

But of these two great poets only one, the latter, fully represents the endeavor to restate from a new point of view and by new methods the old problems of life and thought. Only one fully represents the characteristic struggle of the nineteenth century to throw aside the conventional topics and methods of art and get down to the realities of life. Tennyson in one sense, it is true, is an original poet. He is original and creative in the new and exquisite finish which he gave to poetic style and to some extent in the new vein of sentiment which he introduced. But he does not so much create new elements and methods in literature as refine those which are already there. He develops the music of his blank verse out of Milton and Shelley and its colour out of Keats. Nothing is so new and therefore nothing is so crude in him as in Wordsworth or Browning. He is the poet of English life in an almost narrow sense of the words; he is the poet of Anglicanism. His ideals are all there, in the great broad-shouldered genial Squire, in the very respectable and semi-aristocratic English parson, in English ministers and University halls; in English landscape with the typical brook and farm, seen in no profound significance of matter, revealing spirit as by the brooding and penetrative eye of Wordsworth, but in its simply picturesque aspects, a kind of pleasant accompaniment to the decorous and refined life of an ideal Englishman.

Not wholly in the busy world, nor quite
Beyond it, blooms the garden that I love.
News from the humming city comes to it
In sound of funeral or of marriage bells;
And sitting muffled in dark leaves, you hear
The windy clanging of the minster clock,
Although between it and the garden lies
A league of grass, washed by a slow broad stream.

That is the Tennysonian landscape and the Tennysonian feeling for Nature. He is rather an original artist than a great creative poet.

Browning on the other hand has gone forward on ways hitherto untrodden. His topics, his points of view and his methods are as new as those of Dante or Shakespeare or Milton. After Keats and Shelley we can imagine some one predicting the lyrical vein of Tennyson, but the dramatic form of Browning, his diction and his versification are an absolute surprise. They are the result of one attempt more to break up the old heavens of art and bring poetry another step nearer to nature. With Browning the century makes what is evidently its last successful effort in the expansion of poetic form and perhaps of art in general.

For the signs are not wanting that a change is at hand and that we are entering upon an epoch in which the regard for what Plato called the Goddess of Limit, for system and for uniformity of standards will be greater than it has been in the nineteenth century.

In the late Matthew Arnold's critical writings we find the commencement of a reaction, an attempt to re-establish severer standards in art, more uniformity in style as against eccentricity and individual lawlessness.

This, then, is the position which Browning holds in the history of English literature. He is the last great effort of the nineteenth century in the direction of expansion. His innovations go far beyond those of its greatest innovators. He has utterly disregarded the

classical standards of style which still exercised a lingering influence over the writings of Wordsworth, of Carlyle and of Emerson; his vocabulary is as unselect as a dictionary's, the abstruse terms of science and philosophy, the obsolete terms of older literature, and the careless idioms of conversation jostle each other in his pages; as for grammar it is with some reason that he boasts in *Pachiarotto* that he is "free of all its four corners"; his methods of construction in all his great works, in *Fra Lippo* or the *Ring and the Book*, or *Andrea del Sarto* are absolute novelties; and his characteristic points of view are attempts to overturn (as in *The Glove*) or undermine (as in *Cleon*) or at least present in a perfectly new light (as in the *Epistle*) all the current views on life or art.

To attempt a final judgment on an achievement of such unusual compass and significance would be as yet premature. Work of this kind is like a draft drawn on the future of humanity. The opinions of contemporaries vary according as their aesthetic instincts are conservative or progressive. It is only by successive comparison of new growths and tendencies that a final judgment is evolved. Then we see how much humanity at large has found it good to incorporate of this special tendency, and the draft is honoured or dishonoured in due proportion. In the meantime the scientific analysis of the new phenomena is a study not in the least dependent on that ultimate judgment. We can at least determine with precision what the new qualities and methods of this poetic art are; and to do this will always help us somewhat to see how the final judgment is likely to go.

From this point of view then I will examine the poetical work of Browning, and in order to make the study as definite as possible I will confine myself, in the meantime, to a single poem and commence by a descriptive analysis of it.

(To be Continued.)

COLLEGE NEWS.

CAIRD'S PHILOSOPHY OF KANT.

THIS is the most important work in the region of pure philosophy which has appeared since the publication of the late Professor Green's "Prolegomena to Ethics." The logical treatises of Bradley and Bosanquet reach a high level of merit, and exhibit a distinct advance upon the logic of Mill, valuable as that work is, but they are burdened with a certain incomplete mastery of the principles of a spiritual philosophy. Professor Caird's work is the most complete and consistent exposition of Idealism that has anywhere appeared. His review of the philosophy of Kant has brought him face to face with all the problems of the higher philosophy, and it is safe to say that there is no topic that has not received at his hands the peculiar illumination that comes from a highly cultured mind of great speculative depth or subtlety. A thorough study of these volumes is a philosophic study in itself. The student who has mastered them will not only possess an intimate acquaintance with the whole mind of Kant, but a clear perception of the inadequacy of English popular philosophy and a comprehension of the issues to which the critical philosophy, sympathetically inter-