

man, and left Pasteur, the great scientist with the simple faith of a Breton peasant.

In dealing with this great genius of modern literature, it is impossible to give on these pages more than a superficial study to his works and to outline a few salient points in connection therewith, because all of them teem with brilliant passages, which could only be the product of a mind consecrated to the deep study of human problems and their solution. The reader is taken whirling down a stream of apparently conflicting thought that bubbles with wit and humour, through maelstroms of paradoxical statements, only to emerge upon the calm sea of certainty—certainty such as Chesterton's philosophy alone can establish in the mind.

His first important productions were "The Wild Knight," "The Defendant" and "Greybeards at Play," extracts from which appear to reveal an agnosticism which pervaded Chesterton's mind in his early days of fame. Afterwards close association with Belloc promoted that sturdy defence of Catholic doctrine which permeates all of his later works, notably "Orthodoxy" (1908). This book may well be termed his masterpiece, by the fact that it is written in answer to a challenge from an independent free-thinker in England, for a statement of his (Chesterton's) faith. In 1905 Chesterton had written a book, entitled "Heretics," which attacked modernity and branded it as a false philosophy. The whole essence of the work is summed up in the following typical Chestertonian parable from one of its pages:—

"Suppose that a great commotion arises in the street about something, say a lamp-post, which many influential persons desire to pull down. A grey-clad monk, who is the spirit of the Middle Ages, is approached upon the matter and begins to say in the arid manner of the Schoolmen, 'Let us, first of all, consider, my brothers, the value of Light. If Light be in itself good—' At this point he is somewhat excusably knocked down. All the people make a rush for the lamp-post. The lamp-post is down in ten minutes and they go about congratulating each other on their unmedieval practicality. But as things go on, they do not work out so easily. Some people have pulled the lamp-post down because they wanted the electric light—some because they wanted old iron; some because they wanted darkness because their deeds were evil. Some thought it was not enough of a lamp-post, some too much. Some acted because they wanted to smash municipal machinery; some because they wanted to smash something. And there is war in the night,