plane.

In his "Principles of Ethics" Herbert Spencer gives this hazy conjectural opinion as to the origin of morals:—

If, in common with other things, human feelings and ideas conform to the general law of evolution, the implication is that the set of conceptions constituting ethics, together with the associated sentiments, arise out of a relatively incoherent and indefinite consciousness; and slowly acquire coherence and definiteness at the same time that the aggregates of them differentiate from the larger aggregate with which it is originally mingled. Long remaining undistinguished, and then but vaguely discerned as something independent, ethics must be expected to acquire a distinct embodiment only when the mental evolution has reached a high stage.

In supporting his position Mr. Spencer refers to the development of Hebrew morality. His references unfortunately are vague and unmarked by the strict accuracy that should characterize the scientific enquirer. For example, he says:—

After the chronic antagonisms of nomadic life had been brought to an end by their captivity, and after their subsequent wars of conquest had ended in a comparatively peaceful state, the expression of altruistic sentiments become marked, until in Leviticus we see emerging the principle—often regarded as exclusively Christian—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"—a principle, however, which appears to have been limited to the congregation of the children of Israel.

It may be asked to what captivity, the Egyptian or Babylonian, does the author refer. The nomadic life of the Hebrews virtually ended when they entered into possession of the promised land. The wars of conquest took place after their deliverance from the Egyptian bondage, but the law divinely revealed to Moses was given while they sojourned in the wilderness. The incomparable moral law, applicable to people of all time, was not an afterthought. The giving of the law on Mount Sinai while yet the children had not altogether emerged from their nomadic condition, hardly tallies with Herbert Spencer's development theory of morals. He also makes mistakes which could hardly have been expected to find a place in his pages. Reference is made to Old Testament instances in proof that "there was among the Hebrews but little reprobation of lying." His inference is in these words: "Indeed it would be remarkable were it otherwise, considering that Jehovah set the example." In Robert Ingersoll such modes of expression would not be surprising, but that Herbert Spencer can thus speak is in some respects remarkable. After using such language it is little cause for wonder that he should say: "Nor do we find the standard much changed in the days of Christ and after. Instance the case of Paul, who, apparently piquing himself on his 'craft and guile' elsewhere, defends his acts by contending that 'the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto His glory.'" To the ordinary reader of the New Testament it will be apparent that Mr. Spencer's reading of the passage in Romans here quoted is of a superficial character. Paul there, for the sake of argument, adopts for the moment his opponent's contention only for the purpose of showing its untruth, and the imputation is emphatically rejected.

The end of ethics, according to Herbert Spencer, is as unsatisfactory as his account of its origin:—

From the point of view of absolute ethics, actions are right only when, besides being conducive to the future happiness of self, or others, or both, they are also immediately pleasurable. And again: No school can avoid taking for the ultimate moral aim a desirable state of feeling—called by whatever name—gratification, enjoyment, happiness. Pleasure somewhere, at some time, to some being or beings, is an inextinguishable element of the conception. It is as much a necessary form of moral intuition as space is a form of intellectual intuition.

In the conception of pleasure being the end of moral action there is scant evidence of evolution in morals. This is no advance on the hedonistic theory of the Greek philosophers. If pleasure be made the guiding star of life, what will be its standard? The refined and cultivated mind will find its pleasure in things that the degraded would regard with aversion. What would be the idea of pleasure entertained by those in whom animal propensities predominated? They would find pleasure in pursuits from which right-thinking people turn away in disgust. Still, according to the Spencerian theory, those in pursuit of pleasure in their own way, would be walking in the pathway of happiness, and therefore virtue. The higher ideas of duty and obligation have no definite place in the evolutionary code of morals. Every man in its view would be a law unto himself. It would be long before that happy time Mr. Spencer anticipates when harmony, industry, peace and contentment should universally prevail, if his view of morals were generally adopted. It will be a difficult thing for any philosopher, however learned, to improve on the moral law God gave to Moses. Until the philosophers can furnish a grander code of ethics than is contained in the teaching of Christ, we do well to take heed to the system that comes to us with the sanction of "Thus saith the Lord." Besides, it would not be either wise or safe to substitute pleasure for duty in the conduct of life, knowing as we do that we are responsible to Him who is the appointed Judge of all mankind. Pleasure-loving moralists are not usually the people who have served God and their race by their heroic and unbending integrity in opposition to the false, the plausible and the pleasurable.

Books and Magazines.

THE series of reminiscent articles of "My Father as I Recall Him," by Mamie Dickens, the oldest and favourite daughter of Charles Dickens, will begin in the next issue of the *Ladies' Home Journal* by an entertaining narration of Dickens' personal habits, and an inner glimpse of his home life.

GREAT THOUGHTS. (London: A. W. Hall.)—This English weekly lives up to its title. It is filled with the great thoughts of great thinkers presented in a telling manner. The pages of the world's sages are packed for memorable and pointed utterances, while the leading minds of the present have their best thoughts disseminated for the instruction of the people. It is a periodical of great value.

