

Historical, Literary, Moral, and Art Questions, it forms a perfect compendium of doctrine, in which every proposition is logically deduced from its predecessor, and in which are discussed some of the greatest problems man has to solve.

Written in the form so dear to La Rochefoucauld and so difficult of attainment, that of detached Thoughts or Maxims, the book gives evidence at first sight of profound knowledge of every subject treated of in its pages. There is not one of the five hundred and eighty-five links in the chain that might not be made the subject of a separate essay, and though one distinguishing feature is the skill with which each proposition enunciated is forcibly derived from the one preceding it, and imperatively necessary to the right comprehension of the one that follows, there are, nevertheless, many scattered throughout the volume which stand whole and complete in themselves as self-evident truths.

For instance, the following cannot be taken from their respective sections without breaking the chain of reasoning, yet each is a truism :—

“ A man is ever the same, and he changes incessantly.”

“ Whatever isolates us, diminishes us.”

“ Of all struggles the hardest is the moral struggle against our own time.”

“ Genius is not the slave of what oppresses it ; it suffers from it, but becomes stronger thereby.”

“ The *dead languages* are *types* of extinct civilisations.”

“ No translation is true.”

“ Love is the desire of completing another’s happiness by means of our own.”

“ Envy is self-confessed inferiority.”

“ Science cannot do without truth : Art cannot either.”

“ Every national sentiment creates its national architecture.”

And there are many more which might be quoted. But let these suffice ; of themselves they will reveal the depth of thought in which Chasles indulges, a depth which may be better sounded by reading any one chapter of the “ Questions.”

Clear and lucid the style invariably is ; clear, notwithstanding