

APRIL.— Carlyle.—“French Revolution,” Vol. I. “French Revolution,” Vol. II.

The following is the list of questions taken up at the last meeting, to which we append two of the answers then given.

ROBERT BROWNING.

1. State Fra Lippo Lippi's plea for naturalism in Art. Is it a complete view he gives of the question?

2. Lippo is conscious of his success; Andrea, though a better painter, of his failure. Illustrate and comment on the fact, and compare the two as men and artists.

3. Notice Browning's free and skilful treatment of the life and local color of that old Florentine world in the poem of Fra Lippo Lippi.

4. “This low-pulsed forthright craftsman's hand of mine.”—How does Andrea judge his own work as an artist? Notice the comparison of it with Raphael's.

5. What is the centre of interest in “Andrea del Sarto?” Mention some subordinate points of interest, showing their relation to the primary.

6. The Bishop of St. Praxed's sense of art, like his sense of religion, is of a purely sensuous kind, and tends to corrupt rather than strengthen his nature. Explain and illustrate.

7. What is the problem stated by Cleon, and how does he sum up on it? Is he right in absolutely opposing the life of the mind to “actually living.”

8. Comment on this form of dramatic monologue invented or developed by Browning, and show how it suits his powers as a poet. Does he appear to be expressing his own views in any of these poems.

9. The aim and limitations of painting.

10. Browning's use of the commonplace in speech and action.

11. Browning's obscurity.

12. The ethical teaching of Browning's poetry.

Browning.

6.—The Bishop of St. Praxed's sense of art, like his sense of religion, is of a purely sensuous kind, and tends to corrupt rather than to strengthen his nature. Explain and illustrate.

LET us consider then his “sense of religion.” His first utterance is “All is vanity.” Are we to infer from this that he, like the preacher of old, had learned this from experience in his younger days, or was this the conclusion of the meditations of a pious man—as became a bishop—from his observations of the world. A dying man, and a bishop at that, exclaims “All is vanity.” After this you would expect to hear his wise and saintly admonitions to his sons, or, as they are known to the world, nephews, not to regard the things of this life as the most important and to prepare for the hereafter. But on the contrary he proceeds to give directions for the building of a magnificent tomb to receive his remains—rather in direct contradiction, it would seem, to his previous declaration. He begins his address by stirring up all the old hatred, envy and jealousy in his heart towards his early rival in love and predecessor in office. Not a justifiable action in a Christian, much less in an overseer of souls. He says “the world's a dream,” but all his lifetime he has been trying to accumulate as much of this world's goods as possible, and after death to surround his body with the richest material earth affords. One minute he says “Peace, peace seems all,” and the next, he tells of the envy existing between Gandolf and himself. Again, “St. Praxed's ever was the church for peace,” and then he speaks of his contention with Gandolf for their final resting places in the church. Peace in one breath, I fought in the next. So we may safely put down inconsistency as one feature of his religion.

But he consoles himself that if Gandolf did cheat him out of the corner he desired so much to possess for himself, yet his part of the bargain was not so bad after all, for his niche is in a prominent and pleasant place.

And he must have the very best—peach-