THE publishers of the *Montreal Star* announce that they are about to issue shortly, the finest Almanac ever published in America entitled "The Star" Almanac, consisting of 400 pages of information of the most absorbing interest, together with six coloured maps constituting one of the most valuable works of the kind ever published in any part of the world. A compendium of statistics covering a multitude of important subjects; a book of reference for all Canadians and Americans, and having a special value for all strangers in all lands desirous of knowing about Canada and Canadians.

THE *Century* magazine will take up the Bible and Science controversy. In the November *Century*, Professor Charles W. Shields, of Princeton, answers the question "Does the Bible contain Scientific Errors?" with an emphatic no. He says, "Literary and textual obscurities there may be upon the surface of Holy Writ, like spots upon the sun, or rather like moles in the eye, but scientific error in its divine purport would be the sun itself extinguished at noon. Such a Bible could not live in this epoch." Professor Shields' article will be followed by one in the December *Century* "The Effect of Scientific Study upon Religious Beliefs."

THE DOMINION ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY. (Montreal: Sabiston Publishing Co.)—The supplemental portrait issued with the October number of this Canadian publication is a portrait of the Hon. W. S. Fielding, Premier of Nova Scotia, and the frontispiece is a good portrait of Sir Henry Tyler. The illustrated paper are

Evolution in Yacht Building; "The Old Government House, Montreal;" "Nurses' Life in the Montreal General Hospital;" "Jamaica Vistas," and "A Fairly Truthful Tale of Trout." The number also contains much that will be attractive to the general reader.

MICHAEL AND THEODORA. A Russian Story. By Amelia E. Barr. (Boston: Bradley & Woodruff.)—The author of this extremely interesting and well-told story can write for young people as well as, she can for grown-up people. This Russian story is one specially written for the young. Anyone old or young who begins the reading of it will be impatient till they reach the close. It tells of the cruel sorrows through which two high born Russian children have to pass, and of their final deliverance and the justice meted out to those who wronged them. The tone of the book is thoroughly healthy, and the lessons it teaches, not in set form, but by the form of the narrative itself, are of the kind that young people need to learn.

THE ENGLISH ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE. New York: (Macmillan & Co.)—Joseph Bennett, himself a musician and musical critic of the *Daily Telegraph*, opens the October number of this high class illustrated monthly with an interesting paper on "Some Musical Conductors." Besides the frontispiece, giving an admirable portrait of Sir Arthur Sullivan, there are a number of portraits of eminent conductors. Other illustrated papers of interest are "Clipper Ships," by Herbert Russell; "A Summer among the Dovecotes," by Alfred Watkins; "Golf and Golfing," by Horace Hutchinson; and "Beards and no Beards," by J. Cuthbert Hadden. A new serial story, "Sally Dows," by Brete Harte, is begun, which with the short stories, "The Solitary Girl" and "A Friend of the Commune," make up the fiction of the number.

THE CRITICAL REVIEW. Edited by Professor S. D. F. Salmond, D.D. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark.)—In several respects this is a model quarterly. It does not belong to the ponderous and massive class of reviews that only persons of much leisure can thoroughly profit by. Nor on the other hand is its treatment of the subjects discussed superficial and slipshod. Its special department is criticism of theological and philosophical literature. Its contributors are men of eminence in the Churches to which they respectively belong. Among those writing in the present number are the names of Professors Bruce, of Glasgow; Sayce, of Oxford; A. A. Bevan, of Cambridge; Massie, of Oxford; Iverach and Robertson, of Aberdeen; G. A. Smith, of Glasgow, and many others whose abilities are generally recognized. All that is of value in recent theological and philosophic works comes under the purview of the writers for the *Critical Review*. It likewise contains a record of select literature, a feature of no little value to all interested in the progress of thought.

THE PREACHER'S DAUGHTER. A Domestic Romance. By Amelia E. Barr. (Boston: Bradley & Woodruff.)—It is a mistake to assume that all clever works of fiction are bad and that all novels with a religious tinge are necessarily poor. Yet some make this mistake. It is no more true than hasty generalizations usually are. There are novels of an evil tendency that are stupid as well as wicked, and there are works of fiction, written with a lofty purpose, possessed of great literary merit. Readers of fiction who seek instruction with recreation need be at no loss in selecting any number of good books that can be read aloud in the family circle with profit and delight. Among these latter may be classed any of the works that have come from the graceful pen of Amelia Barr. "The Preacher's Daughter" will no doubt have a special interest in maids and parsonages, but it will find no less interested readers among all classes. It deals with the great facts of human life, and its ever varying circumstances. The story has sufficient life and movement to carry the reader along, and the interest is not only well sustained but keeps on growing till the end is reached. It is needless to add that no open minded reader will finish the book without being greatly the better for having read it.