

of George Henry Lewes turned her into a nominal agnostic not altogether content with her role."

A brooding, reflective temperament was the characteristic of George Eliot. She is the philosopher in fiction, portraying in most sympathetic fashion country life and scenes, but at heart never entirely losing the Christian sympathies of her girlhood. Essentially she was a believer without a creed, a mystic without faith, and withal "in some attenuated sense an illustration of the doctrine of final perseverance."

In all her books, from "Scenes From Clerical Life," to "Daniel Deronda," there is an undercurrent of religion, indeed more than an undercurrent; for they force us to the conclusion that her prime force after all was spiritual. She thought well to put away from her the Christian religion as undeserving of her acceptance, and yet there is not one of her writings in which there may not be found many illustrations of principles that are precise parallels and analogies of the faith she rejected. These illustrations of a repudiated belief suggest what she might have done had her lot been different, if she had kept her faith instead of losing it, if she had never met George H. Lewes; in a word, had she remained Marion Evans, how much happier had she been, and how much richer we!

She gives us a number of clerical portraits; a study of them furnishes us with her standpoint. "She has no over-weening fondness for parsons who either magnify their office or burn with zeal for special dogmas." Her clergymen of the Established Church are generally surpliced Laodiceans; given either to mild betting, or to graceful indolence, or to swearing round oaths on fitting occasions.

In a number of quotations Mr.

Selby shows how George Eliot taught the trustworthiness of the moral instincts; though the light of heaven may seem to have been hidden from her vision, there was vouchsafed an inner light which gave a genuine guidance in practical affairs that could not betray the dutiful soul.

It is pointed out that the author under review declares with no uncertain sound the fact of moral responsibility and a day of grace. Fate and heredity are not the only factors that make up human life. She has nothing but scorn for those who would "tell a story of tragic shame and then describe it as the history of a pure woman."

The story of Tito in *Romola* is of terrible significance. Here again it is the spiritual tragedy of the two main characters of the book that make it great and memorable. The sinning youth, with the best opportunities before him, flinging aside duty and honour, finds punishment follows quickly and surely on the heels of sin. "In George Eliot's pages those who go down into the pit go with their eyes open and after due admonition. The doctrine of retribution is preached with such iteration in her pages as would wreck a modern pulpit."

However severe and caustic George Eliot may be in her criticisms of evangelical theology, she recognizes the need of burdened hearts for help—"for a wise, holy personality on which to lean." Mr. Selby points out how Methodist doctrine is spared in her satire, giving as the reason that the theology of Dinah Morris had to bear the stigma of unduly emphasizing good works. Ceasing to believe in divine mediation she sought the best human substitute for it which her imagination could devise. Most of the mediators she sends to those whose lives are blighted with sin